

# Sultan Muhammad Al-fatih





SULTAN  
MUHAMMAD  
AL-FATIH

The Conqueror of  
Constantinople

The Fall of the West and  
the East

**Dr. Ali Muhammad Al-Salaabi**

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*Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Raheem*

# Introduction

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**V**erily, all praise is due to Allah ﷻ. We praise Him, seek His help and ask for His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah ﷻ from the evil in our own souls and from our sinful deeds. Whoever Allah ﷻ guides, no one can mislead. And whoever Allah ﷻ allows to go astray, no one can guide. I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah ﷻ, the One, having no partner. And I bear witness that Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and messenger.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهٖۤ وَ لَا تَمُوْتُوْا اِلَّا وَاَنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمُوْنَ



﴿O believers! Have fear of Allah according to His right and die not save as Muslims.﴾<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat al-‘Imran*, Verse 102.

يَتَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ آتِفُوا رَبُّكُمْ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا  
 زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ  
 وَالْأَرْحَامَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ﴿٥١﴾

«O mankind! Have fear of your Lord, the One who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and from them spread many men and women. And fear Allah from whom you demand your mutual rights and [do not cut off ties of] kinship. Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you.»<sup>1</sup>

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٧٠﴾ يُصَلِّحْ لَكُمْ  
 أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا  
 عَظِيمًا ﴿٧١﴾

«O Believers! Have fear of Allah and always speak the truth. He will direct you to righteous deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger has indeed achieved a great achievement.»<sup>2</sup>

O my Lord, all praise for You as it suits Your Majesty and Sovereignty; all praise is for You in a manner which pleases You; all praise is for You until You are pleased, and all praise to for You after You are pleased.

<sup>1</sup> Surat an-Nisa', Verse 1.

<sup>2</sup> Surat al-Ahzab, Verses 70-71.

When the book “The Ottoman State: The factors of its renaissance and the reasons for its downfall” was presented at the international book fairs, there was a great deal of interest, and so I received many comments about it. Many writers, from all over the world, have agreed that there should be just one book solely about Muhammad al-Faatih, and the idea was also welcomed by the publisher. So, I started to undertake the proposal, and by God’s Will, if things go as they are planned, other titles about some of the heroes who made a great impact in our glorious history will follow shortly.

This book talks about Muhammad al-Faatih, the liberator of Constantinople and the defeater of the Romans. It is also about his great grandfathers who lived with Islam and died for the sake of raising the Word of Allah high. This book discusses the biographies of ‘Uthman the first, Urkhan, Murad the first, Bayzid the first, Muhammad Halabi, Murad the second, and Muhammad al-Faatih. It details their attributes, the course they adopted, and the way they followed the rules, set out by Allah ﷻ, to build their state. It shows that the liberation (conquest) of Constantinople was the result of the accumulated efforts of scholars, leaders and soldiers. The reader will learn that the Ottoman renaissance, during the reign of Sultan Muhammad al-Faatih, encompassed scientific, political, economic and military fields. The characteristics of victory and governance should exist in a nation and its leader, in order for a state to prevail. Allah ﷻ says:

لَقَدْ كَانَتْ فِي قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَةٌ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ۗ مَا كَانَ حَدِيثًا يُفْتَرَىٰ  
 وَلَٰكِن تَصَدِيقَ الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْصِيلَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى  
 وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

«There is in their stories instruction for men endowed with understanding. It is not an invented tale, but a confirmation of what came before it; a detailed exposition of all things and a Guide and a Mercy to any such as believe.»<sup>1</sup>

This book will enlighten the reader about some of the ordinances set by Allah ﷻ in all societies, in the development of nations and in the building of states. It explains the effect of ruling by the Laws of Allah ﷻ had on the Ottoman state, during the reign of the Sultan Muhammad al-Faatih. It invites the reader to ponder on the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet, to understand the science of the revival of nations and the foundation of states, so that one may attain a sound knowledge about the effects of the laws set by Allah ﷻ. The Book of Allah mentions that these laws were given in all societies; Allah ﷻ says:

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ سُنَنَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَيَتُوبَ  
 عَلَيْكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١١١﴾

<sup>1</sup> *Surat Yusuf*, Verse 111.

﴿Allah wants to make things clear to you, to show you the ordinances of those before you, and to turn to you in Mercy; Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.﴾<sup>1</sup>

The Book of Allah has instructed us to go and see the remains of those societies, left in their settings; Allah ﷻ says:

قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ  
الْمُكذِّبِينَ ﴿١٧٧﴾ هَذَا بَيَانٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٧٨﴾

﴿Many were the ways of life that have passed away before you: travel through the earth and see what the end of those who rejected truth was. Here is a plain statement to men, a guidance and instruction to those who fear Allah﴾<sup>2</sup>

The Book of Allah has instructed us to understand those ways with insight and perception; Allah ﷻ says:

قُلْ أَنْظُرُوا مَاذَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا تُغْنِي الْآيَاتُ وَالنُّذُرُ عَنْ  
قَوْمٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٧٩﴾ فَهَلْ يَنْتَظِرُونَ إِلَّا مِثْلَ أَيَّامِ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا  
مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ قُلْ فَانظُرُوا إِنِّي مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الْمُنْتَظِرِينَ ﴿١٨٠﴾

<sup>1</sup> Surat an-Nisa', Verse 26.

<sup>2</sup> Surat Al-Imran, Verses 137, 138.

﴿Say: “Behold all that is in the heavens and on earth”; but neither Signs nor Warners profit those who disbelieve. Do they then expect anything but what happened in the days of the men who passed away before them? Say: “You wait then: for I too will wait with you.”﴾<sup>1</sup>

The *Sunnah* of Allah ﷻ is distinguished by some principle characteristics, such as that they are predestined; they do not change; they are carelessly ignored by the stubborn, but they benefit the pious; they are applied to both good and corrupt people.

In this study I have focused on the effects and signs of ruling by the Laws of Allah ﷻ, during the reign of Muhammad al-Faatih. I have referred to signs, such as the granting of authority and the consolidation of power; security and establishment (of a good society); victory and prevalence (of stability); might and honour; the spreading of virtues and the elimination of vice.

I have commented on the attributes of Muhammad al-Faatih and his civilized and urban activities. I have mentioned his testament to his son, when he was dying, which truly reflects his way of life, the principles which he believed in and wished his successors to follow. I have shown their sources and basis, and I am convinced that our nation’s leaders are most definitely in need of studying, understanding and putting into practice these principles. I have discussed the spurious arguments which were directed at Muhammad al-Faatih, such as the one fabricated by the English historian,

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat Yunus*, Verses 101, 102

Edward Shepherd Chrissie, in his book “The history of the Ottoman Turks”, in which he defamed the character of Muhammad al-Faatih, out of hatred and jealousy of the glorious Islamic conquest. The American Encyclopaedia, printed in 1980, also expressed its crusader like hatred of Islam, and claimed that Muhammad al-Faatih enslaved most of the Christians of Constantinople, taking them to the market of the city of Adrianople, where they were sold as slaves! I have denied all these spurious arguments and allegations against Muhammad al-Faatih, with sound and sharp proof using historical facts, which have proved that Muhammad al-Faatih was very compassionate and kind with the people of Constantinople. He ordered his soldiers to treat prisoners with mercy, and he liberated many of them with his own money. He met with priests, giving them assurances concerning their beliefs and churches. I have explained that the merciful behaviour of Muhammad al-Faatih was due to his adherence to the guidance of pure Islam, taking as an example the conduct of the Prophet ﷺ and the rightly guided Caliphs, with those ahl-udh-Dhimmah (freed non-Muslims living under Muslim Rule) after him, whose publications explained all their kindness and tolerance towards their enemies.

No one could deny the great role of the Ottomans when the Muslims of North Africa called for their help, after the beginning of the Spanish invasion of Africa, headed by Cardinal Jamines. The Ottoman authority sent the great *Mujahid*, Khayr Eddin Barbarosa, to roam along the Mediterranean, and clean the whole of the North African coast from those invaders, until they were safe from evil.

Constantinople, of which the Prophet ﷺ had given good tidings about its liberation, was conquered by Muhammad al-Faatih, who had an audacious plan of utmost subtlety, great military preparation and accurate execution. He transported his ships by land on logs, and then rolled them down to the sea behind the Byzantine lines, taking them by surprise. This led to the defeat of all the fleets of the enemy and the liberation of the city of Constantinople, which later became the capital of the Caliphate. It is now called “Istanbul” in a manner to hide the history of Sultan Muhammad al-Faatih, who spent days and nights in the tents or riding horses, and never knew the comfort of cities nor palaces<sup>1</sup>.

I have mentioned the Ottomans, with both their positive and negative attributes, in my book “The Ottoman State: The Factors of Renaissance and the Causes of Downfall”. However, in this book, I have discussed the biography of Muhammad al-Faatih and the factors of renaissance during his reign.

Some intellectuals, who were influenced by the western methods of historical writing, criticised my series about the Islamic history of North Africa, saying: “Why should faith be mixed with history? What is the relation between a leader’s attributes and history? Why is the relationship between the ruling by Allah’s Laws and history important?” I reply – and success is from Allah ﷻ - that the method of writing Islamic history and interpreting its events relies on the basis of Islamic concepts. It takes the Islamic faith and

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<sup>1</sup> See “Our History: Caught between the Ignorance of Muslim People and the Distortions of the Enemy”.

its obligations as the basis of its methodology and its interpretation of historical events. Dr. Akram Diya' has said: "The interpretation of Islamic history is derived from the Islamic concept to the universe, mankind, and life in general. It is based on the belief in Allah ﷻ, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and the Divine Decree, whether good and bad it is from Allah ﷻ. It does not go beyond the Islamic faith, and it is also based upon the principles of conduct of the first Islamic society, a fact which distinguishes the course of Islamic history from that of secular world history, due to the effect of the Divine Revelation within it."<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, in order to interpret Islamic history, it is necessary to refer to its Islamic sources in order to understand the motivating factors of behaviour in that society, which had been constructed and nurtured upon the Islamic *Shari'ah*. Islamic teachings, commands and prohibitions directed most of its development, with its propagation and Jihad for the Sake of Allah ﷻ, in educational, professional and social fields, as well as in the internal and external affairs of the established Islamic society.

In order to reach an authentic and real adapted interpretation of the development of Islamic history, we need to know and understand the elements which formed the society and governed its progress, in addition to the foundation of its concepts and culture. We need to compare this historical progress with the Islamic legal commands and prohibitions. We need to know how many of them were linked to those commands and requirements, and how many of them

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<sup>1</sup> "The Rewriting of Early Islamic History" (3).

deviated from them, so that we could learn the extent of the impact of Islam on mankind, and the deprivation of other societies, which had deviated from the *Shari'ah* of Allah ﷻ. We also may recognise Allah's Benevolence and Mercy to humanity; for He ﷻ brought them out of darkness into light, from oppression to justice, from misery to happiness, from fear and anxiety to peace and security; He ﷻ says:

الرَّ كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ لِتُخْرِجَ النَّاسَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ ﴿١٠١﴾

«Alif. Lam. Ra. (This is) a Scripture which We have revealed unto you (Muhammad) that thereby you might bring forth mankind from darkness unto light, by the permission of their Lord, unto the Path of the Mighty, the Owner of Praise»<sup>1</sup>

The method which I have adopted in these historical studies is the same method used in the Qur'an for presenting narratives. It is for this reason that I have focused on highlighting the attributes of leaders, issues of faith and the foundations upon which nations were established and revived.

In the Qur'an, we are presented with the story of Prophet David (*Dawud*) ﷺ, the devout Muslim leader, whose attributes are an example to any righteous ruler, showing a way to achieve perfect happiness in this world and in the Hereafter; Allah ﷻ says, addressing Prophet Muhammad ﷺ:

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat Ibrahim*, Verse 1

أَصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ وَاذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَا دَاوُدَ ذَا الْأَيْدِ ۗ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ ﴿١٧﴾

«Have patience at what they say and remember Our Servant Dawud, a man of strength, for he always turned to Allah»<sup>1</sup>

The attributes of Prophet David (*Dawud*) ﷺ, mentioned in this Verse, are as follows:

(1) Patience: Allah ﷻ had ordered Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to adopt the example of Prophet Dawud in regard to his patience, which showed his obedience to Allah ﷻ

(2) Servitude: Allah ﷻ described him as «**Our Servant**», using the plural form to express Himself, gloriously. Being described as having been in a state of servitude to Allah ﷻ is the utmost honour, just as with Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, when Allah ﷻ mentioned him at the beginning of *Surat al-Isra*’:

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَىٰ بِعَبْدِهِ ۗ لَيْلًا ...

«**Glory to Allah Who did take His Servant<sup>2</sup> for Journey by night...**»<sup>3</sup>

(3) The power to execute Allah’s Commands «**a man of strength**».

<sup>1</sup> *Surat Sād*, Verse 17.

<sup>2</sup> Editors note: ‘Our Servant’ & ‘His Servant’ both mean Allah’s Servant.

<sup>3</sup> *Surat al-Isra*’, Verse 1.

(4) The return to Allah ﷻ, in total obedience to all His Commands, as Allah ﷻ says: **﴿for he always turned to Allah﴾**.

The description of Prophet Dawud عليه السلام as a ruler who had the power to adhere to Allah's Commands and was always turning to Allah ﷻ was proof of his correct understanding of Allah ﷻ, a fact that allowed him to worship Allah ﷻ in a truly devotional way.

Allah ﷻ mentioned other attributes of Prophet Dawud عليه السلام and the trials he went through, saying:

﴿ وَهَلْ أَتَاكَ نَبُؤُا الْخَصْمِ إِذْ تَسَوَّرُوا الْمِحْرَابَ ﴿١١٠﴾ إِذْ دَخَلُوا عَلَى دَاوُدَ فَفَزِعَ مِنْهُمْ ؕ قَالُوا لَا تَخَفْ خَصْمَانِ بَغَى بَعْضُنَا عَلَى بَعْضٍ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا تُشْطِطْ وَاهْدِنَا إِلَى سَوَاءِ الصِّرَاطِ ﴿١١١﴾ إِنَّ هَذَا أَخِي لَهُ تِسْعٌ وَتِسْعُونَ نَعَجَةً وَإِي نَعَجَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ فَقَالَ أَكْفَلْنِيهَا وَعَزَّنِي فِي الْخِطَابِ ﴿١١٢﴾ قَالَ لَقَدْ ظَلَمَكَ بِسُؤَالِ نَعَجَتِكَ إِلَى تِعَاجِهِ ؕ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْخُلَطَاءِ لَيَبْغِي بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَقَلِيلٌ مَّا هُمْ ؕ وَظَنَّ دَاوُدُ أَنَّمَا فَتَنَّاهُ فَاسْتَغْفَرَ رَبَّهُ وَخَرَّ رَاكِعًا وَأَنَابَ ﴿١١٣﴾ ﴾

﴿ And has the news of the litigants reached you? When they climbed over the wall into (his) Mihrab (a praying

place or a private room,). When they entered in upon Dawood (David), he was terrified of them, they said: "Fear not! (We are) two litigants, one of whom has wronged the other, therefore judge between us with truth, and treat us not with injustice, and guide us to the Right Way. Verily, my brother (in religion) has ninety nine ewes, while I have (only) one ewe, and he says: "Hand it over to me, and he overpowered me in speech." (Dawood (David)) said (immediately without listening to the opponent): "He has wronged you in demanding your ewe in addition to his ewes. And, verily, many partners oppress one another, except those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and they are few." And Dawood (David) guessed that We have tried him and he sought Forgiveness of his Lord, and he fell down prostrate and turned (to Allah) in repentance.﴾<sup>1</sup>

Scholars have mentioned great benefits that may be derived from these verses, as well as many words of wisdom. These verses of trial were followed by Allah's nomination of Prophet Dawud ﷺ as a vicegerent on earth, saying:

يٰۤاٰدُوۤدُ اِنَّا جَعَلْنٰكَ خَلِيۡفَةً فِى الْاَرْضِ فَاَحْكُمۡ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوٰى فَيُضِلَّكَ عَنۡ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰهِ ۗ اِنَّ الَّذِيۡنَ يَضِلُّوۡنَ عَنۡ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيۡدٌۢ بِمَا ذُنُوۡا يَوْمَ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٢١﴾

﴿O David! We did indeed make you a vicegerent on earth: so judge between men in truth (and justice), and do not follow the lusts of your heart, for they would

<sup>1</sup> *Surat Sād*, Verses 21-24.

**mislead you from the Path of Allah. Those who wander astray from the Path of Allah will receive a grievous penalty, because they forgot the Day of Account.﴾<sup>1</sup>**

In the above verse, Allah ﷻ has given us some basic principles of judging between people:

(1) **﴿So judge between men in truth (and justice)﴾** i.e. judge people with justice, upon which the heavens and the earth were established, which is the first and most important principle of judgment (in governing or ruling).

(2) **﴿And do not follow the lusts of your heart﴾** i.e. do not incline to your own desires when you judge between people, for it will lead you to the Hellfire.

This great verse shows that ruling justly over people is a religious status, which the Messengers of Allah ﷻ and His righteous servants had adopted. Judging people, in truth, requires having knowledge about religious legal affairs, knowledge of the legal case, and knowledge of the manner in which to apply the legal rule pertaining to it. One who ignores any one of these types of knowledge is not fit to rule, and so is not permitted to undertake such a duty.

This verse suggests that the ruler should be cautious of any inclination towards his whims, while the next verses discuss many important issues of faith in the life of the Muslim:

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat Sād*, Verse 26.

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاءَ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَطْلًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ظَنُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا  
 فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنَ النَّارِ ﴿١٧﴾ أَمْ نَجْعَلُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا  
 الصَّالِحَاتِ كَالْمُفْسِدِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ أَمْ نَجْعَلُ الْمُتَّقِينَ كَالْفُجَّارِ ﴿١٨﴾  
 كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِّيَدَّبَّرُوا ءَايَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿١٩﴾

﴿And We did not create the heavens and the earth and all that is between them in vain. That is the opinion of those who disbelieve, and woe unto those who disbelieve from the Fire! Shall We treat those who believe and do good deeds as those who spread corruption on the earth; or shall We treat the pious as the wicked? (This is) a Scripture that We have revealed unto you; full of blessing, that they may ponder its Revelations, and that men of understanding may reflect﴾<sup>1</sup>

The Qur'an mentioned Allah's Gift to Prophet Dawud ﷺ, as Allah ﷻ says:

وَوَهَبْنَا لِدَاوُدَ سُلَيْمَانَ ۚ نِعَمَ الْعَبْدِ ۚ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

﴿We bestowed Solomon (*Sulaiman*) on David (as a son). How excellent a Servant! He was always turning in repentance (toward Allah)﴾<sup>2</sup>

Then, there is also reference to the smelting of iron which Prophet Dawud ﷺ practiced:

<sup>1</sup> Surat Sād, Verses 27-29.

<sup>2</sup> Surat Sād, Verse 30.

وَعَلَّمْنَاهُ صَنْعَةَ لَبُوسٍ لَّكُمْ لِيُحْصِنَكُمْ مِنْ بَأْسِكُمْ ۗ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ

شَاكِرُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

«And We taught him the fashioning of armour coats, to protect you from your warfare. So will you then be thankful?»<sup>1</sup>

﴿ وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ مِنَّا فَضْلًا ۗ يَنْجِبَالُ أَوِيٍّ مَعَهُ وَالطَّيْرَ وَآلنَّا لَهُ  
الْحَدِيدَ ﴿٨١﴾ أَنْ أَعْمَلْ سَبِغَاتٍ وَقَدِّرْ فِي السَّرْدِ ۗ وَاعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا إِنِّي

بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٨٢﴾

«And assuredly We gave David Grace from Us, (saying): O you hills and birds, echo his psalms of praise! And We made the iron supple unto him, saying: Make long coats of mail and measure the links (thereof). And do right. I am Seer of what you do»<sup>2</sup>

This was Allah's Gift to Prophet Dawud عليه السلام, besides his being a Prophet, ruler and vicegerent. Allah سبحانه had bestowed His Servant Dawud with the blessing of knowledge about how to smelt iron from its ore, which is the main element used in building civilisations and states, and settling wars.

<sup>1</sup> *Surat al-Anbyyyah*, Verses 80.

<sup>2</sup> *Surat Sāba*, Verses 10-11.

It is this Qur'anic method which I have pursued in my portrait of history, focusing on the character and faith of the leaders, and the methods they adopted, and whether they were close or far from the Judgment of Allah ﷻ.

This method opposes that of western historians, because it is derived from an Islamic concept of life, the universe, mankind and the course of history, given by the Creator, as exemplified in His Holy Book and the *Sunnah* of His final Servant and Messenger, Muhammad ﷺ.

This method of historical research would free all those who have been alienated from rational thought by the western systems that were imposed by the colonialists, who tried and still try to keep the Muslims away from their Religion, history and civilisation.

I have received some criticism, from some researchers, from which I have benefited a great deal. So I thank them very much, and I ask Allah ﷻ to grant them success in their work, and make us all successful in the service of our Religion and Faith, as can be seen from the glorious history of our *Ummah, Ameen.*

I have divided this book into four parts: introduction, two chapters and conclusion.

The first chapter comprises of six objects of research articles. The second chapter comprises of six research articles.

## **Chapter One: The Rise of the Ottoman State and its Conquests.**

1. 'Uthman, the Founder of the Ottoman State

2. The Sultan Urkhan bin ‘Uthman
3. The Sultan Murad.
4. The Sultan Bayazid the First.
5. The Sultan Muhammad the First.
6. Murad the Second.

## **Chapter Two: Muhammad al-Faatih and the Conquest of Constantinople.**

1. The Sultan Muhammad al-Faatih.
2. The Spiritual Liberator of Constantinople, *Shaikh* Shamsuddin, ‘Ak Muhammad bin Hamzah.
3. The effect of the Liberation of Constantinople upon the European and Islamic world.
4. The reasons behind the Liberation of Constantinople.
5. The main attributes of Muhammad al-Faatih.
6. Some of his public works.

### **Conclusion.**

#### *Additional Reading.*

Finally, I ask Allah ﷻ to accept this work as undertaken sincerely for His Noble countenance. I ask Him ﷻ to reward me for every written letter in this research, accept them in the scale of my good deeds, and reward everyone who helped me to complete this book.

Written by:

The Servant of Allah who seeks His Forgiveness and Grace,  
‘Ali Muhammad as-Salabi May Allah ﷻ forgive him, his  
parents, and all Muslims, *Ameen.*

# **Chapter One**



# The Rise of the Ottoman State and its Conquests

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**T**he Ottomans were related to a nomadic Turkic tribe which existed in Kurdistan at the beginning of the seventh century (A.H), which corresponds to the thirteenth century (C.E). As a result of the Mogul invasion of Iraq and eastern Asia, under the leadership of Genghis Khan, Suleiman, the grandfather of ‘Uthman, emigrated with his tribe in 617 A.H (1220 C.E), from Kurdistan to Anatolia, and settled in the town of Akhlat<sup>1</sup>. After his death, in 628 A.H (1230 C.E), he was succeeded by his middle son, Artaghul, who continued this trek to the north west of Anatolia; having approximately a hundred families with him, together with four hundred horsemen.

When Artaghul (the father of ‘Uthman) fled with his tribe of less than one hundred families, from the evil attack of the Moguls, he reached a fierce battle between the Muslims and

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<sup>1</sup> A city in East Turkey near the lake of Wa’an.

the Christians, which was going in favour of the Byzantines. So, he ordered his people to surge forward into the battle in support of their fellow Muslims, which led to the victory of Muslims over the Christians.

At the end of the battle, the leader of the Muslim Seljuk Army rewarded the stand made by Artaghul and his group, offering them land around the western border of Anatolia, and a chance to spread their booty at the expense of the Romans.

## The First Research

# ‘Uthman, the Founder of the Ottoman State

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‘**U**thman, the son of Artaghul, after whom the name of the Ottoman State was named, was born in 606 A.H./1258 C.E, the year in which the Moguls, led by Hulako, invaded Baghdad. These events were critical as the calamities were huge. Ibn Kathir said: “They attacked the country and killed everyone they found of the men, women, children and elderly. Many people hid in wells, rubbish bins and grass lands for days; while others grouped together and locked themselves inside shops and mosques, but the Tatars broke in, by demolishing the doors or burning the fronts, and once inside, they chased the fleeing residents; slaughtering them on the roofs. None escaped from the massacre, except for Jews, Christians and those who had sought their protection.

It was a critical period for the Muslim *Ummah*, who had been weakened because of their sins and disobedience to Allah’s Commands. The Moguls attacked the Muslims,

disgraced them, slaughtered them, stole their wealth and destroyed their dwellings. It was in these arduous times that ‘Uthman, the founder of the Ottoman State, was born. The irony was that the sign for the beginning of the path into power for the *Ummah* took place when it was at its lowest and weakest point. It was the beginning of a re-establishment of their former power and glory, by the Wisdom and Powerful Will of Allah ﷻ, Who says:

إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيَعًا يَسْتَضِعُّ طَائِفَةً  
مِنْهُمْ يُدَبِّحُ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيِي نِسَاءَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ



«Truly Pharaoh elated himself in the land and divided its people into sections, oppressing a small group among them; he slew their sons but kept their females alive, for he was indeed a maker of mischief»<sup>1</sup>

وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضِعُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً  
وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ ﴿٤﴾ وَنُمَكِّنُهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنُرِي فِرْعَوْنَ  
وَهُمَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا مِنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَحْتَدِرُونَ ﴿٥﴾

«We wished to be gracious to those who were oppressed in the land, to make them leaders (in faith) and make

<sup>1</sup> Surat al-Qasas, Verse 4.

them heirs, to establish a firm place for them in the land»<sup>1</sup>

There is no doubt that Allah ﷻ is able to re-establish on earth those who are oppressed, at any time or at the twinkling of an eye; He ﷻ says:

إِنَّمَا قَوْلُنَا لِشَيْءٍ إِذَا أَرَدْنَاهُ أَنْ نَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ﴿٥٦﴾

«Our Word unto a thing, when We intend it, is only that We say unto it: “Be!” And it is»<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, people who follow the truth should not be impatient in their hope for Allah’s Promise of victory and establishment. It is necessary to consider the religious and universal ordinances, and it is imperative to be steadfast upon the religion of Allah ﷻ, Who says:

... وَلَوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ لَانتَصَرْنَا مِنْهُمْ وَلَكِنْ لِيَبْلُوَ بَعْضَكُمْ بِبَعْضٍ ...



«...but if it had been Allah’s Will, He could certainly have exacted retribution from them (Himself); but He lets you fight in order to test some of you with others...»<sup>3</sup>

When Allah ﷻ wants something to happen, He ﷻ gradually sets forth its causes. The story of the powerful establishment of the Ottoman state started with the appearance of ‘Uthman

<sup>1</sup> Surat al-Qasas, Verses 5-6.

<sup>2</sup> Surat an-Nahl, Verse 40.

<sup>3</sup> Surat Muhammad, Verse 4.

bin Artaghul who was born in the year when the Abbasid Caliphate fell in Baghdad.

### **First: The main leadership attributes of ‘Uthman the First:**

When we examine the biography of ‘Uthman the First, we notice some attributes that were deeply rooted in his personality, as a military leader and politician; the main qualities of which were:

#### ***(1) Bravery***

When the Christian leaders in Bursa, Madanus, Adrahnus, Kettah and Kestalah called upon the Byzantines, in 700A.H / 1301, to form a coalition of crusaders to fight ‘Uthman bin Artaghul, the founder of the newly formed Ottoman state, ‘Uthman led his soldiers forth into battles himself, to destroy the crusader armies, thus showing his courage, which had become an example for all the Ottomans to follow.

#### ***(2) Wisdom***

When he assumed the leadership of his people, he decided wisely to stand with the Sultan ‘Ala-ddin against the Christians, and helped him conquer many fortresses. As a result, he was appointed as an *Amir* by the Seljuk Sultan ‘Ala-ddin, the leader of the state of the Byzantine Seljuks. He allowed him to coin a currency in his name, along with making *Du’a* (supplication) to Allah ﷻ for him during *Jumu’a* (Friday) sermons in the territories under his rule.

#### ***(3) Sincerity***

When the residents of the regions neighbouring the Emirate of ‘Uthman sensed his sincerity in following his religion,

they rose to support him and firmly establish the foundations of the Islamic state, opposing the enemies of Islam.

#### **(4) Steadfastness**

This particular attribute of his personality was observed when he began liberating strongholds and countries. In 707 A.H, he conquered the fortresses of Kettah, Lafkah, Aq Hisar and Qawj Hisar. In 712 A.H, he conquered the fortresses of Kabwah, Yakijah Taraqlawa, Tikrar Bikary and others. His conquests were crowned by the liberation of the city of Brussa in 716 A.H / 1317, after a long and difficult siege. The liberation of Brussa was one of the most arduous conquests of ‘Uthman; there was a ongoing conflict between him and Aqrinus, the leader of Brussa, for a few years, until the latter eventually surrendered and handed the city over to ‘Uthman. Allah ﷻ says:

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ

تَفْلِحُونَ ﴿٢٠٠﴾

**«O you who believe! Persevere in patience and constancy, vie in such perseverance, strengthen one another and fear Allah; that you may prosper»<sup>1</sup>**

#### **(5) The Attraction of Faith**

This attribute was seen clearly in his dealings with Aqrinus, the leader of Brussa, who later embraced Islam. ‘Uthman gave him the title of “Bek”, and he became a prominent leader in the Ottoman state. Indeed, many Byzantine leaders were so affected by the personality of ‘Uthman and his

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<sup>1</sup> Surat al-‘Imran, Verse 200.

system of government that they joined his army. Numerous Islamic groups enlisted under the banner of the Ottoman state, such as the *Ghazyarum* (defenders), who were an Islamic group stationed near the Roman borders, in order to repel any Byzantine attack against the Muslims, who had been based there since the time of the Abbasids. The position of their station on the borders had enabled them to gain expertise in fighting the Byzantines and helped them to adhere firmly to the teachings of Islam, which was the only way of overcoming the crusader armies.

There were also other groups, such as al-Ikhwan (the brothers); a group of charitable people who had helped the Muslims in their fight against the invaders. They were mainly traders who had offered their wealth in the service of Islam, such as building mosques and hotels. Some of them being Muslim scholars, helped to spread Islamic knowledge and allow people to remain steadfast in their religion.

#### **(6) Justice**

Most Turkish sources, which had recorded the history of the Ottomans, report that Artaghul had appointed his son, 'Uthman, the founder of the Ottoman state, as the judicial authority of the city of Qurrah jah Hisar, after he had liberated it from the Byzantines in 684 A.H / 1285. In one famous case, 'Uthman judged in favour of a Byzantine Christian against a Turkish Muslim. So the surprised Byzantine asked 'Uthman: "Why did you judge in my favour, knowing that I am not a follower of your religion?" 'Uthman replied: "Rather, how could I fail to judge in your favour, when Allah ﷻ, Whom we worship, says: **Allah Commands you to render back your trusts to those to whom they are due; and when you judge between people,**

**judge with justice﴾”<sup>1</sup> After having experienced this justice, that man, together with his people embraced Islam.**

‘Uthman the First ruled his subjects justly as well as those living in the lands which he had liberated. He never treated any conquered people with injustice, oppression or subjugation; but followed the way of Allah ﷻ:

قَالَ أَمَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ فَسَوْفَ نُعَذِّبُهُ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ فَيُعَذِّبُهُ عَذَابًا نُّكَرًا  
وَأَمَّا مَنْ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُ جَزَاءٌ أَحْسَنُ <sup>ط</sup> وَسَنَقُولُ لَهُ

مِنَ أَمْرِنَا يُسْرًا ﴿٨٧﴾

**﴿He said: "As for him who does wrong, we shall punish him; and then he will be brought back unto his Lord; Who will punish him with a terrible punishment (Hellfire). But as for one who believes and works righteousness, he will have the best reward (Paradise), and we (i.e. Dhul-Qarnain) will speak to him from our command with ease.﴾”<sup>2</sup>**

This indicated his presence of faith, piety, insight, aptitude, justice, kindness and mercy.

### **(7) Loyalty**

He was most concerned about loyalty to conventions. When the leader of the Byzantine fortress at Ulubad requested, as a condition when he surrendered to the Ottoman army, that no Muslim Ottoman should cross the drawbridge into the

<sup>1</sup> *Surat an-Nisa*, Verse 58.

<sup>2</sup> *Surat al-Kahf*, Verses 87-88.

fortress, ‘Uthman kept to that agreement, along with those who came after him. Allah ﷻ says:

... وَأَوْفُوا بِالْعَهْدِ <sup>ط</sup> إِنَّ الْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْئُولًا <sup>ج</sup>

﴿...and fulfil every engagement; for every engagement will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning)﴾<sup>1</sup>

### ***(8) Devotion to Allah ﷻ during his conquests***

His works and conquests were not done for his economic or military benefit. Rather they were for the sake of spreading the Message of Islam. The historian Ahmad Rafiq has described him in his encyclopaedia, “A Grand General History”, saying: “‘Uthman was extremely religious and knew that the propagation of the Message of Islam was a divine duty. He possessed a vast range of strong political thoughts. ‘Uthman never founded his state on the love of authority, but rather, for the sake of spreading Islam.”

Misr Ughlu said: “‘Uthman bin Artaghul used to believe deeply that his sole duty in life was *Jihad* for the Sake of Allah ﷻ, to proclaim and establish the Word of Allah ﷻ. He progressed, using all his power and feelings, to achieve this goal.”

These were some of the characteristics of ‘Uthman the First, being a natural outcome of his faith in Allah ﷻ, his preparation for the Last Day, his love for people of faith, his hatred towards people of disbelief, and his deep love for *Jihad* in the Path of Allah ﷻ, and the propagation of the Message of Islam.

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat al-Isra'*, Verse 34.

During his conquests, ‘Uthman used to suggest to the Byzantine leaders, in the region of Asia Minor, to make a choice between three offers: to embrace Islam, pay *Jizyah* (Tax on people of the Book living under an Islamic authority) or face the prospect of war. Some Byzantine Romans embraced Islam, others joined him and accepted his second offer to pay the *Jizyah*, while the rest faced a *Jihad* void of any clemency, and were all defeated, so ‘Uthman was able to add all their territories big to the state under his control.

The personality of ‘Uthman was well-balanced and attractive, because of his strong faith in Allah ﷻ and the Last Day. It was for this reason that his power never decreased, nor was his justice compromised, nor did he allow his sovereignty to overcome his mercy, nor his wealth overcome his modesty. He deserved Support of Allah ﷻ, because of his wisdom and control of power. It was a Bounty from Allah ﷻ upon His Servant ‘Uthman, who had been granted status and power to rule over Asia Minor with His Word. He was under the great Care of Allah ﷻ, Who opened the door of success for him to achieve his ambitions. He spent his time between fighting against the enemies of Islam with the sword and the conquest of people’s hearts with his faith and benevolence, calling hem to Islam.

Whenever he liberated a nation, he used to call them to the Message of the Truth; the belief in Allah ﷻ. He was keen to introduce many kinds of reforms in the newly liberated regions, managing to establish the authority of truth and justice.

## Second: The Constitution followed by the Ottomans

The life of *Amir* ‘Uthman, founder of the Ottoman state, was characterised by *Jihad* and the call for Allah ﷻ. The religious scholars, there, were at the service of the *Amir* supervising the administrative planning and legal execution within the Emirate.

The testament of ‘Uthman to his son, Arukhan, has been preserved for us as the civilised guidance and Islamic system that was practised by the Ottoman state.

He told his son:

“O son, avoid being concerned with anything that was not commanded by Allah ﷻ, the Lord of the Worlds. If you are faced with a problem, consult the judgment of the Islamic scholars.

“O son, honour those who are around you and be generous towards your army. Do not let the devil deceive you concerning your soldiers and wealth. Do not avoid the people of *Shari ‘ah*.

“O son, you are aware that our sole objective is to please Allah ﷻ, the Lord of the Worlds. It is with *Jihad* that the light of our religion can spread everywhere, so that we might achieve the Pleasure of Allah ﷻ.

“O son, we are not among those who wage wars for the passion of sovereignty. We live by Islam and we die for Islam, and this my son is what you are fit for.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> From the book “The Ottomans in History and Civilisation” by D. Muhammad Harb, p.16

In the book, “The Political History of the Ottoman State”, we find another narration of the testament, which says:

“O son, you should know that the spread of Islam, guiding people rightly to it, and protecting the property of Muslims, is a trust around your neck, which Allah ﷻ will ask you about on the Day of Reckoning.”

In the book, “The Misfortunes of the Children of ‘Uthman”, we find another expression in ‘Uthman’s testament to his son, Arukhan, saying:

“O son, I am drifting towards my Lord, and I am very proud of you; for you will be just to your subjects, and a *Mujahid* for the Sake of Allah ﷻ, in spreading His Religion.

“O son, I recommend that you treat the scholars of the *Ummah* well, honouring them, and consulting them for their opinions, for they only do what is the good.

“O son, beware not to do something which displeases Allah ﷻ. If you meet any difficulty regarding an issue, ask the religious scholars, and they will guide you towards what is good.

“You should know, my son, that our only way, in this life, is the Way of Allah ﷻ; our sole objective is to spread the Religion of Allah ﷻ, for we are not seekers of status and worldly matters.”

Other expressions from the testament of ‘Uthman say:

“This is my testament to my sons and friends. Keep the elevation of the noble Islamic Religion by steadily pursuing *Jihad* for the Sake of Allah ﷻ. Raise the noble flag of Islam high by performing *Jihad* perfectly. Always be at the

service of Islam; for Allah ﷻ has appointed a weak servant, such as me, to conquer so many lands. Take the Word of *Tawheed* to the farthest lands, with *Jihad* for the Sake of Allah ﷻ, and remember that whoever deviates from the path of truth and justice, will be deprived from the intercession of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ on the Day of Resurrection.

“O son, there is no one in this world who will not be subject to death, and my time has come near, by the Command of Allah ﷻ, so I hand you the affairs of the state; be just in all your issues...”

This testament was the system followed by the Ottomans. They were fully dedicated to Islamic knowledge and showed the highest respect to Islamic scholars; they also focused their interests in major scientific fields to improve their military institutions; being devoted to *Jihad* they were able to expand their conquests to the furthest land that had been reached by any Muslims.

We may extract from this testament the foundations and principles upon which the Ottoman state had been established:

- (1) “O son, avoid being concerned with anything that is not commanded by Allah ﷻ, the Lord of the Worlds”**

This was a call to adhere to the Commandments of Allah ﷻ in every issue, whether minor or significant, in a manner that puts the Judgment of Allah ﷻ before everything else; Allah ﷻ says:

...إِنَّ الْحُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ أَمَرَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ ذَٰلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ

أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

«...The Command is for none but Allah: He has commanded that you worship none but Him; that is the Right Religion, but most people do not understand»<sup>1</sup>

This means that the true Commandments of Religion, the Faith, and the affairs of mankind belong to Allah ﷻ, Alone, Who honours His Messengers with this. Therefore, no human being should make a judgement in any matter with his own opinion, intellect or interpretation, disregarding the Judgment of Allah ﷻ. This is the basic of The Religion of Allah ﷻ, as was revealed to all His Messengers, despite the diversity in where and when they appeared. The Qur'an was revealed to establish this totality in worship and obedience to the Commandments of Allah ﷻ, Who says:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِمَا أَرَاكَ اللَّهُ ...



«We have sent down to you the Book in truth that you might judge between men as Allah has shown you...»<sup>2</sup>

Just as the achievement of total worship of Allah ﷻ is one objective of the Revelation of the Book of Allah ﷻ, the establishment of the Commandments of Allah ﷻ, as the one

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat Yusuf*, Verse 40.

<sup>2</sup> *Surat an-Nisa'*, Verse 105.

system of judgment among mankind, is another noble objective of the Revelation.

‘Uthman commended his son, a future ruler of the Islamic state, to adhere to the Commandments of Allah ﷻ, in all his affairs during his reign, because he knew that the establishment of the Commandments of Allah ﷻ by the Muslim ruler is a Contract, as mentioned by Allah ﷻ in the Qur’an:

وَأذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمِيثَاقَهُ الَّذِي وَاثَقَكُمْ بِهِ إِذْ قُلْتُمْ  
سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَأَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿٧﴾

«Remember the Favour of Allah to you and His Covenant which He ratified with you, when you said: “We hear and we obey”; and fear Allah, for Allah knows well the secrets of your hearts»<sup>1</sup>

This is a Reminder from Allah ﷻ to His believing servants, regarding His Blessings upon them, in the legislation, which He ﷻ prescribed for them in this great Religion, sent through the Message of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Allah ﷻ took their covenant, that they would follow His Legislation and adhere to it, as was the case with the Companions’ pledge of allegiance to the Prophet ﷺ. Allah ﷻ considers any breach of the pledge, to follow His Judgment, as a sign of the days of ignorance, saying:

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat al-Ma'idah*, Verse 7.

أَفَحُكْمَ الْجَهْلِيَّةِ يَبْغُونَ ۚ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ



﴿Do they then seek after a judgment of (the Days of) Ignorance? But who for a people whose faith is assured can give better judgment than Allah?﴾<sup>1</sup>

In this Verse, anyone who turns away from the Judgment of Allah ﷻ, choosing another judgment is reproached.

Establishing the Commandments of Allah ﷻ, as a system to rule the affairs of people, is, in fact, to achieve proper devotion and worship to Allah ﷻ, Alone, which is the reason behind the creation of both mankind and Jinn; Allah ﷻ says:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥١﴾

﴿I have only created jinn and men that they may worship Me﴾<sup>2</sup> i.e. to obey Me Alone, with no associates besides Me<sup>3</sup>.

The vast concept of worship comprises of many deeds and actions; some of these deeds can be performed individually, while others can only be done within an Islamic state. These sublime meanings were evident in the mind of the founder of the Ottoman state, when he commended his son and prince Arukhan with this expression: “O son, beware not to occupy yourself with something Allah ﷻ did not command.”

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<sup>1</sup> Surat al-Ma'idah, Verse 50.

<sup>2</sup> Surat Adh-Dhariyat, Verse 56.

<sup>3</sup> Tafsir Ibn Kathir.

This guidance from ‘Uthman to his son, who would be the state leader, contained the two fundamental meanings of worship:

**First**, that none should be worshiped but Allah ﷻ.

**Second**, that Allah ﷻ should be worshiped with what He commanded and legislated<sup>1</sup>.

There is no doubt that the Ottoman state was very keen in protecting these two basic principles, by opposing all acts of idolatry and polytheism within its society and institutions. The Ottoman leader and the scholars surrounding him were very keen to establish true worship of Allah ﷻ in a manner befitting Him, and in protecting the religion from any misleading foreign ideologies.

## **(2) If you face a problem in your command, then consult the opinion of the Islamic scholars**

Allah ﷻ has commanded the system of *Shurā* (consultation), having deep wisdom, great objectives and huge benefits. It is for this reason that ‘Uthman the First ordered his son to establish a council of scholars for consultation about his affairs, as commanded by Allah ﷻ:

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ<sup>ط</sup> وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانفَضُّوا  
مِّنْ حَوْلِكَ<sup>ط</sup> فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ<sup>ط</sup> وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ<sup>ط</sup> فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ  
فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ<sup>ع</sup> إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

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<sup>1</sup> *Fatawa* Collections of Ibn Taymiyah.

«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 about you; so pass over (their faults) and ask for Allah’s Forgiveness for them, and consult them in the affairs. Then when you have taken a decision put your trust in Allah, for Allah loves those who put their trust in Him.»<sup>1</sup>

Sayyid Qutb, may Allah’s Mercy be upon him, said:  
 “In this categorical text (“...and consult them in the affairs.”), Islam commends this principle in the system of ruling, and even Muhammad ﷺ, the Messenger of Allah, was to adopt it. This is a definitive text which does not leave, with the Islamic nation, any doubt that “Consultation” is a necessary principle for an Islamic system to be established. Allah ﷻ says:

وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

«Those who respond to their Lord and establish regular prayer; who (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation; who spend out of what We bestow on them for sustenance»<sup>2</sup>

Professor Abd al-Qadir ‘Awdah, may Allah’s Mercy be upon him, said:

“Consultation is one of the fundamentals of faith and one of the most distinguished attributes of Muslims. Allah ﷻ has

<sup>1</sup> *Surat al-Imran*, Verse 159.

<sup>2</sup> *Surat ash-Shura*, Verse 38.

equalled it to *Salat* and the giving of charity, when He ﷻ says: (“**Those who respond to their Lord and establish regular prayer; who (conduct) their affairs by mutual Consultation; who spend out of what We bestow on them for Sustenance.**”).

Allah ﷻ shows that their response is manifested in their establishment of *Salat*, their mutual consultation of their affairs and their spending in charity.

If *Shurā* is part of faith, then people who neglect it have not completed their faith, and are therefore, deficient in it. One must observe *Shurā* properly in order to be a good Muslim. *Shurā* is an Islamic obligation upon both the rulers and their subjects. A ruler has to consult about all the affairs of his rule and administration, policies, legislations, and everything related to the benefit of individuals, as well as to public welfare; while the subjects should voice their opinions about all matters, whether the ruler has consulted them or not.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, we may notice that *Amir* ‘Uthman had preceded many contemporary scholars and intellectuals when he considered the principle of *Shurā* as an obligation, by ordering his son to follow the opinion of the scholars, who command only what is good.

*Shurā* had greatly contributed to the building of the Ottoman state and the bond between the ruler and his subjects. It also strengthened the state’s authority of politics and *Jihad*.

The concept of *Shurā* was developed in the Ottoman state to the extent that a ruler was appointed for every region,

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<sup>1</sup> “Islam and our political conditions” p.193.

carrying the title of “*Pasha*” heading a council of consultants to discuss all the affairs of the state.

**(2) O son, I recommend that you treat the scholars of the *Ummah* well, and honour them**

‘Uthman had a strong relationship with eminent scholars and righteous figures during his reign. He often sat for hours in their gatherings to receive their advice, learn from their vast knowledge and consult them about the affairs of the state. He used to attend the gathering of the Mawla Sheikh “Iddeh Bali”, and also married his daughter, following a vision that he once had: One day he spent the night at the Sheikh’s home and he dreamt seeing a moon coming out from the Sheikh’s body and entering into his own chest. Then a great tree grew and its branches covered the sky. Underneath the tree, there were great mountains with rivers flowing outward, and the people benefited from the trees, both for themselves and their animals. When he reported his vision to the Sheikh, the latter said: “Glad tidings for you, as you have gained the status of the Sultan; the Muslims will benefit from you and your children, and I will marry you to my daughter.” Some writers have attempted to consider this vision as a myth and not a reality, despite it being mentioned in a substantive book, titled: “*Shaqa’iq Nu’maniya fi Dawla al-‘Uthmaniya*”; which has given us important references about the scholars of the Ottoman state over long periods of time.

This vision does not oppose the intellect nor the written texts. ‘Uthman the First, may Allah’s Mercy be upon him, was a very pious man, who possessed good vision together with respect for and love of people. Allah ﷻ says:

أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾  
 الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾ لَهُمُ الْبُشْرَىٰ فِي الْحَيَاةِ  
 الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ ۗ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ  
 الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٦٤﴾

**﴿No doubt! Verily, the Auliya' of Allah, no fear shall come upon them nor shall they grieve; those who believed, and used to fear Allah much (by abstaining from evil deeds and sins and by doing righteous deeds). For them are glad tidings, in the life of the present world (i.e. righteous dream seen by the person himself or shown to others), and in the Hereafter. No change can there be in the Words of Allah, this is indeed the supreme success.﴾<sup>1</sup>**

The glad tidings in this world is what Allah ﷻ has given to the pious believers, as expressed in many Verses in the Qur'an. The Prophet ﷺ also said:  
 "Good insight is from Allah ﷻ"<sup>2</sup>

"Good insight is one of the forty sixth parts of Prophethood."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Surat Yunus*, Verses 62-64.

<sup>2</sup> *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, the book of Vision, chapter of the vision of the pious (8/88 – No. 6986).

<sup>3</sup> *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, the book of Vision, chapter of the glad tidings (8/89 – No. 6990).

Abu Dhar رضي الله عنه said: “I asked the Prophet ﷺ: ‘A man does a good deed (for the Sake of Allah) and people praise him,’ so he ﷺ replied: “This is glad tidings for a believer.”<sup>1</sup>

‘Uthman the First, may Allah’s Mercy be upon him, was granted by Allah ﷻ to receive the love of all Muslims, for his *Jihad*, piety and righteousness.

The testament of ‘Uthman to his son became a system that was followed by the rulers of the Ottoman state, which proves that the Ottomans observed the *Shari‘ah* of Allah ﷻ, because the *Shari‘ah* gives status to scholars, based upon the following:

- Obeying the scholars is regarded as obedience to Allah ﷻ and His Messenger; so it is an obligation to adhere to their commands.
- Obeying them is not intended to be exclusive, but follows [this on from] the obedience to Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ.

There is plenty of proof regarding the great status of the scholars in the *Shari‘ah*:

**First;** Allah ﷻ says:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءٰمَنُوْا اطِيعُوْا اللّٰهَ وَاَطِيعُوْا الرَّسُوْلَ وَاُوْلِي الْاَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ

... 

**﴿O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Apostle and those charged with authority amongst you...﴾<sup>2</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> *Sahih Al-Muslim*, the book of Vision, chapter (4/2034).

<sup>2</sup> *Surat an-Nisa'*, Verse 59.

Ibn ‘Abbas ؓ said: “Those who are charged with authority amongst you are the people with Islamic knowledge; people who obey Allah ﷻ and teach others the meaning of their religion; they command them to do good and forbid them from doing evil; therefore Allah ﷻ has commanded us to obey them.”<sup>1</sup>

Leaders should be obeyed if what they command is supported with Islamic knowledge; their obedience is in accordance to the obedience of scholars. Obedience takes place in that which is good and recommended by Islamic knowledge. Just as obeying the scholars is in observance to obeying the Prophet ﷺ, obeying the leaders should be in accordance to obeying the scholars. Since Islam was established by these two factions: the scholars and the leaders, the common people who are their followers, then the (level of) goodness in the world depends on the (level of) righteousness of these two, and its corruption is due to their corruption.<sup>2</sup>

**Second;** Allah ﷻ commanded that we should turn to them and ask them about any difficult matter; He ﷻ says:

... فَسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧﴾

﴿...Ask the people of the Reminder if you do not know﴾<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Tafsir at-Tabari* (5/149).

<sup>2</sup> *‘Ilam al-Muwaqqi’in* (1/10), edited by Abd Ra’uf Sa’d.

<sup>3</sup> *Surat al-Anbiya*, Verse 7.

In this Verse, respect is to be shown to people of knowledge, and the highest type of knowledge is that of Revelation. Allah ﷻ has commanded everyone who is without knowledge to consult the scholars in all their affairs.

During the reign of the Ottoman state, the scholars were consulted by all the Sultans during trials and tribulations; they possessed a great ability to gather people together under the banner of *Jihad* for the Sake of Allah ﷻ, and to establish the system of *Shari'ah* for governing people's lives. They never allowed the Sultans to transgress beyond the Laws of the *Shari'ah*. The commands of the scholars were derived from the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*:

**First**, the Qur'an:

Allah ﷻ says:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِمَا أَرَاكَ اللَّهُ ...<sup>ع</sup>



«We reveal to you the Scripture with the Truth; that you may judge between mankind by that which Allah has shown you»<sup>1</sup>

The Qur'an is the first source which comprises of all the commandments and legal judgments that are related to the affairs of people's lives. It comprises of many essential principles and definitive laws to reform all aspects of life. The Qur'an also notifies the Muslims of the fundamentals required in order to establish an Islamic state.

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat an-Nisa'*, Verse 105.

**Second**, the pure *Sunnah*:

The *Sunnah* is the second source, from which the scholars obtain their judgments. It is through the *Sunnah* that they come to understand the practical implementation of the laws mentioned in the Qur'an, as exemplified in the leadership of the Prophet ﷺ over his *Ummah*. It is through the *Sunnah* that we discover the perfect society that is expected under Islam.

**Third**, the overall agreement (*ijma*) of the *Ummah*:

Especially the agreement of the Companions, headed by the first four Caliphs. Allah ﷻ says:

وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ  
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهِ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصَلِّهِ ۖ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴿١١٥﴾

﴿And whoever opposes the Messenger after the Guidance (of Allah) has been manifested to him, and follows other than the way of the believer's, We shall keep him in the path he has chosen, and burn him in Hell – and what an evil destination (that is).﴾<sup>1</sup>

**Fourth**, the opinions (*ijtihad*) of the scholars:

Allah ﷻ says:

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat an-Nisa*, Verse 115.

وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِّنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوْ الْخَوْفِ أَدَّعَوْا بِهٖ ۗ وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى  
 الرَّسُولِ وَإِلَىٰ أُولَى الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَنبِطُونَهُ مِنْهُمْ ۗ

... 

«When there comes to them some matter touching (public) safety or fear, they make it known (among the people), if only they had referred it to the Messenger or to those charged with authority among them, the proper investigators would have understood it from them (directly)...»<sup>1</sup>

This Verse gives proof for the scholars to apply their interpretations when a clear-cut text is not available; for the scholars within the *Ummah* of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ are the inheritors of the Prophets (as in the Prophet’s Hadith); they are assigned to derive judgments in particular issues of jurisprudence – not because they are infallible, as there is no priesthood in Islam – but because they deserve to be called the “People of the Reminder”, and Allah ﷻ says:

... فَسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ 

«...So ask the people of the Reminder if you do not know»<sup>2</sup>

The scholars of the Ottoman state used to establish their political system upon the faith of *Tawheed* (the belief in the Oneness of Allah ﷻ and rule by His Laws). Their economic

<sup>1</sup> Surat an-Nisa’, Verse 83.

<sup>2</sup> Surat an-Nahl, Verse 43.

system was based on transactions with gold and silver free of usury (interest based transactions), exploitation or unlawful operations that are prohibited by Allah ﷻ. Their social and ethical system was based on the ethics of Islam, and their international relations followed the standard of the 'Aqeedah of Islam, as commanded by Allah ﷻ in the following Verse:

لَا يَنْهَىٰكُمْ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾ إِنَّمَا يَنْهَىٰكُمْ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ قَاتَلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَأَخْرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ وَظَلَمُوا عَلَيْكُمْ إِخْرَاجَكُمْ أَنْ تَوَلَّوهُمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

«Allah does not forbid you, with regard to those who do not fight you for (your) faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them; for Allah loves those who are just. Allah only forbids you, with regard to those who fight you for (your) faith and drive you out of your homes and support (others) in driving you out, from turning to them (in friendship and for protection). Whoever would befriend them, then, such are the wrongdoers»<sup>1</sup>

(4) You should know my son that the spreading of Islam, the guidance of people to it, and the protection of the

<sup>1</sup> Surat al-Mumtahanah, Verses 8-9.

**lives of Muslims and their properties, is a trust around your neck, which Allah ﷻ will ask you about.**

‘Uthman the First, may Allah’s Mercy be upon him, understood that the religion of Islam is a religion of a continuous *Da‘wah* (calling to or propagation), which does not stop until the termination of human life on this earth, and that among the objectives of the Islamic state is to support and advance this *Da‘wah* until the light and message of Islam reaches every person, just as the Prophet ﷺ used to do, following Allah’s Command:

﴿ يَتَأْتِيَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ <sup>ط</sup> وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا  
بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ <sup>ع</sup> وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ <sup>ط</sup> إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ

الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

**﴿O Messenger! Make known that which has been revealed to you from thy Lord, for if you do not do it, you will not have conveyed His Message. Allah will protect you from mankind. Allah does not guide the disbelieving folk﴾<sup>1</sup>**

The Prophet ﷺ implemented Allah’s Command and sent messengers to all the kings and leaders on earth; he ﷺ sent letters to the Roman emperor, but he was told that they would only read sealed letters; so he ﷺ had a silver seal made to stamp the letters he despatched to the Romans, the Persians, the Ethiopians, the Egyptians, and the leaders in

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat al-Ma'idah*, Verse 67.

Balqa' and al-Yamamah, all within one day. He ﷺ also sent letters to the leaders of 'Amman, Bahrain, Yemen, etc.<sup>1</sup>

'Uthman followed the example of the Prophet ﷺ in his call to Islam, and so did all his sons after him. A *Da'wah* group emerged within the state which all the leaders and Sultans supported both financially and intellectually.

The Ottomans state, and population at large adopted many ways in helping Christians to embrace Islam. They used to celebrate in the mosques with all those who accepted Islam, assisting them with everything that they might have needed in life.

Since the Ottomans were so keen to adhere to their religion, and were very humble towards others, many Christians converted to Islam.

They used to treat all Christian detainees kindly, releasing whoever was sincere and faithful, without any obligation to change their faith. They looked after elderly Christians well, which was another incentive for many Christians to embrace Islam.

Many Ottomans married Christian women, who were consequently prohibited by the church from entering churches, so they followed the way of their husbands.

Many of the Christians who embraced Islam called their families to follow the great and tolerant religion of Islam,

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<sup>1</sup> From "*Zad al-Ma'ad*" (1/199-124)

after they had witnessed its harmony with human nature and the way it addresses the intellect and revives the heart.

The Ottoman state transferred many Muslim villages to Christian areas and moved many Christians to Muslim regions, which helped to spread Islam steadily.

Sultan Murad adopted the policy of releasing any Christian detainees who embraced Islam, a policy which helped to increase the number of Muslims.

The spread of Islam in the Balkan region was supported, on one hand, by the harsh conduct of local feudal lords, who imposed higher taxes on people, and on the other hand by senior church leaders who sold the secrets of the religious institution and its duties. The priests opted for a solid relationship with the Ottoman regime, many of whom embraced Islam.

The Sultans used to offer many gifts to Christian leaders who chose to embrace Islam, many of whom proved to be very loyal to the Ottoman state.

‘Uthman the First, may Allah’s Mercy be upon him, had shown that the protection of Muslim lives and properties was a trust given to the Muslim leader, which was a religious obligation, just as enjoining good and forbidding evil, implementing the Laws of Punishment, calling people to high moral standards, and teaching the Muslim community the matters of its religion. All this has to be executed under the supervision of a Muslim ruler.

This resulted in many benefits, for both the ruler and his subjects:

- 1- The establishment of *Shari'ah*, and the safeguarding of the faith in order that the Word of Allah ﷻ should remain the highest. Allah ﷻ says:

... وَلَوْلَا دَفَعُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ هُدَمَتْ صَوَامِعُ وَبِيَعٌ  
وَصَلَوَاتٌ وَمَسْجِدٌ يُذَكَّرُ فِيهَا اسْمُ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا ... ﴿٤٠﴾

«...For had it not been for Allah's repelling some men by means of others, cloisters and churches and oratories and mosques, wherein the Name of Allah is oft mentioned, would assuredly have been pulled down...»<sup>1</sup>

It is necessary for man to follow commandments, prohibitions, and guidance to righteousness; because whoever does not command and encourage good deeds, would end up commanding evil deeds or inciting it.

- 2- The lifting of general punishments, Allah ﷻ says:

وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِّنْ مُّصِيبَةٍ فِيمَا كَسَبْتُمْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَيَعْفُوا عَنْ كَثِيرٍ



« Whatever misfortune strikes you, it is what your right hands have earned; and He forgives much »<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat al-Hajj*, Verse 40.

<sup>2</sup> *Surat Shura*, Verse 30.

Allah ﷻ also says regarding the misfortunes on the Day of Uhud:

... قُلْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِكُمْ ... ﴿١١٥﴾

«Say: it is from yourselves»<sup>1</sup>

Disbelief and all kinds of sins cause misfortunes and calamities. Allah ﷻ says:

فَلَوْلَا كَانَ مِنَ الْقُرُونِ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ أُولُوا بَقِيَّةَ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْفَسَادِ  
فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِمَّنْ أَجَيْنَا مِنْهُمْ ۗ وَاتَّبَعَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مَا  
أُتْرِفُوا فِيهِ وَكَانُوا مُجْرِمِينَ ﴿١١٦﴾

«If only there had been, among the generations before you, men possessing a remnant of good sense to warn their people from corruption in the earth, as did a few of those whom We saved from them! The wrong-doers followed that by which they were made sapless, and were guilty»<sup>2</sup>

He ﷻ also says:

وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ لِيُهْلِكَ الْقُرَىٰ بِظُلْمٍ وَأَهْلِهَا مُصْلِحُونَ ﴿١١٧﴾

<sup>1</sup> Surat al- 'Imran, Verse 165.

<sup>2</sup> Surat Hud, Verse 116.

﴿ In truth, your Lord does not destroy the townships tyrannously while their folk were doing right.﴾<sup>1</sup> (This explains one of the ordinances of Allah ﷻ, regarding nations; when a nation, which is suffering from injustice and corruption, has someone to fight such transgression there, Allah ﷻ does not send His Punishment on it.)<sup>2</sup>

3- The Attraction of Allah’s Mercy to a nation; He ﷻ says:

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ ... ﴿٧﴾

﴿Your Lord proclaimed: If you give thanks, I will give you more...﴾<sup>3</sup>

4- The Islamic nation should achieve the characteristic of goodness, as is described in the Verse:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ ... ﴿١١٠﴾

﴿You are the best community that has been raised up for mankind. You enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency, and you believe in Allah...﴾<sup>4</sup>

5- Avoiding the attributes of the hypocrites. Allah ﷻ says:

<sup>1</sup> *Surat Hud*, Verse 117.

<sup>2</sup> “In the Shades of the Qur’an” (4/1933).

<sup>3</sup> *Surat Ibrahim*, Verse 7.

<sup>4</sup> *Surat al-Imran*, Verse 110.

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ  
وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ... ﴿٧١﴾

« The believers, (both) men and women, are protecting friends one of another; they enjoin right and forbid wrong... »<sup>1</sup>

**(5) O son, honour those around you and be generous to your army.**

In order to perform its duty to guide people to righteousness, the Islamic nation should be good itself; it is the witness over other nations, because it is a middle nation. Allah ﷻ says:

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ  
الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا... ﴿١٢٦﴾

« Thus We have appointed you a middle nation, that you may be witnesses against mankind, and that the messenger may be a witness against you... »<sup>2</sup>

There are mutual rights between the ruler and his subjects, rights which were stated in the testament of ‘Uthman to his son. The Ottomans ensured the establishment of these rights.

***Among the rights of the rulers towards their subjects are:***

<sup>1</sup> Surat at-Tawbah, Verse 71.

<sup>2</sup> Surat al-Baqarah, Verse 143.

1. The Preserving the pure faith of the *Ummah*.
2. Making all efforts to unify the *Ummah*.
3. Protecting the *Ummah* from its enemies.
4. Protecting the properties of people from corruptors and outlaws.
5. Preparing the *Ummah* concerning *Jihad*.
6. Preserving whatever is dictated by *Shari'ah*.
7. Collecting charity, *Zakat* money and alms, and distributing it lawfully.
8. Selecting trustworthy people for positions of responsibility.
9. Granting subjects their rights from the *Bait-al-Mal* (Ministry of Finance), but without extravagance and in due time.
10. Directly supervising the affairs of the population in any administration that is related to public welfare.

***Some of the rights of the subjects towards their rulers:***

1. Obedience: Allah ﷻ says:

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ...



**﴿O you who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority...﴾<sup>1</sup>**

The Ottoman society observed total obedience to its rulers, as long as they were committed to the *Shari'ah*, because they knew that obedience to the rulers was restricted to the latter's


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<sup>1</sup> *Surat an-Nisa'*, Verse 59.

obedience to Allah ﷻ and His Messenger; as the Prophet ﷺ said: **“Obey him in so far as he is obedient to Allah; and disobey him in matters involving disobedience to Allah.”**<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Support:

The Ottoman society always gathered around their legal rulers and answered their call to *Jihad* for the Sake of Allah ﷻ. The Ottomans regarded their support of their leaders as an act of worship to Allah ﷻ, Who says:

... وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ ... 

**﴿...And help one another to righteousness and pious duty﴾**<sup>2</sup>.

Their concept of support of their leaders meant that they should show them the utmost respect to them. This concept necessitates that respect and honour should be shown towards the leader, as the Prophet ﷺ has said:

**“Glorifying Allah involves showing honour to a grey-haired Muslim and to one who can expound the Qur’an – but not to one who acts extravagantly regarding it, or turns away from it – and showing honour to a just ruler.”**<sup>3</sup>

## 3. Sincere advice:

The Ottoman society used to provide sincere advice to its rulers, in accordance to the Hadith of the Prophet ﷺ, in which he said: **“Religion is sincerity (three times)”** the

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<sup>1</sup> *Sahih Muslim*, the book of *al-Imarah* (Leadership) (3/1480 – 1852)

<sup>2</sup> *Surat al-Ma'idah*, Verse 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Abu Dawud*, the book of *Adab*, (4822).

**Companions said: “To whom, O Messenger of Allah?” he ﷺ replied: “To Allah ﷻ, His Book, His Messenger, and to the leaders of the Muslims and the masses.”<sup>1</sup>**

#### 4. Reform:

The Ottoman society understood that the continuous rightness of the *Ummah* depended on the righteousness of its leadership. The righteous scholars took many glorious stands in reforming and rightly guiding the rulers, for example, Sheikh ‘Ala’ Eddin Ali bin Ahmad al-Jamali, who died in 932 A.H.

#### **(6) Do not be deceived by Satan concerning your army and your wealth.**

This meaning may be perceived by a person who understands the Qur’an and is affected by it, the one who ponders over the lives of the Prophets and Messengers, because one would then know that any success would come from Allah ﷻ, and not from one’s army nor wealth. This was the stance of Prophet Yusuf عليه السلام; Allah ﷻ says:

﴿ رَبِّ قَدْ ءَاتَيْتَنِي مِنَ الْمَلِكِ وَعَلَّمْتَنِي مِنْ تَأْوِيلِ الْأَحَادِيثِ فَاطِرَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَنْتَ وَلِيِّ فِى الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۗ تَوَفَّنِي مُسْلِمًا وَأَلْحَقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ ﴾

**﴿O my Lord! You have indeed bestowed on me some power and taught me something of the interpretation of dreams and events, O You, Creator of the heavens and**


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<sup>1</sup> *Sahih Muslim*, the book of *al-Iman* (1/74 – 55).

**the earth! You are my Protector in this world and in the Hereafter. Take my soul (at death) as one submitting to Your Will (as a Muslim) and unite me with the righteous﴾<sup>1</sup>**

Regarding the above Verse, Ibn al-Qayyim said: “This supplication has combined the confirmation of the Oneness of Allah ﷻ, the submission to Him, the need for Him, and the allegiance to Him Alone.”

When Dhu-l-Qarnain (the righteous man mentioned in *Surat al-Kahf*) finished the construction of the great dam for the oppressed people, despite having an army, money and authority over nations, he humbly said:

قَالَ هَذَا رَحْمَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّي ... 

﴿This is a mercy from my Lord...﴾<sup>2</sup> ; it is a beautiful and blessed expression, which has many connotations:

Sayyid Qutb said: “Dhu-l-Qarnain looked at his great work, and did not feel pride or arrogance; he was not excited by his power and knowledge. But rather, he remembered Allah ﷻ and thanked Him, and referred all such good work to Him ﷻ.”

One of the greatest methods of remembrance of Allah ﷻ is when a person remembers Allah’s Grace upon him; he reflects on the blessings of Allah ﷻ upon him, and so he humbles himself before his Lord.

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat Yusuf*, Verse 101.

<sup>2</sup> *Surat al-Kahf*, Verse 98.

Thus was the testament of ‘Uthman to his son; warning him against Satan and his evil ways.

**(7) It is with Jihad that our religion reaches all horizons, and the Pleasure of Allah is achieved.**

‘Uthman the First, may Allah’s Mercy be upon him, believed that the spread of the religion of Allah ﷻ (Islam) to the furthest horizons could be achieved through performing *Jihad* for the Sake of Allah ﷻ. The main objective of *Jihad* is to elevate the Word of Allah ﷻ, in order to worship Him Alone; i.e. with no partners besides Him. Allah ﷻ says:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾ مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ

وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ يُطْعَمُونِ ﴿٥٧﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ ﴿٥٨﴾

«I have only created Jinn and mankind that they may worship Me, (Alone); no sustenance do I require from them nor do I require that they should feed Me; for Allah is He Who gives (all) Sustenance, Lord of Power, Steadfast for ever.»<sup>1</sup>

The concept of worship dominates all aspects of life, as well as the affairs of the Hereafter, as man’s life and death are for the sake of Allah ﷻ. This is explained in the Verse:

قُلْ إِنْ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٢٧﴾

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat adh-Dhariyat*, Verses 56-58.

«Say: “Truly my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death are (all) for Allah, the Cherisher of the Worlds”»<sup>1</sup>

It was for this purpose that ‘Uthman the First, set out with his army and population, striving in the Path of Allah ﷻ, while their motto was: Allah ﷻ has sent us to guide whomsoever He ﷻ wants, from worshipping humans to worshipping Allah ﷻ, Alone; from the narrowness of this world to its spaciousness; and from the oppression of any deviated religious practices to the justice of Islam.

The only means for the Ottomans was to establish the Judgment of Allah and the System of Allah on earth was by *Jihad* for the Sake of Allah ﷻ.

When the Christian countries tried to stop the expansion of the Ottoman State by making sporadic attacks, they were faced with *Jihad*, which repelled all their repeated attacks. The Ottoman leaders followed the Words of Allah ﷻ, Who says:

وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقْتَلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ  
 الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿١٦٢﴾ وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِّنْ  
 حَيْثُ أَخْرَجُوكُم ۚ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ ... ﴿١٦١﴾

«Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress the limits; for Allah does not love transgressors, and slay them wherever you find them,

<sup>1</sup> Surat al-An'am, Verse 162.

**and turn them out from where they have turned you out; for turmoil and oppression are worse than slaughter...﴾<sup>1</sup>**

The Ottomans followed this Command, and worked on removing all obstacles which prevented people from listening to the Call of Allah ﷻ, which provided people with the most perfect concept of existence and system to develop it.

The Ottoman state performed *Jihad* for the Sake of Allah ﷻ, and managed to conquer, with Allah's Help, many lands, where Islam still remains the faith of the people, such as in the Balkans. It also helped protect the populations in North Africa from the wicked attacks of the Christians, ensuring the protection of this Islamic Faith.

**(8) Whoever among my offspring deviates from the path of Truth and Justice, will be deprived from the Intercession of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ on the Day of Resurrection.**

'Uthman stated clearly that he was innocent of anyone who should deviate from the path of Truth and Justice, and called on anyone who would replace him to adhere to the Truth, establishing justice among people.

Justice is the cornerstone in establishing an Islamic society and Divine Rule. There is no space in Islam for a society run by oppression and injustice. It is for this reason that Islam focuses on establishing this foundation and supports it.

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat al-Baqarah*, Verses 190-191.

There are many Verses from the Qur'an and sayings of the Prophet ﷺ which emphasize this:

﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَايَ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ ... ﴾<sup>1</sup>

«Allah commands justice and kindness and giving (help) to kith and kin...»<sup>1</sup>

﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ﴾

«Allah commands you to render back your trusts to those to whom they are due; and when you judge between people, you should judge with justice. Verily, how excellent is the teaching which He (Allah) gives you! Truly, Allah is ever Hearing and Seeing.»<sup>2</sup>

﴿ يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ ۚ إِنَّ يَكُفِّرُ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا ۗ فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا أَهْوَىٰ أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا ۚ وَإِنْ تَلَوْتُمْ أَوْ تَعْرِضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴾

<sup>1</sup> Surat an-Nahl, Verse 90.

<sup>2</sup> Surat an-Nisa', Verse 58.

﴿O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice as witnesses to Allah, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be against rich or poor; for Allah can best protect both. Do not follow the lusts of your hearts, lest you swerve, and if you distort justice or decline to do justice, verily Allah is well-acquainted with all that you do﴾<sup>1</sup>

Allah ﷻ forbids injustice and has promised destruction to oppressors in this world, and a painful punishment in the Hereafter; He ﷻ says:

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللَّهَ غَافِلًا عَمَّا يَعْمَلُ الظَّالِمُونَ ؕ ... ﴿٤٢﴾

﴿And never think that Allah is unaware of the deeds of the wrongdoers...﴾<sup>2</sup>

It was according to this Godly Guidance that ‘Uthman motivated to establish justice amongst people. He mobilised his army and used all its means for the purpose of spreading the Message of Islam, so that people could be acquainted with their Creator. He combined the great conquests of the sword with the conquests of hearts, by having sound faith and good manners. His method of dealing with people was based upon Allah’s Words:

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat an-Nisa*, Verse 135.

<sup>2</sup> *Surat Ibrahim*, Verse 42.

قَالَ أَمَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ فَسَوْفَ نُعَذِّبُهُ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ فَيُعَذِّبُهُ عَذَابًا نُكَرًا  
 وَأَمَّا مَنْ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُ جَزَاءٌ أَحْسَنُ<sup>ط</sup> وَنَسْتَقُولُ لَهُ  
 مِنْ أَمْرِنَا يُسْرًا ﴿٤٧﴾

**«He (Dhu-l-Qarnain) said: "As for him who does wrong, we shall punish him; and then he will be brought back unto his Lord; Who will punish him with a terrible torment (Hell). But as for him who believes and works righteousness, he shall have the best reward, (Paradise), and we (Dhu-l-Qarnain) shall speak unto him mild words (as instructions)."»<sup>1</sup>**

**(9) O son, we are not of those who wage wars for the pleasure of power or individual authority. We live by Islam and by Islam we die.**

This paragraph of the testament shows the nature of the Ottoman state, which distinguishes it from other states. The main objective behind its foundation was to defend Islam, to elevate its banner and destroy the Byzantium state which was a constant threat to the Muslims living in their homes. It was this meaning which gave the title of “*al-Ghaazi*” (the Invader or the *Mujahid* in the Path of Allah ﷻ) to the leader of the Ottoman state. Many Muslims answered his call for *Jihad* and joined his army of warriors, who were willing to destroy the Byzantium state and so, protect their faith.

It was this long-term testament that Ottoman’s leaders followed during their glorious reign of power.

<sup>1</sup> *Surat al-Kahf*, Verses 87-88.

‘Uthman the First left the Ottoman state with an area measuring sixteen thousand square kilometres. He managed to provide for his nascent state a channel on the Sea of Murmurah and used his army to threaten two main Byzantine cities: Azniq and Bursah.

## The Second Research

# Sultan Arukhan bin 'Uthman

(726-761 A.H. / 1327-1360 CE)

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**A**rukhan took over the reign after the death of his father 'Uthman, following his policy in his rule and conquests. In 727 A.H. / 1327 CE, he liberated the city of Nicomedia, situated in north-west Asia Minor, near the city of Constantinople (Istanbul). He founded the first Ottoman ('Uthmani) university there, and appointed Dawud al-Kaysari, an Ottoman scholar who had studied in Egypt<sup>1</sup>, as its chancellor. He focused on modernising the military, making it the organised army of the state.<sup>2</sup>

Sultan Arukhan was keen in fulfilling the good tidings of the prophecy made by the Prophet ﷺ, about the liberation of Constantinople (Istanbul). So he formulated a strategic plan intending to siege the Byzantine capital from the east and west simultaneously. In order to achieve this goal, he sent his

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<sup>1</sup> The Rise of the Ottoman State, p.29.

<sup>2</sup> The Ottomans in History and Civilisation, p.17.

son and heir, Sulaiman, to cross the Dardanelles (channel) and occupy some positions on the western shore.

In 758 A.H, Sulaiman crossed the channel at night, with forty warriors, when they reached the other side, they seized the Byzantine ships. On the eastern side, Sulaiman ordered his soldiers to sail the ships to the European shore, where they liberated the ports of Tarnab, Galipoli – where there was the Jana Fortress – Uppsala, and Rodestu, which are all situated on the Dardanelles going from south to north. This was the Sultan’s major breakthrough which served to benefit his successor in the liberation of Constantinople<sup>1</sup>.

### **First, the establishment of a new army with a religious and educational foundation.**

One of the main works related to the life of Sultan Arukhan was his formation of a well organised Islamic army. He divided his army into units of ten, a hundred, or a thousand soldiers. He assigned one fifth of the spoils of war for the expenses of the army. He made a permanent professional army, rather than one gathered only in times of war, having military training camps.

He also added a new army, called the “*al-Inkishari* army”, comprised of new Muslims, which increased in number, together with the expansion of the Ottoman state, following its great victories over its enemies. Many people in the newly liberated regions embraced Islam and joined the *Inkishari* army to help spread the Message of Islam. The new Muslims were given an Islamic military education, and then

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<sup>1</sup> The Ottoman State (p.22) by Dr. Jamal Abd ul-Hadi.

enlisted in the Ottoman army. Sultan Arukhan together with the clerics instilled a love of *Jihad* and martyrdom within the army, so their slogan was “Invader or Martyr,” when they entered the battlefield.

Most foreign historians have claimed that the *Inkishari* army was made up of young Christian men who were removed from their families and forced to accept Islam, in line with a law claimed to be called “*dafshariyah*”; claiming that this system was like an Islamic legal levy which they called “the young boys tax” or sometimes “the children’s tax”. It was a tax which they claimed allowed the Ottomans to remove one fifth of the total number of children from any Christian city or village, and that was considered as the fifth of the spoils of war, which is the portion of the *bait al-mal* (state treasury) of the Muslims. Some of the foreign historians who made these allegations and distorted the truth were Carl Brokelman, Gibons and Jupp.

The truth is that this so called “children’s tax” system was nothing but a lie that was added to the history of Arukhan bin ‘Uthman and Murad bin Arukhan, and later to that of all the Ottomans. In reality, the system showed the state’s time concern about the homeless Christian children<sup>1</sup>. Islam, which was the governing system of the Ottoman state, categorically rejects this so called “children’s tax” that was alleged by certain foreign historians.

It is sad that this serious lie, based on crusader resentment, was approved by a group of Muslim historians and then included it in their educational programme in schools and

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<sup>1</sup> Those left homeless and orphaned after the war.

universities. In fact, many Muslim historians were influenced by the writings of orientalists and so repeated those claims in their own books. They have no proof except the allegations made in the writings of the orientalists, such as Jupp, Comeauville or Brokelman, who should not be trusted because of their bad intentions towards Islam and its history.

The truth about the new army was that Arukhan created a well organised army which was ever ready, whether in times of war or peace. It was formed from horseman of his tribe and from the *Mujahideen*, who rushed to answer his call for *Jihad*, and also from the Roman army leaders and their soldiers, who would later embrace Islam. As the Sultan finished the organisation of his new army, he went to the residence of the great pious scholar, al-Hajj Baktash, and asked him to make a supplication for the army. The scholar obliged and invoked Allah's Blessings upon the army, and asked Allah ﷻ to make them victorious over all their enemies. He then turned to the Sultan and asked him: "Have you chosen a name for this army?" the Sultan replied: "Not yet." The scholar then said: "So its name should be simply '*Yani Tishri*' (the new army)". The flag of the new army was a red cloth centred by a crescent, beneath which there was a sword, which they had named '*Dhul-Faqqar*', referring to the sword of 'Ali bin Abi Talib ﷺ. This was the idea of 'Ala' Uddin bin 'Uthman, the brother of Arukhan, who was a scholar in *Shari'ah* as well as a famous ascetic.

Both Arukhan and 'Ala' Uddin agreed that the main purpose of creating the new army was to continue the *Jihad* against the Byzantines and conquer more of their lands, in order to spread the Message of Islam and liberate the Byzantine

people from tyranny. Indeed, many of them embraced Islam and received a good Islamic education, which was firmly established in their hearts.

Summary of this point:

Therefore, we confirm that the Sultan Arukhan never took Christian children away from their families nor forced them into Islam. All the claims of Brokelman, Jupp and Gibons were fabricated, which should be omitted from all the books about our Islamic history. Their knowledge, trust and Islamic brotherhood suggest that every concerned Muslim, from scholars, intellectuals, historians, teachers, researchers and media people should reject this slanderous allegation made against the Ottomans, which has become widely accepted as a definite truth, beyond any argument!

## **Second, The home and foreign policy of Arukhan.**

The invasions of Arukhan were set against the Romans, but in 736 A.H / 1336 CE, the governor of Kurah Se<sup>1</sup> died, and his sons disagreed and disputed over the issue of leadership. Arukhan exploited the moment to end their dispute, yet ended up seizing the emirate himself. It was one of the goals of the young Ottoman state to take over the Seljuk Byzantine State in Asia Minor and everything under its authority. The conflict continued with the other emirates until the days of Sultan Muhammad al-Faatih, who managed to place Asia Minor under his authority.

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<sup>1</sup> One of the emirates built after the fall of the Seljuk Roman state.

Arukhan focused on solidifying the foundations of his state. He conducted reforms, organising the affairs of the state's administration and the army's institutions. He built mosques and educational institutes, and these were run by sound scholars and teachers, who were highly respected by the state. Every village had its school, and every city had its university, where students studied language, sciences, mathematics, metaphysics, architecture, astronomy, along with memorising the Qur'an, understanding its meaning, studying the *Sunnah*, Islamic jurisprudence, and issues of faith.

Therefore, after seizing the emirate, Arukhan spent twenty years without engaging in war; instead he established the civil and military systems of his state. He strengthened home security, built mosques with endowment funds, and constructed many vast public buildings, which were proof of his great insight, wisdom and piety. He did not engage in wars for the sake of invading more lands, but rather, he was keen on strengthening his authority in the regions which he had liberated, by establishing the state's standard in all civil, military and educational matters.

It confirmed Arukhan's understanding of the gradual progress in building a state, establishing a civilisation, and reviving a nation.

When Arukhan finished organising his affairs at home, a power struggle erupted within the Byzantine state, so Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos asked for the help of Sultan Arukhan against his enemy. In response, Arukhan deployed an Ottoman force to reinforce the Ottoman authority in Europe. In 1358 CE, an earthquake struck the

cities of Trakia, which caused the walls of Galipoli to fall and so most of its residents fled; a fact which made it easy for the Ottomans to enter. The Byzantine emperor strongly protested against it; Arukhan simply replied that it was an Act of God which had opened the doors of the city for his forces.

Galipoli became the first Ottoman base in Europe, and the starting point for the first invasions, which were crowned by the seizure of the whole of the Balkan region.

When John V (the Fifth) took control of the Byzantine state, he reaffirmed the control of Arukhan over all the liberated regions in Europe, in return for the Sultan's agreement to facilitate the dispatching of provisions to Constantinople. Arukhan then sent many Muslim tribes for the purpose of *Da'wah* (call); inviting to Islam, as well as trying to prevent the Christians from expelling the Ottomans out of Europe.

**Third, some factors which helped Sultan Arukhan achieve his goals:**

(1) The periodical system followed by Sultan Arukhan and learning from the efforts of his father 'Uthman, along with the availability of material and conventional means, helped them to liberate the Byzantine regions in Anatolia. Sultan Arukhan's efforts were characterised by his firmness shown in expanding his state, however the Christian world failed to pay much attention to the spreading of the Ottoman state, until after the Ottomans had crossed the sea and taken Galipoli.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Ottoman State in Modern Islamic History, p. 22.

(2) During their military confrontations against the Balkan nations, the Ottomans were known for their unified ranks, and the objectivity of their religious (*Sunni*) school of thought.

(3) The Byzantine state reached its downfall, as its society suffered a political crisis, as well as a religious and social breakdown, all of which helped the Ottomans to gain control of the Byzantine regions.

(4) The weakness of the Christian coalition, due to a lack of trust between the ruling authorities in the Byzantine state, and their allies, such as Bulgaria, Serbia and Hungary.

(5) The religious differences between Rome and Constantinople, between the Roman Catholics and the Orthodox Christians, which left a deep impression in the minds of both two groups.

(6) The appearance of the new military system, based upon the principles of faith, with educational methods and Divine Objectives, which was supervised by the best of the Ottoman military leaders.

## The Third Research

# Sultan Murad the First

(761-791 A.H. / 1360-1389 CE)

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**M**urad I (the First) was a brave, generous and religious warrior who was very organised and showed justice towards his subjects and army. He dearly loved *Jihad*, building mosques, schools and buildings for homeless people. The best military leaders and experts were selected as a council for consultation, so he was able to expand both in Asia Minor and Europe simultaneously.

In Europe, the Ottoman army attacked the properties of the Byzantine state and seized the city of Adrianople in 762 A.H / 1360 CE, which had a strategic importance in the Balkans. It was the second most strategic city in the Byzantine Empire after Constantinople. Murad took it as the capital of the Ottoman state from 768 A.H / 1366 CE, and so the capital had been moved to Europe, with Adrianople as its Islamic capital. The objectives of Sultan Murad, regarding this move were:

(1) To develop the military strength of Adrianople as a strategic area.

(2) Sultan Murad's desire to take the European provinces of which he had reached in his *Jihad* campaign.

(3) From this new capital, Sultan Murad was able to combine all the factors of the basic rule of the state with the elements of its renaissance, re-locating many groups of government employees, administrators, military personnel, lawyers and religious scholars, who formed tribunal courts, educational institutes and built military training camps.

Adrianople continued to be the political, social, military and religious capital, until the Ottomans liberated Constantinople in 857 A.H/ 1453 CE, which became their new capital.

### **First, a crusader alliance against Murad:**

Sultan Murad continued his *Jihad* movement coupled with *Da'wah* to liberate many regions and spread Islam in Europe. His army began by liberating Macedonia, and news of his victories spread. So a crusader alliance, made up of the Balkan nations and Europeans, was formed with the blessing of the Pope, Urban V (the Fifth). The alliance included the Serbians, Bulgarians, Hungarians and population of the region of Walachia. The crusader alliance raised an army of sixty thousand soldiers, who were confronted by the Ottoman leader "LalaShahin," with an army considerably less in number, and met near the city of Chirming, on the River Maritza, where a fierce battle took place. The crusader army was defeated, and its two Serbian leaders fled, but later drowned in the River Maritza, whereas the King of Hungary, who also fled, miraculously managed to escape. Meanwhile, Sultan Murad was busy fighting other enemies in the region of Asia Minor, where he

liberated many cities, then returned to his base of authority to put in the regions which he had liberated in order, as befits a wise leader.

***The results of the Ottomans' victory on the River Mariiža:***

(1) They managed to liberate the provinces of Trakia (in Bulgaria) and Macedonia, until they reached west Bulgaria and east Serbia.

(2) The cities and properties of the Byzantine State in Bulgaria and Serbia fell easily into their hands.

***The first treaty between the Ottoman state and the Christian state:***

As the Ottoman State grew in power, its neighbours became extremely worried about their states, especially the weaker ones, so the Republic of Rajuz<sup>1</sup> took the initiative to send messengers to Sultan Murad to conclude a friendly trade treaty, in which they agreed to pay an annual tax of five hundred gold ducats; this being was the first treaty conducted between the Ottoman state and one of the Christian countries.<sup>2</sup>

**First, the Battle of Kosovo (1389 CE)**

Sultan Murad had entered the Balkan region himself with his military commanders, which angered the Serbs; so they tried many times to exploit Sultan Murad's absence in Europe, by

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<sup>1</sup> A state by the Adriatic Sea.

<sup>2</sup> The History of the Ottoman State, by D. Muhammad Farid, p.132.

attacking the Ottoman armies in the Balkans, however they failed to achieve anything. The Serbs, Bosnians and Bulgarians had prepared a large European crusader army to fight Sultan Murad who had come to Kosovo with a well organised army. It was reported that a minister of Sultan Murad, who was carrying a copy of the Qur'an with him, opened it and came across the Verse:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى الْقِتَالِ ۗ اِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ عِشْرُونَ  
صٰبِرُونَ يَغْلِبُوْا مِائَتَيْنِ ۗ وَاِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ مِّائَةٌ يَغْلِبُوْا اَلْفًا مِّنَ  
الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا بِاَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُوْنَ ﴿٦٥﴾

«O Messenger! Rouse the believers to the fight. If there are twenty amongst you patient and persevering they will vanquish two hundred: if a hundred they will vanquish a thousand of the unbelievers: for these are a people without understanding.»<sup>1</sup>

So he saw the glad tidings of victory, as did the other Muslims, which raised their morale.

### 1. The Martyrdom of the Sultan Murad:

After the victory at Kosovo, Sultan Murad went to inspect the battlefield and walked by the rows of dead Muslims, making supplications for them. He also checked over the injured, and it was at this time that a Serbian soldier, who pretended to be dead, rushed towards the Sultan, but the

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat al-Anfal*, Verse 65.

guards managed to stop him, however, he claimed that he wanted to speak to the Sultan to take his *Shahada* (declaration of faith) and embrace Islam. The Sultan signalled to his guards to release him, so the Serbian drew closer and pretended to kiss the Sultan's hand, but suddenly pulled out a poisoned knife and stabbed the Sultan, who subsequently died as a martyr on the 15<sup>th</sup> of *Shaaban*, 791 A.H.<sup>1</sup>

## **2. The Last Words of the Sultan Murad:**

“In my departure, I can only but thank Allah ﷻ, the Knower of the Unseen, the Acceptor of the supplication of the poor. I testify that there is no god but Allah ﷻ. None deserves to be thanked or praised but Him. My life nears its end and I have seen the victory of the warriors of Islam. Obey my son, Yazeed; do not torture the prisoners, do not harm them, and do not rob them. I bid you farewell, from this moment, and I bid farewell to our great victorious army, (leaving you all) to the Mercy of Allah ﷻ, for He ﷻ is the One Who safeguards our state from any harm.”

The Sultan was martyred at the age of sixty five.

## **3. The Supplication of Sultan Murad before the Start of the Battle of Kosovo:**

Sultan Murad knew that he was fighting for the Sake of Allah ﷻ, and that victory comes from Allah ﷻ. It was for this reason that he constantly supplicated to Allah ﷻ, invoking His Blessings as he relied on Him, Alone. In his

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<sup>1</sup> The History of the Ottoman Sultans, by al-Qurman, p. 16.

submissive supplication, we learn about Sultan's Murad's knowledge and devout worship of his Lord. He invoked his Lord, saying:

“O Allah, O Merciful One, O Lord of the Heavens, You accept supplications, so do not disgrace me, O Merciful One; accept the supplication of Your poor servant this time; send rain pouring down and disperse the clouds of darkness so that we may see our enemy, as we are but Your sinful servants. You are the Giver and we are the poor. I am but Your poor submissive servant. You are the All-Knower of the Unseen and secrets kept in hearts; I am not seeking my own benefit; I only seek Your Pleasure. I give my life for Your Religion, so accept my wish and do not allow the Muslims to be disgraced before their enemies. O Allah, the All Merciful, do not make me the cause of their death, rather make them victorious...<sup>1</sup>

In another narration, he said:

“O Allah, I swear by Your Honour and Majesty that I do not seek a long lasting life in performing my *Jihad*; I rather seek Your Pleasure, and nothing but Your Pleasure. So please honour me with a dignified death, for Your Sake.

“O Allah, my Master, accept my supplication and submission to You. Send down Your Mercy upon us.

O My Lord and Master, all Sovereignty and Might are Yours; You grant it to whomsoever You want among Your servants. I am but Your weak and poor servant; You know both my inner and outer feelings. I swear by Your Might and

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<sup>1</sup> The Islamic Conquests through the time, p. 390.

Honour that I do not seek the benefits of this lasting world, but I only seek Your Pleasure, nothing but Your Pleasure.

“O My God and Master, You have dignified me by guiding me to the path of *Jihad* for Your Sake, so magnify my honour by granting me a death for Your Sake.”

This submissive supplication is proof of Sultan Murad’s knowledge of Allah ﷻ; that he had met and understood the conditions of the words of *Tawheed*, “*la ilaha illa Allah*” (there is no god but Allah); he knew its meaning well and followed Allah’s Command:

﴿فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ...﴾

«Therefore you should know that there is no god but Allah...»<sup>1</sup>

It is a matter of knowledge and affirmation, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَلَا يَمْلِكُ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ الشَّفَعَةَ إِلَّا مَنْ شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ

وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

«And those whom they invoke instead of Him have no power of intercession; except those who bear witness to the Truth, and they know.»<sup>2</sup>

It is a matter of absolute certainty, where there is no room for any doubt, as Allah ﷻ describes the believers:

<sup>1</sup> Surat Muhammad, Verse 19.

<sup>2</sup> Surat az-Zukhruf, Verse 86.

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا وَجَاهَدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

«The only true Believers are those who have believed in Allah and His Messenger, and have never since then doubted, but have striven with their belongings and their persons in the Cause of Allah; such are the sincere ones.»<sup>1</sup>

Sultan Murad accepted the word of *Tawheed* with his heart and tongue, and obeyed Allah's Commands and Prohibitions, in response to Allah's Words:

﴿ وَمَنْ يُسَلِّمْ وَجْهَهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ

الْوُثْقَىٰ ... ﴾

«Whoever submits his whole self to Allah and is a doer of good has grasped indeed the most trustworthy handhold»<sup>2</sup>

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا

يَجِدُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا ﴿٢٢﴾

«But no, by your Lord, they can have no (real) Faith, until they make you (O Muhammad) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance

<sup>1</sup> Surat al-Hujurat, Verse 15.

<sup>2</sup> Surat Luqman, Verse 22.

against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission.)<sup>1</sup>

He was sincere with his Lord, as the faithful people mentioned by Allah ﷻ:

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ ... ﴿٥٠﴾

﴿They have been commanded no more than this: to worship Allah, offering Him sincere devotion and being true (in faith)...﴾<sup>2</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Whoever possesses the following three qualities will have the sweetness of faith:

- (1) The one to whom Allah and His Messenger become dearer than anything else;
- (2) Who (when he) loves a person, he loves him only for Allah’s Sake;
- (3) Who hates to revert to atheism (disbelief) as he hates to be thrown into the Fire.”<sup>3</sup>

Sultan Murad perceived the true concept of faith and *Tawheed*, experiencing its effects in his life. It helped him develop power and dignity in himself, as he was certain that, ultimately, help comes from Allah ﷻ Alone, Who is the

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat an-Nisa*, Verse 65.

<sup>2</sup> *Surat al-Bayyinah*, Verse 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, the Book of *Iman*, chapter: Sweetness of Faith (1/11 – No. 16)

giver of life and death, and the Owner of Authority and Sovereignty. Therefore, he had no fear except of Allah ﷻ, Alone. His faith in Allah ﷻ gave him much power and determination to be steadfast in pleasing Allah ﷻ, in all his actions, where he sacrificed what was dear to him for the Sake of Allah ﷻ.

Sultan Murad experienced the truth of faith, and therefore moved in the way of *Jihad*, spending everything that he owned for the sake of spreading the Message of Islam.

Sultan Murad's reign lasted thirty years, and was characterised by wisdom and skilfulness, unparalleled by anyone in his time. The Byzantine historian Halko Nadilas said of Murad I (the First): "Sultan Murad undertook many significant activities; he engaged in 37 battles, both in Anatolia and in the Balkans, and was victorious in all of them. He treated all his subjects well, regardless of their religion or race."

The French Historian Crinard said: "Murad was one of the greatest leaders from the 'Uthman family. If we evaluate him personally, we find him to be of a higher status than all the European leaders of his time."<sup>1</sup>

The results that followed the Muslim's victory in the battle of Kosovo were:

- (1) The spread of Islam in the Balkan region, where many nations willingly embraced Islam.
- (2) Many European countries started to comply with the terms of the Ottoman state; some of them began to pay the

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<sup>1</sup> "The Ottomans in History and Civilisation" p. 19.

*Jizya* tax, while others declared their allegiance to the Ottomans, as a means of avoiding their displeasure.

(3) The Ottoman authority extended its rule over Hungary, Romania and the Adriatic region, until Albania.



## The Fourth Research

# Sultan Bayazid the First

(751-805 A.H. / 1349-1402 CE)

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**A**fter the martyrdom of Sultan Murad, his son Bayazid took control. He was a brave and noble leader, eager to continue making Islamic conquests (as his father did), focusing deeply on the military affairs. He targeted the Christian emirates in Anatolia, which were to come under Ottoman rule about a year after his succession. Bayazid used to travel so quickly between Anatolia and the Balkans, and so was nicknamed “The lightning”.

### **First: His policy with the Serbs:**

Bayazid forged a friendly relationship with the Serbs, despite their major influence in forming the Balkan alliance against the Ottoman state. Bayazid’s intention was to have an ally in his active military policy, which targeted the Seljuk Turkish emirates in Asia Minor. Therefore, Bayazid agreed that the Serbs should be ruled by the two sons of King Lazar, who was killed in the Battle of Kosovo, and so he commanded them to rule Serbia with its customary laws, but in return for

a pledge of allegiance to him, a tax to be paid to him, as well as dispatching an army of soldiers to support his army during his military campaigns. He also was to marry the daughter of the late King Lazar.

### **Second: The Submission of Bulgaria to the Ottoman Authority:**

Following the Serbian Agreement, Bayazid launched a brief strike on Bulgaria in 797 A.H / 1393 CE, seizing it. The fall of Bulgaria to Ottoman rule had a huge effect in Europe, as fear spread to all countries. So then the Christian crusader forces resolved to try to end Ottoman rule of the Balkans.

### **Third: The International Crusader Alliance against the Ottoman State:**

Sigismund, the king of Hungary, and Pope Boniface the Ninth, made an urgent call to form a European Crusader alliance against the Ottoman state, which was the greatest of all alliances that the Ottoman state had to face in the fourteenth century, in terms of the number of countries involved. That crusader army reached a total of 120,000 fighters, from many different countries: Germany, France, England, Scotland, Switzerland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and some of the Italian principalities.”<sup>1</sup>

By 800 A.H / 1396 CE the campaign had reached Hungary, however its chiefs and leaders disagreed with Sigismund before the battle commenced. Sigismund wanted to wait until the Ottomans attacked first, but the military leaders

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<sup>1</sup> The Ottoman State in the History of Contemporary Islam, p.41.

decided to attack first, and so they advanced to the River Danube, until they reached Nikopolis, south of the Balkans and surrounded it. At the beginning, they seemed to be overcome, until Bayazid appeared unexpectedly with an army of around a hundred thousand soldiers, nearly as many as the Crusader army, yet better equipped and organised. Most of the Christians were defeated, as many of their leaders were either killed or captured. The Ottomans ended the battle with plenty of booty, including much of the enemy's military equipment. In the ensuing celebrations, Sultan Bayazid said that he would conquer and liberate Italy and feed his horse with wheat by the altar of Saint Paul's in Rome."<sup>1</sup>

Many of the French nobles were captured at this battle. The Sultan accepted the *Fidyah* (ransom) and released many of the detainees, including Count di Nefre, who vowed that he would never return to fight against the Ottoman Sultan again after his release, but the Sultan said to him: "I allow you to break your vow, in case you want to return to fight against me, as there is nothing more beloved to me than fighting all the Christians in Europe and defeating them."<sup>2</sup>

As for Sigismund (King of Germany and Byzantine Emperor), who was very proud of his army and once proclaimed arrogantly: "If the sky happens to fall on us, we will hold it with our lances", he fled from the battlefield with the Knights of Rhodes. They reached the black sea and found the Christian frigates, so they boarded one of those boats to escape, defeated and humiliated.

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<sup>1</sup> Muhammad al-Faatih, by Salim al-Rashidi, p.33.

<sup>2</sup> The History of the Ottoman State, by Muhammad Farid Bik, p.144.

As a consequence, the status of Hungary was severely weakened in the sight of the Europeans following the defeat in the battle of Nicopolis.

That overwhelming victory had a positive effect on Bayazid and the Islamic society. Bayazid sent letters to the Muslim leaders in East, giving the glad tidings of their great victory over the Christians. Together with the letters he sent some of the Christian detainees as proof of his victory. Then he adopted the name “the Sultan of the Romans,” with respect to his control of all the region of Anatolia, and also sent a letter to the Abbasid Caliph in Cairo, asking for his acceptance of that title, so that his authority would attain official legality and a prestigious status in the Islamic world. Sultan Barquq Hami, the Abbasid Caliph accepted the request of Bayazid, being his only ally against the threatening forces of Timorlink. As a result, thousands of Muslims immigrated to Anatolia to serve the Ottoman state, many of whom were soldiers, who contributed greatly to the economic and cultural life in Iran and Iraq, and countries beyond the Rivers Tigris and Euphrates.

#### **Fourth: The Siege of Constantinople:**

Before the battle of Nicopolis, Bayazid managed to exert much pressure on the Byzantine Empire; he demanded the Emperor should appoint a Muslim judge in Constantinople, to determine the affairs of Muslims, following a siege of the city. The Emperor obliged and created an Islamic court; a mosque was built and around 700 houses were assigned to Muslims. The Emperor surrendered half of the Borough of Gallatin, where strong Ottoman forces of 60,000 soldiers were assigned to enforce the payment of the tax imposed on

the Byzantine state. Others taxes were imposed on harvests and all other produce. Before long the *Adhan* (Call to Prayer) was being announced from the minarets within the Byzantine capital.

After achieving their great victory in the battle of Nicopolis, the Ottomans firmly established their control of the Balkan region. They were feared by all the nations; Bosnia and Bulgaria submitted to the Ottoman rule, and the Ottoman soldiers continued to pursue the fleeing Christian armies. Bayazid punished the leaders of al-Mura who had given military support to the Crusader Alliance. He also decided to punish the Byzantine Emperor for his hostile stand during the war against the Crusader Alliance, so he demanded that he should surrender the city of Constantinople. Emperor Manuel sought the help of the whole of Europe, but in vain. In truth, the capture of the city of Constantinople was the main target in the *Jihad* campaign of Sultan Bayazid I (the First). He led a powerful army and imposed a complete siege of the city. As the whole of Europe awaited the fall of the Byzantine capital, at any moment, the Sultan was obliged to turn away from the liberation of Constantinople, due to the emergence of another danger threatening the Ottoman state.

### **Fifth: The Clash between Timorlink and Bayazid:**

Timorlink belonged to the noble families in the lands beyond the river. In 1369, he was appointed as King of Khurasan in his base Samarkand. He managed to expand his empire with his fearless army and controlled much of the Islamic world. His huge armies spread all over Asia from Delhi to Damascus, and from the Ural Sea to the Arabian Gulf. He conquered Fars (Persia), Armenia, the highlands of the two

rivers, the areas between the Caspian and Black Sea. In Russia, he seized the areas extending between the rivers: Volga, Dun and Denair. He declared that he would take control of all inhabited lands and make it his own property, because – he said: “There should exist no master except one master on earth, since there is no god but one in the heavens.”<sup>1</sup>

Timorlink was described as a brave leader, with military expertise and political skills. Before deciding a matter, he used to gather information by despatching his agents and spies. He never rushed when taking any of his decisions, and was fully respected to the extent that his soldiers would carry out any of his commands.

As a Muslim, Timorlink used to take care of the scholars, especially the followers of the Naqshabandi sect.

### **Some reasons which contributed in the conflict between Bayazid and Timorlink:**

(1) Those leaders of Iraq who had lost their countries to Timorlink sought the help of Bayazid; while the leaders of Asia Minor sought the help of Timorlink. Both sides incited the sought authority to wage a war against the other side.

(2) The Christians urged Timorlink to attack and destroy Bayazid.

(3) There was an exchange of heated letters between the two sides

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<sup>1</sup> In the Basics of the Ottoman History, p. 56.

## **Sixth: The downfall of the Ottoman State:**

Timorlink advanced with his army and seized Siwas; he destroyed the defending force of the city which was led by Artaghul, son of Bayazid. The two armies met near Ankara in 804 A.H / 1402 CE. Bayazid's forces numbered 120,000 to face the huge army led by Timorlink. The Moguls won the battle and Bayazid was captured and remained detained until his death the following year.

Bayazid's defeat was due to his rashness as he did not choose a suitable place to camp with his army of no more than 120,000 warriors; whereas Timorlink brought with him more than 800,000 fighters. Many of Bayazid's soldiers died of thirst due to the summer drought. Before the commencement of the battle, many of the Tatar soldiers who were in Bayazid's army fled the battlefield, along with the soldiers of the Asian emirates whom Bayazid had liberated; for they joined the camp of Timorlink.

The Christian countries of the West were highly pleased with Timorlink's victory and the downfall of the Ottoman state. The kings of England, France, Castile (Spain), and the Byzantine Emperor of Constantinople all congratulated Timorlink for his great victory, as the Europeans believed that they would no longer have to worry about the Ottoman threat, which had loomed over them for so long.

After the defeat of Bayazid, Timorlink seized Aznik, Brusa as well as other cities and fortresses. Then he attacked Izmir and took it from the control of the Knights of Rhodes, the Knights of "Saint John", in an effort to justify his position before Islamic public opinion, which had accused him of

directing a mighty blow against Islam, by destroying the Ottoman State. By his assault against the Knights of Saint John, Timorlink had tried to justify the battles in Anatolia with an aspect of *Jihad*.

### **Seventh: The Civil Wars:**

The Ottoman State became subjected to an internal threat of the civil war, as the offspring of Bayazid began to dispute over their entitlement to the throne, which erupted as civil conflict for ten years, from 806 to 816 A.H/ 1403 to 1413 CE.

Bayazid's five sons were engaged in his battle against Timorlink. Mustafa was thought to have been killed in the battle; Musa was captured with his father; while the other three fled the battlefield, the eldest of whom was Sulaiman; who went to Adernai and declared himself a Sultan. 'Isa went to Brusa and declared himself the Successor of his father. War was declared between the three sons, fighting to take control of the fallen parts of the torn state, while the enemy looked on. Timorlink released the other brother, Musa, to increase the *Fitnah* (the dispute over the throne), inflaming the situation between all the brothers as they continued to fight one another.

One year later, Timorlink left the country, having destroyed everything; leaving it in the worst state of chaos and turmoil. This was a testing period for the Ottoman State, which had also preceded their genuine state of power as characterized by the liberation of Constantinople.

It is the Ordinance of Allah ﷻ that He does not grant a nation any real established power until after it has undergone different periods of trials and tribulations, wherein He ﷻ distinguishes between those who are bad and those who are good. It is a constant Ordinance which applies to any Islamic nation; that of testing the faith of the believers, yet granting them power on earth after they have endured it, faithfully.

Allah ﷻ says:

أَحْسَبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا ءَامَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَلَقَدْ  
 فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ <sup>ط</sup> فَلْيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلْيَعْلَمَنَّ  
 الْكٰذِبِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

«Do people think that they will be left alone on saying “We believe,” and that they will not be tested? Indeed, We did test those before them, and Allah will certainly know those who are true from those who are false»<sup>1</sup>

When the Prophet ﷺ was asked which people suffered the greatest affliction, he ﷺ replied: “The Prophets, then those who come closest to them (in conduct), then those who come closest to them (in conduct). A man is afflicted by adhering to his religion. If he is firm in his religion his trial is severe, but if there is weakness in his religion it is made light for him, and it will continue like that until he walks on the earth without sin.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Surat al-Ankabut*, Verses: 2-3.

<sup>2</sup> At-Tirmidhi (4/601), a sound and authentic *Hadith*.

The Prophet ﷺ explained that a state of *Fitnah* is a common condition faced by a believer, as he ﷺ also said:

**“The example of a believer is like that of a wheat stalk which keeps swaying with the breeze; for a believer is continuously afflicted by trials. As for the example of a hypocrite, it is like a rice stalk which does not bend until it is harvested.”<sup>1</sup>**

The Ottomans withstood the ordeal of Ankara, despite the internal conflicts, until eventually Muhammad the First took control of the state, in 1413, and managed to recapture all the lost land of the Ottomans.

The awakening of the Ottomans from the nightmare of Ankara was due to the Godly system of morality which it had adopted in conducting its affairs. That system re-established the Ottoman nation as one that was superior in its aspects of religion, ethics and *Jihad*. All praise is due to Allah ﷻ that the Ottomans were able to rediscover their religious fervour and noble character. This reawakening of the Ottoman State was also due to the rare skill by which Arukhan and his brother, ‘Alauddin, had reorganised their new state with an impressive judicial system and continuous public education, available for all members of Ottoman society. These fundamental civil systems of government enabled the Ottoman state to rise again, from the darkest days of the ordeal of Ankara, and continue its advancement with a determination that surprised both its enemies and allies.

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<sup>1</sup> *Sahih al-Muslim (Sharh an-Nawawi)*, the book of The Day of Resurrection, Paradise and Hell.

## The Fifth Research

# Sultan Muhammad the First

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**S**ultan Muhammad the First was born on 781 A.H / 1379 CE, and took over the reign of the nation after the death of his father, Bayazid. He was known historically as “Muhammad Jalabi”, and was of a medium build, with a rounded face, joined eyebrows, fair skin, red cheeks and broad chest. He was physically strong and was active, practising wrestling, and he participated in 24 battles, receiving forty wounds.

Sultan Muhammad Jalabi managed to end the civil war because of his inherent skill of determination with insight. He defeated his brothers, one after the other, until he was left alone to take the reign of the state.<sup>1</sup> He spent his period of rule in rebuilding the state and re-establishing its infrastructure. Some historians consider him as the second founder of the Ottoman State.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Muhammad al-Faatih, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> The Ottoman Sultans, p. 41.

This Sultan was known to have been firm, yet lenient, in dealing with those who infringed the rules of the state. When he defeated the *Amir* of al-Kurman Province, he forgave him after his vow never to break the trust of the state again, however he was to forgive him once again after breaking this vow.

His policy focused on rebuilding the state by re-enforcing its internal system of government. He conducted a peaceful agreement with the Emperor of Constantinople, making him his ally by returning some cities on the Black Sea coast and Tsalia to him. He made peace with Venice, after the defeat of his frigate at Galipoli. He subdued revolutions in both Asia and Europe, and reclaimed all the emirates that had been conquered by Timorlink to his authority.

During the reign of Sultan Muhammad, a man named Badruddin assumed the status of “*Shaikh*” or “Islamic scholar” and was appointed as a judge in the army of Musa, the brother of Sultan Muhammad, which was the highest rank in the Ottoman state. In Aznik, a Turkish city, “*Shaikh*” Badruddin bin Isra’il began to call to his corrupt movement. He used to call for equality in inheritance for both men and women, equality of religions; as he failed to distinguish between Muslims and non-Muslims; saying that all people are brothers to each other, despite the diversity of their faiths. Many ignorant and corrupt people joined that movement, because the disciples of the corrupt “*Shaikh*” managed to propagate his way, amongst whom was a man called “Bir Kalejah Mustafa” and another man of Jewish origin named “Tor Kamal”. The influence of this corrupt movement spread diversely as that evil “*Shaikh*” had many followers. Sultan Muhammad Jalabi confronted that evil

movement, dispatching one of his army generals to lead a large army against the “*Shaikh*” Badruddin. Unfortunately, the commander, Suleiman was killed by the traitor, “Bir Kalijah”, and his army was defeated; so Sultan Muhammad prepared another large army that was led by his Prime Minister, “Bayazid Basha”, to fight against “Bir Kalijah”, who was defeated in the Battle of “Burno”. “Bir Kalijah Mustafa” was captured and sentenced to death, following Allah’s Command:

إِنَّمَا جَزَاءُ الَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا أَنْ يُقَتَّلُوا أَوْ يُصَلَّبُوا أَوْ تُقَطَّعَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ مِّنْ خَلْفٍ أَوْ يُنْفَوْا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ لَهُمْ خِزْيٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا ۗ وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ

عَظِيمٌ ﴿٣٣﴾

«The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger and strive with might and main for mischief through the land is: execution or crucifixion, or the cutting off of hands and feet from opposite sides, or exile from the land: that is their disgrace in this world and a heavy punishment is theirs in the Hereafter.»<sup>1</sup>

*Shaikh* Badruddin continued his transgression, and thought that he would be able to take control of the nation, because of the state of turmoil prevalent throughout the country. He used to say: “I will revolt until I take control of the world. With my beliefs, I will divide the world among my

<sup>1</sup> *Surat al-Ma'idah*, Verse 33.

followers, with the power of knowledge and the secret of Monotheism. I will cancel the laws of the people of traditions and their movement, and I will make some prohibitions lawful.”<sup>1</sup>

The *Amir* of “al-Aflaq” in Romania supported that evil “*Shaikh*” financially and militarily, but Sultan Muhammad Jalabi was prepared for his corrupt movement and was able to force him to move to the province of Dali Orman, in present day Bulgaria<sup>2</sup>. However, European support began to reach that evil “*Shaikh*” and the extent of his revolution began to spread until his army of followers reached between seven and eight thousand. Sultan Muhammad used to closely monitor the situation, and therefore personally led a large army to fight against that evil “*Shaikh*”, at Dali Orman. The Sultan took “Sizor” (in present day Greece) as the base of his leadership, dispatching his forces to defeat the rebels. The evil “*Shaikh*” attempted to escape after the defeat of his army of rebels, however, the secret services of Sultan Muhammad managed to break the ranks of the rebels and set a trap for the rebel leader, who was eventually captured and brought to the Sultan.<sup>3</sup>

When the Sultan faced “*Shaikh*” Badruddin, he said: “Why is your face pale?”

Badruddin replied: “The sun, O leader, becomes yellow when sunset approaches.”

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<sup>1</sup> The Ottomans in History and Civilisation. P. 140.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 141-142.

The scholars of the state carried out an open scientific Islamic debate with Badruddin, then a legal court was conducted, which sentenced the evil “*Shaikh*” to death, following the scholars’ *Fatwah* (Islamic edict), which was based on the Prophet’s saying: **“When you all agree that there is a man who wants to rebel and sow discord among you, to divide your group, then kill him.”**<sup>1</sup>

The corrupt ideology preached by “*Shaikh*” Badruddin was the same ideology as preached by the movement of contemporary Free Masons of the twentieth century. It is based on removing all the barriers between people of sound Islamic creed and those of corrupted faiths. It calls for unity between Muslims, Jews, Christians, Hindus, and Communists; this ideology opposes the Islamic creed, which stresses the fact that there is no fraternity between Muslims and people of corrupted faiths. How could there be any brotherhood between those people, who oppose Allah ﷻ and His Messenger, and believing Muslims.<sup>2</sup>

Sultan Muhammad the First greatly appreciated poetry and literature. It was said that he was the first Ottoman sultan to have sent an annual gift to the *Amir* of Makkah in the form of charity money to be distributed among the poor of Makkah.<sup>3</sup>

The Ottoman public loved Sultan Muhammad the First, and nicknamed him “The Hero”, because of his noble deeds and bravery.

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<sup>1</sup> *Sahih* al-Muslim, the book of Leadership, chapter: “When two Caliphs took the Pledge of Allegiance” (3/1480 – Number 1852).

<sup>2</sup> “Mistakes that should be amended in History (The Ottoman State) p. 38.

<sup>3</sup> The History of the Ottoman State, p. 152.

In truth, many of the Ottoman rulers had surpassed him in celebrity, yet he could be considered to be among the most noble of all the Ottomans. Both Oriental and Greek historians have admitted his good human nature. The Ottoman historians thought he was like a brilliant captain who managed the leadership of the Ottoman State so well, when it was threatened by foreign invasions from the Tatars in addition to the civil wars.

### **His Death:**

Sultan Muhammad the First dedicated his life to eradicate all traces of the ordeal suffered by the Ottoman State, and undertook internal measures to prevent any anarchy in the future, while still engrossed with his mission, as he felt his end was coming; so he called the Pasha Bayazid, telling him: "I have nominated my son, Murad, as my successor Caliph, so obey him and be truthful to him as you have been to me. I want you to bring Murad now, because I cannot leave my bed. If the Divine Decree takes place before his arrival, then beware not to declare my death, until he arrives."<sup>1</sup>

He died in 824 A.H / 1421 CE in the city of Ederna at the age of forty three.

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<sup>1</sup> The Ottoman Sultans, p. 41.

## The Sixth Research

# Sultan Murad the Second

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**S**ultan Murad II (the second) took over after the death of his father Muhammad Jalabi on 824 A.H / 1421 CE, when he was about eighteen years old. He loved to perform *Jihad* for the Sake of Allah ﷻ, and the call to Islam in Europe.<sup>1</sup>

He was known among all his subjects for his piety, justice and compassion. Sultan Murad II was able to destroy all internal rebellious movements, which were conducted by his uncle Mustafa, who was supported by the enemies of the Ottoman State. The Byzantine Emperor, Manuel, was behind the conspiracies and crises suffered by Sultan Murad. He provided aid and support to the Sultan's uncle, Mustafa, to lay a siege of the city of Galipoli, to try to remove it from the Sultan and make it his own base. But Sultan Murad managed to capture his uncle and sentence him to death.

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<sup>1</sup> Mistakes that should be amended (the Ottoman State) p. 38.

Nevertheless, Emperor Manuel continued his conspiracies against the Sultan and so sponsored his brother. He appointed him as head of an army which attacked and seized the city of Nikia, in Anatolia, but the Sultan marched against him and destroyed his army. His brother surrendered and was executed. It was then that the Sultan decided to give the emperor a practical lesson, so he quickly attacked and seized Salonika in 833 A.H / 1431 CE making it an essential part of the Ottoman State.

Sultan Murad directed some telling blows to the rebellious movements in the Balkans; as he was keen to establish Ottoman Rule firmly in that region. The Ottoman army moved towards the north to subdue the Province of Walacha and imposed the annual tax on them. The new Serbian king was forced to enter under the rule of the Ottoman Authority and renewed his allegiance to it. The Sultan managed to remove any impediments in Albania and Hungary, and his army then moved south to reinforce Ottoman Rule in Greece. The Ottomans managed to liberate Albania in 834 A.H / 1431 CE, concentrating mainly on the southern part of the country. The northern part, witnessed some fierce resistance, and the northern Albanians were able to destroy two Ottoman armies in the mountains of Albania. The Ottomans suffered many losses in their retreat, as many European states provided support to the Albanians against the Ottomans, especially from the authorities in Venice, who were aware of the danger of the Ottoman's conquest of that region.

On the Hungarian front, the Ottomans managed to defeat the Hungarians in 842 A.H / 1438 CE, capturing more than seventy thousand soldiers. The Sultan then moved to liberate

Belgrade, the capital of Serbia, but failed. The Sultan was defeated twice in 846 A.H / 1442 CE, when a new Crusader alliance was created to try to eradicate the Ottomans completely from Europe. This alliance received the approval of the Pope, and included Hungary, Poland, Serbia, Genoa, Venice, the Byzantine Empire, and the Duchy of Bergandy; other German and Czech armies joined the alliance, and its leadership was given to a powerful Hungarian commander, named John Hanyadi. In 848 A.H / 1444 CE, the Ottomans were compelled to accept a peace treaty, lasting ten years, in which the Sultan surrendered Serbia and acknowledged George Brankovic as its ruler. The Sultan also surrendered the province of al-Aflaq to Hungary, and paid a ransom of sixty thousand ducats for the release of his son-in-law, Mahmoud Shalabi, who was a general commander of the Ottoman army. The treaty was drafted in Ottoman Turkish and Hungarian. Both leaders swore, by their holy books, to honour the treaty.

After concluding the peace treaty with his European enemies, Sultan Murad returned to Anatolia, where he was affected by the death of his son, prince 'Ala'. He was so distressed that he decided to appoint his other son, Muhammad, as the Sultan. Muhammad was fourteen, and due to his tender age, his father surrounded him with experts and advisers to help run the affairs of the country. He then left, travelling to Magnesia in Asia Minor, intending to spend the rest of his life in total seclusion and serenity, so as to devote his time completely to the worship of Allah ﷻ.

However, the Sultan could not enjoy his seclusion for long, as Cardinal Cezarini, and some of his aides, began to call for the abrogation of the peace treaty with the Ottomans and

chase them out of Europe, especially after the appointment of Murad's son, Muhammad, who was too young and inexperienced to be perceived as a threat to them. Pope, Eugene IV (the fourth), approved of this evil idea and called on the Christians to break the treaty and attack the Muslims. He also stressed that the treaty concluded with the Muslims was invalid, because it was ratified without the "blessing of the Pope," who was the "representative of Christ on earth."

So, the Christians broke the treaty and mobilized their armies to fight against the Muslims. They laid siege on the Bulgarian city of Varna, situated on the coast of the Black Sea, which had been liberated by the Muslims.

Breaching treaties was a common characteristic of the enemies of Islam, and it is for this reason that Allah ﷻ commanded the Muslims to fight them, saying:

... فَاقْتُلُوا أَيْمَةَ الْكُفْرِ إِنَّهُمْ لَا أَيْمَانَ لَهُمْ ... ﴿١٢﴾

«...Fight the chiefs of disbelief, for their oaths are nothing to them...»<sup>1</sup>

They respect no oaths or conventions, which is their common trait. They do not hesitate in attacking any nation, when they sense any weakness in them. Allah ﷻ truly describes them:

لَا يَرْقُبُونَ فِي مُؤْمِنٍ إِلَّا وِلَا ذِمَّةً وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُعْتَدُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

<sup>1</sup> Surat at-Tawbah, Verse 12.

«With regard to a believer, they respect not the ties, either of kinship or of covenant! It is they who have transgressed all bounds.»<sup>1</sup>

When the Christians started moving towards the Ottoman State, the Muslims learned of their advance and were extremely worried; they called for Sultan Murad, insisting on his quick return to confront their advance. The Sultan left his retreat and quickly led the Ottoman army against the threat posed by the Crusaders. He managed to reach Adernai on the same day as the Christians. By the second day, an intense battle took place between the Muslim and Christian armies. Sultan Murad stuck the treaty that had been broken by the Christians on the head of a lance to carry them, so that the heavens and earth would be witnesses of the treason and aggression of the enemy, thereby instilling more zeal and courage in his soldiers.

The two groups fought intensely and the Christians could have won the battle due to their crusading nature and increased fanaticism, but they failed due to the sincere *Jihad* spirit of the Ottomans. The Hungarian King “Ladislass”, the violator of the treaty met Sultan Murad face to face in battle, and the Sultan managed to kill him with a lance strike that threw him off his horse; the *Mujahideen* then rushed to decapitate him, raising his head high, with cries of “*Allahu-Akbar*” (Allah is the Greatest).

One of the Muslim warriors shouted at the enemy: “O disbelievers, this is the head of your king!” That image had a powerful effect on the Christian soldiers, who were taken by

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat at-Tawbah*, Verse 10.

fear and terror. The Muslims, then attacked them fiercely and managed to expel their entire gathering.

This battle took place on the plains of Kosovo on 7, October 1448 CE/ 852 A.H. It lasted three days and ended with an overwhelming victory of the Ottomans.

Sultan Murad returned to his private isolation in Magnesia, after having stepped down once again in favour of his appointed son. It was like the return of the victorious lion to his den.

In Ederna, the *Inkishari* groups caused anarchy, as they started a chaotic campaign everywhere. Sultan Muhammad was still young, and the state authorities were worried that the situation would worsen and get out of hand, so they once again sent for Sultan Murad to run the state himself. On his arrival, the *Inkishari* groups submitted to him, and he appointed his son, Muhammad, as the *Amir* of Magnesia in Anatolia. The Sultan remained on the Ottoman throne until the last days of his life; a life spent in conquest and liberation, for the Sake of Allah ﷻ.

He died at his palace in Ederna, aged 47, and in accordance with his testimony, he was buried near the Muradiya Mosque in Bursa. He commanded that nothing should be built on his grave. He suggested to be buried on a Friday, and so his testimony was duly honoured.

The Sultan had built mosques and schools, palaces and bridges. He built the mosque of Ederna which had three balconies, beside which he constructed a canteen to feed the poor.

## **Chapter Two**

# Muhammad al-Faatih and the Liberation of Constantinople



## The First Research

# Sultan Muhammad al-Faatih

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**S**ultan Muhammad II (the Second) was the seventh Sultan from the ‘Uthman family, and was nicknamed “al-Faatih” (the liberator) or *Abu al-Khayrat* (father of good). He ruled for thirty years, in which was to be a period of glory for the Muslims. He came to rule the Ottoman State at the age of 22, after the death of his father on 16<sup>th</sup> *Muharram*, 855 A.H / 18<sup>th</sup> February, 1451 CE. His personality combined strength with justice, and he had an extensive knowledge of many fields of science, which he had learnt in the Prince Institute. He also learnt the languages of his time, as well as having an inclination to study history. All this knowledge helped him to develop his character for his administration of both the state and the battlefield, before he was to be known as Muhammad al-Faatih (the liberator), for his liberation of Constantinople.

He followed the same course adopted by his father and grandfathers, in reorganising the different administrations of the state, putting more emphasis on balancing the financial

resources of the whole country and their management, in a manner that avoided all aspects of opulence and over-spending.

He also made an effort to improve the army, by keeping personal records of his soldiers, increasing their salaries and arming them with the latest weapons available at the time.

Regarding the management of the provinces, he improved them by reinstating the position of some past governors, while replacing those who had shown any signs of carelessness.

After spending a period in making reforms at home, he turned to the Christian fronts in Europe in order to liberate more regions and spread the Message of Islam.

Many factors had helped the Sultan achieve his goals, such as the weakness of the Byzantine Empire; because of the conflicts with other European countries and also because of some internal disputes which had spread throughout the country.

Sultan al-Faatih worked hard to crown all his conquests with the liberation of Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire and the main base for the crusade invasions against the Islamic world. He made it the capital of the Ottoman state, thereby managing to achieve what his predecessors failed to do<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The Rise of the Ottoman State. P.43.

## **First: The Liberation of Constantinople:**

Constantinople was a major city of the world. It was founded in 330 CE by the Byzantine Emperor, Constantine I (the First).<sup>1</sup> It had a unique strategic position internationally, and it was once said of it: “Had the world been a single kingdom, it would have been right for Constantinople to be its capital.”<sup>2</sup> Since its foundation, the Byzantines adopted it as their capital, as it was one of the world’s largest and most important cities.

When the Muslims engaged in a *Jihad* against the Byzantine state, this city had a special role in that conflict. The Prophet ﷺ had given his Companions the glad tidings about its liberation in many circumstances, such as during the Battle of the Trench<sup>3</sup>. It was for this reason that the Muslim Caliphs and their army commanders had competed to liberate it through the ages, in the hope that the Prophet’s Hadith would be fulfilled by their hands.

**The Prophet ﷺ said: “Constantinople will (definitely) be liberated by the hands of one man. What an excellent *Amir* (is he), and what an excellent army (is that army)!”<sup>4</sup>**

The Islamic forces had tried hard to conquer the Byzantine capital, since the days of the Mu‘awiyah bin Abi Sufyan ؓ, in the first of the Islamic invasions on 33 A.H. passing by the

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<sup>1</sup> Europe in the Middle Ages, by Sa‘id ‘Ashur, p.29.

<sup>2</sup> The Liberation of Constantinople and the Biography of Muhammad al-Faatih, by D. Muhammad Mustafa, p 36-46.

<sup>3</sup> Recorded by Imam Ahmad in his *Musnad* (4/335).

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Khaldun, “al-‘Ibar” (3/70) The history of Khalifah bin Khayyat (p.315).

invasions of the ‘Amawi Sultan, Sulaiman bin ‘abd al-Malik, in 98 A.H, the Abbasid Sultan, Harun ar-Rasheed in 190 A.H, and the Seljuk rulers in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

The Ottomans replaced the Seljuks, renewing their attacks on Constantinople at the hands of the Sultan Bayazid “the lightning”, whose forces laid siege to the city in 796 A.H / 1393 CE. The Sultan began to negotiate with the Byzantine Emperor to peacefully surrender the city to the Muslims, but he kept delaying his decision in the hope of receiving some European support to fight off the attack of the Muslims on his city. During this time, the Mogul (Mongol) armies of Timorlink had landed inside the Ottoman territories and began to cause havoc. Sultan Bayazid was forced to withdraw his troops so that he could face the Moguls himself. The famous Battle of Ankara was the last one for Bayazid, who was captured and died in captivity in 1402 CE. Muhammad al-Faatih used to participate in the running of the state of his father, and since then, he witnessed the conflict of the Byzantine State in different circumstances. He was completely aware of the previous Ottoman campaigns to liberate Constantinople.

Therefore, ever since he was appointed as Sultan in 855 A.H / 1451 CE, he was always eager to conquer Constantinople and liberate it. The Islamic education received from the scholars helped increase his love for Islam, the Qur’an, the *Sunnah* of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and the adherence to Islamic *Shari’ah*. He was described as a pious leader, who loved Islamic scholars, encouraging the propagation of

Islamic knowledge and education, which he himself had received from his father and the respected scholars.<sup>1</sup>

Muhammad al-Faatih was influenced, from a young age, by pious scholars, such as the eminent “Ahmad bin Ismail al-Kourani”, who was his teacher during the reign of Sultan Murad the Second, al-Faatih’s father. It was this true Islamic education and those great educators – especially al-Kourani, the pious scholar who would face up to the Sultan if he saw any decisions against the Laws of Islam – which made it naturally possible to produce such a great leader as Muhammad al-Faatih, who was a true believer, and adherent to the limits of *Shari‘ah*.

There was also the role of *Shaikh* Ak Shamsuddin in developing the personality of Muhammad al-Faatih, as he encouraged him in motivating the Ottoman *Jihad* movement, and reminding him that he could be the intended *Amir* mentioned in the Prophet’s Hadith. It was for this reason that al-Faatih wished for the prophecy to apply to him.<sup>2</sup>

## **Second: The Preparation for the Liberation of Constantinople:**

Sultan Muhammad al-Faatih made all the necessary planning for the conquest; he reinforced his army with more recruits, until it reached nearly a million *Mujahideen*. This was a huge number compared to the armies of other countries at that time.

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<sup>1</sup> The History of the Ottoman State, by Ali Hassoun, p.42.

<sup>2</sup> The Islamic Conquests Through the Ages, p. 359.

He personally supervised the training of his huge army with all the different combat strategies, using different weapons. He also focused on training them spiritually, to be qualified for their *Jihad* mission, by reminding them about the Prophet's admiration for army which would liberate Constantinople, hoping they might be the ones referred to. That reminder gave them strength and courage. The existence of Islamic scholars among the soldiers helped to increase the soldiers' determination to perform *Jihad* in accordance with Allah's Commandments.

The Sultan then built a fortress called "Rumli Hasar" on the European side of the Bosphorus Channel, at the narrowest point, facing the citadel built during the reign of Sultan Bayazid on the Asian side. The Byzantine Emperor had tried to convince the Sultan not to build the fortress, in return for some financial arrangement which he had previously promised; but al-Faatih insisted on building it because of its strategic military importance. When it was built, it was 83 metres high, facing the other fortress, with only 660 metres between them. He prohibited any ship from reaching Constantinople from the areas on the eastern side, such as the Kingdom of Trabson and other provinces which could support Constantinople.

### ***The Sultan's production of necessary weapons:***

The Sultan gave special priority in the production of the right type of weapons to liberate Constantinople, especially cannons. He brought a Hungarian engineer named "Urban", who excelled in manufacturing heavy weaponry. He welcomed him well, providing him with the necessary finance and manpower to achieve his project. That engineer

was able to make several large cannons, headed by the famous huge Sultan's Cannon which weighed a hundred tons and needed a hundred strong bulls to move it.

### ***The Sultan's interest in his fleet of frigates:***

Among the preparations made by the Sultan, was his special care towards his fleet. He fitted them as different warships to make a well equipped attack on Constantinople; which was a coastal city that could never have been conquered without the existence of a strong naval power. It was reported that the fleet of ships prepared for this mission numbered in excess of four hundred.

### ***Concluding treaties:***

Before his assault on Constantinople, al-Faatih concluded some treaties with his different enemies in order to focus on one enemy.

He conducted a treaty with Galata, next to Constantinople on the east, which was only separated by the "Golden Horn" Channel. He also made a treaty with Hungary and Venice, two of the neighbouring European countries.

However, these treaties were not honoured when the assault on Constantinople began; as many forces came from these cities to defend Constantinople, in aid of their fellow Christians, disregarding their treaty with the Muslims.

As the Sultan prepared the last steps to begin his assault, the Byzantine Emperor tried to make the Sultan change his mind, by sending him money and different gifts, and also by

trying to bribe the Sultan's consultants. But the Sultan was adamant to execute his plan, and nothing could make him change his mind. Upon seeing the Sultan's determination, the Emperor decided to seek help from different European authorities, foremost of whom was the pope, the head of the Roman Catholics, at a time when the churches of the Byzantine Empire followed the Orthodox Church. There was enmity between the two churches; so the Emperor was forced to flatter the Pope by admitting that he was prepared to work for the unity of the Orthodox Church, under the Pope's authority, against the will of the Orthodox masses.

The Pope sent his representative to Constantinople to give a sermon in the St. Sophia Church, where he declared the unification of the two Churches. This measure angered the Orthodox people in the city, and so they began to show signs of countering the joint imperialistic venture, under the pope. One of the Orthodox leaders then said: "In Byzantium I would certainly prefer to see Turkish turbans rather than the Latin hats."<sup>1</sup>

### ***The Attack:***

Constantinople is surrounded by sea on three sides: the Bosphorus (Channel), the Marmora Sea and the Golden Horn Channel which was strongly protected by a huge chain that controlled the access of ships. There were also two walls, which surrounded it from the shores of the Marmora beach to the Golden Horn Channel, with a space of 60m between the walls. The height of the internal wall was about 40 feet, with towers that rose to 60 feet. As for the external

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<sup>1</sup> Muhammad al-Faatih, by al-Rashidi, p.89.

wall, its height was about 25 feet, with detached towers full of soldiers.

From the military aspect, the city remained one of the best shielded cities in the world, because of its high walls, fortress, towers, along with its natural protective elements. So it would have been very difficult to invade it. Indeed, many military attempts to conquer it had failed in the past, eleven of them being Islamic!

The Sultan al-Faatih was making the final steps for the invasion, by gathering more intelligence about the city, and preparing the necessary maps for its siege. He used to tour the whole area around the city to watch its walls and natural defences.

The Sultan had given orders to repair the road from Ederna to Constantinople to smoothen the way in transporting the huge cannons to Constantinople; a journey that lasted two months. They were protected by a section of the army, until the arrival of al-Faatih on the outskirts of Constantinople on Thursday (26, *Rabi' al-Awal* 875 A.H/ 6 April, 1453 CE).

He gathered his army, which comprised of almost 250,000 soldiers, and gave them an inspirational speech, in which he urged them to make *Jihad*; seeking victory or martyrdom. He reminded them of making a big sacrifice and being sincere whilst fighting the battle. He recited some Verses of the Qur'an, commending such qualities, and he also reminded them of the Prophet's Hadith about the liberation of the city of Constantinople, and the merits of the liberating

army and its leader. The whole army started making *Takbeer*<sup>1</sup>, *Tahleel*<sup>2</sup> and *Du'a*<sup>3</sup>.

There were some scholars in the army, who went as soldiers and preachers, which helped raise the spirits of the soldiers before the engagement of war, thus fulfilling their duty.

The following day, the Sultan gave his orders to position his land army in front of the external walls of the city, creating three main sections, to complete the siege from all sides. He also stationed some army reserves behind the principle soldiers, and placed the cannons before the walls, especially the Sultan's Cannon, which was placed in front of the Tob-Kabi entrance. He assigned some groups to monitor from around all the high and close positions of the city. At the same time, the Ottoman ships were positioned all over the near waters, but could not approach the Golden Horn Channel, because of the huge chains set up there to prevent the access of any ship, although the Ottoman fleet managed to take control of the "Princes Isles" in the Marmorah Sea.

The Byzantines tried their best to defend Constantinople; they located their soldiers around the walls, but the Ottoman army had already completed its siege of the city, but did not without some skirmishes, between the two armies, during the first days of the siege. Many Ottoman soldiers attained martyrdom, especially those positioned closer to the doors of the fortified city.

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<sup>1</sup> *Allahu-Akbar*.

<sup>2</sup> *La ilaha illa Allah* (there is no god but Allah)

<sup>3</sup> Supplication.

The Ottoman cannons fired their “missiles” from different positions around the city. Their firing, together with the horrifying sound, had a great role in instilling fear and terror in the hearts of the Byzantine residents; they were therefore able to destroy some of the city walls, but the defendants were able to swiftly rebuild the walls, or at least repair them. The Christians support did not cease to come from Europe, as five ships came from Genoa; led by the Genoese commander, Lucas Giustiniani (Justinian), accompanied by seven volunteer frigates from different European countries. Their ships were able to reach the old Byzantine city after a naval confrontation with the Ottoman ships. The arrival of the European support had a great effect in lifting the morale of the Byzantines; who appointed Justinian as the commander of all the forces defending the city.

The cardinal and all the priests used to tour the defence spots around the city, urging the Christians to be firm and patient; and encouraging people to visit the church to ask “Christ”<sup>1</sup> and the “Virgin Mary”<sup>2</sup> to save the city; so the Emperor himself started to attend the Church of “St. Sophia” for that reason.

#### **Fourth: The Negotiations between al-Faatih and Constantine:**

The Ottomans soldiers, led by al-Faatih, showed bravery in their powerful assault on the city, and the Byzantines, led by

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<sup>1</sup> Jesus Christ is worshipped by the Christians as either God or son of God; while he is but a Messenger of Allah, like any other Messenger, with the Divine Message to worship Allah, Alone, with none associated besides Him.

<sup>2</sup> The Virgin Mary was the Mother of Prophet ‘Isa (Jesus Christ), peace be upon him.

Constantine XI, withstood the attack, heroically. The Emperor tried all he could to defend his city and people; so he started presenting the Sultan with various offers to tempt him to withdraw, in return for money or even allegiance. But the Sultan replied requesting the handover of the city, with the guarantee that no person or church would be harmed; his reply was presumably as follows:

“The Emperor should handover the city to me; and I swear that my army will spare everyone’s life and property; whoever wants to stay in the city will remain in peace and security, and whoever wants to leave, may do also in peace and security.”

The siege was still incomplete due to the Byzantine’s naval control of the Golden Horn Channel; however the Ottomans attack was relentless, as the *Inkishari* army showed utmost bravery and rare valour. On the 18<sup>th</sup> of April, the Ottoman cannons managed to breach the Byzantine walls, by the River Lukus, on the western side of the walls; so the Ottoman soldiers rushed forward bravely to invade the walls with their ladders, but the gap was not large enough for them to make a swift attack; and they faced strong resistance with arrows and different types of missiles. As the night closed in, the Sultan gave the order of withdrawal from the walls to wait for another chance to attack.

On the same day, the Ottoman fleet tried to storm the Golden Horn Channel by destroying the block of chains, but the joint European and Byzantine ships along with the defending forces positioned behind the huge chains were able to block the Islamic fleet, destroying some of them in the process; so

the rest of the Ottoman ships were forced to withdraw after they failed to accomplish their aim.

### **Fifth: The dismissal of the Ottoman Fleet's commander and the bravery of Muhammad al-Faatih:**

Two days after the Golden Horn battle, another battle took place between the Ottoman navy and some European ships which tried to reach the gulf. Al-Faatih himself led the battle on the coast, after sending a message to the commander of the fleet, telling him: "Either you should capture these ships or sink them, but if you fail to succeed, do not return to me alive." However, the European ships managed to reach their destination, when the Ottoman ships failed to stop them, despite all the efforts of the fleet. Sultan al-Faatih was very disappointed with the fleet commander and dismissed him, when he returned to the central command centre. He summoned him and accused him of being a coward. The commander, Baltah Oghli, was deeply offended and replied by saying: "I am facing death with a firm heart, but it hurts me to die while I am accused with such an accusation; I and my soldiers have fought to our best standard." He then lifted his turban to reveal his injured eye.

Al-Faatih was then persuaded that his commander had done all he could, so he let him leave after his dismissal, appointing Hamza Pasha in his place.

Historical records have mentioned that Muhammad al-Faatih used to monitor the sea battles while riding his horse, and used to enter the sea with his horse, until the water reached his chest. The battling ships were only a stones throw from

him, so he would yell at Baltah Oghli, waving his hands at him.

The naval defeats had a deep impact on the thinking of some advisers, headed by the Minister, “Khalil Pasha”, to convince the Sultan to give up the attempted conquest of Constantinople, removing its siege. But the Sultan insisted on liberating the city and continued to shell the defensive positions of the city on all sides, and at the same time, he was seriously thinking of sailing his fleet into the Golden Horn Channel, especially after observing the crumbling walls on that side.

### **Sixth: A Brilliant military ingenuity**

The Sultan had a brilliant idea of transporting the ships from their ports in Besiktas to the Golden Horn Channel; by carrying them on the road linking the two ports, thus avoiding being attacked around Galata. The distance between the ports was only about three miles, yet it was not a plain road to travel on.

Muhammad al-Faatih gathered his army commanders and presented them with his plan, and identified their next place of battle. He received their backing and admiration for his plan.

When the plan was implemented, and al-Faatih gave his order for the road to be straightened, then the soldiers brought some wood soaked with oil and fat to facilitate the carrying of the ships. The difficult part of this plan was to transport the ships downhill, however, the Ottoman ships were generally small and light. That night, the Ottomans

managed to relocate more than seventy ships down to the Golden Horn. It was certainly a great feat at that time; a miracle, showing the swift thinking and execution within the Ottoman mentality. The Byzantines were astounded when they learnt of the event; they could not believe it, but the reality of the situation forced them to accept that unexpected plan.

The merit of that miracle goes to Allah ﷻ Who gave the Sultan high mindedness and amazing intellect. It also goes to show the brilliant architects and the labourers who were willing to execute any plan with great enthusiasm.

It took place one night, as the inhabitants of the city awoke the next morning to hear the *Takbeer (Allahu-Akbar)* of the Ottomans and their loud *Anasheeds* (Islamic songs), while boarding their ships on the Golden Horn, controlling the channel. There was no longer any water barrier between the defendants of the city and the Ottoman soldiers.

One Byzantine historian expressed his admiration of the event, saying: “We have never seen nor heard before of such an unusual event as this. Muhammad al-Faatih turned the earth into sea and his ships crossed the top of the mountains instead of the ocean waves. Al-Faatih has exceeded “Alexander the Great” in this act.”<sup>1</sup>

The people of Constantinople felt despair, and many omens and rumours spread throughout the city, saying that Constantinople would fall when ships are seen sailing on land!

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<sup>1</sup> The History of Muhammad al-Faatih, p.135, by Yelmaz Azantu.

The existence of the Ottoman ships in the Golden Horn had a great effect in weakening the fighting spirit of the force defending the city, because many of that force had to be moved to defend the walls by the Golden Horn, which were previously protected by sea water.

The Byzantine Emperor arranged for many operations to try to destroy the Ottoman fleet in the Golden Horn, however his incessant efforts failed before the Ottoman's stand.

The Ottomans also positioned some special cannons on the hills to destroy all the Byzantine ships on the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus which inhibited the movement of the enemy ships.

### **Seventh: The Meeting of the King Constantine Palaiologos XI and his aides:**

Emperor Constantine XI conducted a meeting with his aides, consultants, and the religious leaders of the city, who advised him to leave the city, to seek the support of the Christian European countries. They had hoped that the Christian armies would come to their aide to force Sultan al-Faatih to withdraw and lift his siege of the city. But the Emperor rejected that opinion, insisting on fighting to the end; not wishing to leave his population, but to face the same fate as them. He also regarded his decision as a sacred obligation, and suggested that they should not advise him to leave. He contended by sending delegations to the European countries requesting aid and support, but they returned with utter disappointment.

The Ottoman secret services had already infiltrated Constantinople, and so were aware of all the political and military concerns in the city.

### **Eighth: The Ottoman mental war:**

The Sultan increased his assault on the walls, making it his focus in a plan that he had prepared himself in order to weaken the enemy. The Ottoman forces continued their attacks on the walls, trying to climb them many times in a very heroic and brave manner. The most terrorising thing for the soldiers of the Byzantine Emperor was the shouts of "*Allah-Akbar.*" The Sultan started directing the powerful cannons towards the hills, behind Galata, sending its missiles towards the port. One commercial ship was directly hit and sunk. Another ship which feared the same fate, fled behind the walls of Galata. The attacks continued day and night, under the supervision of the Sultan, in order to exhaust the forces under siege and prevent them from getting any time to rest. Their spirit was low as they looked at each others force for signs of disgrace and failure. They even started to discuss publicly ways to avoid being captured by the Ottoman forces.

Emperor Constantine XI was forced to hold a second conference, in which one of the commanders suggested an abrupt attack on the Ottomans to open a gap that would link them with the outside world. As they were discussing this plan, one of the soldiers interrupted their meeting, informing them that the Ottomans had launched a ferocious and sustained attack on the River Lycos. Constantine XI left the meeting, mounting his horse and calling his reserves to enter

into battle. The fighting went on until late at night, when the Ottomans had to retreat.

Sultan Muhammad used to surprise his enemies from time to time with new strategies of fighting that were unknown to the enemy.

### **An Ottoman Military Surprise:**

The Ottomans forced a new way to assault the city; they had made a huge mobile fortress with three decks that was even higher than the walls. It was covered with armour plating armors resistant to fire. It was filled with men on every deck; the soldiers in the higher level were archers who shot at the Byzantine soldiers lifting their heads above the walls. The defenders of the city were taken aback when they saw the Ottomans approaching the walls with their mobile fortress. Mortal combat between the two forces began when the fortress came up to the walls. Some of the Muslim soldiers from the mobile fortress managed to scale the walls, so Constantine felt defeated. However, the Byzantine fighters intensified their defence using flamed missiles on the fortress until it was burnt down and fell upon the Byzantine towers, killing everyone inside.

The Ottomans, however, did not lose hope in trying again, as the Sultan, who was supervising the event himself, said: “Tomorrow, we will make four others.”

The siege continued, in this manner, until the people within the city became weary. So the leaders of the city held a meeting, on the 24<sup>th</sup> of May, inside the palace of the Emperor who insisted once again to stay and continue to lead

his people in defence of the city. He went out to check the walls and all the defensive units that were deployed in their positions. Rumours spread within the city that the most effective incident took place on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May, when some people carried a statue of “The Virgin Mary” (as they had envisaged her) around the city, asking “her” to grant them victory over their enemies. But suddenly the statue fell to the ground and broke; this was interpreted as a foreboding omen. The following day there was abundant rain, coupled with lightning, a bolt hit the Church of St. Sophia. The priest perceived this as an evil omen, so he approached the Emperor to inform him that God had given away the city and that it would soon fall into the hands of the Ottoman warriors. The Emperor was so deeply disturbed that he lost consciousness.

The Ottoman cannons did not cease firing their projectiles at the walls and towers of the city, until many of them were destroyed; their debris filled the trenches around the walls. The defenders were unable to clear all the trenches, so then it was possible for the Ottoman forces to storm the city, however the choice of the point of invasion had not yet been decided.

### **Ninth: The Last Negotiations between al-Faatih and Constantine XI:**

Muhammad al-Faatih expected the imminent fall of the city, however he still wanted to enter it peacefully. He wrote a letter to the Emperor asking him to hand over the city

peacefully, so as not to shed further blood. He offered him a safe passage, together with his family and aides, and anyone else who wanted to leave the city for a particular destination of their choice. He also assured the rest of the population that everyone was welcome to stay in the city and live in security. When the emperor received the letter, he called all his advisers and asked their opinion about the Sultan's latest offer. Some agreed to hand over the city to avoid further bloodshed, but others insisted on fighting until the end. The emperor preferred the second option, and sent a reply, saying that he thanked God that the Sultan wanted peace, and that he was pleased to pay *Jizya* (tax) to the Sultan, but as for Constantinople, he swore that he would defend it until the last drop of his blood; that he should either safeguard his throne or be buried under the city walls.

When the Sultan received the letter, he said: "Good. Shortly, I will either have a throne in Constantinople or a grave in it." After the setback of his taking the city peacefully, the Sultan intensified his assault of the city. The Sultan's huge cannon backfired on its operators due to overheating from such intense firing; killing them, one of whom was Urban, the Hungarian engineer behind its manufacture.

The Sultan arranged the cannons to be cooled using olive oil, an idea which was successful. Thus, the cannons continued to bombard the city, aiming at the city centre.

### **Tenth: Sultan al-Faatih's meeting with the Consultation Committee:**

The Sultan held a meeting with his advisers, high ranking commanders, and Islamic scholars. He requested that all the members of the committee should state their opinions clearly

and without delay. Some of them, including the Minister Khalil Pasha, preferred a complete withdrawal to avoid any more bloodshed, and warning the Sultan against the possibility of enraging Christian Europe, following the Muslims' seizure of the city. The Minister gave further reasons to backup his opinion, but was accused of being on the side of the Byzantines. Other members urged the Sultan to continue the attack until the city's its liberation. They belittled the power of Europe, mentioning how enthusiastic the Ottoman soldiers were to complete the conquest, and warning that any withdrawal would destroy the morale of the army. One commander in support of this opinion was "Zughnoush Pasha", an Albanian Christian who had embraced Islam, thought little of the European forces and was convinced of the Sultan's imminent victory.

The Sultan asked "Tarakhan," another commander supporting the opinion of Zughnoush. Then, the Sultan asked two scholars, *Shaikh* Shamsuddin and al-Mawla al-Kurani, who replied that they also agreed with Zughnoush, saying: "It is necessary to continue the war with the same firm spirit so that victory would be ours."

Everyone present showed more enthusiasm, following the agreement of the two scholars; the Sultan was very pleased with the supplication of the *sheikh*, receiving it as glad tidings of victory. He could not resist help saying: "Which of my grandfathers had any similar power to me?"

The opinion of the scholars supported the Sultan's concern to continue performing *Jihad*, until the liberation of Constantinople. The Sultan concluded the meeting, stating

that the general assault to storm the city was close, and that he would give the orders at the most convenient moment.

**Eleven: Muhammad al-Faatih ordered and supervised his soldiers himself:**

On Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> May, 1453 CE, 18<sup>th</sup> *Jumada* the First, 857 A.H, the Sultan commanded his soldiers to purify their souls and show more devotion to Allah ﷻ in *Salat* (Prayer) and other acts of worship, and continue their supplications, in the hope that Allah ﷻ might ease their conquest of the city. On the same day, the Sultan went out himself to survey the city walls to understand the latest developments. He pointed towards certain targets, asking his bombers to aim at them, in particular. He also reminded his soldiers of their seriousness and sacrifice in confronting the enemy. He sent a message to the people of Galata, who remained neutral, reminding them not to intervene; guaranteeing his loyalty to his agreement with them, and promising to compensate for all their losses. That same night, the Ottomans lit a great fire around their camp and began shouting the *Tahleel* and *Takbeer*. The Byzantines thought that the fire was burning the Ottomans camps, and they were very disappointed to discover that the Ottomans were actually celebrating their imminent victory in advance, and this made the Byzantines nervous.

The scholars walked amid the soldiers, reciting the Verses about *Jihad* and *Surat al-Anfal*, reminding them of former martyrs, headed by Abu Ayyub al-Ansari ؓ.

When al-Faatih returned to his tent, he called for all his commanders to give them his last orders, delivering the following speech:

“If we manage to conquer Constantinople, one of the *Ahadith* and miracles of the Prophet ﷺ would be fulfilled by us. Everything revered in this Hadith would be for us; so inform our soldiers, one by one, that the victory which we should gain would grant Islam such strength and honour. Every one of our soldiers should be aware of Islam’s teachings during this battle. Tell them to avoid attacking the churches and places of worship, sparing the priests, the weak, and those unable to fight...”

At the same time, the Byzantine Emperor gathered his people in the city, to hold a general mass, for men, women and children, and to supplicate and weep in the churches, in a Christian manner, in the hope that their supplications would be answered and their city might escape the siege.

The Emperor delivered a very moving speech, in which he urged them to defend their city, even after his death. He urged them to defend Christianity against the Ottoman Muslims. It was an amazing sermon, according to historians; moving all those present to tears. The Emperor performed his last prayer in the Church of St. Sophia, and then visited his palace for the last time. He stood before a picture on the wall – a depiction was of Jesus – bowed, mumbled something, then stood up, put on his helmet, and left the palace, at midnight, in the company of his loyal friend, the historian Francis. They toured the defensive positions of the Christian forces observing the military manoeuvres of the Ottoman army, which was ready to attack by sea and land.

## Twelfth: Liberation and Imminent Victory from Allah



At 1 am on Tuesday, 20<sup>th</sup> *Jumada* the First, 857 A.H / 29<sup>th</sup> May 1453 CE, the general assault of the city began, after the *Mujahideen* had received their orders. They attacked the walls, announcing the *Takbeer*, which terrorised the Byzantines, who started ringing their church bells. The final assault was carried out by land and sea simultaneously, according to a well prepared plan. The *Mujahideen* sought martyrdom advancing bravely towards their enemy. They attacked several places, but the main thrust was in the region of the River Lycos, under the leadership of al-Faatih himself. When the first assault brigade showed some signs of fatigue, following their brave incessant onslaught, they were replaced by another brigade, which the Sultan had prepared, who were able to reach the walls with hundreds of ladders, but the Byzantines were able to repulse them. After two hours of fighting, the Sultan gave his orders for his soldiers to rest, but at the same time, he ordered a third brigade to advance forward and attack the walls, at the same place. The Byzantine defenders were surprised to see yet another group of attackers, after they were expecting a break, as they themselves were extremely exhausted. At the same time, the combat continued at sea, so the Byzantine capacity to defend the city was outstretched in every area. As dawn drew near, the Ottoman forces could clearly see the positions of their enemies, and so began to increase the intensity of their attack. The Muslims were very keen to achieve victory, yet the Sultan gave his orders to his forces to withdraw to give the bombers a chance to fire more missiles at the walls and the Byzantine defenders. After the bombardiers had completed their shelling, a new group of *Inkishari* soldiers,

led by the Sultan himself, moved forward, with archers covering their advance. Thirty of the brave *Inkishari* soldiers managed to scale the walls to the surprise of their enemies. Despite the fact that some of them were martyred, including their commander, they were able to pave the way for the *Tob-Qabi* to enter the city, and raised the Ottoman flags from behind the walls.

That success instilled even more enthusiasm in the rest of the army to storm the city, and at the same time, the leader of the forces defending the city, Justinian, was seriously injured, and was forced to withdraw from the battlefield. This had a negative effect on the rest of the defenders; forcing Emperor Constantine XI to replace Justinian, who boarded a ship and fled by sea. The Emperor lost all attempts at reassuring his soldiers; they started to despair and question the worthiness of their resistance.

The Ottomans continued their relentless assault in another part of the city, until they were able to storm the walls and seize some of the towers, after destroying the defending Byzantines on the Ederna entrance, raising the Ottoman standard above them. When Constantine XI saw the Ottoman flags waving on the north towers of the city, he was convinced of the futility of defending any more, so he removed his robes to avoid being recognised, dismounted his horse, and fought until he died on the battlefield.<sup>1</sup>

The spread of the news of his death had a great impact in raising the fervour of the Ottoman *Mujahideen*, and destroying the willpower of the Byzantines. The Ottoman

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<sup>1</sup> Muhammad al-Faatih. P.137.

forces were able to enter the city from different directions, as the defenders fled their positions, following the death of their leader. Al-Faatih was on his horse, with his soldiers, and shared with them the joy of that victory over their enemies. His commanders congratulated him, and he said: “All praise and thanks to Allah ﷻ. May Allah’s Mercy be upon the martyrs, and may He ﷻ grant the *Mujahideen* honour and glory, and pride of place among my people.”

Inside the city, there was still some resistance, which led to the martyrdom of many more *Mujahideen*, but many of the inhabitants escaped to take refuge in the churches. It was not yet midday (of Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup>, *Jumada* the First 857 A.H, 29<sup>th</sup> May 1453 CE) when the Sultan had reached the city centre, surrounded by his soldiers and commanders, who kept repeating the expression, “*Masha’Allah*”. He turned towards them, saying: “You have become the liberators of Constantinople, about whom the Prophet ﷺ informed us,” he congratulated them over the victory and prohibited any more killing; commanding them to show mercy and kindness to people. Then he dismounted his horse and prostrated to Allah ﷻ; thanking Him, praising Him, and being humble before Him.”<sup>1</sup>

### **Thirteen: The Treatment of Muhammad al-Faatih towards the defeated Christians:**

Muhammad al-Faatih headed towards St. Sophia’s Church (at Aya Sofia), where a large group of people had gathered, with their priests and clerics, reciting their supplications. When the Sultan approached the church, the Christians

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<sup>1</sup> Islamic Conquests through the Ages, p.384.

within it were afraid. One of the priests came forward to open the doors, and the Sultan asked him to calm the people down and reassure them of a safe return to their houses. People began to feel secure, and some of the priests who were hiding inside the lockers of the church emerged, declaring their desire to embrace Islam, after having witnessed the kindness of Sultan al-Faatih.

The Sultan ordered that the church should be transformed into a mosque, as soon as possible, so that the first *Jumu'a* (Friday) prayer could be held in it. The labourers started their job; removing all the crosses and statues, covering all the wall paintings with white paint, and building a *Minbar* (pulpit) for the Friday *Khutbah* (Sermon).

It was lawful Islamically to turn that church into a mosque, because the country was liberated by force, and forced liberation has its own ruling in Islamic Law (*Shari'ah*).

The Sultan offered the Christians the right to perform their religious rituals and choose their religious leaders, who also had the right to judge in their civil affairs. He also gave the same right to church leaders in other provinces, but at the same time, he imposed the *Jizya* (tax on non-Muslims) on all of them.

The British historian, Edward Shepherd, tried to defame the image of the Islamic Conquest of Constantinople, in his book "The History of the Ottoman Turks." He assigned dreadful attributes to Sultan Muhammad (II) al-Faatih, out of envy and hatred towards the glorious Islamic conquest. The American encyclopaedia, published in 1980, followed the same crusader hatred towards Islam, claiming that Sultan Muhammad had enslaved most of the Christians in

Constantinople, and then driven them to a slave market in the city of Ederna to be sold.

The clear historical records show that Sultan Muhammad al-Faatih treated the people of Constantinople with mercy, and ordered his soldiers to show kindness and compassion towards the prisoners. He freed many of them with his own money, especially the Greek princes and religious leaders. He held a meeting with the bishops to calm them and reassurances to them about the protection of their lives, religious beliefs and churches. He ordered them to appoint a new patriarch, of which the Christians voted for Ignatius Patrika. After his appointment, the new Patriarch walked towards the residence of the Sultan with a retinue of bishops. He was welcomed by Sultan al-Faatih to have dinner, where they discussed many religious, political and social issues. The Patriarch left the residence of the Sultan with a different opinion of the Ottoman Sultans, the Turks, and all Muslims in general. He felt that he had been before an intellectual, who had a message, firm religious faith, humanity, and a complete sense of honour.

The Byzantines were no less surprised than their Patriarch; for they had expected to be subjected to a general wave of killing. But it was not long before everyone was back to their daily life, with peace and security.

The Ottomans were keen to adhere to the teachings of Islam, ensuring that social justice should include their treatment of their Christian subjects, without fanaticism or discrimination. The Ottomans never even thought of oppressing the Christians because of their religion.

The different religious sects of the Christians under Ottoman rule fully received their religious rights. Every sect had its own religious leader, its own special religious schools and its own places of worship.

Sultan Muhammad al-Faatih showed the kindness and tolerance towards the Christians of Constantinople thanks to his sincere adherence to Islam; for he followed the example of the Prophet ﷺ and the rightly guided Caliphs, who are documented as having shown remarkable tolerance towards their enemies.



## The Second Research

# The Spiritual Liberator of Constantinople Shaikh Ak Shamsuddin

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**M**uhammad bin Hamza, a Roman from Damascus, moved to the lands of the Byzantines with his father, to study various subjects, to become a great Islamic scholar during the Ottoman reign.

He taught Muhammad al-Faatih, for his lineage went back to the rightly guided Caliph, Abu Bakr as-Siddiq ﷺ. He was born in Damascus in 1389, and learnt the Qur'an by the age of seven. He studied in Amasya, Halab, and Ankara, and died in 1459.

He taught Prince Muhammad al-Faatih the principle knowledge of that time: knowledge of the Qur'an, the

*Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ, Islamic jurisprudence (*Fiqh*), and languages, including: Arabic, Farsi and Turkish.

He also taught him other subjects, such as mathematics, astronomy, history and military strategy.

*Shaikh* Ak was one of the scholars who supervised Prince Muhammad, when he was appointed as the *Amir* of Magnesia, in his training for provincial administration and the art of governance.

*Shaikh* Ak managed to convince the young prince that he was the leader who was mentioned in the Prophet's *Hadith*. When Prince Muhammad became the sultan of the Ottoman state at such a young age, his *Shaikh* quickly directed him to move with his army to try to fulfil the prophecy in the *Hadith*. So the Ottoman forces besieged Constantinople from the land and sea, battling for 54 days.

When the Byzantines had achieved a temporary victory, and the Byzantine population felt joy and relief, four ships sent by the Pope managed to enter the city. The Ottoman commander and princes gathered with Sultan Muhammad II and told him: “You have forced all these soldiers to maintain this siege so as to implement the instructions of one of the scholars – referring to *Shaikh* Ak. You have caused death and injury to so many soldiers and destruction of their equipment; and furthermore, the Christians have now received more support from outside, so there is no hope for any conquest...”

The Sultan sent Waliuddin Ahmad Pasha, his minister, to *Shaikh Ak*, asking him for the solution. The *Shaikh* replied: “It is predestined that Allah ﷻ will grant us victory.”<sup>1</sup>

The Sultan, however, was not convinced by this answer, so he sent his minister a second time, asking the *Shaikh* to give more justification (for his statement).

The *Shaikh* wrote a letter to his disciple, Muhammad al-Faatih, in which he said: “Certainly the incident of the ships has caused mental anguish in our ranks, yet caused joy amongst the disbelievers, but remember that the established fact is that man’s work is subject to predestination, decreed by Allah ﷻ, and all judgment returns to Allah ﷻ. We have turned to Allah ﷻ and recited the Qur’an, and this is only a moment of negligence, which will be followed by Allah’s Mercy with good news never previously witnessed before.” These words instilled a sense of peace and serenity in the minds of commanders and soldiers, so the war council immediately decided to continue the struggle to liberate Constantinople. Sultan Muhammad then went to the tent of the *Shaikh* and kissed his hand, saying: “Teach me a supplication to ask Allah ﷻ so that I may be successful”, so the *Shaikh* duly obliged, the Sultan left the tent to order the general assault.

Sultan Muhammad wanted his *Shaikh* to be beside him during the attack, so he requested for his company. However, the *Shaikh* had given instructions to his guards not let anyone enter his tent, so they refused the Sultan’s messenger permission to approach the *Shaikh*. The Sultan

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<sup>1</sup> The Ottoman in History and Civilisation, p.373.

was angry and went himself to call the *Shaikh*, but was refused entry by the guards following the *Sheaikh's* instructions. The Sultan took his knife and cut the side of the tent only to see the *Shaikh* performing a long prostration to Allah ﷻ; he was wearing a turban and some of his white hair touched the ground; his white beard glistened. The Sultan watched him rise from his prostration with tears upon his cheeks; then he invoked Allah's Help to grant their victory in battle."

The Sultan returned to his command centre, observing the walls of the city; he witnessed his soldiers opening gaps within it, through which many fighters had penetrated into the city.

Sultan Muhammad was delighted and said: "My happiness is not for the conquest of the city, but the existence of such a man (his *Shaikh*) in our time."<sup>1</sup>

The scholar Shawkani mentioned in his "*al-Badr at-Tali*," that during the battle, *Shaikh* Shamsuddin's blessing and merit was witnessed for he had correctly identified the day of the liberation of Constantinople to the Sultan."<sup>2</sup>

When the Ottoman army surged into the city, in strength and with enthusiasm, the *Shaikh* approached the Sultan to remind him of the rules of *Shari'ah* as well as the rights of defeated nations, according to Islam.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "*al-Badr at-Tali*" (2/167).

<sup>2</sup> "*al-Badr at-Tali*" (2/116).

<sup>3</sup> The Ottomans in History and Civilisation, p. 374.

After honouring his soldiers with gifts and presents, the Sultan held a ceremonial feast that lasted three days. The pious *Shaikh* stood and gave a small speech, saying: “O soldiers of Islam, remember that the Prophet ﷺ had said about you: ‘Constantinople will (definitely) be liberated; what an excellent *Amir* (its *Amir*), and what an excellent army (that army)!’ We ask Allah ﷻ to make us successful and forgive us. Do not waste whatever money you have gained. Spend it on doing good deeds for the people of the city. Listen to your Sultan, obey him and love him.” Then he turned to Sultan al-Faatih, and said: “O my Sultan, you have become the joy for the Ottomans to behold; so continue to be a *Mujahid* in the Way of Allah...” then he shouted the *Takbeer*.

After the liberation of Constantinople, *Shaikh* Shamsuddin went to the grave of the Prophet’s Companion, Abu Ayyub al-Ansari ؓ, at a site near the wall of Constantinople. *Shaikh* Shamsuddin was the first to give a Friday sermon in the Aya Sofia Mosque.

### **Shaikh Shamsuddin helped to prevent the Sultan from being overcome by a sense of pride**

Sultan Muhammad al-Faatih loved his *Shaikh* very much, holding him in high esteem. He said to his gathering after the conquest: “You see that I am very happy, but my happiness is not only due to the liberation of this fortress; it is for having such an eminent beloved *Shaikh* beside me in my reign; it is for my teacher, *Shaikh* Ak Shamsuddin.”

He described his respect for *Shaikh* Shamsuddin in a conversation with his minister, Mahmoud Pasha, saying:

“My respect for *Shaikh* Shamsuddin is not out of choice; when I am near him, I feel a sense of serenity and awe.”<sup>1</sup>

That scholar was always keen to educate the Sultan correctly to understand concepts of *Iman*, *Islam* and *Ihsan*. The *Shaikh* was not only a religious scholar; he also had knowledge of botany, medicine and pharmacology. He was famous for his research of medicinal herbs and its suitability in curing many ailments and diseases.

*Shaikh* Shamsuddin was as interested in bodily diseases as he was in mental ones. He was especially interested in epidemic diseases which spread rapidly in his time, killing tens of thousands. He wrote a book on this subject, in Turkish, entitled “Living Matters”, in which he stated: “It is wrong to imagine that diseases appear spontaneously in people. Diseases move from one person to another contagiously. This contagion is so tiny that it is not possible to see it with a naked eye, because it takes place with live agents.”

Thus, *Shaikh* Shamsuddin was the person to give a definition of bacteria, in the fifteenth century. The microscope had not yet been invented; and it was not until four centuries later that the French chemist and biologist, Louis Pasteur, came to the same conclusion.

*Shaikh* Shamsuddin was also interested in cancer and wrote about it. In all, he wrote two books on medicine, which were entitled: “Living Matter” and “The Book of Medicine,” in

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<sup>1</sup> The Ottomans in History and Civilisation, p.375.

Turkish and the Ottoman languages. In addition the *Shaikh* had seven books published in Arabic.

### **His Death:**

*Shaikh* returned to his native land, Koniuk, after having felt a strong desire to see it again, despite the Sultan's insistence that he should remain in Istanbul (Constantinople). He died in 863 A.H, 1459 CE, may Allah's Mercy be upon him; for this is the Ordinance of Allah ﷻ in His Creation. Neither godly leader, nor brave liberator emerges, except that there is a group of pious scholars around him to teach and guide him. There are many of such examples to cite, and we have mentioned the role of Abdullah bin Yasin with Yahya bin Ibrahim in the Murabiteen State (in Morocco); Judge al-Fadil with Salahuddin in the Ayyubi State, and here we mentioned the role of *Shaikh* Ak Shamsuddin with Muhammad al-Faatih in the Ottoman State.

May Allah's Mercy be upon them all, and may He accept their sincere efforts and deeds.



## The Third Research

# The Effect of the Liberation of Constantinople upon the European and Islamic World

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**B**efore its conquest, Constantinople was a huge obstacle to the spread of Islam in Europe. Therefore, its liberation led to the entry of Islam into Europe, bringing so much strength and peace to its new converts more than ever before.

The conquest of Constantinople still remains one of the great events in world history, especially concerning European history and its relationship with Islam.

The Sultan started reorganizing the affairs of the city, following the conquest; rebuilding its defences; it became

the capital of the Ottoman State, and so it was renamed it 'Islam Bul,' meaning the city of Islam. However, it was later distorted to 'Istanbul.'

The Christian west was greatly affected by the news of this conquest. The Christians were taken by feelings of pain and disgrace, as they contemplated the danger of Muslim armies coming from Islam-Bul (Istanbul). The poets and lecturers tried hard to stir and revive old feelings of hatred and anger in the minds of the Christians against the Muslims. The kings and princes held long and frequent meetings, trying to put aside their differences. Pope Nicholas V (the fifth), of all people, was the most affected, and strove to unite the Italian provinces in fighting the Muslims. He headed a conference, held in Rome, in which all the participating countries declared their determination to help one another, by directing all their efforts and power in fighting against a common enemy. That alliance was nearly formed, but for the death of the pope, caused by a severe stroke, resulting from the news of the fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans, he died on 25<sup>th</sup> March, 1455 CE.

The Pope Pius II (the second) tried all he could to rekindle the Crusader hatred in the minds of the Christians. Some countries were prepared to undertake the pope's idea to destroy the Ottomans, but when the time came for mobilization, most of the European countries withdrew due to domestic crises. Indeed, 'The Hundred Years War' had exhausted both England and France; Britain was busy with its constitutional concerns and civil wars; Spain was busy fighting the Muslims of Andalusia; while the Italian states were concerned with consolidating their relations with the Ottoman State, for the sake of financial gain.

The project of the crusader campaign finished with the death of its leader, the Pope. Hungary and Venice became vulnerable to the Ottoman State. As for Venice, it drew up a friendship treaty and became good neighbours with the Ottomans for its own benefit; while Hungary lost its war against the Ottoman forces, who managed to add to their state the following regions: Serbia, Greece, al-Aflaq, al-Qurm, and the main islands of the archipelago. They achieved such success in a short period of time when Sultan Muhammad attacked them by surprise and destroyed their military power.

As for the effect of the Conquest of Constantinople in the Islamic east, we say: joy and happiness spread all over the Islamic lands, from Asia to Africa. The conquest was the dream of the grandfathers, and the hope of so many generations. They longed for it, yet it took place at the hands of Muhammad al-Faatih, who sent letters to all the rulers in the Islamic World, in Egypt, the Arabian Peninsula, Persia, India, etc, to inform them of the great Islamic victory. The news of the victory was celebrated on the pulpits, and many prayers of thankfulness to Allah ﷻ were performed, while all houses and shops were decorated in celebration of that great day in Islam.

### **The Letter of Al-Faatih to the Sultan of Egypt:**

Here are some extracts from the letter of al-Faatih to his brother in Islam, the Sultan of Egypt, which was drafted by *Shaikh* Ahmad al-Kourani:

“... One of the best attributes of our ancestors, may Allah’s Mercy be upon them, is that they were warriors for the Way of Allah ﷻ; they did not worry about any accusations of

accusers; and we are following that tradition by remaining firm upon that wish; adhering to the Command of Allah ﷻ:

قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ ... ﴿٢٩﴾

﴿Fight those who do not believe in Allah...﴾<sup>1</sup>,

And holding firmly to the saying of the Prophet ﷺ:

**“Whoever’s feet should be covered with dust from the Path of Allah ﷻ, Allah ﷻ would forbid him the fire.”**<sup>2</sup>

Our main concern this year has been filled with Blessings from Allah ﷻ; as we cling to the Rope of Allah ﷻ, the All-Mighty, to perform the obligation of invasion, for Islam, following His Commandment:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ يَلُونَكُمْ مِنَ الْكُفَّارِ ... ﴿١٢٣﴾

﴿O you who believe, fight those who are close to you among the disbelievers...﴾<sup>3</sup>

So we equipped the offensive army of with the *Mujahideen*, on land and at sea, to liberate a city which was filled with vice and disbelief, and stood arrogantly in the middle of the Islamic States, showing off its polytheism.

This city was partly located by the sea and partly on land. We had prepared well for it, as Allah ﷻ Commanded us:

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat at-Tawbah*, Verse 29.

<sup>2</sup> Recorded by *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Ahmad, at-Tirmidhi, and an-Nassai (6061).

<sup>3</sup> *Surat at-Tawbah*, Verse 123.

وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ ... ﴿٦٠﴾

﴿And make ready for them in every way you can of power...﴾<sup>1</sup>

We prepared all the weapons and power we could, we made use of cannons, stones, ships, all types of weapons that were available; we relied on Allah ﷻ to destroy them with His Agents, such as thunder, wind and lightning. We attacked the city on the 26<sup>th</sup> of *Rabi' the First*, 758 A.H.

Whenever they were called to the Truth, they refused out of pride. We laid a siege on their city; we fought them and they fought us in a battle that lasted fifty four days and nights.

By dawn of Tuesday, 20<sup>th</sup> *Jumada the First*, we made a general attack with all our forces, and Allah ﷻ granted us victory before sunrise.

سَيَهْرَمُ الْجَمْعُ وَيُوَلُّونَ الدُّبُرَ ﴿٤٥﴾ بَلِ السَّاعَةُ مَوْعِدُهُمْ وَالسَّاعَةُ

أَدَّهَىٰ وَأَمْرٌ ﴿٤٦﴾

﴿Soon will their multitude be put to flight and they will show their backs. Nay, but the Hour (of Judgment) is the time appointed time (for their full recompense), and that Hour will be most grievous and more bitter﴾<sup>2</sup>

They were destroyed like the people of 'Ad and Thamud. Some of them were killed and others were taken prisoner.

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat al-Anfal*, Verse 60.

<sup>2</sup> *Surat al-Qamar*, Verses 45-46.

Their wealth was removed and their crosses were broken. We turned their places of worship into mosques, for the people of Islam, and all praise is due to Allah ﷻ.”

Sultan Muhammad al-Faatih also sent a letter to the Sharif of Makkah, in celebration of the liberation of Constantinople, and asked him to make *Du'a* for them. He dispatched some gifts from the spoils gained after the battle.

## The Fourth Research

# The Reasons behind the Liberation of Constantinople

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The liberation of Constantinople did not happen unexpectedly; but was rather the result of a cumulative effort performed by Muslims since the first age of Islam; a desire of those generations to achieve the glad tidings of the Prophet ﷺ. The appearance of the Ottoman State increased the interest in conquering Constantinople, and we notice that the Ottoman Sultans were people of deep knowledge about working by the Ordinances set by Allah ﷻ. Sultan Muhammad al-Faatih adopted this *Sunnah*, as it appears in his biography of *Jihad*, for he was always keen to implement Allah's Words:

وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَمِنْ رِبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ تُرْهَبُونَ

بِهِ عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ وَءَاخِرِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَهُمْ... ﴿١٥٩﴾

﴿And make ready for them in every way you can of power and of horses tethered, that thereby you may dismay the enemy of Allah and your enemy, and others beside them whom you do not know...﴾<sup>1</sup>

Muhammad al-Faatih understood from this Verse, that the matter of victory for this religion requires the deployment of different types of power. He interpreted this Verse practically in his blessed *Jihad*, by assembling a great army to besiege Constantinople. He did not hesitate in making all types of weaponry available during his era...

The army which surrounded Constantinople, under the leadership of Muhammad al-Faatih, was morally prepared. It embodied the true meaning of faith and piety, and assumed the burden of trust to convey the Divine Message. It was developed upon the true meaning of faith, under the supervision of devout scholars, who adopted the Book of Allah ﷻ and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ as their way to educate its members.

Their education was based upon the fact that:

- 1- Allah ﷻ is One, with no associate besides Him. He ﷻ neither took a partner, nor a son. He ﷻ is free from all shortcomings, and described with Perfect Attributes that are never ending.
- 2- He ﷻ is the Creator of everything, the Owner of everything, and the Manager of everything:

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat al-Anfal*, Verse 60.

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ  
 اسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يُغْشَى اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ يَطْلُبُهُ حَثِيثًا وَالشَّمْسَ  
 وَالْقَمَرَ وَالنُّجُومَ مُسَخَّرَاتٍ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ أَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْأَمْرُ ۗ تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ  
 رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾

«Your Lord is Allah Who created the heavens and the earth in six Days, then He mounted the Throne. He covered the night with the day, which is in haste to follow it, and had made the sun and the moon and the stars subservient by His Command. His verily is all creation and commandment. Blessed be Allah, the Lord of the Worlds!»<sup>1</sup>

He ﷻ is the source of every blessing in existence, whether small or big, visible or invisible:

وَمَا بِكُمْ مِنْ نِعْمَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ ۗ ثُمَّ إِذَا مَسَّكُمُ الضُّرُّ فَإِلَيْهِ تَجْرُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

«Whatever of comfort you enjoy, it is from Allah. Then, when misfortune reached you, unto Him you cry for help»<sup>2</sup>

- 3- His Knowledge encompasses everything. Nothing is hidden from Him, whether on earth or in the heavens. He ﷻ knows what man hides and what he reveals:

<sup>1</sup> Surat al-A'raf, Verse 54.

<sup>2</sup> Surat an-Nahl, Verse 53.

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَمِنَ الْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ يَتَنَزَّلُ الْأَمْرُ بَيْنَهُنَّ لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا



«Allah, it is who has created seven heavens, and of the earth the like thereof. The Commandment comes down among them slowly, that you may know that Allah is Able to do all things, and that Allah surrounds all things in Knowledge»<sup>1</sup>

- 4- He ﷻ gets His Angels to record all man's actions, small or big, and will reveal them to him at the right time:

مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ

«He utters no word but there is with him an observer ready»<sup>2</sup>

- 5- He ﷻ tests people with different matters against their wishes, so that they know themselves well: who among them accepts Allah's Divine Decree, and who among them curses his fate, and therefore does not deserve anything from Him ﷻ:

<sup>1</sup> Surat at-Talaq, Verse 12.

<sup>2</sup> Surat Qaf, Verse 18.

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۗ وَهُوَ

الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ ﴿٦٦﴾

«Who has created life and death that He may try you, which of you is best in conduct; and He is the Mighty, Forgiving»<sup>1</sup>

6- He ﷻ provides success and support to whoever turns to Him:

إِنَّ وَلِيَّيَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْكِتَابَ ۗ وَهُوَ يَتَوَلَّى الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

«My Protecting Friend is Allah who revealed the Scripture. He befriended the righteous»<sup>2</sup>

7- His Right upon His Servants is that they should worship Him, Alone with none associated with Him:

بَلِ اللَّهِ فَاعْبُدْ ۗ وَكُنْ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

«But Allah must you serve, and be among the thankful!»<sup>3</sup>

8- He ﷻ defined the concept of His Oneness in the Qur'an:

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<sup>1</sup> Surat al-Mulk, Verse 2.

<sup>2</sup> Surat al-A'raf, Verse 196.

<sup>3</sup> Surat az-Zumar, Verse 66.

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿١﴾ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ﴿٢﴾ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ﴿٣﴾  
 وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ﴿٤﴾

﴿Say: He is Allah, the One! Allah, the eternally Besought of all! He does not beget nor was He begotten, and there is none comparable unto Him.﴾<sup>1</sup>

The scholars of the Ottoman State adopted the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ in educating the soldiers of its army with the truth of fate and the way to salvation. They focused on the following points:

- 1- that this life, even if it lasts a while, is doomed to end, and that its qualities, however great they are, are cheap and unworthy:

إِنَّمَا مَثَلُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَاءٍ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَاخْتَلَطَ بِهِ  
 نَبَاتُ الْأَرْضِ مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ النَّاسُ وَالْأَنْعَامُ حَتَّى إِذَا أَخَذَتِ  
 الْأَرْضُ زُخْرُفَهَا وَازَّيَّنَتْ وَظَنَّ أَهْلُهَا أَنَّهُمْ قَدِرُونَ عَلَيْهَا  
 أَتْنَاهَا أَمْرًا لَيْلًا أَوْ نَهَارًا فَجَعَلْنَاهَا حَصِيدًا كَأَن لَّمْ تَغْرَبْ  
 بِالْأَمْسِ ۚ كَذَلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

﴿The similitude of the life of the world is only as water which We send down from the sky, then the earth's growth of that which men and cattle eat, mingled with it, till, when the earth has taken on her ornaments and is

<sup>1</sup> Surat al-Ikhlaas.

embellished, and her people deem that they are masters of her, Our Commandment comes, by night or by day, and We make it as reaped corn as if it had not flourished yesterday. Thus, do We expound the Revelations for people who reflect.﴾<sup>1</sup>

... قُلْ مَتَّعُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ ... ﴿٧٧﴾

﴿...Say: the comfort of this world is scant...﴾<sup>2</sup>

- 2- that all mankind will return to Allah ﷻ; they will be accounted for their deeds; they will end in Paradise or in Hell:

أَلَمْ أَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانَ أَنْ يُتْرَكَ سُدًى ﴿٣٦﴾

﴿Does man think that he is to be left aimless?﴾<sup>3</sup>

- 3- that the Blessings in Paradise help them to forget all the sweetness of this life:

ثُمَّ جَاءَهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ ﴿٢٠٦﴾ مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا

يُمْتَتِعُونَ ﴿٢٠٧﴾

﴿ And afterwards comes to them that (punishment) which they had been promised! All that with which they used to enjoy (in this life) shall not avail them.﴾<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Surat Yunus, Verse 24.

<sup>2</sup> Surat an-Nisa', Verse 77.

<sup>3</sup> Surat al-Qiyamah, Verse 36.

<sup>4</sup> Surat ash-Shu'ara', Verses 206 -207.

- 4- that after the end of this world, people will go through arduous times, as their fate is decided either in Paradise or in Hell:

يَتَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ ۚ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١﴾  
يَوْمَ تَرَوْنَهَا تَذْهَلُ كُلُّ مُرْضِعَةٍ عَمَّا أَرْضَعَتْ وَتَضَعُ كُلُّ  
ذَاتِ حَمَلٍ حَمْلَهَا وَتَرَى النَّاسَ سُكَرَىٰ وَمَا هُمْ بِسُكَرَىٰ وَلَٰكِنَّ  
عَذَابَ اللَّهِ شَدِيدٌ ﴿٢﴾

﴿O mankind! Fear your Lord! For the convulsion of the Hour (of Judgment) will be a terrible thing! That Day you shall see that every mother giving suck shall forget her suckling-babe, and every pregnant female shall abort her load (unformed); you shall see mankind as in a drunken riot, yet not drunk: but dreadful will be the Wrath of Allah.﴾<sup>1</sup>

فَكَيْفَ تَتَّقُونَ إِن كَفَرْتُمْ يَوْمًا يَجْعَلُ الْوِلْدَانَ شِيبًا ﴿١٧﴾ أَلَسَمَاءُ  
مُنْفَطِرٌ بِهِ ۚ كَانَ وَعْدُهُ مَفْعُولًا ﴿١٨﴾

﴿ Then how can you avoid the punishment, if you disbelieve, on a Day that will make the children grey-headed (i.e. the Day of Resurrection)? Whereon the heaven will be cleft asunder? His Promise is certainly to be accomplished﴾<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Surat al-Hajj, Verses 1-2.

<sup>2</sup> Surat al-Muzzamil, Verses 17-18.

5- that the only way to safety from such ordeal and torment is by having faith in Allah ﷻ and doing good deeds, seeking His Pleasure:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ هُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا  
الْأَنْهَارُ ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْكَبِيرُ ﴿١١﴾

﴿For those who believe and do righteous deeds, will be Gardens beneath which Rivers flow; that is the Great Salvation (the fulfilment of all desires).﴾<sup>1</sup>

It was through these teachings that the Ottoman scholars managed to raise the awareness of all members of the Ottoman State – commanders, soldiers and masses – of their right towards the Religion of Allah ﷻ and their role in spreading the Message of Islam.

This education generated a special determination and enthusiasm in the minds of all members of Ottoman society. Their leader, Muhammad al-Faatih, was very proud of these facts as witnessed in his words:

My enthusiasm is to strive to serve my religion, the Religion of Allah ﷻ.

My determination is to subdue all people of disbelief with my soldiers, the Soldiers of Allah ﷻ.

My thinking is focused on “liberation” and victory, by Allah’s Mercy.

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<sup>1</sup> Surat al-Buruj, Verse 11.

My *Jihad* is conducted with life and money; what is better than this, in this world, after observing the Commandments of Allah ﷻ?

My desire is to conduct hundreds of thousands of invasions for the Sake of Allah ﷻ.

My request is to defend the Sanctity of Allah ﷻ and raise the Islamic state above the enemies of Allah ﷻ.

When Sultan al-Faatih wanted to conquer the city of Trabson, whose leader was a Christian, he wanted to attack it by surprise. So he prepared for it by taking along with him a great number of labourers who specialized in tree cutting and road construction. But they came across some high mountains on their way. The Sultan dismounted his horse and descended the mountain, using both his hands and feet, like the rest of the soldiers. They were accompanied by the mother of Hassan Uzun, the leader of the Turkmen, who had come to reconcile between the Sultan and her son. She asked the Sultan: “Why do you go to all this trouble? Is Trabson worth it?” He replied: “O mother, Allah ﷻ has put this sword in my hand so that I conduct *Jihad* with it for His Sake. So, if I do not bear this burden and fulfil my duty, with this sword, I would not deserve to have such a title as “the invader”, and how could I face Allah ﷻ on the Day of Judgment, after this?”

This was the mentality of most of the soldiers and their commanders, due to their deep religious upbringing and faith.

## The effect that ruling by Allah's Law had on the Ottoman State, during the reign of Sultan Muhammad al-Faatih:

Reflection on the book of Allah ﷻ, the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ, and the history of nations and their people gives one a great understanding of the Ordinances of Allah ﷻ for mankind and all creatures. The Book of Allah ﷻ is full of the Ordinances and patterns, set within different societies and populations; Allah ﷻ says:

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ سُنَنَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَيَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

«Allah wishes to make clear to you and to show you the ordinances of those before you; and (He wishes to) turn to you (in Mercy); and Allah is All-Knowing All-Wise»<sup>1</sup>

The Ordinances of Allah ﷻ are understood through understanding the Book of Allah ﷻ and the authentic *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ.

The Book of Allah ﷻ is Guidance for us to follow the principles of the laws set by Allah ﷻ, in all times and places, through history; He ﷻ says:

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat an-Nisa'*. Verse 26.

قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ

الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿١٣٨﴾ هَذَا بَيَانٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾

﴿Many were the ways of life that have passed away before you. Travel through the earth and see what was the end of those who rejected truth. Here is a plain statement to men; a Guidance and Instruction to those who fear Allah!﴾<sup>1</sup>

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَجَعَلَ الرَّجْسَ عَلَى

الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٤٠﴾ قُلْ أَنْظُرُوا مَاذَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

وَمَا تُغْنِي الْآيَاتُ وَالنُّذُرُ عَنْ قَوْمٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٤١﴾

﴿No soul can believe except by the Will of Allah, and He will place Doubt (or obscurity) on those who will not understand. Say: “Behold all that is in the heavens and on earth;” but neither Signs nor Warners profit those who believe not.﴾<sup>2</sup>

Through the Verses of the Qur’an, we perceive the fact that:  
First: The Ordinances of Allah ﷻ are predestined; Allah ﷻ says:

مَا كَانَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ مِنْ حَرَجٍ فِيمَا فَرَضَ اللَّهُ لَهُ ۖ سُنَّةَ اللَّهِ فِي الَّذِينَ

خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ ۗ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ قَدَرًا مَّقْدُورًا ﴿١٤٢﴾

<sup>1</sup> Surat al-‘Imran, Verses 137-138.

<sup>2</sup> Surat Yunus, verses 101-102.

«There can be no difficulty to the Prophet in what Allah has indicated to him as a duty. It was the practice (approved) of Allah amongst those of old, who have passed away, and the Command of Allah is a predetermined Decree.»<sup>1</sup>

Second: They are unchangeable; Allah ﷻ says:

مَلْعُونِينَ أَيْنَمَا ثُقِفُوا أُخِذُوا وَقُتِلُوا تَقْتِيلًا ﴿٦﴾ سُنَّةَ اللَّهِ فِي الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا ﴿٧﴾

«They shall have a curse on them; wherever they are found they shall be seized and slain (without mercy). (Such was) the practice (approved) of Allah among those who lived aforetime: no change will you find in the practice (approved) of Allah.»<sup>2</sup>

وَلَوْ قَاتَلَكُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوَلَّوْا الْأَدْبَرَ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُونَ وِلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿١٢﴾ سُنَّةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا ﴿١٣﴾

«If the Unbelievers should fight you they would certainly turn their backs; then would they find neither protector nor helper. (Such has been) the practice, approved, of Allah already in the past; no change will you find in the practice (approved) of Allah.»<sup>3</sup>

Third: They are continuous and never end; Allah ﷻ says:

<sup>1</sup> Surat al-Ahzab, Verse 38.

<sup>2</sup> Surat al-Ahzab, Verses 61-62.

<sup>3</sup> Surat al-Fath, Verses 22-23.

قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنْ يَنْتَهُوا يُغْفَرْ لَهُمْ مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ وَإِنْ يَعُودُوا فَقَدْ

مَضَتْ سُنَّتُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

﴿Say to the unbelievers if (now) they desist (from unbelief) their past would be forgiven them; but if they persist the punishment of those before them is already (a matter of warning for them).﴾<sup>1</sup>

Fourth: They are not to be opposed; Allah ﷻ says:

أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ  
كَانُوا أَكْثَرَ مِنْهُمْ وَأَشَدَّ قُوَّةً وَءِثَارًا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَمَا أَعْنَى عَنْهُمْ مَا  
كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾ فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَرِحُوا بِمَا  
عِنْدَهُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ وَحَاقَ بِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾ فَلَمَّا  
رَأَوْا بِأَسْنَا قَالُوا ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَحَدَّهُ وَكَفَرْنَا بِمَا كُنَّا بِهِ مُشْرِكِينَ  
﴿٤١﴾ فَلَمْ يَكُ يَنْفَعُهُمْ إِيمَانُهُمْ لَمَّا رَأَوْا بِأَسْنَا سُنَّتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي قَدْ  
خَلَتْ فِي عِبَادِهِ وَخَسِرَ هُنَالِكَ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

﴿Do they not travel through the earth and see what was the end of those before them? They were more numerous than these and superior in strength and in the traces

<sup>1</sup> Surat al-Anfal, verse 38.

**(they have left) in the land: yet all that they accomplished was of no profit to them. For when their Messengers came to them with Clear Signs they exulted in such knowledge (and skill) as they had; but that very (Wrath), at which they were wont to scoff, hemmed them in. But when they saw Our Punishment they said: “We believe in Allah, the One Allah, and we reject the partners we used to join with Him.” But their professing the Faith when they (actually) saw Our Punishment was not going to profit them. (Such has been) Allah’s Way of dealing with His Servants (from the most ancient times). And even thus did the rejecters of Allah perish (utterly)!﴾<sup>1</sup>**

Fifth: They apply to both the good and the corrupt.

The Prophets and all the believers are subject to the Ordinances set by Allah ﷻ, which have their effects on those who implement the Commandments of Allah ﷻ and on those who turn away from them.

Since the Ottomans observed the Laws of Allah ﷻ in all their affairs, the effects of their obedience to Allah ﷻ were seen clearly in the manner of their rule.

***First, the establishment of their authority:***

We find that the Ottomans, from the time of their first leader until Muhammad al-Faatih, were keen to establish the laws of Allah ﷻ for themselves and their families. They were sincere to Allah ﷻ, as they ruled by His Law, so He ﷻ gave them power and helped them to establish their rule on earth.

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat Ghafir*, Verses 82-85.

This is a pattern which does not change for those nations that work hard to establish the Law of Allah ﷻ on earth. Allah ﷻ promises the believers, saying:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي  
 الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ... ﴿٥٥﴾

﴿Allah has promised to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds that He will, of a surety, grant them inheritance (of power) in the land as He granted it to those before them...﴾<sup>1</sup>

The Ottomans had achieved true faith and wished to be governed by the Law of Allah ﷻ.

**Second, security and settlement:**

Asia Minor suffered from many conflicts in different provinces, but after that Allah ﷻ blessed the Ottomans with the ability to unite all the provinces and directed them to perform *Jihad* in the Path of Allah ﷻ, He ﷻ provided them with peace and security, in those regions ruled by Islamic *Shari'ah*. Allah ﷻ grants peace and security to anyone who correctly establishes the pure creed of Islam, free from any sort of polytheism; He ﷻ says:

الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا ءِيمَانَهُم بِظُلْمٍ ءُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ الْاَمْنُ وَهُمْ  
 مُّهْتَدُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat an-Nur*, Verse 55.

«It is those who believe, and confuse not their beliefs with wrong, that are (truly) in security, for they have the (right) guidance.»<sup>1</sup>

### **Third, victory and conquest (liberation):**

The Ottomans were keen to support the Religion of Allah ﷻ with everything they possessed, and the Promise of Allah ﷻ was realised in them, for He ﷻ says:

... وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَن يَنْصُرُهُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٨٢﴾ الَّذِينَ  
إِن مَّكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَمَرُوا  
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ غَلِيبٌ ﴿٨٤﴾

«...Allah will certainly aid those who aid His Cause; for verily Allah is Full of Strength, Exalted in Might (Able to enforce His Will). They are those who, if We establish them in the land, establish regular prayer and give regular charity, enjoin what is right and forbid wrong; with Allah rests the end (and decision) of all affairs.»<sup>2</sup>

Whenever a group tries to establish the *Shari'ah*, thus following the Guidance of Allah ﷻ, He ﷻ eventually grants them power and authority. Yet, many people are still worried about following the *Shari'ah* of Allah ﷻ; because of the hostility that they would have to face from the enemies of Allah ﷻ; all the conspiracies of their enemies, together with their economic sanctions; however, these are all illusions,

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat al-An'am*, Verse 82.

<sup>2</sup> *Surat al-Hajj*, Verses 40-41.

like those that the Quraish had, when they told to the Prophet ﷺ:

وَقَالُوا إِن نَتَّبِعِ أَهْدَىٰ مَعَكَ نُنْخَطَفُ مِنْ أَرْضِنَا ... ﴿٥٧﴾

﴿They say: “If we were to follow the guidance with you we would be snatched away from our land...”﴾<sup>1</sup>

That is because when they eventually did follow the Guidance of Allah ﷻ, they came to dominate the east and west, within a quarter of a century.

Allah ﷻ supported the Ottomans, by helping them to conquer lands; thus submitting people to the Law of Allah ﷻ, and opening their hearts to the Guidance to Islam.

Those Islamic nations who avoid the *Shari‘ah* of Allah ﷻ, only disgrace themselves, both in this world and in the Hereafter.

The responsibility of rulers, judges, and scholars in trying to establish the Law of Allah ﷻ is immense; they will be accountable before Allah ﷻ for this. If those in authority do not rule by the Law of Allah ﷻ, enmity would arise in society as can be seen today.

#### ***Fourth, honour and dignity:***

The honour and dignity that characterised the Ottomans was due to their adherence to the Commandments of Allah ﷻ and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet ﷺ. Whoever fully respects the Book of Allah ﷻ and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet ﷺ, has

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<sup>1</sup> *Surat al-Qasas*, Verse 57.

indeed taken a step in the right direction, and Allah ﷻ will dignify all those who adhere to His Book; He ﷻ says:

لَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ كِتَابًا فِيهِ ذِكْرُكُمْ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

«We have revealed for you (O men) a book in which there is a Message for you: Will you not then understand?»<sup>1</sup>

Ibn ‘Abbas ؓ said in his interpretation of this Verse; “It has your honour.”

The Ottomans derived their honour and dignity from Allah ﷻ observing to the laws of Islam, just as ‘Umar bin al-Khattab ؓ who said: “We were a disgraced nation, until Allah ﷻ honoured us with Islam. If we should try to seek honour in anything other than Islam, Allah ﷻ would disgrace us.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, Umar bin al-Khattab ؓ informed us of the reality behind whether a nation should live in dignity or disgrace, is due to its attitude towards the Islamic *Shari‘ah*; positive or negative. No nation has ever been sanctified except with the Religion of Allah ﷻ, nor has it ever been disgraced, except by deviating from it. Allah ﷻ says:

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًا ... ﴿١٠﴾

«If anyone should seek for glory and power, to Allah belong all Glory and Power...»<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Surat al-Anbiya*, Verse 10.

<sup>2</sup> Recorded by al-Hakim in “*Al-Mustadrak*”, the Book of *Iman* (1/62).

<sup>3</sup> *Surat Faatir*, Verse 10.

He ﷺ also says:

... وَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُولِهِ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَكِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾

«...All Honour belongs to Allah and His Messenger, and to the Believers, but the Hypocrites do not know (this)»<sup>1</sup>

The biography of such Ottoman Sultans as ‘Uthman the First, Murad, and Muhammad al-Faatih, inform us of their tremendous respect for Islam; their love for the Qur’an, and their willingness to die in the Path of Allah ﷺ; for they lived a blessed life, thanks to their establishment of the Religion of Allah ﷺ (Islam); Allah ﷺ says:

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰ ءَامَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَرَكَاتٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ  
وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَكِن كَذَّبُوا فَأَخَذْنَاهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

«If the people of the towns had only believed and feared Allah, We should indeed provided them with (all kinds of) Blessings from heaven and earth; but they rejected (the Truth), and so We brought them to account for their misdeeds.»<sup>2</sup>

#### ***Fifth, the spread of virtues and obliteration of vice:***

During the reign of Muhammad al-Faatih, virtue was apparent whilst vice was eradicated. A new generation

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<sup>1</sup> Surat al-Munafiqeen, Verse 8.

<sup>2</sup> Surat al-A'raf, Verses 96.

appeared, with such qualities as nobility, generosity, bravery and sacrifice for the sake of their faith. They longed for the Reward of Allah ﷻ, yet feared His Punishment. The whole nation responded by trying to please Allah ﷻ, observing His Commandments and Prohibitions.

The positive effect of ruling by Allah's Laws, in former nations, is apparent to anyone who studies Islamic history. The Blessing that were experienced by the Ottoman State were but one of Allah's Ordinances, which remain immutable.

Any nation that seeks this noble objective will eventually reach it, provided it abides by the Divine Commandments.

The aim of this historical research is to learn profoundly from all the faithful ones who preceded us, in terms of their *Jihad*, knowledge, and firm desire to govern by the Laws of Allah ﷻ.

All those great victories, in the history of our *Ummah*, were granted by Allah ﷻ to those who were sincere to Him ﷻ, establishing His Laws in themselves and their society.



## The Fifth Research

# The main attributes of Muhammad al-Faatih

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**M**any qualities of leadership may be seen in the personality of Muhammad al-Faatih, the main ones being:

### **(1) Firmness of Purpose**

This was apparent when he realised the incompetence of his admiral, Baltah Oghli, during his siege of Constantinople; he sent him a message, saying: “You should either capture those ships or you destroy them, but if you do not succeed in your mission, do not return to me alive.”

When Baltah Oghli failed in his mission, the Sultan replaced him with Admiral Hamza Pasha.

### **(2) Bravery**

He used to personally fight battle, with his sword. During one such battle in the Balkans, the Ottoman army was ambushed by Estephan the leader of the Bogdan, whose army hid behind trees, shooting the Ottomans as they passed

by. The soldiers had to crawl on the ground and the whole army was in turmoil, until the Sultan's quick response to restore order, shouting at his army, he said: "O *Mujahideen* invaders, be like Soldiers of Allah, and show your Islamic zeal." Then, he grabbed his shield and sword, and rode forward on his horse. This action instilled so much enthusiasm in the hearts of his soldiers, who followed him deep into the forest, where fierce sword fighting took place, lasting the whole day.

The Ottomans managed to decimate the army of Estephan, who fell off his horse yet was able to escape; so they were able to collect much booty there.

### **(3) Intelligence**

This was apparent in his great idea to transport his ships from the port of Besiktas to the Golden Horn, to avoid the area of Galata and the southerners. The distance between the two ports was about three miles, over an undulating road. When the plan commenced, al-Faatih gave his order for the road to be straightened, and then the soldiers brought some wood, soaked with oil and fat, to facilitate the carrying of the ships. Which was a momentous achievement at that time; for it showed speed of thinking and execution; the astuteness of al-Faatih.

### **(4) Determination and Persistence**

Sultan Muhammad al-Faatih sent a message to Emperor Constantine XI, asking him to surrender Constantinople to prevent any further bloodshed in the city and to avoid any harm, having the option of staying in the city or leaving, however, Constantine rejected the proposal, so then the

Sultan Muhammad said: “Right! Shortly, I will either have a crown or a grave in Constantinople.”

When the Byzantines managed to burn the huge mobile wooden fortress, the Sultan’s response was: “Tomorrow, I will construct four more.”

In all these incidents he showed his determination and persistence to attain his objectives.

### **(5) Justice**

He treated the people of the Book according to the teachings of Islamic *Shari‘ah*; giving them their religious rights, so no Christian was ever subject to mistreatment or aggression. The Sultan honoured their leaders, because his motto was “Justice is the basis of kingship.”

### **(6) Never feeling conceited with his power**

When the Sultan entered Constantinople, he repeated the words: “All Praise to Allah ﷻ. May Allah have Mercy upon the martyrs, and grant the *Mujahideen* honour and glory, and my people pride and thankfulness.”

He related all merit to Allah ﷻ; therefore, he always praised and thanked his Lord, which was due to his strong faith in Allah ﷻ.

### **(7) Sincerity**

Many of the Sultan’s positions indicate his deep sincerity to his religion and his faith, as highlighted in his literature:

My intention: To observe Allah’s Commandments [Perform *Jihad* in the Way of Allah ﷻ]

My enthusiasm: To strive hard in the service of my religion, the Religion of Allah ﷻ.

My determination: To subdue all people of unbelief with my soldiers, the Soldiers of Allah ﷻ.

My thinking: To focus on conquest and victory, gaining the Allah's Mercy.

My *Jihad* is conducted with life and money; what is better in this world, after observing the Commandments of Allah ﷻ? My desire is to conduct hundreds of thousands of invasions, for the Sake of Allah ﷻ.

My request is to defend the Sanctity of Allah ﷻ and raise the Islamic state above the enemies of Allah ﷻ.

### **(8) Knowledge**

His father was interested in his education ever since his childhood. He made him follow a great educational system, supervised by a group of eminent scholars of his time. He learnt the Qur'an, *Ahadith*, *Fiqh*, as well as mathematics, astronomy, history, and both theoretical and practical military studies.

Thanks to Allah ﷻ, Sultan al-Faatih was supervised by such great scholars as *Shaikh* Ak Shamsuddin and the Mulla al-Kourani, the first scholars of the Ottomans, who had so much knowledge, in many subjects, during his lifetime. The result of all that education was clearly seen in the Sultan's military and intellectual tendencies.

The Sultan was fluent in three languages, which were necessary for any intellectual of his time; Arabic, Farsi and Turkish. He was also a poet and wrote a volume of poetry in Turkish.



## The Sixth Research

# Some of his public works

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### (1) The Sultan's Interest in Education

Sultan Muhammad al-Faatih was a great admirer of knowledge and scholarship. Therefore, he was interested in building schools and institutes throughout his state. Sultan Arukhan was the first to build a school in the Ottoman State, and his successors follow suit.

However, Muhammad al-Faatih exceeded his predecessors in this matter; he strove hard to spread knowledge, by constructing more schools, and introducing reforms in the educational system, in small towns and cities as well as the countryside.

He designated plenty of endowment for the finance of these schools, and organised their levels, terms and examinations. He closely followed the course of this educational system, attending some of the examinations during his school visits. He made education free for everyone, encouraging brilliant teachers and students by giving them gifts and rewards. The subjects taught were: *Tafsir* (Interpretation of the *Qur'an*),

*Hadith* (study of the Prophet's Traditions), *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence), literature, linguistics, architecture, etc.

He built eight schools next to his mosque, in Constantinople, where the students would spend the final stages of their academic study, living in dormitories, and receiving a monthly scholarship. They also could borrow books from a library, run by a qualified librarian whom the Sultan suggested should have knowledge of all the books and authors.

The education courses included system field studies; as there were separate branches for theory and practical knowledge.

Ministers and wealthy scholars used to compete with each other to build institutes, schools, and charity houses.

## **(2) The Sultan's Interest in Scholars**

Scholars and authors were highly regarded by Sultan Muhammad al-Faatih; he offered money to produce work, encouraging them with extra gifts, to focus on science and help improve the educational system.

When the province of al-Kurm had been added to the state, he ordered for its labourers and craftsman to be transported to Constantinople; but his minister, Rum Muhammad Pasha mistreated the newcomers, including some scholars among them, such Ahmad Jalabi, son of Sultan Amir 'Ali. However, after Sultan al-Faatih knew of this, he gave some excuses to the scholar and returned to his country in a dignified way.

When the Sultan defeated Uzun Hasan, the leader of the Turkmen, who used to side with the enemies of the

Ottomans, he gave his orders to kill all the prisoners, except the scholars among them, such as the judge Muhammad Sharihi, who was a man of virtue in his time.

Whenever the Sultan heard about a scholar in difficulty, he rushed to his aid, sending everything he needed to help him in the issues of his religion.

It was a habit of the Sultan, during the month of Ramadan, to invite a group of scholars to his palace, who would discuss the interpretation of the Qur'an among themselves. He would participate himself in the discussions, presenting the scholars with gifts and financial rewards.

### **(3) The Sultan's Interest in Poets and Poetry**

A scholar of Ottoman Literature reported that Sultan al-Faatih was involved in literary renaissance, during his thirty year rule, as he was a great poet. His reign was characterised by years of blessings, grace and progress. He was known as Abu al-Fath, because he defeated two empires, liberated seven kingdoms, and captured two hundred cities. He established houses of worship and knowledge, and he was also known as Abu al-Khayrat (the benevolent).

Al-Faatih was interested in literature in general, and particularly in poetry. Many poets were in his company, as he appointed many of them as ministers, such as Ahmad Pasha Mahmoud, Mahmoud Pasha and Qasim al-Jazri Pasha. There were thirty poets assigned to his palace, receiving monthly wages of a thousand dirhams, who used to commend him for his good deeds and generosity towards men of knowledge.

#### **(4) The Sultan's Interest in Translation**

Sultan Muhammad al-Faatih was fluent in Latin, and in order to advance the intellectual development in his country, he ordered the translation of many Greek, Latin, Arabic and Farsi writings into Turkish. Among the books translated was a book of Medicine by Abu al-Qasim az-Zahrawi, a physician from Andalusia.

When he came across a book of geography with maps, he analysed it with the Byzantine scholar, George Amortizes; then asked him, together with his son –who was fluent in Arabic – to translate it into Arabic, redrawing the map again and verifying all the names of countries, writing them both Latin and Arabic. He rewarded them well for their excellent work. There was also a scholar called Ali al-Kawshaji, who was the greatest mathematician and astronomer of his age; whenever he wrote a book in Farsi, he translated it into Arabic and offered it to the Sultan.

Al-Faatih was very interested in Arabic, because it is the language of the Qur'an, and a major scientific language of that age.

The Sultan made a great library in his palace, which contained so many books in different scientific fields; he appointed *Shaikh* Lutfi as its manager. The library contained more than twelve thousand volumes, of which Professor Wiseman has described as a point of transition between the east and west.

#### **(5) The Sultan's Interest in public buildings and hospitals**

Sultan al-Faatih was passionate about building mosques, institutes, palaces, hospitals, hotels, public baths,

supermarkets and public parks. He introduced water into the city by means of special aqua ducts. He encouraged wealthy people to build public places in the city to make it more attractive. He was especially concerned to make Constantinople the most beautiful capital in the world; a capital of science and the arts. He assigned a doctor for each hospital, assisted by a team of nurses, a pharmacist, and some assistants. He suggested that all hospital staff should be compassionate and kind-hearted towards patients. He ordered the doctors to check on the patients twice a day, and show extreme caution when issuing their prescriptions. He also recommended that hospital cooks should consider their meals well, so as to suit each patient's particular illness. All the patients used to get free treatment and free medicines, regardless of their race or origin.

#### **(6) The Sultan's Interest in Commerce and Industry**

The Sultan showed great interest in commerce, helping to improve it by all means available. He followed in the steps of his predecessors, who were always ready to develop the sectors of commerce and trade among their subjects, in all the major cities, which witnessed great prosperity during their era, as compared to the reign of the Byzantine state who monopolised everything and crippled progressive trade.

The Ottomans were aware of international markets and all the various terrestrial and maritime trade routes. The other countries were compelled to open their ports to Ottoman commercial ships, and the state policy helped all business sectors flourish and prosper during the reign of the 'Uthman family, who had their own recognised gold currency.

The state produced many munition factories, and built fortresses in areas that were of military significance to the state.

#### **(7) The Sultan's Interest in administrative organisations**

Sultan al-Faatih worked hard to develop his state, setting some regulations to enable him to systematize all the affairs of local administrations. The regulations were derived from the Islamic *Shari'ah* by a committee of scholars appointed by the Sultan. The committee put in place a law called "the Law of Nameh," that was drawn from the *Shari'ah*, and established as the basis of state rule. The law was made of three chapters, which related to the positions of the employees, customs and protocols, in addition to some punishments and fines. The law clearly decreed that the state was to be ruled by an Islamic government, based on the superiority of the Islamic aspect, not giving preference to any particular race or origin.

The Sultan al-Faatih was also concerned about establishing some regulations to organise the relationship of non-Muslims in the country with their Muslim neighbours, and with the state which governed them. He established justice among all his subjects, removing all robbers and highwaymen. He ensured that peace and security was common throughout the Ottoman State.

The Sultan purged the state of all incompetent employees, replacing them with competent ones. Indeed, the aspect of proficiency was his sole basis for choosing his aides and governors. He also introduced firm financial regulations concerning state taxes, and ended any negligence or

misconduct of tax inspectors, which had previously wasted vast state funds.

### **(8) The Sultan's Interest in the Army and Navy**

Since the rule of Sultan Arukhan, an army and was developed and improved, by his successors, especially the Sultan Muhammad al-Faatih, who gave it special priority. The army, according to the Sultan, was the main foundation of the state. He reorganised the army and appointed an "*Agha*" as leader for each battalion.

Along with the manpower of the army, with numerical superiority, the reign of Sultan al-Faatih was distinguished by the formation of many different military zones. He built military factories to meet the army's need for clothing, armour, weapons and munitions. There were different, well organised, regiments of army personnel, such as cavalry, light and heavy infantry units, and support units. There was also a unit called "*laghmajiyah*", whose duty it was to dig holes for mines and trenches underground, during the siege of fortresses. The military college was developed, during the reign of al-Faatih, to produce successive groups of architects, doctors, veterinaries and scientists. The college used to supply the army with all the technicians that they required, a fact which earned the Ottomans a reputation for professionalism and efficiency.

The Sultan was very keen to develop the infantry and navy of his military forces, which proved to be of great significance at the liberation of Constantinople. Indeed, it was the siege of Constantinople around the sea which helped conquer the city, so it was not last long before the Ottoman fleet controlled the Black and White seas. His interest in

naval matters made historians consider him as the real founder of the Ottoman navy, for he learnt from those countries that were advanced in ship building, such as the Italian republics of Venice and Genoa.

### **(9) The Sultan's Interest in the establishment of Justice**

The establishment of justice for their subjects was seen as a duty of the Ottoman Sultans. Sultan al-Faatih, like his predecessors, in the Ottoman family, was extremely eager to advance the cause of justice in all departments of the state.

In order to ensure the establishment of his policy of justice, he would often send some Christian clerics, to all the sectors of the state to monitor the application of justice for themselves for people in tribunals. They were also given every freedom to criticise and record any violation, and report it to the Sultan. Their reports usually praised the course of justice in tribunals and the judicial system as a whole.

When the Sultan embarked on a military campaign, he would stop over in some provinces, erecting his tent in order to welcome people and listen to their complaints.

He was well aware that Islamic scholars were more conscious of justice and the keenest to observe it. So he considered scholars to be the heart of the state; if they were good, the state was good, but if they were corrupt, the state would be corrupt. Therefore, he raised their status, providing all the means that were necessary for them to continue their studies and research. He was particularly interested in judicial scholars, who judgments in people's affairs. He was not content that they should be pious and fair in their

judgments; he wanted them to be also the subject of praise and respect by all people. So he made the state take responsibility of all their financial expenses, to prevent them from being tempted by bribery and corruption.

Despite his busy life of performing *Jihad* and making conquests, he used to follow the affairs of the state closely, due to his insight and aptitude. He would often walk along the roads of the city to check on the condition of his people, listening to any of their complaints.



# Summary

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1- Ottoman history has been subjected to a defamation campaign of deformation, falsification and slander from the Jews, Christians and secularists.

2- Some Arab and Turkish historians have also followed the course of these enemies of the Caliphate.

3- The European states sponsored a front against the Islamic Caliphate, and supported historians in Egypt and al-Sham (Palestine, Syria and Lebanon) to impose the national secularist movement, headed by such people as al-Bustani, al-Yaziji, George Zaydan, Adib Ishaq, Salim Naqqash, Shalbi Shamil, Salamah Musa and others.

4- The Freemasons managed to dominate the intellectual nationalists within Islamic populations, who were subjected to Masonic guidance more than their own response to the request of their people, especially with regards to the implementation of Islam.

5- The historians who worked to defame the image of the Ottoman State told lies, giving spurious arguments to distort the truth about the glorious reign of the Ottomans, in a

research campaign characterised by their blind hatred towards Islam in general.

6- A group of Muslim scholars rebutted the enemy's accusation, in defence of the Ottoman State, of which the most significant replies were those of:

- Dr. Abd al-Aziz al-Shannawi, in three large volumes, entitled: "The Ottoman State is an Islamic State subjected to Slander".

- Dr. Muhammad Harb, "The Ottomans in History and Civilisation" and "Sultan Muhammad al-Faatih, the Conqueror of Constantinople and Defeater of the Romans"

- Dr Muhammad Muwaffaq Bani al-Murjah, "The Revival of the Sick Man"

7- The Ottomans were related to a tribe of Turkmen, who settled in Kurdistan and worked as shepherds.

8- Sulaiman, the grandfather of 'Uthman, emigrated in 617 A.H with his tribe and settled in the city of Akhlat, east of present day Turkey.

9- Artaghul succeeded as the leader of the tribe of Sulaiman, following Sulaiman's death, and continued his move towards the north-west of Anatolia. On his way, he came across an armed conflict between the Muslim Seljuks and the Christian Romans; so he joined the side of the Muslims, and his engagement was at the right time, so victory went to the Seljuk.

10- The Muslim Seljuk leader, Artaghul, and his group seized a piece of land by the western borders of Anatolia, near the Byzantine colonies, and offered the Ottomans a chance to expand at the expense of the Byzantnes.

11- ‘Uthman I (the First) assumed the leadership of his people, following the death of his father, and followed his father’s policy of expanding into Byzantine lands.

12- ‘Uthman I (the First) was distinguished by some great characteristics, such as: bravery, wisdom, faithfulness, patience, justice, loyalty, sincerity in his conquests for the Sake of Allah ﷻ, and also his love for gaining knowledge and its people.

13- The life of ‘Uthman I (the First), the founder of the Ottoman State, was based on performing *Jihad* and calling to the Way of Allah ﷻ. He was always surrounded by Islamic scholars, who supervised both the administrative plan and its execution. The will left by ‘Uthman I (the First) to his son because a civil document and Islamic legal guidance, upon which the Ottoman State took its course.

14- Sultan Arukhan took over as leader, after the death of his father in 726 A.H, following the same policy as his father in his ruling and conquests. He was focused on achieving the Prophet’s glad tidings, as mentioned in his *Hadith*, namely the liberation of Constantinople. He developed a strategic plan to besiege the Byzantine capital from both the east and west.

15- The most significant deed in the life of the Sultan Arukhan concerned his foundation of the Islamic Army. He

introduced a special system in the army, dividing the army into regiments; each regiment consisted of ten, a hundred or a thousand soldiers. He assigned a fifth of the spoils of war to the army expenses, and kept the army in a state of constant preparedness, as it had to be mobilised quickly at times of war. He also developed special centres for military training.

16- Arukhan focused on consolidating the foundations of the state, by introducing some reforms and organising the administration. He strengthened the army, built mosques and science institute, which were supervised by brilliant scholars and teachers, who earned the respect of the state.

17- The Sultan Murad I (the First) succeeded after the death of the Sultan Arukhan in 761 A.H. Murad I (the First) was a brave, generous and religious warrior, who was firmly attached to the Islamic system; remaining close to all his subjects and soldiers. He was passionate about Islamic expansion, building mosques, schools and refuges. He was surrounded by a group of experts, who formed his board of consultants. He was able to expand his state into both Asia Minor and Europe at the same time.

18- Murad I (the First) managed to liberate Ederna in 762 A.H, making that city a capital of the Ottoman State, so for the first time the capital of the Islamic state was moved to Europe.

19- Sultan Murad I (the First) knew that he was fighting in the Way of Allah ﷻ, and that victory was from the Almighty ﷻ; therefore he was persistent in his supplication to Allah ﷻ, and was extremely reliant on Him; it was this constant

supplication that reflected his true knowledge and devotion to his Lord. He fell as a martyr in the battle of Kosovo against the Serbs.

20- Sultan Murad I (the First) led the Ottoman people for a period of thirty years with wisdom and proficiency, that was unequalled by anyone during his lifetime.

21- Bayazid took over the reign, following the death of his father, Murad I, in 791 A.H. He was brave and very enthusiastic about engaging in Islamic invasions. He was remarkably interested in military affairs, targeting the Christian sovereignties in Anatolia, which soon became part of the Ottoman State after only a year of his rule. He was compared to lightning, as he was known for travelling so swiftly between the two fronts: the Balkans and Anatolia.

22- Bayazid was defeated by the armies of Timorlink because of his haste and recklessness, and his poor choice of location in deploying his army.

23- The Ottoman State faced domestic crises as a civil war erupted among the sons of Bayazid in order to seize the throne. That war lasted for ten years, for that period was a testing time and trial, preceding a period of sovereignty following the liberation of Constantinople.

24- Sultan Muhammad Jalabi managed to end the civil war, due to his firmness and insight. He overwhelmed his brothers, one after the other, until he took control of the Ottoman authority. He spent his period of rule rebuilding the state and consolidating its foundations. Some historians regard him as the second founder of the Ottoman State.

25- Sultan Muhammad Jalabi managed to destroy the movement of the *Shaikh* Baiduddin, who preached equality in money, property and religion, since he did not distinguish between Muslims and non-Muslims regarding their in faiths.

26- Sultan Jalabi was an admirer of poetry, literature and the arts in general. It was said that he was the first Ottoman Sultan to send the annual gift to the *Amir* of Makkah.

27- Murad II (the Second) took the reign in 824 A.H, after the death of his father, Muhammad Jalabi. He was devoted to *Jihad* and the call to Islam, and was also a poet who loved scholars and poets.

28- Muhammad II, al-Faatih took the reign, at the age of 22, after the death of his father in 855 A.H. He was distinguished by his unique personality, which combined strength with justice. He also excelled over others, from an early age, in many fields of science, of which he was taught in the school of princes. He had knowledge of many languages of his time, and liked to study history.

29- Sultan al-Faatih's most significant deed was the conquest of Constantinople; it had a great effect on both the Islamic and European world.

30- The Ottomans were devoted to rule by Islamic *Shari'ah*, and therefore great signs appeared in the Ottoman society, such as sovereignty and authority, security and settlement, victory and liberation, honour and dignity, and spread of virtue and eradication of vice, etc.

31- Muhammad al-Faatih was known for his many qualities of leadership such as: firmness, bravery, shrewdness, determination, persistence, justice, modesty, sincerity and knowledge.

32- Some of the deeds of Muhammad al-Faatih were: the building of schools and institutes for scholars, poets, authors and translators. He was also interested in the construction of hospitals, industrial buildings for commerce and trade, and administrative buildings for his government, army and navy.

33- Muhammad al-Faatih left a will in which he sincerely expressed his system of life, and the principles in which he believed.

34- *Shaikh* Muhammad bin Hamzah (Ak Shamsuddin) and *Shaikh* Ahmad al-Kourani were considered to have been the two *Shaikhs* who had the greatest intellectual impact on the mind of Sultan Muhammad al-Faatih.



# Conclusion

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The Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said:

**“Constantinople will be conquered by the hands of a man, so blessed be the leader of that conquest, and blessed be that army!”**

The city of Constantinople (known today as Istanbul) was enlightened and blessed with Islam on 855 *Hijri* (1453 CE). That conquest which proved to be one the greatest in military history. Constantinople was regarded as one of the most important and largest cities in the world. It was established in 330 CE, becoming the capital of the Byzantine Empire. Its previous capital was Rome, however, due to its natural strategic position and manmade defences, Constantinople became the new capital. It was surrounded by water on three sides, and was protected by a wall on the forth side.

**Due to its excellent natural strategic defence, the city was almost impossible to conquer.**

The above *Hadith* narration became an inspiration and motivation for many Muslims to attempt to conquer the city, as they desired to be that blessed army with that blessed

leader. Although famous companions and leaders were able to conquer the surrounding cities, they were never able to conquer Constantinople itself, despite numerous attempts. The attempts to lay siege on Constantinople were therefore halted for 700 years after 155 *Hijri*, as it seemed impossible.

**That honour was to be given to a man known as Muhammad II, al-Faatih.**

That great commander and leader had a very noble upbringing; his father made sure that he received the best education, desiring that he should grow up as a complete Muslim, a Muslim who would serve Islam fully, and a Muslim who would be willing to sacrifice his life for Islam. He could speak six languages, which included Arabic, Turkish, Persian (Farsi), Latin, Greek and Hebrew. In addition to these qualities he was learned in all the sciences: physics, mathematics, chemistry and philosophy. One of the most distinguished aspects of his life was that he would always be in the company of scholars; never would he waste his time in the company of jokers or clowns. Such was his knowledge, that he himself could have become a scholar. He would engross himself in worship during the night, and he would never miss a prayer in congregation. Apart from the spiritual aspect of Islam, he never neglected the other aspect of Islam, namely the ability to remain physically fit so as to defend himself and his Religion. He was a superb horseman and an outstanding soldier, a quality that was present in every Muslim in the early generation of Islam, but has almost disappeared and been neglected in recent times. Muhammad al-Faatih used to detest a life of luxury, as this would have distracted him from his return Journey to the Hereafter.

## **He knew the *Hadith* of the Prophet, mentioning the conquest of Constantinople.**

This *Hadith* inspired him from a very young age as he desired to be that blessed leader, which is in sharp contrast to the situation which prevails today. Today, the youngsters are raised with the desire to become celebrities or football stars! Muhammad al-Faatih studied the military history of the Muslims in depth, with all their attempts at conquering Constantinople. He studied all the defeats that were inflicted upon the Muslims, as well as all the areas which could be improved, as Constantinople was yet to be conquered and blessed with the Light of Islam.

His father, Murad II, was the Caliph of the Muslims, however, Murad II became tired of the responsibilities of leadership and decided to retire, so he abdicated and gave the leadership to his son, Muhammad II, (al-Faatih), **who was still only at the tender age of twelve!** He knew that he could rely on his son, as he had a superb intellect and befitted for the role. But because of internal problems, and dangers at the borders from the enemy, his father returned as the Caliph, however not long after this, his father passed away, in 853 A.H (1451 CE) and Muhammad II (al-Faatih) became the Caliph and so took control of all the Ottoman Caliphate at the age of 22!

Now, all his preparations could be put into action, as he was the Caliph. What was to follow was one of the most amazing and unparalleled conquests ever undertaken in military history. **Such was this conquest that even his enemies were dumbfounded and astonished by his unorthodox methods; they acknowledged and paid tribute to his**

**brilliance; to his unique tactics that were displayed during that in this conquest.**

**By Ibn Munir**  
*(The Islamic Society – London)*

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**Additional Reading:**

*The Light of Islam in Constantinople: Glimpses of History*



# grief & depression

from an  
Islamic Perspective

Dr Abdulrah al-Khatir

## Winning the Heart of your Wife



Freedom Ben Sa'ud al-Mubarrad

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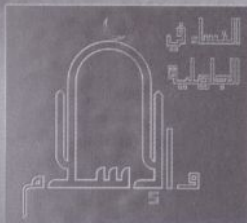
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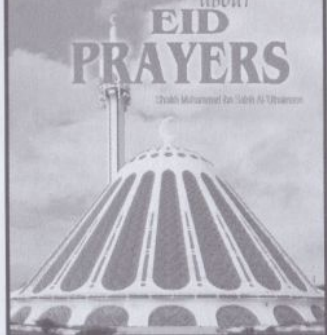
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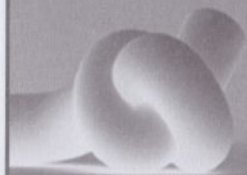
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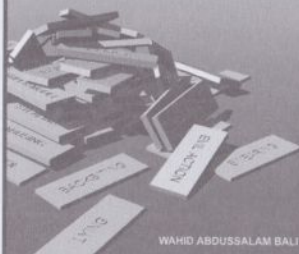
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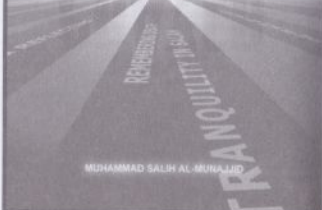
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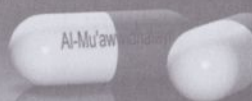
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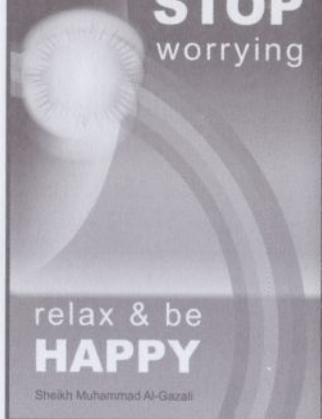
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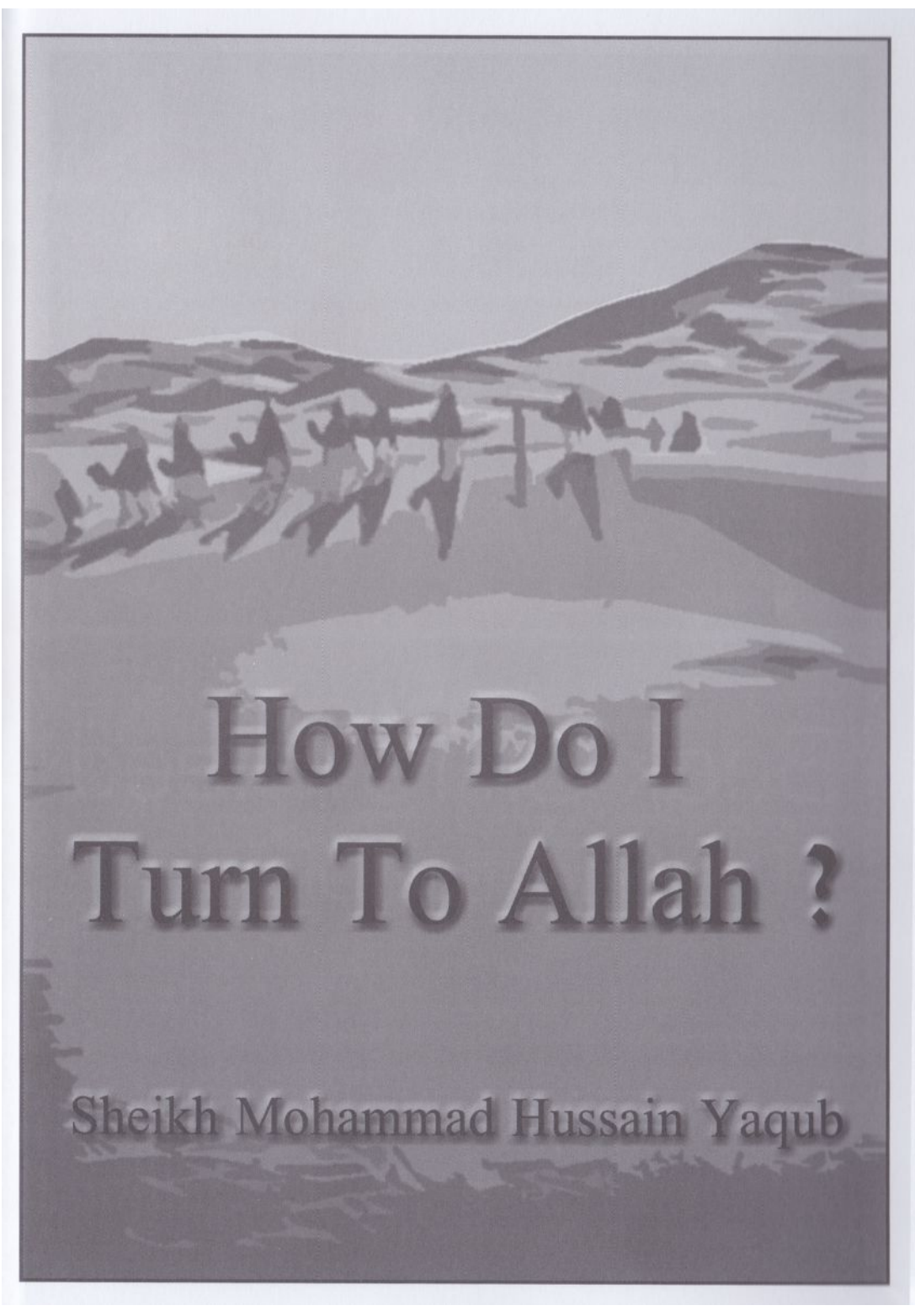


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**T**he Prophet PBUH is reported to have said: "Constantinople (today known as Istanbul) will be conquered by the hands of a man, so blessed be the leader of that conquest, and blessed be that army!" The city of Constantinople was enlightened and blessed with Islam on 855 Hijri (1453 CE). That conquest which proved to be one the greatest in military history. Constantinople was regarded as one of the most important and largest cities in the world. It was established in 330 CE, becoming the capital of the Byzantine Empire. Its previous capital was Rome, however, due to its natural strategic position and manmade defences, Constantinople became the new capital. It was surrounded by water on three sides, and was protected by a wall on the fourth side. Due to its excellent natural strategic defence, the city was almost impossible to conquer. The above Hadith narrated became an inspiration and motivation for many Muslims to attempt to conquer the city, as they desired to be that blessed army with that blessed leader. Although famous companions and leaders were able to conquer the surrounding cities, they were never able to conquer Constantinople itself, despite numerous attempts. The attempts to lay siege on Constantinople were therefore halted for 700 years after 155 Hijri, as it seemed impossible. That honour was to be given to a man known as Muhammad II, al-Faatih.



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