

Chapter Two

Regulations for change by hand [physically forcing change]

I mentioned that it is possible to make changes by hand for any individual; however, it is important to know that there are regulations and controls for utilizing the physical means of making change. Scholars obtained these regulations from religious legal texts and from the general intent of religious laws. We will show in this chapter the most important regulations, which are:

First, evil [disobedience] has to be real and present.

Change is not allowed by physical strength if the evil has not happened, or if an evil already happened in the past. Imam Al-Ghazali said, “Disobedience happens in three stages. The first is a past disobedience, which is punishable for the past or censured, and it is up to the governors – not to the individuals. The second is current disobedience where the person is [currently] doing it like wearing silk clothes, playing music, and drinking alcohol. This evil must be extinguished by any means, as long as these means do not result in a worse evil or one on the same level, and the decision is commanded by any individual. Third is the expected evil, which is like someone cleaning a room and decorating it in order to get ready for drinking alcohol but the alcohol is not there yet. So it is a doubtful evil, because something might prevent this person from getting the alcohol. Such a case does not give authority for an individual to punish the drinker other than giving him advice and guidance. Also, for this case, violence and beating is not to be done by individuals or rulers unless the disobedience and evil continue.” (1)

Second, change must follow legal steps set by religious scholars.

Al-Ghazali mentioned in his book, *Ihyau'l Deen*, “The steps for change start with identification by identifying the evil to the person, then gently preaching, then swearing and violent language, then physical means like destroying the entertainment and spilling the alcohol. Then there is threatening and frightening, followed by beating with the hands and feet, then helpers are called in and weapons should rise.” (1)

These levels could be divided, as professor Jalal Al-Din Al-Ghumry said, “into correction by preaching and correction by force, consecutively.” (2)

Imam Ibn Al 'Arabi told us that we start with words and advice, and if that does not work, then use the hand. Professor Jalal Al-Din Al-Humry told us that it is agreed to use words before force. He said, “All the scholars came to an agreement that the use of force is not acceptable if there is hope of fixing the problem by teaching and guidance.”

Scholar Al-Jassas said, “God commanded us to call and preach the truth before resorting to fighting, and if it is refused then fighting is permitted”. The scholar Al-Zamkhashri said, “Start at ease, and if that does not work go to the harder stuff”. Ibn Al-'Arabi Al-Maliki said, “God, to Whom be ascribed all perfection, asks for peace before war, and commands

attack when there is no change”. Al-Qurtabi said, “If evil can be extinguished by talking, then that should be done. If only punishment and killing can extinguish it, then that should be done. And if it could be extinguished without killing then killing is not allowed.” (3)

Third, only the amount needed must be used.

If the individual is able to get rid of the evil without the need to attack the evil doer, then the evil doer shall not be attacked. Al-Ghazali, may God rest his soul in peace, commented on this case by saying, “To take him out, do not pull his beard and do not pull his foot. If you could, just pull him by the hand; to add more harm is not necessary. Do not rip his silk shirt, just unbutton it.” (4)

He said, “Individuals can only eliminate the current evil. Anything over that is considered punishing the doer for a past evil or for one they will do in the future, and only the ruler has the right to decide in such cases, not the individuals.” (5)

Ibn Al-Qayim wrote about the legal issues told by Al-Shafi’I – if the attacker used overly harsh actions against someone else in eliminating an evil, he is doing an evil too.

Fourth, changing an evil should not lead to a bigger evil.

The Sheikh of Islam, Ibn Taymiya, clarified this matter by saying, “If the forbiddance of evil and the enforcing of good are for a certain interest or to prevent an evil, the interest or evil prevented must be evaluated. If the interest is minimal and the evil resulting is more than the original evil, then it is forbidden and illegal.” (1)

Ibn Taymiya clarified this issue with an example, the Prophet, God’s mercy and blessings be upon him, had to leave `AbdGod Bin Abi Sallul and others hypocritical of Islam without punishment, because such an action against them would have disturbed the community, stirred trouble, and resulted in people’s disdain toward the Messenger of God, God’s prayer and peace be upon him, even describing him as a murderer of his friends. (2)

Imam Ibn Al-Qayim, may God rest his soul, said, “Forbidding evil has four grades. First, to eliminate it and establish its opposite. Second, to decrease it but not eliminate it. Third, that a similar evil follows it, and fourth, that a worse evil totally succeeds it.” The first two are legal, the third is an issue of jurisprudence, and the fourth is prohibited. (3)

We would like to emphasize something important here which is that the measure of good and evil should rely on religious laws and not be based on intelligence or sentiment. That is why Ibn Timiya said, “The right measure of good and evil is the scale of Sharia when man follows the written law and will not depart from it, otherwise he will fall into creating theories and false images.” (4)

Fifth, the general public shall not be involved except in clear cut issues that do not require jurisprudence.

Regarding this, Al-Ghazali says, the public should only be concerned with clear, well-known issues like drinking alcohol, adultery and abandoning prayers. (1)

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Imam Al Nawawi, may God rest his soul in peace, said: Only those scholars who know what they are allowing and what they are forbidding shall allow or forbid things. This varies with the thing to be forbidden. If it is one of the well-known duties like prayer, fasting, adultery, drinking, and the like, then all Muslims are knowledgeable about these, even if they are the smallest sayings or deeds. As far as jurisprudence, the public has no say in it, and cannot apply its thoughts to it as that it is only for the scholars to do. (2).

Therefore, these are the most important conditions to be mindful of when change has to be enforced [physically] by hand. Our dear reader might have noticed that most of these regulations are not only for the public but also for the rulers to consider. Also, some change is not solely done by hand, but it may also require talking. We just mentioned those rules specifically for “change by the hand of the public” because of the tremendous need for it in this situation more than other situations. And only God knows best.

Chapter Three

Suspicious and inquiries

1- Some mention that the Almighty says, “You who believe, guard your own souls. Let not those who go astray lead you astray. You are under guidance, (1)” as evidence that a man who is walking in the right path has to worry only about himself – that he has nothing to do with others.

Without any doubt, this understanding of the verse is wrong. And to answer this we use what Abu Bakr Al-Sidiq, may God be pleased with him, said: “People, when you read this verse, ‘you who believe, guard your own souls. Let not those who go astray lead you astray. You are under guidance,’ you understood it wrong because I heard our Messenger, God’s blessing and prayers be upon him, say, when people see an evil and do nothing to change it, God’s punishment for it will be on all of them.” (2)

What is meant by the verse is that when the believers perform their duties in commanding good and forbidding evil, they are on the right path and no evil shall harm them.

Ibn Taymiya said, “To be on the right path, therefore, is obedience to God and performing duties of commanding goodness and forbidding evil among other things.” (3)

Professor Sayyid Qutb, may God rest his soul in peace, said, “That is how the first Khalifa, may God be pleased with him, corrected what people thought about this holy verse. Today we need to adopt that correction too because to change an evil is a hard job. That is why weak people paraphrase this verse in a way that frees them from the labor and pains of Jihad, and releases them from its effort and distress...May God rest his soul in peace, continued, saying, “Jihad in a

gentle way is done when the wrongdoers are individuals in need of enlightenment and guidance. Physical force is applied when an evil power is in the way of people's lives deterring them from the right path, hindering God's religion, and debilitates God's Sharia. Only after that [using force], believers will bear no responsibility, and those who go astray will receive their punishment from God when they face Him at their death." (1)

This saying clarifies what God is saying, "And fear, tumult, or oppression affects not in particular (only) those of you who do wrong." (2) Those who abandon forbidding evil, despite their ability to forbid it, will receive the same punishment and affliction as those who commit the evil. Consequently, Sheikh Muhammad Ahmad Al- Rashid called those people "the lost believers." He said, "Pious ascetics, you will face the danger of the law of the Almighty if you stay silent; do not be deceived by your holiness or worship; speak the truth and forbid evil or face perdition." (3)

2- Some say, if individuals use the hand [physical force] to forbid evil it will lead to chaos and anarchy.

Answering that, we say, if you mean that using the hand to change an evil will lead to anarchy and chaos, it means you are applying your thought over clear texts of Sunna, against deeds of the friends of the prophet, and against what scholars of various principles say. No one has the right to think differently than what the Prophet taught us, God's prayer and blessing be upon him, as we have previously shown. Otherwise it will be like an accusation that the Prophet is calling for chaos and anarchy.

If you mean that using force could lead to strife, we already explained previously that the conditions of using the hand in changing an evil is to not create a worse evil, and we mentioned the words of Ibn Taymiya about the measure of good and evil. So, there is no room for the obstinate to argue anymore.

It is good to tell those arguers about what Imam Abi Bakr Al- Jassas said:

"None of the intellectuals of this nation, their predecessors, and their ancestors, had to talk about this issue, except for foolish talkers who were ignorant of the Hadith. They ignored fighting evildoers as well as the forbiddance of evil if it necessitated the use of weapons in the fight." Listen to what God the Almighty said, "Fight evildoers until they recognize the will of God." This literally tells us to fight the evil doers with the sword. Those people also claim that it is permissible for the ruler to be oppressive, unjust, and to kill souls, which God forbade, but the public is forbidden from standing against it by saying or physically commanding without weapons. This made them a worse evil for the nation than its enemies because they hold others back from fighting the oppressor and do not stop rulers from committing unfairness and oppression. This, in turn leads to the triumph of the dissolute and Magi: the enemies of Islam. That is when borderlines are trampled, oppression is rampant, land becomes desolate, religion and the world disappear, atheism and exaggeration prosper, along with paganism and other weird religions. All that would happen because they abandon commanding goodness and forbidding evil, and consequently deny the ruler his reward. (1)

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This is what Al-Jassas said in his time. What would he say if he saw our time and the disasters we are in, all resulting from not commanding goodness and forbidding evil?

Here I would like to reiterate my astonishment at the Egyptian Ministry of Religious Endowments, as it distributes to the Imams of the nation's mosques booklets entitled "Islam's Process of Changing Evil." The authors of the booklet repeat this above-mentioned suspicion, but do not cite one example from the Holy Book, Sunnah, the consensus of Islamic legal scholars, or even one quote by one of this nation's scholars.

More astonishing is that in order to support their position, they use the booklet "Islam, religion of the mind in the face of extremist thinking." This collection has been condemned by Al-Azhar [a university and Sunni learning center in Egypt] and requested that it to be confiscated.

Consequently, real chaos is not in changing the evil but in allowing it to spread and increase, as well as in having to fight those who oppose the change, claiming fear of chaos and corruption.

3- Some brothers ask how we explain what the prophet, God's prayer and blessing be upon him, said, "Whoever among you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand; if he cannot, then with his words, and if he cannot, then with his heart...", while we said it starts with talking before [physical] hand change.

It is understood from the Hadith that one starts with the hand, then the mouth, and then the heart.

Our answer to that is what the late scholar Bin Al- 'Arabi, may God rest his soul in peace, said in Gharib Al-Fiqh, about this Hadith.

He said that the prophet, God's prayer and blessing be upon him, started with the last step in changing the evil which is changing by hand.

It seems to me, and God knows better, that the prophet, God's prayer and blessing be upon him, meant to talk about the ultimate goal for the changer to achieve. One man can achieve changes by his hand, while another man cannot achieve change by his words, and yet another cannot achieve the change except by his heart. The first man has to cause change with his words; if the evil doesn't cease, he has to go to the next level, even to change things by force. The second man lectures and gives advice, but if the evil doesn't cease, the second man should not use his hand to achieve the change, because he is not capable of that. The third is not even capable of lecturing; he should avoid the evil and deny its existence with his heart. And God knows best.

4- Some bring up an issue regarding asking for permission from the ruler to affect change, meaning that the rulers have to say yes to the individual before they can command change; that they cannot do it without the ruler's permission. In fact, whoever reads the sayings of the

scholars that we mentioned deduces that the ruler's permission is not needed. Nevertheless, we conclude from Imam Al-Ghazali's writings in *Ihau'l Deen* that this condition for change is false, and the verses and proofs referenced indicate that whoever sees an evil and remains silent, is in disobedience as well. It is an obligation to end the evil wherever and however he finds it. Generally speaking, to specify that permission from the Imam is required is an unfounded condition (1).

He said, "As it was mentioned in the Hadith, to stand against an oppressive ruler is the highest privilege. So if we were to stand against the Imam [ruler] for oppression, how would we also seek his permission to do it?" (2)

He also said, "Our predecessors always held the rulers accountable, and they agree that the rulers' permission is not needed. If someone ordered the enforcement of something good and the ruler were in agreement, even if it were to judge the ruler himself for some evil for which he should be punished, then why would his permission be needed for his own judgment?" (1).

5- Some people cite what God, the exalted, said: "And make not your own hands contribute to [your own] destruction."

Nowadays, changing the evil by hand causes people leading the change to be arrested and apprehended by the unjust governments. So changing the evil is equivalent to making one's hand contribute to one's destruction.

This is a suspicion that Abu Ayub Al-Insari, may God be pleased with him, spared us from responding to when he said in his Hadith what Aslam Abi `Umran said: A man from the immigrants of Constantinople attacked enemy lines and penetrated them. Some claimed that he threw himself into destruction [death] with his own hands. Abu Ayub said, this verse descended to us "Supporters" of the prophet. We accompanied the Messenger, God's prayer and blessing upon him, in many things and we were victorious with him. When Islam spread and became prominent, we said God blessed us with the friendship of his Prophet, God's prayer and blessing be upon him, and Islam's followers increased. We left our families, children, and all materialistic things. But when the war was over, we wanted to return to our families and children and live back among them. Then, God revealed to us, "And spend of your substance in the cause of God, and make not your own hands contribute to [your own] destruction." So the destruction actually was to stay among family, children, and money, while abandoning jihad. (2)

This statement shows that a person's hand contributes to his own destruction when he abandons giving and working for God's religion, and when he prefers families and money rather than obeying God and performing Jihad for His sake. In other words, it is the opposite of what those people understand. God's messenger, God's prayer and blessing be upon him, said, "The master of martyrs Hamza Bin `Abd Al-Mutalib is on the same level of martyrdom as a man who gets killed for standing up to an unjust ruler preaching and warning him" (1).

So a person who dies because he says the truth before an unjust ruler is not only a martyr but also the master of martyrs; so how do you consider pain for the sake of God through using one's hand self-destruction?

Imam Abu Bakr Al-`Arabi said when he interpreted God's verses, those who commit sins against the scripture of God kill the prophets without a right, and kill those who order justly...Some of our scholars said that this verse is about commanding goodness and forbidding evil, even though it could lead to killing the one who is ordering it. He also said that if the one calling for the change is afraid that he might get beaten or killed, but he is hoping for the disappearance of that evil, then the scholars said this can be enough. But if he does not at least hope for that change then there is no benefit in it.

I believe that if someone has pure intent before God he should attack in any way he can, without hesitation. (2)

Imam Ibn Al-`Arabi sees that even if you think you will be hurt and evil might not disappear, attack the evil and fulfill the intention of God without hesitation.

6- Some use God's words to Moses and Aaron as proof, "Say to him, be lenient, maybe then he will remember and fear God" (3). He also said, "Dispute not with the People of the Book, except for the better."

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He also said, "Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching and argue with them in better things." (5) They also say that these verses indicate leniency and softness, whereas using force to change evil is the complete opposite of that - it is violence to be rejected.

Our answer to that is:

1- As far as His saying, "Tell him to be lenient," those people do not distinguish between calling and commanding goodness while forbidding evil. Calling with our words precedes using physical force, as we have previously shown. If the evil is changed by preaching and advising then the use of force is not justified; otherwise, using force becomes a duty. And, if what these people understood was correct, then killing infidels would never be allowed because the verse that they rely on is talking about Pharaoh, who is an infidel. Therefore, their approach is speaking mildly and kindly to infidels without using force, even if they insist and remain in their evil. The Prophet taught otherwise when he used to invite them [infidels] to change by the word, and it was good for those who did. If they did not, then the sword was used to chasten the tyrants.

Ibn Taymiya, may God rest his soul in peace, said, "For this is the basis of religion, a book to guide, and a sword to conquer; be content with your Lord as guide and conqueror." (1) Mr. Sayyid Qutb, may God rest his soul in peace, said that jihad in a gentle way is done when the wrongdoers are individuals in need of enlightenment and guidance. Physical force is applied when an evil power is in the way of people's lives deterring them from the right path, hindering God's religion, and debilitates God's Sharia. (2)

2- As for God's saying, "And dispute you not with the People of the Book, except for the better"...

We reply to their understanding of this verse with the following:

They missed the rest of the verse which says, "Unless it is with those of them who inflict wrong." Those who inflict wrong cannot be disputed with by good means. They deserve something else.

A group of scholars said that this verse is replaced by other verses. When he explained this, Abu Bakr Bin Al-'Arabi mentioned that it is not replaced. He said, "It is in fact specific because the Prophet, God's prayer and blessing upon him, was sent to fight for God's sake with the tongue. Then God ordered him to use the tongue and the sword, until God's argument won and stubbornness became apparent. He was successful for ten continuous years so that whomever he gained strength over was killed, and the rest used augmenting for their own good." (1)

This becomes clearer when judge Abi Bakr Bin Al-'Arabi said, "Unless it is with those of them who oppress." He said this is in four things: first, the people of war; second, those who do not pay tribute tax; third, those who remain stubborn after presenting the argument; and fourth, those who further debate their argument and continue to lie. These sayings are correct over and over again. (2)

Also, it was shown that to argue using gentle preaching is not for these four kinds and their likes. If gentle preaching does not work with some people, other means are suggested. As someone said:

"If you face evil with good then evil will take over but if you face evil with evil then it will end."

As for His saying, "Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching," if it is understood from this that the call [preaching] has to be lenient and kind, we are in agreement and cannot refute it. But if advising and guidance do not work, what is to be done? We explained previously with proofs and evidence what ought to be done if advising does not work, and we do not need to repeat it.

On the other hand we need to clarify. People understand that the meaning of wisdom is merely mildness and pity; however, it is more encompassing than that.

Below are some of the meanings of wisdom that Al-Qaurtabi mentioned.

Ibn `Abass said that wisdom is the knowledge of the Quran, its Fiqh [Islamic jurisprudence], its transcription and wisdom, similarities and differences, preamble, and postscript.

Qutada and Mujahid said, "Wisdom is the Fiqh [Jurisprudence] in the Quran." Mujahid also said [it is] "the rightness in speaking and acting." Ibn Zayd said, "Wisdom is the reason in

religion.” Malik Bin Uns said, “Wisdom is knowledge in God’s religion, Fiqh in it, and following it.” Ibn Al-Qasim said, “Wisdom is thinking in God’s way and following it.” He also said wisdom is obeying God, Fiqh in the religion, and working with it. Al-Rabi' Bin Uns said, “Wisdom is apprehension.” Ibrahim Al-Nakha'ai said, “Wisdom is comprehending the Quran.” Zaid Bin Aslm and Al-Husn said, “Wisdom is devoutness.”

Al-Qurtabi said, “I said all of these, except what Al-Sadi, Al-Rabi', and Al-Husn said—they are close to each other. Wisdom is a source of mastery, mastering a saying or an action. So everything mentioned above is a kind or a type of wisdom. So the Book of God is wisdom, the Sunnah of his prophet is wisdom, and everything in the Tafsir [Quran interpretation] is wisdom, and the basis of wisdom is what is prohibited among evils.” (1)

When defining wisdom, Ibin Al-Qayyim, may God rest his soul in peace, said, “Doing what should be done, as needed when needed.” (2)

This means using force when the situation calls for force and softness when the situation calls for softness.

So do you see the meaning of wisdom? It is to follow Sharia in the Book of God, and his prophet’s Sunnah. We should follow the religious Sharia wherever it leads. We cannot let our desires lead us over the Book of God and the prophet’s Sunnah by allegedly arguing for wisdom. How rightful is the one who said, “Replacing the sword with calmness is as harmful as replacing calmness with the sword.” A last point we would like to make about this subject is that it is dangerous to adopt only some Islamic principles, make a big deal out of them, and highlight them, while we forget other issues and their importance. Islam is as much a religion of kindness and forgiveness as it is also a religion of strength. The Prophet, God’s prayer and blessing be upon Him, is a laughing fighter, yet merciful and heroic. (3) He is the prophet of mercy when mercy is needed, and a fighter when the situation calls for fighting and force.

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When it comes to corruption and oppression in the nation, true mercy is the use of force to eliminate evil. God the Almighty spoke about this matter in reference to an adulterer or adulteress, “Let not compassion move you in their case, in a matter prescribed by God, if ye believe in God and the Last Day.”

Isn’t this verse an example of how mercy is required in specific situations but rejected in others? It is said, “Certain situations demand certain standards.” May these people fear God, for they uproot Islamic texts and understand them in a way that pleases evildoers. May they come back to piety and God so he can judge them--favoring those in the world will not favor them on that day.

7- Some people mention what Al-Qurtabi, may God rest his soul in peace, says, “Scholars said that commanding goodness and forbidding evil is by hand for the princes, by tongue for the scholars, and by heart for the weak or ordinary people.” (2) They want to say that no ordinary

person has the right to use physical force to change the evil, and we say to them: first, you understand well what Al-Qurtabi, may God rest his soul in peace, meant when he used the decisive Arabic preposition (‘ala) and we use the preposition (lam). This shows that he meant to emphasize the duty of princes [rulers] to enforce change by hands, but the rest of the people do not have a duty like the rulers because their duty is to affect change by their heart. But just because it is not a duty, does not mean that it cannot be by hand and tongue for the public as well. All we said was that an individual from the public has the right to change an evil with his hands in special situations, like when he sees a man committing adultery with a woman and he is the only one who saw it. If he is able to change it by hand [physical force] then he has a duty to do it.

Second, this understanding is contrary to what the Al-Qurtabi said before. He says, “Muslims came to an agreement, according to Ibn ‘Abd Al-Bir, that it is a duty to change an evil for everyone who can change it. If change does not take place, at least blame, for blame does not hurt [physically] and is acceptable. It should not stop a person from seeking the change either by the tongue or heart. He is not required to do more.” (1) Change by all means is required by rulers and other people, as long as they have the ability to do it.

Third, this understanding is in contradiction to what Al-Qurtabi said later, “If Zayd knew that Omar were in debt to Bakr, Zayd should then pay that debt if the payer cannot or will not pay it” (2).

Look how he said “Zayd,” which is a generic name that can apply to any person, while he did not say if he saw the ruler.

Fourth, if we accept what they understood from Al-Qurtabi, may God rest his soul in peace, the public would have no right to change an evil even by tongue, as they would be allowed to only do it by heart. This concept is not acceptable, as it contradicts where the Prophet, God’s prayer and blessings be upon him, said “‘Religion is an advice.’ We said, ‘For whom, Messenger of God?’ He said, ‘To God, His Book, His messenger, Muslim imams, and to the public.’” A Muslim told us that.

This Hadith indicates that regular people can advise imams and leaders. Advise them to do what? Command goodness and forbid evil by words [the tongue].

This saying also contradicts what the Prophet, God’s prayer and blessing be upon him, said, “The master of martyrs Hamza Bin ‘Abd Al-Mutalib is on the same level of martyrdom as a man who gets killed for standing up to an unjust ruler preaching and warning him.” Al-Hakim told this in Sahih Al-Isnad.

Look, he said “a man” and did not say “a scholar,” which indicates that he is any man from the Muslim community. If this superficial understanding of what Al-Qurtabi said was what he actually meant, that change is at the hand of rulers only, it would have put them under the subjection of the rest of the text. It says that change by the tongue is up to the scholars only. Anyone with any good knowledge of the religious texts would never say, after what preceded, that the public cannot change evils by the tongue.

So the real meaning of what Al-Qurtabi said is that change by the hand is for the rulers more than others, by tongue for the scholars more than others, but change by the heart is for everyone equally. And God knows best.

Fifth, if Al-Qurtabi, may God rest his soul in peace, meant it the way they understood him, we would have contradicted him and rejected his claim. That would have been contrary to the Hadiths, to the work of the friends of the prophet, and to the totality of agreement which he transcribed, may God rest his soul. But we came to a conclusion, thanks to God. We found a balance between his words and words of other scholars, and the issue is resolved thanks to God.

8- Some raised the issue of damage to others while changing the evil. They claim that if a Muslim tries to change an evil, his friends and relatives might be harmed by the evildoers. Therefore, change should not happen.

We say to those people, yes, scholars mentioned that if the change will harm other Muslims it is forbidden. Regarding this, Al-Ghazali, may God rest his soul in peace, said, “If the person knows that his friends, family, or relatives might be beaten up [affected] with him, it is forbidden for him to affect the change.” (1)

But what kind of harm is to be a cause of stopping the change? Not any harm, but the harm identified by the scholars, as Imam Al- Ghazali mentioned, “If the harm will affect relatives and neighbors, he should quit because harming Muslims is forbidden just as silence is in the face of evil. Yes, if the harm won’t affect money or souls, but only verbal abuse and insult, we should look again. This varies according to the levels of seriousness of that evil, levels of viciousness of those words on hearts, or the level of insults to one’s honor.” (2)

Al-Ghazali meant that if the harm is on souls and money, it is fair to stop seeking change, but if it is only verbal abuse and insult, it would not be enough to stop seeking the change. If cussing and verbal insult is tolerating a lesser evil to get rid of the bigger one, then so be it. I asked our Sheikh Dr. `Umar `Abd Al-Rahman about the level of harm that someone else has to bear which would forbid the change. He responded that the damage has to be to a person’s health, body, freedom, honor, breaking a hand or going to jail, or getting beaten...and so on.

We conclude that not every harm caused is legitimate in this issue, but the previous explanation must be applied as to harm accepted, or not accepted, especially in comparison to the seriousness of the evil to be changed. And God knows best.

On the other hand, it is not correct to assume that every change by hand leads to harm for someone because this goes back to reality and whoever is doing such things. If it is causing harm for him for God’s sake, he is more able than others to know whether this change will also cause harm to someone else or not.

Those who object should first ask those who experienced it since they are more knowledgeable of how much damage occurs or if it does at all.

9- Some say that whoever tries to change the evil by his hand is infringing the right of the ruler to be in charge of setting laws.

We respond to that by saying:

“This is mixing and matching, because changing the evil is different from setting laws and they’re both very different.”

Al-Imam Al-Ghazali, may God rest his soul in peace, distinguished between these two when he said, “Individuals can only eliminate the current evil. Anything over that is considered punishing the doer for a past evil or for one they will do in the future, and only the ruler has the right to decide in such cases, not the individuals.” (1)

As a result, we understand that he distinguishes between the removal of the evil and its punishment. The first can be executed by anyone, whereas the second is up to the ruler. One of the purposes of restraining evil in Islam is to discipline the offender for the deed, prevent him from doing it again, and restraining others from doing the same sin. For this reason, this responsibility is subject to the ruler.

Thus, the operation of changing the evil is merely removing it or extinguishing it, and it is done by the ruler and others. We clarified this previously and offered evidence for those who read it—there is no need for an additional argument...And God knows best.

Finally...

Finally, we say that this is our opinion. We write it for whoever wants to know the truth concerning this issue. In reality, the people who oppose this issue are of two types. The first are secular journalists and paid writers who have nothing to do with texts of Sharia. They obtained their evidence from crumbs off of the tables of the West.

The second are those who relate to religious legal studies but ignorantly advise the people like those in the first section. They tell the Muslim youth who are trying to change evil by physical means that this is extremism, bias, violence, and so on. Our discussion throughout the previous pages was for the second type, with whom we share common ground of trusting the religious texts and proofs, even if they ignore and stray as we previously mentioned.

As for the first type of people, that is an entirely separate conversation not to be started from this point, but from a different fundamental point: Are they convinced of Islam or not?

Are they ready to debate this point and other points according to the Book of God and the Sunnah of the prophet, God’s peace and prayer upon him, or are they arguing with their whims above God’s teaching, may He be exalted and praised? To the likes of those we say what the Almighty said to his prophet, prayer and peace be upon him: “We placed you upon the Sharia, then we put thee on the (right) way of religion so follow thou that (way), and follow not

the desires of those who know not.”

God’s prayer and blessing be upon our prophet Muhammad and his family and friends.

‘Abd al-Akhar Hammad

Important addendum

The Mufti [Sunni supreme religious leader] of the Republic [of Egypt] allows changing evil by hand to someone other than the ruler...

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In a conversation with Dr. Muhammad Sayid Tantawi, Mufti of the Republic, published in October Magazine, the Sheikh launched a crusade against those who are calling for changing evil by physical means for individuals who are not rulers and said, “What if this ruler is an oppressor or accepts bribes, or this or that...then we apply other ways to get our rights, we reject this ruler, revolt against him, and find another...” (1).

We ask, what is the meaning of the people revolting against an oppressive ruler and finding another? Does it not mean that individuals change the evil by physical means? The evil here is the oppressive, debauched, and corrupt ruler, so they removed him and replaced him. If a revolution is not a change by hand and by force, then I don’t know what is...

Confirmed by the most important references

1. The Holy Quran
2. The meaning of the great Quran by “Ibn Kuthayrr”
3. Al-Jami' Li Ahkam Al'Quran Al Karim [Collection of Regulations of the Holy Quran] by Al-Qartabi
4. Ahkam Al- Quran [Regulations of the Quran] by Al-'Arabi
5. Ahkam Al- Quran [Regulations of the Quran] by the Jassas
6. In the shadow of the Quran by Sayyid Qutb
7. Sahih Muslim by Al- Nawawi
8. Al-lulu' wa Al-Murjan; [The Pearl and the Coral] Agreements of the Two Sheikhs by Muhammad Fu'ad Abd Al-Baqi.
9. The Collection of Sciences and Wisdom by Bin Rajab Al-Hanbali
10. Sharh Al-Arba 'in Al-Nawawia; [The Explanation of the Forty Nawawi] by Bin Dakik Al-Eid
11. Fateh Al- Bari, the explanation of Sahih Al-Bukhari by Ibn Al-Qayim
12. Al-Mughni, [The Enricher] by Ibn Kadama Hanbali
13. Al-Muhala by Ibn Hazm
14. Al-Turuq Al-Hikamya Fi Al-Siyasa Al-Shar 'iyya; [Wise Ways in Religious Law Policies] by Ibn Al-Qayim
15. Ghayth Al-Umam; [Rain of the Nations] By Al-Jwayni
16. Ihya 'Ulumm Al-Din; [Reviving the Sciences of Religion] By Al-Ghazali
17. Al-Tashria'a Al-Jina'ai Al-Islami; [Criminal Islamic Sharia] By 'Abd Al-Qadir 'Awda
18. Ighathat Godfan min Masa 'd Al-Shaitan; [Saving the Lost from Satan's Traps] by Ibn

Al-Qayim

19. `Usul Al-Da 'wa; [Origins of the Call] by `Abd Al-Karim Zaydan
20. Al-Amr Bi Al-Ma 'u Wal-Nahi An Al-Mihmkar; [Commanding Goodness and Forbidding Evil] by Sheikh Al-Islam Ibn Timiyah
21. Al-Amr Bi Al-Ma 'u Wal-Nahi An Al-Mihmkar; [Commanding Goodness and Forbidding Evil] by Jalal Al-Din Al-Umari
22. Al-Muntalaq [The Basis] by Muhammad Al-Rashid
23. Madarj Al-Salikin [Steps of Believers] by Ibn Al-Qayim.
24. Ahkam Ahl Al-Zo; [Regulations of Conscientious] by Ibn Al-Qayim.
25. Majmu' Al-Fatawi; [Collection of Fatwas] by Sheikh Al-Islam Ibn Timiyah
26. Zad Al-Ma 'ad [Food for the Antagonist] by Ibn Al-Qayim
27. Al-Sael Al-Jarrar; [Continuous Flow] by Shakwani
28. Tarbiat Al-Awlad Fi Al-Islam; [Raising up Children in Islam] By `Abdallah Nasih `Alwan
1. `Ihya Ulum Al-Din, [Reviving the Sciences of Religion] V-2 P. 913

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Look at `Ihya' Ulum Al Din; [Reviving the Sciences of Religion] V- 2 P. 423 and beyond.

2. Al- Amr Bi Al-Ma'ru Wal Nahi 'an Al-munkar; [Commanding Goodness and Forbidding Evil] by Jalal Al-Din P. 471.
3. Al- 'Amr Bi Al-Ma 'ru Wal Nahi 'an Al-munkar; [Commanding Goodness and Forbidding Evil] by P. 171.
4. Al-Ihya'. [Reviving] V-2 P. 623.
5. Al-Ihya'. [Reviving] V-2 P. 723.
- 1- Al- 'Amr Bi Al-Ma 'ru Wal Nahi 'an Al-munkar; [Commanding Goodness and Forbidding Evil] P. 13 Al-Eman Publishers
- 2- The previous source P. 33
- 3- I'lam Al-Muwqi'in; [Informing the Sinners] V-2 P. 51.
- 4- Al-Amr Bil-Ma 'ruf Wal Nahi 'An Al-Munkar [Commanding Goodness and Forbidding Evil] P. 13.
- 5- Al-Ihya'. [Reviving] V-2 P. 613.
2. Sharh Sahih Muslim; [True Hadith by Muslim] V-1 P.15
Surat Al-Ma 'ida Verse 501.
- 2- Told by The Men of the Four Sunun and Ibn Haban [Told by those who wrote the four regulations and Ibn Haban in his Hadith]
3. Majmu' Fatawa Ibn Tymiyah; [Collection of Religious Decrees by Ibn Tymiyah] Vol 41 P. 974.
Al-Thilal; [Shadows] P. 399. 2- Surat Al-Anfal, Verse 52.
3. Al-Muntalk [Basis] P. 48.
- 1- Regulations of the Quran by Al-Jassas according to Al-Amr Bil Ma 'ruf Wal Nahi 'An Al-Munkar by AVUmari P 601.
- Al-Ihya'. [Reviving] V-2 P. 013, 113
- 2- The same as the previous source
- Al-Ihya'. [Reviving] V-2 P. 113
- 2- In his explanation, Ibn Kuthayr said that this was told by Abu Dawud, AlTarmathi

and Al-Nisa'I. `Abd Hamid said it in his explanation. Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn Mardwia, Ibn Harir, and Al-Hafiz Abi Y'ala in his support, Ibn Haban in his true Hadith, Al- Hakim in his writing. All of them are from the Hadith of Yazid Bin Abi Habib.

- 1- Told by Al-Hakim, written in Sahih Al-Isnad, and in the corrected series for Al-Albani number 473.
- 2- Regulations of the Quran by Ibn Al-`Arabi V-1 P. 67, 762.
- 3- Surat Taha, Verse 44.
- 4- Surat Al-`Ankabut [The Spider] verse 64.
5. Surat Al-Nahl [The Bees] verse 521.
- 1- (Collection of Fatwas 6/36)
- 2- Al-Thilal; [Shadows] P. 399
- 1- Ahkam Al-Quran; [Regulations of the Quran] P. 7841, 8841
- 2- The previous source.
1. The explanation of Al-Qartabi V-2 P. 831.
2. Madairj Al-Salikin P 753 Published by Dar Al-Turath
3. Look at Zad Al-Ma'ad by Ibn Al-Qyim V -1 P. 02.
- 3- Surat Al-Nur [The Light] verse (2).
- 2- Tafsir, [Explanation] of Al-Qurtabi V-1 p. 921.
- 1- Tafsir, [Explanation] of Al-Qurtabi V-1 p. 921
- 2- The previous source.
- 1- `Ihya"Ulum Al-Din; [Reviving Religion's Sciences] V 2 P. 613
- 2- `Ihya"Ulum Al-Din; [Reviving Religion's Sciences] V 2 P. 913
- Al-Ihya'; [Reviving] V- 2 P. 723

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- 1- 1st of May issue of October Magazine 1988. This announcement by the Supreme Mufti was published after finishing our research, which is why we included it in a special addendum. It is known that Al-Mufti is carrying the banner of “changing evil by physical force is only allowed to the ruler.” Yet, look at what God made him say.

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Sharia Proofs for Allowing Change by Hand for Individuals

Developed by

`Abd Al-Akhar Hammad