

Nucleotheism - Understanding the Iranians

Mordechai Kedar, THE JERUSALEM POST

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There is currently great concern regarding Iran's activities in the nuclear sphere and, at the same time, the calls of the country's president for the destruction of Israel and "transfer of Israel to Europe."

For the Western observer, these pose several difficult questions: How is it that the Iranians fail to hear the powerful voices demanding the termination of their nuclear program? How can they fail to see the progression of steps being taken against them? How can they fail to fear a fate similar to that of Saddam Hussein? And if they do see and understand all these developments, what is it that motivates them to persist in following this path which, day by day, becomes more problematic?

The answers to all these questions are rather simple once we thoroughly understand the thinking of the ayatollahs who have ruled Iran ever since Khomeini's revolution in 1979. To do this, we must first grasp the Islamic concept Wilayat al-Faqih, meaning "Rule by the Man of the [true] Faith" and implying that the Man of Faith must dominate all areas of the life of the nation.

According to the principle of Wilayat al-Faqih, all these matters must be under the control of the Man of Faith in view of the fact that he enjoys divine inspiration, whereby Allah illuminates his path and guides his footsteps and his decisions.

Thus, all decisions of the Man of Faith are correct; he is infallible, being endowed with 'Isma (infallibility) which protects him from being in error and turns him into the perfect human being. It follows that all men, not only Muslims, must obey him and carry out his commands.

The idea of Wilayat al-Faqih became established in Iran with the Khomeini revolution of 1979. All policies, internally as well externally, were shaped by this principle.

With regard to the nuclear question, the Iranian logic is as follows: "If Allah gave us the ability to develop nuclear weapons, and if we decided that we must carry out this development, then this decision cannot be wrong, for Allah illuminates our path and guides us to the correct decision. The decision to proceed with the nuclear development is not our decision but a divine decision, our part being merely to carry it out. Were we to terminate the development of our nuclear capability, we would be guilty of violating a divine command."

THE AYATOLLAHS' attitude toward the European and American pressure exerted against them is negative indeed. The Iranian constantly asks himself: "Who appointed these infidels to tell us what to do and what not to do? Since when have these defiled individuals the right to demand that we defy Allah's decisions which we have accepted?"

Inasmuch as the diplomatic pressure exerted against the mullahs is not legitimate in their eyes, they believe they have every right to deceive Europe and the US by whatever steps are necessary to conceal their nuclear program. This deception is not regarded as sinful, because the foreign pressure is directed against Allah and His decisions; thus Iran possesses a divine power of attorney to oppose their pressure in every way.

It is this utter disregard for the West, and in particular for Western demands directed against Iran, that prompted Ahmadinejad to make pronouncements which, as he well realizes, are in complete defiance of Western ethos. His latest declarations are directed against Israel which he regards as a European colony, an infidel implant in the heart of the Islamic world.

Iran's president sees no difference between the establishment of Israel in violation of Allah's decision and the anti-Iranian dictates which likewise oppose Allah's commands. As a Shi'ite Muslim, he is obligated to do all in his power to eliminate the infidel Judeo-Christian presence in Palestine, just as it is his duty to do all that is necessary to build up the country's power, seeing that Allah, in his grace and mercy, has endowed the Iranian Shi'ite Muslims with the ability to develop nuclear weapons.

In the Ayatollahs' view, an Iran armed with nuclear weapons will be an instrument in Allah's hand to impose Islam upon the entire world. And they, the Ayatollahs, have been chosen by Allah to carry out His mission.

To the Western mind, this Islamic logic is hard to comprehend, inasmuch as it brings Allah's wishes into the realm of political planning and into the very core of its nuclear program. The Ayatollahs cannot understand how correct decisions can be arrived at unless, at the helm of the pyramid of decision makers, Allah Himself is placed, speaking through the Koran and the oral tradition - the Hadith, as these sources are interpreted by the Faqih, the Man of Faith, i.e. Khamena'i.

It should be borne in mind that there are indeed Shi'ite religious scholars who do not accept the doctrine of Wilayat al-Faqih, but the mullah's regime disregards their opinion.

This is the Iranian logic and this is what motivates the regime presently. No negotiations, no pressure can change Allah's decision as executed by the Ayatollahs. Unless the Western world succeeds in driving them to the brink of the abyss and threatens to push them beyond, Allah will not authorize them to change their thinking.

Every day that goes by during which they succeed in pursuing their nuclear program is proof for them that Allah is still leading them on the correct path. How, otherwise, could it happen that they are progressing in their divine program?

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