

PROPHETIC MASCULINITY

*Strength
Shaped
By the
Divine*

GUS KAZEM

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Strength Shaped By the Divine

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Preface

In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful. All praise belongs to Him alone, the Sustainer of every world, whose authority is not bound by time, measure, or consensus, and whose command does not bend to desire. Peace rests upon the Messenger who carried the trust without seeking dominion, who walked among people while bearing a weight few could endure, and upon all who choose integrity when ease would be simpler, until the final reckoning. O Lord, You are the light that enters every fracture; before You, language narrows and meaning strains, for what is vast can only be approached, never contained. This book was not written to argue with modern masculinity, improve it, or compete with it, but to replace the question it keeps asking. The prevailing discussion assumes masculinity is discovered through debate, optimized through appetite, validated by attention, or proven through dominance, while revelation treats it as a burden before identity, a responsibility before expression, and an obligation before performance. The men preserved in the Qur'an and Sunnah are not remembered for confidence, physique, reach, or acclaim, but for what they carried when obedience demanded restraint, patience, mercy, or solitude. This work does not romanticize the past or aestheticize faith; it restores proportion by returning masculinity to its original axis of command, restraint, accountability, and service. The chapters that follow dismantle false measures not through cultural polemic but through replacement, setting prophetic definitions beside

modern assumptions and allowing contrast to clarify truth. Nothing here seeks agreement, identification, or applause; it asks only whether masculinity will remain shaped by reaction and validation, or be formed under command, where strength is measured by what a man refuses, carries, and answers for when no one is watching.

PART I — FALSE MEASURES

Clearing the ground by exposure, not argument

“*He must be called the savior of humanity. I believe that if a man like him were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world, he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would*”

George Bernard Shaw

Chapter 1 — Reactive Men

In the present moment, masculinity is discussed more than it is practiced, argued more than it is examined, and performed more than it is carried, with endless commentary framing manhood as something to be defended, reclaimed, optimized, or displayed in response to cultural pressure. The dominant patterns reward speed over depth, reaction over formation, and visibility over responsibility, encouraging men to define themselves through opposition, appetite, or approval rather than through obligation. Strength is marketed as dominance, confidence as volume, leadership as attention, and purpose as personal success, producing a generation fluent in critique but thin in covenant. Many men are taught to see themselves as embattled figures in a collapsing world, urged to harden, assert, and retaliate, yet given little instruction on restraint, patience, or accountability beyond self-interest. Others are told to construct identity through performance, measuring worth by desire attracted, money accumulated, or audiences gathered, as if manhood can be validated externally rather than forged internally. Across these trends runs a common thread: masculinity treated as a reaction to circumstances rather than a response to command, as something assembled from grievance or aspiration rather than shaped by duty. What is largely absent is any serious engagement with the question of orientation what a man stands toward when applause fades, conflict subsides, and advantage disappears. In this environment, manhood becomes fragile, dependent on constant stimulation and affirmation, quick to rise and quick to fracture. The noise is constant, the guidance shallow, and the promises immediate, leaving little space for endurance, silence, or long obedience. This chapter enters that noise not to debate it, but to expose its limits by contrasting it with a form of masculinity that does not originate in trend, reaction, or performance, but in standing under command.

Reactionary masculinity appears whenever men define themselves by what they oppose rather than by what they are commanded to uphold, and it thrives in moments of disorder because it feeds on outrage, urgency, and the illusion of action without the burden of responsibility. In the earliest years of revelation, the Qur'an did not

describe men by their anger at falsehood or their volume against it, but by their orientation toward God and their steadiness under obligation, distinguishing clearly between biological maleness and moral manhood. When the Qur'an speaks of Men, it does not praise men for shouting down enemies, winning disputes, or proving dominance in public conflict; it describes men who are not distracted by trade or transaction from remembrance, who establish prayer, who give from what they possess, and who remain faithful to covenants made with God even when fulfillment requires patience, loss, or death. This distinction matters because reactionary masculinity always needs an external target to stay alive, and when that target disappears it turns inward, consuming coherence and direction. In Mecca, the Prophet did not form men by teaching them to react to Quraysh insults, mockery, or violence, though all of that surrounded them daily; instead, he formed men by commanding worship, truthfulness, restraint, and trust in divine judgment, often instructing silence where retaliation was possible and endurance where confrontation was expected. Early believers were beaten, boycotted, isolated, and ridiculed, yet the revelation did not validate them by the intensity of their anger but by their ability to remain upright under pressure, a posture that required control rather than release. The Quraysh themselves were deeply reactionary, defining their identity against the call rather than for any higher principle, responding to verses with rage, counterclaims, and escalating hostility, yet history records that their fury produced no lasting structure, no moral inheritance, and no coherence beyond immediate resistance. By contrast, men like Abu Bakr, Ali, and the early companions were shaped through commands that limited reaction, such as restraint from fighting in Mecca despite clear injustice, a directive that tested obedience more severely than combat would have. Reaction feels powerful because it moves quickly and announces itself loudly, but command feels heavy because it restricts movement and demands internal order before external action. The Qur'an consistently ties manhood to covenant rather than confrontation, stating that among the believers are men who were true to what they pledged to God, some having fulfilled it and others still waiting, without changing their stance, a description that emphasizes continuity over impulse and faithfulness over flare. Reactionary masculinity cannot wait, because waiting exposes its