

The Looming Tower

Chapter One: The Martyr (Sayyid Qutb)

Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966) -- the subject of this chapter -- arrived in America in 1948, three years after the end of World War II. Coming from Egypt, he set foot in a land that was basking in its war victory and relishing its economic wealth, a stark contrast to the poor, jobless and depressed country from just 7 years before. Although Qutb was born and raised in a destitute village in Upper Egypt, at the age of 42, he had already made a name for himself in the field of education in his homeland. He was the Minister of Education for the government, but his literary criticism of the Egyptian government forced him to exile to America.

Making his home in New York, Qutb entered a city that was rich with sexual desire and racial tensions, only furthering his belief that the Western world was infused with immoral perversion. His aspiration was that Islam would dominate the world, and that the strict moral guidelines of the Quran would govern, above all else. Shortly after Qutb entered college in Washington, D.C., the leader of the Supreme Guide of the Society of the Muslim Brothers, Hasan al-Banna was assassinated in Egypt on February 12, 1949. Qutb was shocked by this event, and this would be the turning point for the eventual assimilation of Qutb and the Muslim Brothers.

Qutb moved to Greeley, Colorado in the summer of 1949 to attend the Colorado State College of Education. At first, Greeley was a community that held all of the attributes that Qutb held dear, which were education, music, art, literature, and religion. Although this small town appeared to be a quiet, quaint town, Qutb disapproved of the socially progressive women, and the racial tensions that ran rampant. Then, after an eight month residence in California, Qutb decided to return home to Egypt. He viewed America as a sexual and spiritual wasteland, and thought that God disagreed with the central focus of the country.

Upon return to Egypt, Qutb wasted no time voicing his dissatisfaction with American ways. He announced that the Egyptian's number one enemy was the white man, no doubt stemming from his multiple interactions with racial discrimination in America, and that modernity would be the fall of the Islam culture. Meanwhile, in Egypt, a war was brewing. The Egyptians were trying to overthrow the British government, and the Muslim Brothers were at the very heart of it. During this time, the Muslim Brothers, with the interest of the people in mind, created their own hospitals, schools, factories, welfare societies and even their own army. In 1948, however, the Egyptian government officially dissolved the Muslim Brothers because it feared the organization's power. At this point, the Brothers directed their attacks on Cairo itself. After they successfully burned most of the city of Cairo, Gamal Abdul Nasser and his compatriots in the Egyptian Revolution of 1952 overthrew King Farouk (an ineffectual ruler who was sympathetic to the British) and took control the Egyptian government. This was the first time in twenty-five hundred years that Egypt was ruled by Egyptians.

In 1954 Qutb became the editor of the Muslim Brothers magazine, *Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn*. As the editor of the magazine, Qutb began to write editorials calling for jihad against the British. Simultaneously, Nasser was negotiating a treaty which called for an end to the British occupation. In August 1954, the magazine was shut down because Nasser disliked Qutb's calls for an Islamic Revolution and his secret alliance with Egyptian communists who were trying to overthrow Nasser. On October 26, 1954, during an address in Alexandria, a member of the Brothers fired eight shots at Nasser in an attempt to kill him. The shooter missed completely. This gave Nasser the popularity of the people. Nasser used this popularity to hang six conspirators and place thousands of other in concentration camps. Qutb was charged for being a part of the Brother's secret apparatus, which was responsible of the assassination attempt. Qutb was put in prison for his involvement.

While in prison Qutb, wrote two politically charged books, *In the Shade of the Quran*, and *Milestones*, which was banned when published in 1964. In his book *Milestones* (smuggled out of prison), he provides an apocalyptic analysis of the world. "Mankind today is on the brink of a precipice," Qutb posits at the beginning. Humanity is threatened not only by nuclear annihilation but also by the absence of values. The West has lost its vitality, and Marxism has failed. 'At this crucial and bewildering juncture, the turn of Islam, and the Muslim community has arrived.' But, before Islam can lead, it must regenerate itself. (29) Qutb divided the world into two camps, Islam and jahiliyya, the period of ignorance and barbarity that existed before the divine message of the Prophet Mohammed. Qutb uses the term to encompass all of modern life: manners, morals, art, literature, law, even much of what passed as Islamic culture. He was opposed not to modern technology but to the worship of science, which he believed had alienated humanity from natural harmony with creation. Only a complete rejection of rationalism and Western values offered the slim hope of the redemption of Islam. This was the choice: pure, primitive Islam or the doom of mankind. (30) Humanity cannot be saved unless Muslims recapture the glory of their earliest and purest expression. 'We need to initiate the movement of Islamic revival in some Muslim country,' he writes, in order to fashion an example that will eventually lead Islam to its destiny of world domination. 'There should be a vanguard which sets out with this determination and then keeps walking the path,' Qutb declared. 'I have written *Milestones* for this vanguard.' (30)

On April 19, 1966 the trial of Sayyid Qutb and forty-two of his followers began. The only real evidence produced was his manifesto *Milestones*, which caused him to be given the death sentence. On August 29, 1966 Qutb was hanged, but his legacy lived on.

Chapter Two: The Sporting Club (Ayman al Zawahiri)

Ayman al Zawahiri and his twin sister, Umnya, were born on June 19, 1951 and raised in a middle class suburb five miles from Cairo, Egypt, called Maadi. The center of this suburb revolved around the Maadi Sport's Club. Ayman and his family never became members of the Maadi club which caused Ayman to be sheltered from the power and status of being a member. Ayman's father Mohammed Rabie al-Zawahiri and mother Umayma Azzam had a great influence in his life.

Growing up with a devout family, Ayman Zawahiri had choices on what career he would want to pursue in his life. His father's side of the family was dedicated mostly to the medical profession as his mother's side was mostly political. Ayman's great uncle, Mohammed al-Ahmadi al-Zawahiri had been the rector of al-Azhar, the thousand-year-old university in the heart of Cairo, which is still the center of Islamic learning in the Middle East. And, Ayman's maternal grandfather, Dr. Abdul Wahhab Azzam, was the president of Cairo University and the founder of King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Starting out with his education, Ayman attended a public secondary school despite his family's reputation. He excelled in his studies, often being called a book worm, and hated sports as he saw them as "inhumane". He was devout starting at an early age in his religious studies praying several times a day. His studies came natural to him with little effort. Although Ayman pursued a medical field education, he was very close to his mom's side of the family. Most of the teachings to Ayman about Islam law society originate from his Uncle Mahfouz Azzam, the patriarch of his maternal side. Sayyid Qutb had a long life bond with Mahfouz Azzam. His love for Azzam was shared in stories to young Ayman teaching him about the Islamic Society preached by The Muslim Brotherhood. Attending Maadi High School, Ayman recruited fellow classmates in underground cells to share his vision of a pure Islamic law society. He could not set his dreams into high gear, but he never gave up on them either. He graduated from the medical school at Cairo University in 1974 where he became a surgeon for three years in the Egyptian Army and would later continue his practice at different times in his life.

At an early age Ayman was taught about Sayyid Qutb's character, purity and torment. The effects of learning about Qutb were seen as early as Ayman's teen years. As Ayman and his brother Mohammed were walking home, they were offered a ride home from the vice president of Egypt, Hubsein al-Shaffei, who had been a judge when Qutb was imprisoned. Ayman responded to al-Shaffei telling him, "we don't want to get this ride from a man who participated in the courts that killed Muslims." So from a young age his beliefs and ideals were very strong and devout.

By 1974 al-Zawahiri had already recruited 40 members to a new group he called al-Jihad. During this time Ayman met a man named Abdallah Schleifer, who became an important and challenging figure in Zawahiri's life. As Ayman was building al-Jihad the Muslim Brothers were also beginning to gain membership and become an underground force within Egypt. As Ayman become more fueled to organize and train his members he joined up with the Red Crescent Society in Peshawar, Pakistan in 1981. This gave Ayman a safer place to run organize and train his organization without interference or attacks from outside enemies. It was in Peshawar that Ayman witnessed the Afghan freedom fighters known as Mujahedeen, which translates into holy warriors. The Mujahedeen had a big influence on Ayman as he would tell of the miracles that the Mujahedeen were having against the Soviets. Ayman had become a notable figure by the early 1980s, when he was implicated in the successful effort to assassinate the President of Egypt Anwar Sadat in October 1981.

Following the assassination, Ayman al-Zawahiri's imprisonment was brutal. As a leader in al-Jihad, he was a constant target of interrogation which brought on horrific acts of torture. From the Sadat assassination came the arrests of many radicals -- including Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman (the Blind Sheikh) -- from many different underground cells. Naturally this brought them all together which started thoughts, plans and ideas throughout the many organizations. In December of 1982, in front of a televised "improvised courtroom" Ayman spoke on the hellish tortures the prisoners had been through. He preached that they were the true Muslims and were there to "abolish the outstanding Islamic movement." Lifting their robes the prisoners revealed the markings of injuries due to the savage beatings through their times of interrogation. Through these times of torture, Ayman became a hardened radical outspoken radical. After his sentence was cut short due to complying with authorities. Ayman again took up his surgical practice. Although applying for fellowships in Europe, Ayman left Egypt for Saudi Arabia. With his departure from Egypt, he had no intentions on returning because of the Egyptian government's refusal to let him leave the country for three years after his release from prison.

Chapter Three: The Founder (Osama bin Laden)

Osama bin Laden, the founder of Al-Qaeda, was born the seventeenth son of Mohammed and Alia bin Laden in January, 1958. By the end of Mohammad's life, he had fathered fifty-four children with twenty-two wives. His life story is one of self-made success, and Osama would go on to live his life in hopes of following his father's footsteps. Though the physical time spent between father and son was brief, Osama claimed to know his father well, and Mohammed's influence on his son was lasting.

Mohammed bin Laden was born in a remote valley in central Yemen, but left Yemen due to devastating drought and opportunities elsewhere. He spent a short time in Ethiopia then traveled to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia at the age of twenty-three. Mohammed got a job as a bricklayer for Aramco, (Arabian American Oil Company) and even though he was illiterate, he was said to have been great with math and an honest worker. Aramco let some of the workers take a year off to start their own business in which time Mohammed

started the Mohammed bin Laden Company. His work found favor with the King of Saudi Arabia, Abdul Aziz; so much so that he was granted many contracts for building royal palaces. As his reputation grew, so did his relationship with the royal families. The bin Laden name had quickly become one of prominence and favor across the Saudi Kingdom. He constructed nearly every major road of importance in the Kingdom and made more than 18 billion dollars in renovations to the Grand Mosque in Mecca and the Prophet's Mosque in Medina (the holiest two sites in Islam). Mohammed bin Laden eventually move his family to Jeddah, where Osama would grow up as a young boy.

Osama grew up in a household full of children in a very modest home, despite the vast fortunes of his father. The way in which Mohammed lived served as an important reminder for Osama of how Muslim men are to resist modernity and luxury. Osama was about four or five years old when Mohammed divorced Osama's mother, Alia. Osama went from a house full of children to being the only child with his mother and new step-father. He would eventually become somewhat of a third parent to his half siblings. Those that knew the family said that Osama was a major authority figure in the family, perhaps even more so than the stepfather, Mohammed al-Attas.

Osama went to a prestigious grade school and grew up watching western movies and wearing western clothes. At the age of fourteen, Osama claims to have had a religious experience and a political awakening. He began to watch more international news, whereby he would sit in front of the television and weep for his Palestinian brethren in their fight with Israel over the rights to certain territories. He began to fast twice a week, in addition to other strict religious practices. Others, including his mother, began to notice young Osama as a leader on all things moral by his example of living a pious lifestyle. He abstained from drinking, gambling, smoking and sex. His only interest was in God, and maintaining his servitude.

He married at the age of seventeen to his first wife, Najwa Ghanem (fourteen), in 1974. It was also during this time that he joined the Muslim Brothers, which at the time was just a Muslim prayer group. It is through the Brotherhood that he met Jamal Khalifa during Osama's first year of college at King Abdul Aziz University. The two would become best friends. They both were heavily influenced by the writings of Sayyid Qutb, and longed for an Islamic society that would combine its religion with its politics. There still were no violent tendencies to their religious zeal, but college provided a time and place for thoughts and ideas to expand. Mohammad Qutb, the younger brother of Sayyid Qutb was a frequent guest speaker at the university, and Osama and Khalifa never missed a chance to listen to his lectures. It was during this time that Qutb was experiencing some criticism for his brother's collection of writings called, *Milestones*, claiming that the body of work had influenced a large following of Muslims to turn to a more violent approach in their religious expression. The critics claimed that this new group of Islamic radicals were interpreting these writings as permission to commit violent acts against Muslims and non-Muslims alike who were not living as true Muslims (according to their interpretation). It was at this point, during the late 1970's, that religious fanatics like Osama, Khalifa, and Mohammad Qutb, began to pick up the debate that was started by Sayyid Qutb twenty years earlier: Muslims that strive to impose all facets of Islamic law on their own lives were considered to be real Muslims, and anything less was considered, *jahiliyya* (see chapter one notes). While many were influenced by the religious piety of this new "radical" interpretation of the Muslim faith, Osama was not one of them. He and his friend Khalifa would initially side with the non-radicals. Their opinions would eventually change.

In 1978, Osama and Najwa had their first son and would later have ten more. Osama spent time with his family and believed, as his father did, that the bigger the family, the better. In 1982, he began his polygamous lifestyle, which would eventually grow his family to three more wives with a total of nineteen children. Polygamy at the time wasn't allowed but he and Khalifa believed that they could show others how to live such a lifestyle properly. Osama's own father, like many men of his time, would marry and divorce a woman in the same day. Osama wanted each wife to be treated equally, which was in contrast to the typical treatment of the third or fourth wife (commonly understood to be "slave" wives). Osama bought a rundown apartment with 4 units, where his wives and family would live.

He would eventually go on to take a part-time position with his father's most prominent company, the Saudi Binladen Group, granted to him by his brothers, despite their reservations. Osama was said to be a very hard worker, just like his father, and those that knew him spoke about him with respect and dignity. Osama, like his father, worked alongside his laborers, despite his role as their boss. Many of his workers remained loyal to him because of his hard-working mentality. Trying to maintain his construction duties and continue his academic ambitions became more time-consuming than he could manage, and Osama would eventually drop out of the University, one full year short of graduating. Osama then went to work for his father's company full-time.

Chapter Four: Change (1979-1981: Siege of the Grand Mosque and beginning of the Soviet War in Afghanistan)

Chapter four opens with background information on Prince Turki, the youngest child of King Faisal of Saudi Arabia. King Faisal sent Prince Turki to be educated in America where he attended Lawrenceville School in New Jersey for High School. After graduating Prince Turki attended one semester at Princeton, but dropped out. Prince Turki then attended Georgetown University but did not complete his Bachelor's degree. While Prince Turki was enrolled at Georgetown, he his tutored by the future 44th President of the United States, Bill Clinton, in Ethics. In 1973 Prince Turki returned to Saudi Arabia where he asked his father for a job. King Faisal denied his request stating that each of his brothers had to find their own jobs. Prince Turki's maternal uncle, Sheikh Kamal Adham granted Turki an intelligence job in the Foreign Liaison Bureau. Prince Turki married Princess Nout bint Fahd al Saud from within the royal family.

On November 20, 1979 the Grand Mosque of Mecca (the holiest site in Islam) was taken hostage by insurgents that used their control of the public address system to broadcast their message to the world. This also was New Year's Day of the Islamic Year 1400. The leader of the rebel insurgents was Jahayman al-Oteibi, and he believed that Mohammed Abdullah al-Qahtani was the Mahdi (the figure who is to guide the people through the end of time, restore peace, and defeat the Antichrist). Fundamentalist preacher Jahayman al-Oteibi had met al-Qahtani while in prison where Jahayman al-Oteibi was given a dream that revealed the Mahdi to him. The insurgents numbered between 400-500 including women and children from various countries: Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Kuwait, Egypt, and Black American Muslims. The insurgents smuggled in arms in biers; which are used to transport the dead for a ritual washing.

Prior to the insurgents cutting the telephone lines a Mosque employee called the bin Laden organizations headquarters to notify of the hostile takeover which contacted King Khalid. Prince Turki immediately joined the command post a hundred meters from the Grand Mosque, where he would remain for two weeks. The insurgents allowed many of the hostages to go unharmed but the insurgents were hidden in underground chambers beneath the courtyard. Prince Turki gained permission from cleric Abdul Aziz bin Baz due to the Quran strictly forbidding violence of any kind within the Grand Mosque in an attempt to end the violent takeover. King Khalid ordered a helicopter assault at which troops were lowered in by ropes into the courtyard which is a massive slaughter. After the slaughter of the troops King Khalid placed Prince Turki in charge. Prince Turki worked closely with Salem bin Laden for maps, the electrical layout, and technical info of the mosque. One of the many proposed ideas was to flood the underground chambers then to electrocute the insurgents or to place explosive saddles on dogs then remote detonate the explosives when inside the Mosque. Prince Turki sought assistance from Federal Secret Service Count Claude Alexandre de Marenches of France. Count Claude Alexandre de Marenches along with 3 other French commanders assistance which must quickly become Muslims due to be allowed within the walls of the holy city. The commandos pumped non-lethal gas into the underground chambers, but the attempt failed. Saudi forces then drilled holes into the courtyard where they dropped grenades into the rooms below the courtyard. The maneuver killed both insurgents and hostages and driving the rebels out where the Saudi sharper shooters killed them. After more than two weeks after the assault began the surviving rebels surrendered including Oteibi to officials. On January 09, 1980 Oteibi and sixty-two disciples were beheaded in eight different cities, the largest execution in the history of Saudi Arabia.

With the siege of the Grand Mosque, the "holiest place in the world had been defiled--by Muslims. The authority of the royal family had been openly challenged. After this, nothing could remain the same. Saudi Arabia had come to a place where it would have to change, but in which direction? Toward openness, liberality, tolerance, modernity, and Western ideas of democratic progress, or toward greater authoritarianism and religious repression."(94) The answer lay in part in Afghanistan, a nearby country that was fighting its own war.

On Christmas Eve 1979, as the siege of the Grand Mosque was going on, Afghanistan was invaded by the Soviet Union. One of the most influential people in recruiting soldiers against the Soviet Union was Palestinian scholar, Abdullah Azzam. Abdullah also caught the attention of Osama bin Laden, they became so close that bin Laden let Azzam stay at his house. Sometimes when Azzam stayed with Osama bin Laden he would have recruitment meeting in bin Laden's house in Jeddah. Over time bin Laden's house in Jeddah became a transit station for the young recruits who had answered the call to "join the caravan" of the Afghan jihad. During the summer after meeting Azzam, bin Laden held military camps for high school and college students. During this time bin Laden proved himself as an excellent fund raiser for the resistance against the Soviet Union. The Saudi Arabian government and other wealthy families such as the family, donated funds, trucks, and discounted airline tickets to the men going to fight. All of the support came due to the threat of Islam by the advancement of communism. Osama bin Laden wanted to join the cause Afghanistan, and he saw it as a way to answer the larger questions that faced Islam at this time of change.

How was Saudi Arabia to move forward? How were the Afghans to fight the Soviets? Bin Laden believed they must become more devout Muslims and reject the world of *jahiliyya*.

Chapter Five: The Miracles (The Soviet War in Afghanistan)

During the Afghan War against the Soviets two men, Osama bin Laden and Abdullah Azzam, greatly helped the Arab Afghan movement that resulted in an extreme devotion to the Muslim faith by their followers. Azzam was promoting propaganda for Muslims everywhere to join the war against the Soviets. This was a war, he said, to defend Muslims from the godless communists. The eventual Arab soldiers had little effect on the war itself, however, because they were not properly trained. Osama Bin Laden's biggest influence on the war was with the money he received from the Saudi Arabia Royal family. Many nations were determined to drive the Soviet's out of Afghan including America. Azzam and Bin Laden were extremists in their devotion to Islam and would spread their faith across a war stricken area, with the backing of nations around the world.

In 1979 Afghanistan was experiencing a Civil War. Prime Minister Hazifullah Amin was pushing aside the traditional Muslim faith and replacing it with a more western slant that outraged many. Thousands of Muslims fled and went into the mountains to join the mujahedeen. The mujahedeen declared a jihad - holy war- on the Amin regime and began to overthrow the government. In September 1979, Soviets invaded Afghanistan and began taking over the major urban cities. After the Prime Minister was shot by the Russians,

Babrak Kamal took office. He used Russian support to keep him in office and to build his army. Many Afghan soldiers had deserted Kamal's army and joined the mujahedeen, which proved to be a strong opponent.

After a year of fighting, Prince Turki al-Faisal, of Saudi Arabia, felt threatened by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. "He believed the Soviet Union's ultimate target was to control the Strait of Hormuz at the base of the Gulf. From there, the Soviets could control the supply route for the supertankers that ferried petroleum from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait, and Iran" (105). The Prince feared that with a Soviet command of the Strait of Hormuz, the world's oil supply could be cut-off. This greatly distressed the Americans who were leading the country in importing oil. With the monetary threat of losing the world's oil supply, many nations had an interest in Soviets invasion of Afghanistan. Turki did not truly believe that they could defeat the Red Army, "he only hoped to delay the inevitable Soviet invasion of Pakistan" (105). In Washington the Carter administration saw the invasion as an opportunity to "give the USSR its own Vietnam War" (105). America turned to the American-educated Prince Turki al-Faisal as an ally and would smuggle money and supplies through Saudi Arabia. During the war the Saudi Arabian government "contributed \$350 to \$500 million per year for the Afghan jihad" (109). The money was placed in a Swiss bank account that was controlled by the United States to help support the mujahedeen for the duration of the war.

In the early 1980's the "mujahedeen were little more than disorganized mobs" (105). There were seven official parties in place to better manage the chaos. The seventh official party was privately funded by Osama bin Laden and better represented Saudi Arabia than the other six. With bin Laden's "Fear of bodily participation" and the direct ties to the Royal family in Saudi Arabia, he kept away from the battlefields in the beginning of the war, an action he would personally regret later in life. Later bin Laden did physically enter the war, breaking a promise he had made to his mother.

In 1984 Abdullah Azzam persuaded bin Laden to cross into the Jaji area, where there was a camp high in the mountains above a major Soviet outpost. While there, the mujahedeen in the Jaji camp were attacked by Soviet missiles and bin Laden claimed that he had never felt closer to God. After the attack bin Laden returned to Saudi Arabia where "he raised a fortune for the mujahedeen- 'between five and ten million dollars" (107). With Osama bin Laden quickly transforming into the key financial backer of the mujahedeen, Abdullah Azzam, bin Laden's mentor, joined forces with his protégé.

"The two men agreed to create a more formal role for the Arabs in Afghanistan although there were few Arabs actually fighting in the jihad at that time" (108). Osama bin Laden financially supported anyone and their families who joined the jihad's forces to get more Arabs actively involved. Azzam took a different approach by issuing a fatwa, which argued "that jihad in Afghanistan was obligatory for every able-bodied Muslim" (108.) In Azzam's fatwa, he draws the line between a *fard ayn* and a *fard kifaya*. He explains that a *fard ayn* "is an individual religious obligation that falls upon all Muslims, like praying and fasting" (108) and that a *fard kifaya* "is a duty of the community" (108).

The first factor working in Bin Laden and Azzam's favor was the political climate of the Middle East and North Africa. Practically every regime in the region featured heavy censorship, high unemployment, a low literacy rate, and inability for men to regularly socialize with women. A hallmark of these governments during the Afghan War was coercing politically inconvenient or undesirable men into joining the jihad, only to prevent these individuals from returning afterwards. The lack of a homeland only served to embed these stateless undesirables further into the movement.

Perhaps the chief incentive for the often youthful Arabs to join bin Laden and Azzam's cause was money. Volunteers were paid a stipend that covered their travel and living expenses and also allowed them to send money home to their families. Azzam was able to draw on his contacts within the Muslim Brotherhood for funding, bin Laden from Saudi oil magnates. In the realm of finance for these operations, bin Laden's contributions could scarcely be overstated. Those who were drawn in to the Arab Afghan movement were drawn by "bin Laden's money as by the obligation to defend Islam in the manner that Azzam prescribed" (108).

Despite the myriad factors working in Azzam and Bin Laden's favor and the incentives offered, Azzam and bin Laden's recruitment efforts were largely unsuccessful. The Arab mujahedeen never numbered more than three thousand and the fighting quality of those they *did* recruit was questionable. Few of these recruits even entered Afghanistan and were considered to be lacking in fighting quality by their Afghan peers.

The financial support of bin Laden's family and Azzam's book sales were put to use furthering the cause of their jihad ideology, as well as fighting the Soviets. With Turki's support to bin Laden, he could "recruit young Arabs to the jihad, as well as provided training and indoctrination" (109). Osama bin Laden built training camps and a theological library with his money. He greatly supported the war and spread of radical Islam financially. "Many of the Arab Afghans swore fealty to Azzam, but it was bin Laden who was paying their rent" (110).

Azzam was known as the powerful supporter of the Muslims while bin Laden was hidden behind Azzam's shadow, because Azzam's stories of martyrdom brought the wishing of death instead of victory. Death attracted many young Arabs and with Azzam's selling of martyrdom, "He claimed that some of the brave warriors had been run over by tanks but survived; others were shot, but the bullets failed to penetrate" (112). The fatwa issued by Azzam and the supporting fatwa by Sheikh Abdul Aziz Bin Baz in Azzam's book *Defense of Muslim Lands* was one of the first in a steady stream of invective propaganda attempting to rally support for the Afghan

jihad. Other books, tapes and essays were circulated in bookstores and mosques throughout world, glorifying martyrdom. The glorification of martyrdom and jihad were also Azzam's primary talking points when he journeyed to the United States on annual recruiting drives.

Azzam also claimed that all Muslims who died still smelled like honey and dripped blood for several days after death. He taught that seventy-two virgins awaited these martyrs "with feasts of meat and fruit and cups of the purest wine" (113). With the desolation and despair that ran from Iraq to Morocco, the idea of wealth and an alternative life of reward attracted many curious and devout Muslims looking for opportunities to die so that they may be martyrs themselves.

Despite the spiritual and financial incentives, the first six years of the Afghan War saw few Arab mujahedeen reach the battlefield. The Arab recruits that *did* see combat would primarily do so under the command of and surrounded by Afghan soldiers. It wasn't until 1985 that Azzam and bin Laden managed to get their volunteer unit, the Brigade of Strangers, into Afghanistan with the intention of engaging the Soviets. Despite their intention to fight, the Brigade did not make contact with the enemy and was disbanded upon its return to Peshawar, Pakistan. A second failed attempt to infuse the Arab contingent into the conflict took place in May of 1986, when bin Laden directed a contingent into the Jaji area. Bin Laden's force set up camp in the midst of a minefield and after several detonations and a panicked retreat was humiliatingly asked to leave the area by the local Afghan commander. Yet another colossal failure by Azzam and bin Laden's contingent took place in 1987, when a meticulously planned attack was disrupted by botched logistics and a lone Soviet gunman with a machine. The Arab contingent was forced to leave after achieving nothing and suffering three casualties. This failure convinced officials back in Pakistan to begin closing down Services Bureau hostels and Arab training camps.

By 1986, the United States began sending stinger missiles to the Afghans in appreciable numbers. "It was clear by then that the Afghans were winning the war" (127). Mikhail Gorbachev, the general secretary of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union began to withdraw the Soviet troops out of Afghanistan. It took three years for the Soviet Union to completely extricate themselves from Afghanistan, but it was clear that the mujahedeen had eradicated the influence of Communism in Afghanistan. It was also clear the United States, not the Arab Army or Osama Bin Laden's money were the deciding factor in the war. The Arab Afghani soldiers had little effect on the outcome of the war but, they had transformed from the traditional Muslim faith into the radical Muslims of modern Al-Qaeda.

Chapter Six: The Base (al-Qaeda)

Millions of Afghans fled the violence from the Soviet occupation and entered the northwest Pakistani province of Peshawar. That region became a staging ground for the jihad against the Soviets around 1986. This was around the time that Ayman al-Zawahiri became a resident of Peshawar. His brother, Mohammed joined him in Peshawar and began setting up the financial hub for a takfiri group, al-Jihad, in that region and received funding from Cairo through Saudi Arabia. Long before this, Takfir wa Hijira was originally established in Egypt and led by Shukri Mustafa in the early 1970's. It was a group that many people, including the Cairo press, referred to as "people of the cave" because they wandered in the deserts of Western Egypt and slept in mountain grottoes. The name takfir means excommunication, and legend has it that its roots go back to the earliest days of Islam. Mustafa was later executed for the kidnapping and murder of a distinguished Islamic speaker in Cairo. This group seemed to disband after their leader's execution, but years later they regrouped and continued on with new radical Islamic ideas regardless of what the Quran taught, specifically about killing people. Members of the new takfir in the late 1980's such as Sayyid Imam (better known as Dr. Fadl) and Dr. Ahmed el-Wed developed a belief that they had divine permission from God to murder anyone that stood in the way of their beliefs. When these members of the original takfir regrouped, they extended their targets to a wide range of people, including fellow Muslims and anyone that registered to vote in government elections.

Ayman al-Zawahiri worked among these takfiris at the Red Crescent hospital in Peshawar which eventually changed his views and strategies from peaceful political resistance towards terrorism. His lifelong goal was to take over control of Egypt and create an Islamic-based government under peaceful processes and conditions. Until his association with these members of takfir, he never advocated such a major call for murder of such groups, although he had long held resentment towards Arab governments and the Muslim Brotherhood. But now, following a major personality change from what seemed to be an identity crisis, his desires took on a wider scope of leading a universal spread of Islam, even if it meant multinational bloodshed. The takfiri doctrine and jihad were the foundation of a new organization which combined multiple ideologies of its different leading founders, each with different goals and backgrounds. The end result of Ayman al-Zawahiri, Osama bin Laden, Dr. Fadl, and Abdullah Azzam would be al-Qaeda, a force that would gain worldwide infamous attention, especially after September 11, 2001.

The Lion's Den, a mountain cave compound, became the headquarters for the mujahedeen near the border with Pakistan. Here, Osama bin Laden, Zawahiri, and Dr. Fadl spent a lot of time together with Zawahiri and Fadl pushing for takfir. Azzam recognized takfir as a real danger and felt that violence against civilians, especially women and children, was against Islam. Bin Laden had initially been reluctant to consider warring with Arab governments and had visions of continuing a jihad against the central Asian republics of the Soviet Union. After a meeting in Peshawar in 1988, bin Laden and his advisors decided it was time to start a new organization from scratch and named it al-Qaeda. This new group's aim was to keep jihad alive after the Soviets were gone from Afghanistan. Once al-Qaeda was formed, requirements were made for those who sought to become members such as being good mannered, obedient,

trusted and willing to obey the instructions of al-Qaeda. By September 1988, thirty members met the requirements to be trained at the base, al-Qaeda, which is where the group's name came from. This new organization was met with opposition by other Arab Afghans because they saw it as competition for the money that they all sought, namely American and Saudi Arabian funds doled out through the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence. Abdullah Azzam and Osama bin Laden were seen as the leaders for al-Qaeda. Azzam stepped aside and allowed bin Laden to take the leadership role thereby reassuring that the Saudis would feel safe and support them with funds. Azzam was eventually pushed further aside by accusations of theft and eventually a trial.

Bin Laden was considered the emir of the Arabs. At the time there were Islamic groups fighting against each other. The two main Egyptian organizations were the Islamic Group led by Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman and Zawahiri's al-Jihad. Bin Laden supported Zawahiri's al-jihad. In Jalalabad on March 1989, a new battle erupted with the Communist Afghan government as the adversary. Now it was not the Soviets, but instead Muslims coming to fight Muslims with Bin Laden leading the Arabs as part of the Afghan mujahedeen. The mujahedeen lost because the commanders could not coordinate with one another. During that time, Bin Laden fell ill again. His main doctor was Zawahiri who treated him for his low blood pressure, speculated to have been Addison's disease. After the Jalalabad battle, Al-Qaeda was created. Its first recruiting meeting was held in Farouk camp in Khost, Afghanistan. It was a takfir camp that Zawahiri and Dr. Fadl had established devoted to training the Arab mujahedeen that will be part of Bin Laden's army. They earned \$1000 a month and \$1500 if they were married, with one month yearly vacation and a yearly round trip ticket home. They also had a health-care plan and an option to get out where they would get \$2400 if they wanted out. Al Qaeda's laws were to establish truth, get rid of evil, and establish an Islamic nation.

After the Jalalabad battle, the Afghan mujahedeen erupted into a civil war. The civil war was dominated by two parties, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Ahmed Shah Massoud, who each wanted an Islamic government in Afghanistan. Hekmatyar was from the dominant tribe in both Pakistan and Afghanistan, the Pashtun. He had the support of the Pakistan ISI, and by default the United States and Saudi Arabia. Massoud was from the Persian speaking tribe of Tajik, one of the largest ethnic groups of Afghanistan. Most of the Arabs were with Hekmatyar except Abdullah Anas who later convinced his father in law, Abdullah Azzam, to also support Massoud. Azzam had many enemies at that time, but his number of enemies increased after his support for Massoud. As a result on November 24, 1989, on his way to visit the mosque a roadside bomb made from 20 kilograms of TNT killed him and his two sons.

Chapter Seven: Return of the Hero

In 1989, Osama bin Laden returned to his hometown, Jeddah, in Saudi Arabia, where he was greeted as a hero. Bin Laden came to be known as the country's first celebrity at the age of thirty-one, and he seemed to command a large international volunteer army that he believed had brought down the Soviet superpower. Worth millions, but not as wealthy as the royals, bin Laden settled back into the family business of building roads and kept homes in Jeddah and Medina. Bin Laden's simple life shed light on the Saudi royal family and revealed much of the corruption and vice of the King and his relatives.

King Fahd of Saudi Arabia came to be known as a drunk and a notorious gambler who would risk millions in all-night gambling parties. His sons were little better. In fact, the attack on the Grand Mosque in 1979 was a time of awakening for the royalty of Saudi Arabia, as they realized they could protect themselves from criticism only by empowering the religious extremists, known as the *muttawā*. However, the *muttawā* became an overwhelming presence in the kingdom and the future models for the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Prince Turki was different than most of the royal family. He lived modestly and was not a tyrant. He was an advocate of women's rights, and he led an intelligence agency in Saudi Arabia. Based on personal experience, he found that the *muttawā* were getting bold enough to preach revolution under the noses of the royal family. So Prince Turki eventually used his agency to keep a close eye on the *muttawā*.

Life in Saudi Arabia changed dramatically during the 1980s. For years the main schools of Islam were taught in Mecca; however the Wahhabis held themselves above such divisions. The minority, the Shia, were forbidden to build new mosques or expand existing ones; however the Wahhabis could worship freely. Saudi Arabia eventually supported ninety percent of the expenses of the entire Muslim faith around the world, and the Wahhabis began to replace other traditions in Islam. Also much of the entertainment the Saudis once enjoyed was outlawed and the economy suffered as jobs dwindled and money dried up. The individuals in the joyless environment were the ones who followed Osama bin Laden.

Bin Laden originally wanted to wage an economic war on the United States by boycotting American products. However, bin Laden had some feelings of gratitude towards the United States for helping with the Soviets. America and Saudi Arabia relied on each other as many other countries do. America was the number one importer of Saudi Arabian oil and many of the Saudis came to America for their education. Bin Laden's desire to strike at the United States seemed odd in this environment.

In 1989, bin Laden asked Prince Turki to allow him to use Al Qaeda, for the first time, to overthrow the Marxist government of South Yemen (his father's homeland). Prince Turki declined. Just a few days later, however, North and South Yemen agreed to unite into one country, The Republic of Yemen. This made bin Laden believe the Americans had a secret pact with Yemen, and in turn bin Laden wanted to destroy the alliance. Bin Laden ventured to Yemen several times and Al Qaeda tried to convince northern Yemen

leaders to raid southern cities and assassinate leaders. President Ali Abdullah Saleh of Yemen asked King Fahd of Saudi Arabia to keep bin Laden out of Yemen. When bin Laden was approached with this idea, he denied ever having gone to Yemen. Bin Laden was later seen going back to Yemen so Prince Naif confiscated his passport. Bin Laden was stuck in Saudi Arabia for the time being; it was a “cold splash of reality” for him.

In 1990, bin Laden “warned of the danger that the murderous tyrant in Iraq, Saddam Hussein, posed to Saudi Arabia” (176) which stirred up heavy consequences. “On July 31 King Fahd personally chaired a meeting between representatives of Iraq and Kuwait to arbitrate the disputes between the two countries” (177). Although Hussein promised not to invade Kuwait at the meeting, two days later the Iraqi army entered Kuwait with only an undermanned Saudi military standing in the way of Saudi’s oil fields. Bin Laden begged the King not to ask the Americans for help but it was too late. The American government and industry viewed Saudi oil as vital to American interests and meant to contain Saddam. Many Saudis were worried about American involvement because western troops were not Muslim. Bin Laden said the presence of Christian foreign troops posed a greater threat to the region than Saddam’s attack.

In January 1991, the United States launched a major offensive under the auspices of the United Nations to remove Saddam and Iraqi forces from Kuwait. By March, the fighting was largely over, but thousands of American troops remained in Saudi Arabia. The United States would continue to use Saudi airfields to oversee a no-fly zone over Iraq for years to come. This enraged bin Laden, and other Islamic fundamentalist who believed that Americans wanted to control the Muslim holy land.

Following the Iraq War, bin Laden secured the return of his passport from the Saudi royal family, and he traveled to Peshawar, Pakistan in March 1992. There, he got into trouble for taking sides against the Saudi royals in the burgeoning civil war in Afghanistan. Ultimately, bin Laden left Peshawar and flew to Khartoum, Sudan in 1992 with his four wives and seventeen children.

Chapter Eight: Paradise

Following the long struggle with the Soviets, many foreign mujahedeen fighters stood to continue power struggles and engaged in a civil war within Afghanistan. Most of the foreign fighters at the end of the civil war chose to return home to their countries of origin, but they were not usually welcomed home as heroes due to their extremist indoctrination. Many countries viewed the returning fighters as threats to the normal way of life because they were devoted to jihad, which had not ended with the withdrawal of the Soviets from Afghanistan. Several of these veterans continued to wander around other countries which had regions going through power struggles and times of hostility. One of these major struggles was the uprising against the democratic government of Sudan in June 1989. At that time, Hasan al-Turabi, a fundamentalist Muslim spiritual leader who wanted to enforce Sharia law in Sudan, decided to open up his country to all Muslims regardless of their backgrounds or places of origin. This invitation drew several roamers who were not welcomed anywhere else, but it also attracted the attention of al-Qaeda’s leaders who soon made Khartoum, a region of Sudan, a major hub for conducting its operations.

Bin Laden eventually made Sudan his home when he moved his large immediate family there in 1992. He coordinated and financed several construction projects there including roads and an airport, and he also founded many different companies on huge plots of land that he purchased from the financially destitute government. Bin Laden employed around five hundred people in Sudan which included around one hundred al-Qaeda members, and they were all well-paid with great benefits as employees of his diverse enterprises. He even considered leaving al-Qaeda around this time of peace in his life to be a farmer, but the ongoing American occupation of Saudi Arabian air bases kept him from reaching ultimate peace of mind. When the United Nations occupied other Arab nations like Somalia and Yemen as a relief effort for the region’s famine, al-Qaeda reemerged as a militant group declaring this move as a threat to Islam. The growing occupation of foreign nations in the Middle East caused al-Qaeda to look closer at Westernization and what they deemed as a threat to the Islamic faith.

With the feeling of a direct assault from America, bin Laden and Abu Hajer al-Iraqi (bin Laden’s spiritual advisor) turned al-Qaeda “from being the anti-communist Islamic army that bin Laden [had] originally envisioned into a terrorist organization bent on attacking the United States” (194). Hajer and bin Laden believed that America remained the sole threat to Islam, and they placed their struggle with America in a larger, grander context dating back to the Middle Ages. According to bin Laden, the Islamic struggle against the West dated back to September 11, 1683, when the King of Poland turned back Muslim armies at the Gates of Vienna. “For the next three hundred years, Islam would be overshadowed by the growth of Western Christian societies” (194). Fundamentalists like bin Laden viewed Christianity “not just [as] a rival,” but as “the archenemy” (194). They believed that Christian America was spreading its power and faith into the Middle East, and that it must be stopped. With America’s parade to Somalia and the belief of the “permanent occupation of the holy land” (192) bin Laden was able to capitalize on this fear and advance his call to challenge the West.

Bin Laden dated the origin of his concerns about the United States to 1982, “when America permitted the Israelis to invade Lebanon and the American Sixth Fleet helped them” (172). He noted that in the aftermath of this event, in 1983, a suicide bomber attacked the U.S. Embassy and the U.S. Marine Corps in Beirut, Lebanon that “led to the prompt withdrawal of American peacekeeping forces” from that country. (197) This development left a profound impression on Osama bin Laden, who believed that the US was weak and would back down in the face of a challenge.

Later, on December 29, 1992 American troops were targeted in two bombings in Yemen. The bombs failed to kill any Americans but bin Laden accepted credit for the muffed attacks that went unnoticed in the United States. Even though no American soldiers were killed, two innocent bystanders perished. Members of al-Qaeda began to question the future of the organization. As doubt began to spread through al-Qaeda, Abu Hajer made a speech on the killing of innocent people. He declared that Ibn Tamiyyah, a thirteenth-century scholar had issued a historic fatwa after Mongols had savaged Baghdad but then converted to Islam. He professed that “Anyone who aided the Mongols, who bought goods from them or sold to them or was merely standing near them, might be killed as well. If he is a good Muslim, he will go to Paradise; if he is bad, he will go to hell, and good riddance” (198). Therefore, the two people who had been killed unintentionally would find eternal happiness or hell based on whether they were good Muslims or not. With two new fatwas issued by Abu Hajer -- the first authorizing the attacks on American troops and the second, the murder of innocents -- al-Qaeda had turned into a worldwide terrorist organization with America as its main target.

Chapter Nine: The Silicon Valley

The twin towers that compiled the World Trade Center were labeled by bin Laden as “those awesome symbolic towers that speak of liberty, human rights and humanity” (200). With an impressive view of the twin skyscrapers across the Hudson River, Little Egypt, held the blind sheikh, Abdul Rahman. He was seeking asylum in the U.S. even though he was on the terrorist watch list. He traveled throughout America and Canada spreading his fatwa that permitted the robbing of banks and the killings of Jews. He aroused thousands of young Muslims and their hatred against America calling to “cut the transportations of their countries, tear it apart, destroy their economy, burn their companies, eliminate their interests, sink their ships, shoot down their planes, kill them on the sea, air, or land” (201). It was unknown to the Americans and their Intelligence agencies that a large radical Islamist group had formed in the country. There were few Middle East specialists available to the FBI and the cloud of fog that hovered over Americans created the belief “that no one who lived in America would turn against it” (201). Then, on February 26, 1993, a homemade car bomb drove into the garage of one of the World Trade Towers and blew through six floors of steel and cement creating a two-hundred foot wide crater. The blind sheikh and his followers created fear inside America with their “extraordinary schemes to blow up a dozen American airliners simultaneously, to assassinate Pope John Paul II and President Bill Clinton, and to crash a private plane into CIA headquarters” (203). Even though they had a network of willing radical Muslims with elaborate outlines of killing as many people as possible to create humiliation towards America, they lacked the technical and organizational skills to employ them.

Soon after the Trade Center bombing, Ayman al-Zawahiri entered into the United States hoping to gain monetary support from Arab and Afghans there to help support the al-Jihad. He joined with Ali Abdelsoud Mohammed, and asked him to gain insight into American intelligence from the inside. Mohammed was previously a major in the Egyptian army, and was suspected by the US government of being an Islamic fundamentalist. He was stationed in Hamburg, Germany as an intelligence officer with the CIA, but was quickly fired and put on a list to prevent his re-entry into the United States. Unbeknownst to the CIA, Mohammed was already back in California on a CIA sponsored visa. He quickly married an American woman, Linda Sanchez, to keep his American visa valid in the US. He soon joined the US Army, was stationed in North Carolina and rose rapidly through the ranks. Meanwhile, he was stealing intelligence off of the base to help write the al-Qaeda training manual. A few years later, while talking with a FBI agent, Mohammed off-handedly mentioned Osama bin Laden and the al-Qaeda organization. Upon questioning from the FBI, he provided inside information into the organization, and their plans. Sadly, no one thought any of these revelations held any importance.

In the meantime, Zawahiri was touring California to raise money for al-Jihad. After collecting a paltry two thousand dollars, he faced the tough decision of either trying to keep his simple organization alive or joining forces with bin Laden’s al-Qaeda. Bin Laden had gained popularity in Egypt, and the Saudi radical wanted to merge all Islamic terrorist groups into one large organization. Although most members of Zawahiri’s al-Jihad were against the merger, they were soon being paid by al-Qaeda, but Zawahiri still thought the solution only temporary.

In 1993, Zawahiri attempted to assassinate Egypt’s interior minister. Although the attempt failed, it introduced the idea of suicide bombers, which would be imbedded into al-Qaeda throughout the future. For centuries, suicide had been considered taboo in the Islam culture, but Zawahiri helped to transform the act into a form of martyrdom, and even recorded the suicide bombers’ vows the night before his mission. While trying another assassination attempt on Egypt’s prime minister in November 1993, a car bomb injured twenty-one people and killed a schoolgirl. Outraged by the death of an innocent child, the citizens of Egypt protested against the Islamic terrorist groups, and more than 280 of Zawahiri’s followers were arrested shortly after. The citizens’ anger was only the beginning of the worldwide fury that was soon to come.

Chapter Ten: Paradise Lost

In 1992, Osama Bin Laden settled in Sudan, a poor country that welcomed him and his money. Bin Laden was determined to unite terrorists groups from around the world to fight against one common enemy, the United States. The U.S. was the last standing superpower and many people saw it as the police force for a New World Order. This was totally against the Muslim belief in spreading Islam and governing by sharia law. Bin Laden believed the superpower had to fall.

The US working under the auspices of the United Nations was on a mission overseeing the effort to end the Somalia famine. Osama Bin Laden sent a handful of al-Qaeda recruits to assist rebels in disrupting the humanitarian effort. Bin Laden claimed to have sent over 250 men. The rebels managed to shoot down two US helicopter in October of 1993 in Mogadishu, Somalia (a scene later made infamous in Black Hawk Down). Al-Qaeda quickly claimed credit for this strike and the desecration of the bodies of U.S. servicemen, even though sources suggest the organization had nothing to do with it. Truth was the rebels wanted nothing to do with Osama's men. Even so, the event proved critical in bin Laden's ongoing story of American cowardice. "Based on the reports we received from our brothers who participated in the jihad in Somalia," he boasted on the Al-Jazeera, "we learned that they saw the weakness, frailty, and cowardice of U.S. troops. Only eighteen U.S. troops were killed. Nonetheless, they fled in the heart of darkness, frustrated after they had caused great commotion about the New World Order."

Zawahiri's terrorist organization had run out of money and it joined Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda reluctantly. One of Zawahiri's men Ali Mohammed had trained in the US Army and proved to be a valuable asset to bin Laden. Al-Qaeda quickly turned to a new frontier with pipe bombs and suicide attacks. Osama Bin Laden justified killing innocent people by stating anyone with a voting card was against Islam; if a Muslim was killed then they were considered martyrs and had paradise waiting on them. If they were not a martyr then they would burn in hell and good riddance.

By 1994, bin Laden's life had reached a pinnacle. He had spent two years in Sudan, and his family and business were doing well. But, he was careless and reckless during this time. He once paid \$1.5 million dollars for what he thought was uranium, but it turned out to be red mercury a useless product. He was also found to be a target of other extremists groups. Osama eventually traveled with body guards and routinely carried an AK-74. Because of bin Laden's extreme statements and behavior, on March 5, 1994, King Fahd personally revoked Osama's Saudi citizenship. The bin Laden family quickly cut his annual pay of seven million dollar from the families businesses.

By the end of 1994 Osama had invested poorly in several flailing businesses and had to reduce the salaries of his al-Qaeda terrorists. Jamal al-Fadl who had been one of Osama's most popular and trusted men reached into the till and stole \$110,000. Fadl had an offer to return the money and be forgiven but chose to leave al-Qaeda instead. Fadl later sold his story to intelligence agencies for a million dollars and protective custody. He later won the New Jersey lottery while living in protective custody.

Faced with dwindling circumstances in Sudan, bin Laden turned his sights on American Embassies in Africa. One of his men, Ali Mohammed, was sent disguised as a tourist to photograph a potential building for an attack. The attack never happened but Osama kept the photographs for the future.

Osama wanted to return to Saudi Arabia and entertained the possibility of an apology to King Fahd. In return Osama would have gained his citizenship back and restored his family's money. His old reporter friend Jamal Khashoggi reached out to him. Osama Bin Laden never went on the record after three days of talking with Khashoggi and never apologized to King Fahd. Khashoggi left without an answer to the direction Osama Bin Laden was headed.

By 1995, bin Laden's idyllic situation in Sudan had turned sour. He told the members of al-Qaeda that he would have to reduce their salaries because he had "lost all my money." He was banned from Saudi Arabia, and had lost his citizenship and passport. Jamal al-Fadl, one of his closest supporters, had betrayed and left him. And, his businesses were losing money. He blamed America and the West for his circumstances and determined to act in the future.

Chapter Eleven: The Prince of Darkness

Back in the United States, during the mid-1990's, John O'Neill and Richard A. Clarke began to pursue the unsettling growth of al-Qaeda and the rise of Osama bin Laden. In 1995, Clarke was the national coordinator for counterterrorism in the White House, and O'Neill was the newly appointed chief of counterterrorism for the FBI. Their first task was to capture Ramzi Yousef, the man who had attacked the World Trade Center in 1993. After the attack, Yousef had become the number one most wanted terrorist by the FBI, but he had left the country without a trace.

Two years later, in 1995, Yousef was spotted in Islamabad, Pakistan, and Clarke passed the news on to O'Neill, who was in charge of a rendition operation, which included the legal kidnapping of a foreign criminal and his return to the United States. Despite the FBI's inexperience with rendition operations -- remember the FBI generally deals with domestic issues leaving foreign tasks to the Central Intelligence Agency, Ramzi Yousef was heavily pursued by John O'Neill.

O'Neill was as committed to his job as anyone at the FBI. He was a dedicated, eccentric individual who worked constantly and demanded the best from himself and his co-workers. Those that knew him gave him the nickname, "The Prince of Darkness," because of his tendency to work through the night. He had dedicated his life to the bureau and those that tried to follow in his footsteps often found themselves with very little life outside of their job, a prospect that O'Neill found quite comfortable.

Within seventy-two hours, Yousef was located, arrested, and brought back to the United States. O'Neill had accomplished a major task, and he hadn't even officially entered his position, which was to begin a week later.

The first clear sign of terror by al-Qaeda would come on November 13, 1995 in the form of a car bomb outside the communications center for the Saudi National Guard. Seven people were killed, and sixty others were injured. One week prior, bin Laden had written a letter to King Fahd and the Saudi royal family, expressing his discontent with the king's tolerance of secular laws, and the presence of American troops in the Kingdom. Though bin Laden never officially took credit for the car bomb that followed, three of the four suspects that were interrogated admitted to being influenced by bin Laden's speeches and one of them was trained at the al-Qaeda Farouk camp in Afghanistan. Though official evidence may dispute the connection, to many, the attack was clearly the initial terrorist attack from al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden.

Chapter Twelve: The Boy Spies

In April 1995, Egyptian intelligence learned that Ayman al-Zawahiri held a meeting of al-Jihad in Khartoum, Sudan with leading members of a rival Islamic group. The two groups were trying to work together to restart terror activities in Egypt, and they were being aided by the Sudanese government. Husan al-Turabi's grand Islamist revolution had been stymied, unable to spread beyond Egypt.

In June 1995, assassins from the Islamic Group, Sudanese intelligence, and al-Qaeda attempted to kill Hosni Mubarak, the Egyptian president, when he traveled to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for a meeting of the Organization of African Unity. Mubarak survived the well-coordinated attack, in which two of his bodyguards were killed, and when he returned to Egypt he declared a state of emergency that was still in effect fourteen years later.

On November 19, 1995, the eighteenth anniversary of Anwar al-Sadat's trip to Jerusalem, Zawahiri's men continued their attack against Egypt, bombing the country's embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan. This act of mass murder alienated many of Zawahiri's followers and thrust him further into the camp of bin Laden.

Meanwhile, the "catastrophe that the radical Islamist leaders of Sudan had created for themselves finally made itself starkly apparent. The government's complicity in the terror plots against New York and the attempted assassination of Mubarak guaranteed international sanctions, which took effect in April 1996."

Wanting to get off the U.S. watch list for states that supported terrorism, representatives from Sudan asked secretly what they had to do to please the U.S. One of the items on the list was getting rid of bin Laden. Sudan then told bin Laden he had to go.

Bin Laden left Sudan on May 18, 1996 and headed to Afghanistan. "His family was scattered and broken. The organization that he had built was torn apart. He held American responsible for the crushing reversal that had led him to this state."

Chapter Thirteen: Hijra

Bin Laden was thirty-eight years old when he left Sudan, a refugee unable to land in his own country and living off of the charity of others. He was entering Afghanistan which had been devastated by twenty years of war and reduced to ruins and poppy fields. Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, was under siege by the Taliban, a mobile guerrilla army composed of students. He settled into an old farm that was owned by an elderly warlord five miles south of Jalalabad.

The Taliban came to power by quickly capturing nine of Afghanistan's thirty provinces including Jalalabad, the gateway to the Khyber Pass. The Saudi government instructed the Taliban to hold on to bin Laden and keep him quiet. Mullah Mohammed Omar, the self-imposed "ruler of all Muslims", became responsible for bin Laden. Omar had come to power attempting to bring peace to a country that had been overrun with violence, ethnic hatreds, and escalating savagery. He had gathered students (the word in Pashtu is "Taliban") from madrassas and first took over a district in the Kandahar province. Many Afghans rallied around the Taliban because they were desperate for order.

The Taliban received its support from Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, madrassas across the Pakistan border, and from a tax on opium. It was composed of male students who had been separated from their families, isolated from females, and were often violated by other men. They had concentrated their studies on the Quran and Sharia and the glorification of jihad. The Taliban government was unsure of bin Laden but hoped he would spend his fortunes in Afghanistan as he had in Sudan.

Bin Laden likened his "banishment" to Afghanistan as the prophet Mohammed's *hijra*, or retreat, to a cave in Mecca when Mohammed was expelled from Medina. He lived a simple life in the caves at Tora Bora, for the most part without modern technology. Bin Laden used this backdrop to symbolize his likeness to Mohammed and declare war against America.

On August 23, 1996, he issued a "Declaration of War Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places." -- "You are not unaware of the injustice, repression, and aggression that have befallen Muslims through the alliance of Jews, Christians, and their agents, so much so that Muslims' blood has become the cheapest blood and their money and wealth are plundered by the enemies," he said. "[O]ne of the worst catastrophes to befall the Muslims since the death of the Prophet," bin Laden claimed, was the presence of American troops in Saudi Arabia. He declared war on Americans and called for supporters to terrorize the country.

Shortly after his declaration of war, bin Laden was visited by Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, Ramzi Yousef's uncle, who told him of a plot to train pilots to crash airplanes into buildings.

Chapter Fourteen: Going Operational

On June 25, 1996 there was a terrible explosion in Saudi Arabia. The explosion occurred at the Khobar Towers military-housing complex in Dhahran, which served as the barracks for the 4404th Airlift Wing. The explosion killed nineteen American soldiers and nearly four hundred people were injured.

John O'Neill set up a team of one hundred agents and met up with the director of the FBI to determine the cause and persons responsible for the bombing. The team was met with opposition by the Saudi investigators, who were cautious with the Americans for fear that American involvement in the case would taint the evidence once it was brought to the clerical judges.

O'Neill was then tasked to be the special agent in charge of the National Security Division in New York. He was in charge of counterterrorism and counterintelligence in the Middle East. The name of this squad was called I-49. This squad spent most of its time keeping track of the Sudanese, Egyptians, and Israelis, who were all recruiting within New York. When O'Neill arrived in New York the I-49 squad was fully immersed with the crash of TWA Flight 800 off the coast of Long Island, which went down in July 1996. In the beginning investigators thought that the plane had been bombed or shot down in retaliation for Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman being on trial in New York. The investigation later confirmed that the crash was due to a freak mechanical failure. This gave O'Neill and his I-49 squad the resources to begin looking at bin Laden.

O'Neill collaborated with the CIA's Michael Scheuer, and Scheuer allowed O'Neill to have one of his FBI agents, Dan Coleman, work with the CIA to investigate bin Laden. Coleman had interviewed a man named Jamal al-Fadl, an al-Qaeda defector, who told Coleman about the existence of a terror organization and its plans. Coleman believed that America had a new threat but his reports fell on deaf ears and only Scheuer and O'Neill seemed to take any interest in any of Coleman's reports. Coleman kept investigating and tracked down bin Laden's former secretary Wadiah el-Hage. Once found Coleman's team found documents on Hage's hard drive that confirmed the allegations that al-Fadl had made about al-Qaeda's existence and their goals. Coleman knew al-Qaeda was up to something but the case against bin Laden remained unfocused.

Chapter Fifteen: Bread and Water

After Osama bin Laden moved to Afghanistan in 1996, his relationship with the Taliban was somewhat strange. One of the only countries to formally recognize the Taliban as the rightful government of Afghanistan was Saudi Arabia, and the Taliban had no quarrel with the U.S. as of yet. Because of these facts, Mullah Omar of the Taliban was compelled to keep Osama out of the public eye, at the request of Prince Turki.

To that end, Omar sent a delegation of Taliban members to "flatter" bin Laden, but at the same time clearly communicate to him that he was not supposed to speak publicly. In return, bin Laden "endorses their rule unconditionally." Almost immediately disregarding these instructions, however, bin Laden met with a CNN press team in March 1997. He proceeded to criticize the Saudi government, claiming they were "subservient to the U.S." Without unveiling any true political plan, he also claimed that the Arabian Peninsula would soon be under a new Muslim government. He declared war on the U.S., citing the facts the American support for Israel, U.S. presence in Saudi Arabia seven years after the end of the Gulf War, and his claim that the Americans were the true terrorists as his reasons for war.

As a result of his incendiary interview, Bin Laden was summoned to Kandahar by Mullah Omar. Omar demanded that Osama relocate his people to Kandahar and cease the interviews and media attention at once. Osama agreed to these requests, and moved his family and organization into a compound called Tarnak Farms. Wright calls the structure "dilapidated" and describes bin Laden's abysmal financial situation. In many instances there was almost no food to be had at the compound.

During this time, Ayman al-Zawahiri was believed to have moved about quite a bit. He traveled to Europe and Asia, all the while staying active in jihad. On December 1, 1996, he was detained in Russia for illegally crossing the Russian border. Subsequently, the Russians were unable to discover his true identity, as he posed as "a Sudanese merchant." He claimed he was unaware he had crossed into Russia, but was sentenced to six months in prison. He was released weeks after the verdict on time served. This instance helped goad Zawahiri into joining bin Laden formally, as he had "more defectors and no real resources."

In July 1997, a deal was struck between the Egyptian government and the Islamic Group. The Islamic Group "formally renounced violence" as a result of continued harsh punishments for their actions and an inability to fend off the security forces who pursued them. Zawahiri was not happy with this development, but it led to the release of over two thousand members of the Islamic Group from Egyptian prisons. Zawahiri convinced some of the released prisoners to join him in the use of violence against the Egyptian government yet again.

On November 17, 1997, six members of the Islamic Group attacked Queen Hatshepsut's temple at Luxor, Egypt, where an opera was set to be performed. They shot one guard, then commenced killing tourists. The rampage lasted forty-five minutes and resulted in the death of women and a five-year-old child. After releasing their fury on the tourists inside the temple, the attackers hijacked a bus, drove through a police checkpoint, and then apparently committed ritual suicide in a cave. Fifty-eight tourist and four Egyptians died, not counting the attackers. Seventeen tourists and nine Egyptians were wounded. Most of the dead tourists were Swiss, as well as two Japanese couples who were on their honeymoons.

The attack at Luxor “shocked and revolted” the Egyptian people, and it failed to influence people favorably towards the terrorists’ ideology. The Egyptian people turned away from the extremists. This lack of support helped drive Zawahiri and bin Laden together.

On February 23, 1998, Zawahiri and bin Laden released a fatwa denouncing America, naming 1) support for Israel, 2) the U.S. presence in Saudi Arabia, and a new claim that 3) America wanted to destroy Iraq as their motivation for the announcement. The fatwa allowed for the killing of American citizens anywhere aggressors could find them. The Zawahiri/bin Laden union was not popular with all of al-Jihad’s members, and some defected. The collaboration led to the notable defection of Zawahiri’s brother Mohammed, who still wanted to focus on seating an Islamic government in Egypt.

Chapter Sixteen: “Now It Begins”

Osama bin Laden called the United States a nation of tyrants and criminals, thus making acts of terror against it morally justified. The fatwa issued against Americans across the globe in 1998 brought a new generation of fighters into al-Qaeda from both the Middle East and from western nations.

In response to the growing threat, the United States formulated a plan to kidnap bin Laden and bring him to the United States for trial. When this plan failed to coalesce, partially due to a failure to obtain a strong indictment, the Director of Central Intelligence, George Tenet, sought out the help of Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. Abdullah sent Prince Turki to Afghanistan to secure Osama bin Laden from the Taliban and Mullah Omar. The following meeting with Omar left Turki under the impression that the Taliban would hand over bin Laden and as a down-payment, Saudi Arabia provided money and trucks to the Taliban, equipment which was used by the Taliban to perpetrate a massacre of rebel forces at Mazar-e-Sharif. The Taliban did not offer up bin Laden, though.

In 1998, CIA operatives uncovered vital intelligence relating to al-Jihad and al-Qaeda from Zawahiri’s “closest personal confidant,” Ahmed Salama Mabruk, whom they kidnapped in Baku, Azerbaijan. Mabruk’s laptop contained al-Qaeda organizational charts and a roster of Jihad members in Europe -- “the Rosetta Stone of al-Qaeda” as Dan Coleman called it. Yet, the departmental rivalry between the FBI and the CIA dictated that the CIA not share the data with counterintelligence Section Chief John O’Neill of the FBI. John O’Neill was one of the highest ranking American officials focused on bin Laden at that time and was ill-equipped to deal with the growing al-Qaeda threat. The combination of faulty intelligence, departmental rivalry, and O’Neill’s close relationships to reporters and Attorney General Janet Reno, as well as his own character flaws prevented the FBI and CIA from coordinating effectively.

America’s intelligence failure could not have come at a worse time. On August 7, 1998, al-Qaeda operatives launched near simultaneous bombings of U.S. embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and Nairobi, Kenya. The purpose of these attacks was to cause as many American and native casualties as possible. Despite the amateurish nature of the bombings, 12 Americans were killed, as well as thousands of Kenyans and Tanzanians killed and injured.

Following the attacks, FBI investigators approached a man who identified himself as Khaleed Saleem bin Rasheed, actually a Saudi national, named Mohammed al-Owhli, who after a brief interrogation provided FBI officials with their first warning of a sizable attack on US soil.

The United States’ response to the 1998 embassy bombings yielded little in the way of results. A Tomahawk cruise missile strike in Khartoum against an alleged chemical weapons laboratory went awry when the lab turned out to in fact be nothing more than a pharmaceutical factory. In response to the missile strike, the Sudanese government allowed two al-Qaeda operatives to escape custody. A second missile strike, this time against al-Qaeda training camps near Khost, Afghanistan proved to be equally ineffective. With a total 66 Tomahawks launched the damage totaled more than a few buildings destroyed and perhaps as few as six al-Qaeda operatives killed. Adding to the impotence of the strike was the probable sale of undetonated cruise missiles by Bin Laden to China and Pakistan.

Chapter Seventeen: The New Millennium

Mullah Omar’s loyalty was split between Osama bin Laden and Prince Turki. Originally Omar had agreed to hand bin Laden to Turki and was negotiating the exchange. Bin Laden had been in Omar’s company for some time. After two missile attacks from America, Omar advised America that the attacks would only provoke more acts of terrorism from the Islamic people. He also advised the only way for this to be avoided is if president Bill Clinton resigned. State department official, Michael E. Malinowski, spoke with Omar and said that there was evidence that bin Laden was behind the East Africa bombings. This conversation had no resolution to the attacks from either end, however it was the first of many informal talks between the US and the Taliban.

Bin Laden split the Taliban by declaring war against the US. Some of the Taliban felt America had always been their friend and it would prove bad to make such a powerful country their enemy. This half also pointed out that no one in al-Qaeda, not even bin Laden himself had the religious authority to declare war. The other half of the Taliban viewed the U.S. as the enemy after the missiles were launched.

Omar could either surrender bin Laden like originally planned, or allow bin Laden to move elsewhere unharmed. If he gave bin Laden up to the Prince as they had agreed, the Taliban would say he had succumbed to American pressure. Omar felt the Taliban would not survive if he handed bin Laden to the Saudis. Breaking a deal with Prince Turki could also have a negative outcome. He spoke with bin Laden who told Omar that he would leave soon, and that he would leave his wives and children in Omar's care. Bin Laden made a pledge, swearing his fealty to Omar, calling him the leader of the faithful. Omar no longer saw bin Laden as a threat, and decided to break his deal with the prince. Omar told the prince when they met that there was a mistake in the translation. The prince was not fooled, they had spoken on several occasions about the transferring of bin Laden into his custody. Omar stood by his claim that the translator had made a mistake and began throwing insults at the translator. Omar also said that bin Laden was a man of honor, and asked the prince to reconsider his stance. Prince Turki left empty handed.

America's attack left in its wake a strong sense of paranoia in the al-Qaeda community, and they began to turn on each other. Bin Laden still sat with his men, an easy way to approach him, possibly an easy way for a traitor to attack. However there were still men loyal to bin Laden amongst the men. One day Abu al-Sha'tha spoke rudely to bin Laden, a man loyal to bin Laden by the name of Abu-Jandal, offered to sit between the two. Bin Laden declined the offer, but when the first man made a sudden movement, Abu-Jandal jumped into action and restrained the man. Bin Laden gave Abu-Jandal the gun he kept on his person and made him his personal body guard. The gun contained two bullets meant to kill bin Laden if he were ever captured. Every night Abu-Jandal would polish the bullets and pray to Allah that he would never have to use them.

In 1998 bin Laden issued his fatwa against the US, but did not make the FBI's most wanted until June 1999. John O'Neill began to notice a pattern and came to the conclusion that time and symbolism had a lot to do with bin Laden's attacks and feared that the turn of the century would add to the theatrics. Panic over terrorism was covered by the Y2K panic. On December 14, a border guard in Port Angeles, Washington stopped an Algerian man, Ahmed Ressay, who's anxiety was extremely high; patrol searched the trunk of his car and inside they found all the makings similar to the bombs used in the Oklahoma bombings. No solid connection between Ressay and bin Laden was ever identified. He was not a member of al-Qaeda although he had learned to build bombs in one of bin Laden's camps. Ressay was a freelance terrorist. His planned target was Los Angeles International Airport, before the attack he inquired if bin Laden would be taking credit for it, but he was left with no answer.

Ressay owned his own ad hoc cell in Montreal. While Ressay was held in customs Washington State authorities found a slip of paper in his pocket which had telephone numbers written on it. John O'Neill called the numbers on the slip of paper and found a connection with Abdul Ghani Meskini who was an Algerian who lived in Brooklyn. O'Neill oversaw a stakeout of Meskini's residence. On December 30, O'Neill arrested Meskini on charges of conspiracy and other suspected terrorists on immigration violations. This would lead to Meskini and Ressay becoming cooperating witnesses for the government.

After the new year, O'Neill and Dale Watson, the assistant director of the Counterterrorism Division, met with Dick Clarke in order to create a strategic plan called the Millennium After-Action Review. This was to change a number of policies to root out al-Qaeda cells. Part of the policy changes were to allow the use of wiretaps along with allowing the Internal Revenue Service and the Immigration and Naturalization services to monitor the flow of money and personnel.

On January 3, 2000, five men in Aden, Yemen broke there fast during the month of Ramadan. The men walked to the shore and found a fishing skiff swamped in the surf. The men believed that this was a gift from heaven and began to strip the boat of anything of value. When the men opened the hatch on the motor they found strange bricks. They began throwing the bricks to the shore believing that they had value. At this time a couple of al-Qaeda operatives in SUVs appeared and demanded to know what the men were doing. When they say the men throwing the bricks they stepped back in alarm. The bricks were C-4 explosives and the boat was to be used for an attack of the USS *The Sullivans*. The attack never happened.

Chapter Eighteen: Boom

Between ten and twenty thousand trainees passed through the Afghan camps from 1996 until they were destroyed in 2001. In order to become a recruit they were to be interviewed about their backgrounds in order to find out what assignment they could be given. One example of this would be Hani Hanjour who stated that he had studied flying in the United States. Hanjour would later become part of the 9/11 plot. The recruits would not only endure strenuous physical training they were to be subjected to the al-Qaeda worldview of utopian goals. The three goals were to *Establishing the rule of God on Earth, Attaining martyrdom in the cause of God, and Purification of the ranks of Islam from the elements of depravity*. There were three stages of training one was that raw recruits spent a period of 15 days in boot camp where they would be pushed to total exhaustion. In the second stage, which lasted 45 days, the recruits received basic military training and map reading. During the third stage the recruits could choose between different specialty camps.

Bin Laden was at first for the use of biological or chemical warfare, but later decided that it was counterproductive, creating sympathy for those who were attacked. In November 1999, it seemed his ideas had changed. It had been three years since Khalid Sheikh Mohammed had brought the idea of flying planes into buildings in America, and now bin Laden wanted to consider the idea again. He called Mohammed to Kandahar to work with him and Abu Hafs (his trusted assistant) on picking targets. During their subsequent meeting the three men discussed the following locations for the attacks: the White House, the U.S. Capitol, the Pentagon, the World Trade Centers, The Sears Tower and the Library Tower.

As bin Laden and his men were consider the plane attack, other al-Qaeda operatives were planning an operation for the Yemini port of Aden. After the failed attack on the USS *The Sullivans*, Tewfiq bin Attash, who took the name of Khallad, masterminded an attack on the USS *Cole*.

The billion-dollar guided-missile warship USS *Cole* was attacked on October 12, 2000 at 11:15 a.m. by a small fishing boat. The attack was somewhat symbolic, with the huge “destroyer”, the *Cole*, representing the capital of the West, and the small fishing boat representing Mohammed. After the attack on the *Cole*, John O’Neill was sent to investigate along with a Arabic-speaking translator by the name of Ali Soufan.

When O’Neill and Soufan arrived in Yemen to investigate the *Cole* bombing, the Americans were essentially held “prisoners” in the Aden hotel in Yemen for their own ‘security’. The Yemen’s equivalent to the FBI, the Political Security Organization (PSO), surrounded the hotel to protect the Americans.

When O’Neill requested evidence from the Yemenis, like videotape of the day of the attack, the Yemenis released it to the Americans after editing crucial parts out of it. The FBI also had to pay the Yemeni government in order to be able to investigate the *Cole* bombing.

Despite these setbacks, Fahd al-Quso was arrested at the end of October and claimed to have delivered \$5000 to Khallad, the mastermind of the *Cole* attack. Khallad had been associated with bin Laden since childhood; he had been part of the embassy bombing and the failed attempt on the USS *The Sullivans*. His involvement in the *Cole* attack marked the “first real link” between al-Qaeda and the *Cole* attack.

When Soufan tried to interrogate Fahd al-Quso, however, he noticed that PSO intelligence stopped the questioning when important facts came up. Soufan managed to collect from al-Quso that his mission was to hand over \$36,000 in al-Qaeda funds. The money was later connected to the money used to purchase the first class air tickets and maintain two of the 9/11 hijackers, Nawaf al-Hazmi and Khaled al-Mihdhar. Since Soufan did not have full support of the CIA, he was not able to connect the *Cole* bombing with the two men in the United States receiving flight training for the 9/11 attacks.

After the *Cole* attack bin Laden separated the senior leaders for the ‘anticipated American response’ that never came! He wanted to lure America into a trap, the trap being Afghanistan. His strategy was to continue to attack the U.S. until the U.S. invaded , then the mujahedeen would “warm upon them and make the entire American empire” fall from its wounds.

Part of the reason no response came was that the U.S. did not connect the USS *Cole* and the 9/11 conspiracy. The CIA withheld important information because it feared it might compromise foreign services relationships. It is uncertain why the CIA withheld the information that might have connected the USS *Cole* with the 9/11 conspiracy and maybe even prevented the attacks.