

WHY DOES NOT MAN MANGE TO GET OVER IMPEDIMENTS

When I read *Surah Al Balad* in the Holy Qur'an, I see in my mind's eye the speech the Exalted Allah directed to His beloved Muhammad (PBUH), the Messenger whom He sends as mercy to the whole world. I can see the portrait of this city as the dwelling place where He sent His Messenger to conclude all previous legislations.

It is the portrait of this earth inhabited by man as well as by our master Muhammad (PBUH). The method that delineates the features of this city, its discipline, the movements of its citizens, as well as the types of its people mentioned in this *Surah* makes this portrait clearer in my imagination while I read it.

Mecca, the city where our master Muhammad (PBUH) was entrusted with the mission, represents the earth we are moving on. It is the place to which he is sent to spread his mission on.

The Exalted Allah said: " Say: 'O men! I am sent unto you all, as the Messenger of Allah.' " (Al A'raf, v. 158) I.e., "I am the only man who makes clear the heavenly revelation in this city (i.e., the whole world), I am the one whose mission is Islam, and his religion, his ideal example, and his method is set by the Lord of man."

The One who is the Addresser as well as the Sender is the Exalted Allah, the one who is sent is our master Muhammad (PBUH), and the people whom the prophet is sent to in this worldly city –whether they respond to him or not—are its inhabitants.

This is the image I have in my mind about the city presented in the Holy Qur'an: " It is He Who hath sent His Messenger with Guidance and the Religion of Truth, to proclaim it over all religions." (At Tawbah,v. 33)

Is he sent only to Mecca?

No, he is sent to Mecca as well as other districts. The Exalted Allah said: "That thou mayest warn the Mother of Cities and all around her." (Ash Shuara, v.7.)

This is the picture of the future city (i.e., the world) that the truthful and the verified by Allah, our master Muhammad (PBUH) told us about when he said:

"This matter will spread as far as night and day reach. Town dwellers or nomads will all follow this religion, voluntarily and glorified (glorified by Allah because they assume the responsibility of the mission) or coercively and humiliated (when they humiliate themselves by their giving in to self-desires and recklessness).

Does not oppression spread in this world but out of self-heedlessness to instigate the desire in some to dominate the others and devour them regardless of their humanity, and regardless of any other consideration?

They claim to belong to humanity, but the truth has become distinct. The city, (the world), is in a state of confusion because its citizens do not understand the speech of the sender, nor do realize what is embodied in the example of the sent.

The Exalted Allah said: "I swear by this City. And you (i.e., Oh you Muhammad) are an inhabitant in this city. And by the begetter (i.e., Adam, {PBUH}) and that which he begot (i.e., his progeny). (Al Balad, vs. 1-3))

Thus the features of the great picture that consists of the city and the messenger sent to it begin to be distinct.

The holy Qur'an, the first Holy Book that is free from nationalism and racism, addresses the East and the West, i.e., man wherever he is, saying:

"Allah Most Gracious ! It is He Who has taught the Quran. He has created man." (Ar Rahman, vs. 1-3) It is a kind of speech that is above nationalities and above all types of discrimination.

Oh humanity! The one who is a dweller of this city (our Prophet {PBUH}) stands up to address every individual of the human race saying:

"Oh mankind. Your God is One and your father is one."

Then the Exalted Allah said: "Verily We have created man". He did not say that He created an Easterner or a Westerner, Arabic or non-Arabic, Ethiopian or Roman, but He said : "Verily We have created man."

When will the inhabitants of the city be aware of this ideal description of this universal city? It is a description of man who is engrossed in the turmoil of the recklessness of himself?

Man...Where is that man?

In one of the figurative didactic stories, it was said that an old man was seen holding a lamp. They asked him: "What are you looking for?"

He said: "I am looking for man."

They said: "this is an impossible case."

He said: "And I am looking for the impossible."

Then the Exalted Allah said: "Verily We have created man in toil". (Al Balad, v. 4) The purpose of man's stay on this earth is not vain or casual; man is not created for frivolity and derision. He is rather created for the task of the mission.

How much time was wasted by man in the narrow lanes of drugs that cancel the role of his mind, in the wine bars that do away with his sanity, and in the laps of the whores that destroy his dignity, his chastity and the cause of his creation.

Man has forgotten his belonging to the community and has drowned himself in the circle of the ego.

Then the Exalted Allah said:"Does he think that non can overcome him ?"(Al Balad, v. 5) I.e., does he believe that by adopting the mottoes of freedom that liberate him from all regulated methods put for him, he would not present an account for his deeds?

I have seen many types of the scenes of liberation in the West. I don't mean the freedom of expressing one's opinion which is part and parcel of man's humanity, nor do I talk about the freedom of being

courageous and bold, or woman's freedom. What I mean to say is that in the name of freedom scenes of the description of pigs, not man, are presented where every male is clinging to a female in shameful scenes, where there is no one person who would ask why this happens.

Does man believe that the Powerful Allah created this city in vain and absented Himself from it?

Do the citizens of this city believe that the Ruler of this city, i.e., Allah, the Exalted, snoozes or sleeps to become unaware of every movement or inactivity in this city?

"He says boastfully, 'I have wasted wealth Lubada (in abundance)!' (Al Balad, v. 6), abundance is the great sum of money. I.e., man would say, 'Here is my wealth which I spend and squander, not in the way the Ruler of this city organized,' Exalted and Glorified is He, 'but in whatever way I wish.'"

"Does he think that none sees him?" (Al Balad, v. 7) The Ruler of the city is Powerful and He can see all man's activities.

"Have we not made for him a pair of eyes, and a tongue and a pair of lips." (Al balad, vs 8-9) Hasn't he seen with his own eyes that We have set up an organized method for this city?

Hasn't he known that We ordered him to employ his tongue and lips to convey this disciplined method to the people of this worldly city to be applied?

By his own eyes, he can see a guiding method that leads him to rational conduct; and by his tongue and lips, he can call people to the true method. The Exalted Allah said:

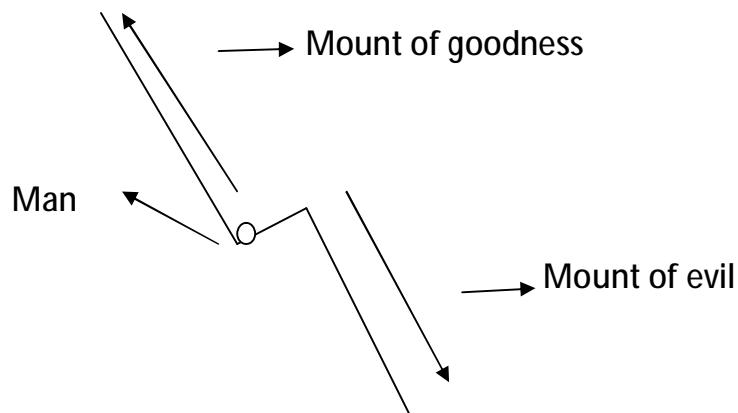
"Who is better in speech than one who calls (men) to Allah, works righteousness, and says, I am of those who bow in Islam?" (Fussilat,v. 33) Thus man can be in harmony with his humanity in this large city when he follows the way of righteousness.

What is the use of man's eyes, tongue and lips if he does not take into consideration the true method by employing his eyes, and use his

tongue and lips to guide every heedless and ignorant, every lost and deluded person and take him out of darkness into light?

Our prophet (PBUH) said: "Say good or be silent", because, in this case, silence is the minimum stage one should stop at if he cannot say good.

Then the Exalted Allah said: "And shown him the two Najeds (mounts, or ways). (Al Balad, v. 10) Najed means the mount. The first mount is the way of good, whereas the second is that of evil, and man is in between. He can be either at the peak of goodness, or at the steep way of evil.



By his inborn egotism, by his self-recklessness and bodily desires, man can be at the bottom of the mount of evil. On the other hand, when man reclaims his spirituality through which he yearns to do good, he can be on top of the mount of goodness.

The Exalted Allah said: "But he whose balance (of good deeds) will be (found) light, Will have his home in a (bottomless) Pit." (Al Qari'a, vs. 8-9) because he would go down the steep road.

He also said: "We have indeed created man in the best of moulds. Then do We abase him (to be) the lowest of the low." (At Teen, vs. 4-5)

Man is standing at this point where he has to choose either ways.

This speech is directed to the inhabitants of this city (our master Adam {PBUH} and his progeny). Thus man's recklessness makes going down the steep way easy for him.

If we put a ball on top of a steep road and leave it alone, we find that it goes down the road very easily without any need for anyone to push it down. How easy it is for man to be debased into immorality whose doors all open easily!

How easy it is for man to be debased into the depravity of abnormal sexual and illegal relationships!

How easy it is for man to use his hand in stealing money illegally to gather wealth through theft, in cheating and in taking bribery effortlessly!

How easy it is for man to oppress the others and cause them pain while he is laughing!

In this way, man descends from the peak of the mount of evil into its bottom. The more he goes down, the more debased he becomes till he is degraded into the level of animals, after which he is even debased into a worse state than that of the animals. The Exalted Allah said: "They are like cattle, nay more misguided: for they are heedless (of warning)." (Al A'raf, v. 179)

On the other hand, when man stands at the foot of the mount of goodness, and he is keen not to fall down from the peak of the mount of evil into its bottom, he has to get over impediments. It is a process of ascension which is difficult for the weak and the paralyzed, for the sleeping and the anesthetized who do not want to regain their consciousness or achieve renaissance, civilization, work, or knowledge. What they aim at is mere absurdity. They want to anesthetize people and be, themselves, anesthetized.

Oh people of the world and the inhabitants of the city, by Allah, isn't it our state today in our Islamic world?

On the other hand, the people of materialism, go up the mount of goodness, but their ascension does not lead them to the mount of the real human goodness because this process is conditioned by two elements:

- 1-To have knowledge, civilization, enthusiasm and resolution...
- 2-To have mercy and virtue.

Today, the people of materialism are ascending the mount of goodness by their progress in technique and material civilization. Everyday, they produce what pushes humanity forward, but they can reach only a limited level. The Exalted Allah said: "That is as far as knowledge will reach them." (An Najm, v. 30). They cannot be promoted to the mount of goodness through which they produce universal mercy. The proof is the oppression and humiliation that we witness from the North countries to the South ones.

What is leaked through media is but very little amount of information compared with the real truth for whoever is acquainted with what is going on in Guantanamo or in Abu Ghreib prison (raping of the chaste women, etc...). It represents only very little amount of the horrible facts that happen there.

As for us, we go down the mount of evil instead of going up the mount of goodness. Moreover, we encourage those who go down it too. Consequently, we do not go up the mount of goodness in sense and meaning.

When we find some one who looks forward to civilization, to development and education, we put thousands of chains, and thousand of thwarting laws and obstacles in his way.

This is our problem and our lamentable reality.

This is our world which they call the Third World.

If you are looking for facilities, then you are considered as the one who wants to ascend the mount though you are called to go down it. then wait for innumerable disappointing laws that would face you till you prefer to say, (if you are virtuous): "At least, I am going to stay where I am, as I do not want more descent."

Sorrowfully, this is the case with the one who holds the beads do today.

I do respect the beads, but I refer to the one who enters into his mosque, his secluded place, or his hermitage and says: "I must bite the stem of the tree."

Thus he wipes up himself from reality as monks do.

Obviously, this behavior is completely in contradiction with the heavenly mission entrusted to man in which he is ordered to go out of his den, his hermitage or his seclusion.

This is what is understood from the two mounts, Oh inhabitants of the city.

Then he said: "Why does not man manage to get over impediments (Al Balad, v.11) this verse instigates us to get over impediments. Thus, man has to ascend the ladder.

Enough impotence... enough anesthetizing...enough ignorance... enough seclusion in hermitages... enough isolation...

If you are the owner of light, go out of your seclusion, for the world is in need for you. The Exalted Allah said: "O thou wrapped up (in a mantle! Arise and deliver thy warning!" (Al Muddather, vs. 1-2) It is an address directed to you to "arise" and "deliver the warning".

Have you understood the message?

Have you conveyed the warning, or you are still sinking in the glass of the "ego"?

Then the Exalted Allah said: "And what will make you know about this path." (Al Balad, v. 12) I.e., Oh you who inhabit the city, do you want me to describe to you the ladder of promotion, the ascension up the mount of goodness in brief expressions?

Do you want me to summarize the whole affair to you so that you understand what I mean by the steps of ascension up the mount of goodness?

This is very easy, for the Holy Qur'an reveals to you in few expressions a complete method, the explanation of which needs too many volumes. The Holy Qur'an presents to you the following outline:

- 1- Freeing a slave.
- 2- Or giving food to the poor on a day of famine to an orphan near or kin or to a needy miserable poor
- 3- Then he became one of those who believe in Monotheism.
- 4- and recommended one another to perseverance and patience

5- and also recommended one another of piety and compassion.

(Al Balad, vs 13-17)

These are the stages of impediments, and these are the steps of promotion.

1- Freeing a slave, means releasing a captive, and it is a well known fact that the captive is an enemy not an ally.

Yes, this is our method, Oh citizens of the city. We set the captive free, and we do not captivate the free. We untie the chained, and we do not fetter the released. This is the title of our civilization, so write down volumes about such a great civilization.

We liberate nations and do not occupy their lands. We spend money on them and do not plunder their wealth.

Oh you who read the Holy Qur'an, would that the Holy Qur'an were the spring of our hearts!

Would that we reacted with it and understood it!

Would that we went deep into its letters, its expressions, its meanings and its titles!

How many the frequent readers of the Holy Qur'an are, especially in Ramadan, but they do not interact with any of its verses! The computer or tape recorder is better than them for it repeats it correctly.

2-- Or giving food to the poor on a day of famine to an orphan near or kin or to a needy miserable poor. The readers know that the rich countries drown too many ships full of nourishment and food to keep the rate of prices fixed. Whereas, in Africa and East Asia, such as what happens in India, there are people who are born on the pavement and live there all their lives. Usually every place on that pavement is known to belong to certain people. Those people may live for sixty, seventy, or eighty years, and then die there.

This is the present reality of the poor world in Asia and Africa.

At the same time, there is investment and wasting away of wealth in the rich and luxurious world.

Thus the second title in our promotion up the mount of goodness is "Or giving food to the poor on a day of famine to an orphan near or kin or to a needy miserable poor", no matter if this needy person is a native or a relative, close to or far from me, a Syrian, an Iraqi, an Indian, an Ethiopian, a Sudanese.... But I should begin with the one closest to me. In my doctrine, I never forget the miserable poor who are living in barrenness and infertility.

Look at the ladder of promotion on the mount of goodness, does it begin with faith, prayer, fasting, or the testimony of 'There is no god but Allah'...? Does it begin with the rituals of worship while describing goodness and its ladder and stages...?

No, it begins with the human method that transfers man from the quality of beastliness to the minimum level of his humanity. It begins with the great human common point which is :

"Liberate a captive and do not fetter a free man, feed the hungry, whether he is close or far from you."

This does not mean sending meals to the poor, for it was said: "Who teaches you how to catch fish, he feeds you, but who gives you a fish to eat, makes you hungry."

Feeding people does also not mean begging food from the rich. It is rather when the learnt teaches the ignorant how to invest his natural resources.

Thus feeding means enriching and making one wealthy after which he never feels hungry.

The Shifitics even legalize giving money to the poor to be transferred from the state of poverty into that of riches. That is, to give them enough money to enable them to invest it in trade, agriculture or industry, so that in the next year, they give alms to the poor from their own money.

3- Then he became one of those who believe in Monotheism. In this verse, the Exalted Allah reveals to you the fact that Islam presents, first of all, a human Islamic method before he asks you to apply the method of worship.

Oh, you who hold the beads and forget the task of humanity, remember that your Islam is based on humanity before performing rituals. Keep on your worship, but remember The Exalted Allah's saying, "Then".

Then he became one of those who believe in Monotheism, because the one who does not feel gratitude towards his Creator is unworthy of humanity. The One Who bestows him favors, Who provides him, Who covers him with innumerable bounties is Allah, the Exalted. If he does not admit the favors of his Creator, the One Who bestows him His blessings, then he would not be worthy of ascending the mount of goodness.

4- And recommended one another to perseverance and patience. Patience at ascending the mount of goodness is an important condition. But we say to those youth who begin ascending the mount then feel boredom and idleness: "This is not our method. Be patient even if you feel tired."

Ascension is tiring, so are impediments. But you have to be patient at learning, at reviewing, at reading a book, at seeking education, at trying to know the others, at doing your work perfectly well. Do not anticipate profit before excelling in your work. You have to be patient at morality, at growing up your children, at taking care of the generation, at the roughness of the others.

Oh citizens of the city, be patient and change yourself from the roots so that a human generation rises with good understanding of the discipline of the country, , and of good understanding of the discipline of Allah on the city.

5- And also recommended one another of piety and compassion, because patience at work may make you fall in the pit of materialism. When you become so engrossed in your work you may forget about your spirituality, your morality and your principles...

Thus, in His method, the Exalted Allah presents what makes you achieve your human equilibrium by making you a mixture of materialism and spirituality:

"They are those on the Right Hand (dwellers of Paradise). (Al Balad, v.18) This is the type of person who ascends the mount of goodness.

Allāhum...Guide us to You favorably, and make us from those who listen to wisdom and follow the best of it.

I say my speech and ask God's forgiveness.