

LOSS OF OUR SENSE OF DUTY

Nowadays, there is a lot of talking about claiming one's rights and demanding them, whereas talking about duties has become less frequent. Talking about rights gives man an opportunity to lay the blame on the others for his dereliction. But talking about duties besieges the speaker and reminds him of what he has to do. Therefore, the enthusiastic speakers about rights increase in number, whereas those who speak about duties become less.

Let us review a Qur'anic text that deals with this subject in which excuses are dropped and justifications are cancelled. In this text, man is addressed and instigated to do his duty caring for no other consideration, whether the others do their duties or not.

"47-They say, "We believe in Allah and in the Messenger, and we obey": but even after that, some of them turn away: they are not (really) Believers.

48-When they are summoned to Allah and His Messenger, in order that He may judge between them, behold, some of them decline (to come).

49-But if the right is on their side, they come to him with all submission.

50-Is it that there is a disease in their hearts? Or do they doubt, or are they in fear, that Allah and His Messenger will deal unjustly with them? Nay, it is they themselves who do wrong.

51-The answer of the Believers, when summoned to Allah and His Messenger, in order that he may judge between

them, is no other than this: they say, "We hear and we obey": it is such as these that will attain felicity.

-52It is such as obey Allah and His Messenger, and fear Allah and do right, that will win (in the end).

53-They swear their strongest oaths by Allah that, if only thou wouldst command them, they would leave (their homes). Say: "Swear ye not; obedience is (more) reasonable; verily, Allah is well acquainted with all that ye do".

54-Say: "Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger: but if ye turn away, he is only responsible for the duty placed on him and ye for that placed on you. If ye obey him, ye shall be on right guidance. The Messenger's duty is only to preach the clear (Message).

55-Allah has promised, to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds, that He will, of a surety, grant them in the land, inheritance (of power), as He granted it to those before them; that He will establish in authority their religion-the one which He has chosen for them; and that He will change (their state), after the fear in which they (lived), to one of security and peace: They will worship Me (alone) and not associate aught with Me.' If any do reject Faith after this, they are rebellious and wicked." (An Nur)

"They say, "We believe in Allah and in the Messenger, and we obey", i.e., they pretend to have faith and claim to do their duties.

"but even after that, some of them turn away", i.e., after their pretension of doing their duty, nothing comes out of it. They seem to be mere pretenders.

"they are not (really) Believers". They are believed to be the people of faith and performing duties, but when their hearts become void of faith, they become tardy in doing their duties, and this indicates the falsehood of their pretending faith, for faith usually results in doing one's duties.

"When they are summoned to Allah and His Messenger, in order that He may judge between them, behold, some of them decline (to come)." Here, the Exalted Allah faces the addressees with a clear statement telling them that duties are not non-restricted concepts. They rather follow a Heavenly Law and are ruled by it. This Law organizes man's life, his behavior, his habits and treatment. When the disbelievers are called to follow this well-disciplined law which explains the concept of duties, they refrain from performing their duties and do not apply this concept.

"But if the right is on their side, they come to him with all submission." They are skilful in demanding their rights, but fall behind in performing duties. When the right is on their side, they hurry up with enthusiasm asking for it though they are negligent of doing their duties. There is contradiction in their behavior which lies in their asking for their rights without doing their duties.

"Is it that there is a disease in their hearts?" This verse is put in the form of a question, but it is meant to be a statement declaring the disease in their hearts, which is hypocrisy, because they lack the incentive of faith. How can they do their duties when they have no incentive of faith?

"Or do they doubt", i.e., the problem is originally latent in their distrust in the Heavenly Law that disciplines and explains the concept of their duties.

How often do suspicious people doubt the Heavenly Law?

How often do they want it to exist only within the boundaries of the mosque, away from practical life, following the example of the materialistic Europeans?

The case is different in our religion because it deals in details with economy, with sociology, and with lawful politics. It also deals with the relationship between the individual and another, between the individual and the community, between a community and another, and between a nation and another. It even deals with the relationship between the assenter and another, and between the assenter and the dissenter, and so on.

When they read a positive law, they take it for granted with great respect and veneration, but when a Heavenly Law is presented to them, regardless of its source and its mere lawful study, they turn away from it and say:

"Do not make religion interfere with life, with economy, with politics, nor with sociology...".

They ruminate what the people of materialism (who originally do not have a Heavenly Law) say. The religious instructions in Christianity direct people only in morals. They do not have any other law concerning life unless they return to Judaism that has some disciplined laws.

But the Exalted Allah concluded all religion by Islam that suits man till Doomsday. It is a flexible reasonable religion that addresses man and is adaptable with the circumstances of this man.

They stir doubt.... But day by day, the positive laws that have been tried with all their different forms, the eastern and western, did not achieve justice, nor equality or cultural progress. Doubt should be elimination from our Heavenly Law,

especially, after the difficult circumstance humanity is living in now, when there is an urgent need for justice, equality and moral values that are absent from the positive laws they apply.

"or are they in fear, that Allah and His Messenger will deal unjustly with them?" I.e., do they fear the oppression of this Heavenly Law?

The strangest statement we often hear it said, is that, "If you want this Islamic Heavenly Law to be considered and applied, then those who do not belong to Islam should also call for the application of their own law", and we say: "Yes, let them do".

When was Islam applied by coercion on the non-Muslim?

When did Islam dominate the non-Muslim?

They have not studied Islam nor have they known it, then after all that, they talk blatantly about it, because they refuse the principle that makes man live in justice. They only seek the law of the whims and the law of the jungle to be applied in societies, by which the oppressors collude with one another to treat the weak and the poor man unjustly. On the other hand, since the breast of Islam is so tolerant and wide to include the whole world, it does not prevent the application of the law of the non-Muslim that disciplines his life and behavior.

Do they fear the oppression of this law that is revealed by Allah to achieve equality?

Throughout the centuries, the Muslims suffered a lot from the oppression of the others. Can you remember what the Crusaders' wars did, And see what the Jews do today?

But has history ever recorded that the Islamic law has oppressed a Jew, a Christian or a pagan.

The caliphate, our master Omar (G.b.p.w.h.) wept when he found a Jew asking people alms because of his old age, and he gave him money from the Muslim treasury.

This is our civilization.

We do not oppress anybody, for our culture is void of any concept of oppressing the others, but the others encroach upon us and tyrannize us.

"Nay, it is they themselves who do wrong." It is they who originally adopted the concept of oppression.

"The answer of the Believers, when summoned to Allah and His Messenger, in order that he may judge between them, is no other than this: they say, 'We hear and we obey' ". The Islamic Ummah admits the Heavenly Law and carries out the necessary obligations depending on this law.

Thus, after mentioning the two opposite parties, the Exalted Allah presents the method of the one who wants to adopt and admit this Heavenly Law, and do his duties according to it.

The result of the above mentioned obedience is that the party of the believers will win and prosper, "it is such as these that will attain felicity."

"It is such as obey Allah and His Messenger, and fear Allah and do right, that will win (in the end)." After describing the state of the believers in the above mentioned verse, the Exalted Allah follows it up with the rule that summarizes the whole idea in the following statement:

When the believer does his duties, "It is such as obey Allah and His Messenger", and joins it with faith "and fear Allah and do right", he is verified with fear which is the mark of faith and

knowledge. Consequently, the believer wins and prospers, "that (they)will win."

After mentioning the two parties, the oppressors and the one who applies the Heavenly Law, the Exalted Allah presents a third type, i.e., the hypocrite. He said:

"They swear their strongest oaths by Allah that, if only thou wouldst command them, they would leave (their homes)." They promised and procrastinated saying: "If we find the Law of Allah call us to do our duties, we will certainly answer the call."

I beg your pardon, for this is the state of our Ummah, and the state of most of us. Every one of us shows his readiness saying: "I'll do...I'll sacrifice...I'll give alms..., and no one in the world can use the word 'will' better than we do. We are the people of 'will'.

The Exalted Allah said: "Don't swear", for there is no need for verbal confirmation.

"Obedience is (more) reasonable," i.e., it is better for you to do one duty than vain speech, oaths and pretension. We do not want procrastination, promises, confirmation nor do we want you to tickle the feelings... but we want one duty only, that is:

"Obedience is (more) reasonable," i.e., do at least one duty admitted by the law of Allah, the Exalted, whether it is in the field of knowledge , deed or any other work that would push ahead the wheel of renaissance and civilization...

Stop talking...stop promising... Oh Muslims, what are you doing?

One obligation that you do continuously will suffice on condition that it will not be temporary and transient, but it should be your customary practice in knowledge, in deed, in service or in manners.

"verily, Allah is well acquainted with all that ye do". i.e., if you claim to do many duties, the Exalted Allah controls you and you cannot cheat the One who Sees you.

"Say: "Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger," i.e., do your duty according to the law decreed by Allah, the Exalted.

"but if ye turn away, he is only responsible for the duty placed on him and ye for that placed on you," i.e., you should not fall short of your duty with the excuse that the others neglect theirs, or that the rulers, or those who have authority on you force you to do that, and that you fear to be physically or emotionally injured.

In his book *At Tarikh* from Wa'el, Al Bukhari produced the Hadith of the Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) who when he was asked:

"What if we were ruled by rulers who do not obey Allah in their deeds?". This is the issue in our reality. We avoid doing our duty with the excuse that the politicians and leaders do not, and that we are unable to do it, nor can we build the virtuous society. Thus, we hang our negligence on the peg of the politicians. Our prophet (p.b.u.h.) said: " he is only responsible for the duty placed on him and ye for that placed on you."

What better and more rhetorical speech can be found better than this statement in addressing nations? Is there any excuse for the Muslim after this obvious statement?

The question is: Oh Muslims, why don't you do your duties?

Do not claim that you cannot do your duty because of your rulers, princes and politicians...

Why don't you do just one duty?

According to the language of reason, this is a cogent proof.

Then, the Exalted Allah, addressed the companions of the Messenger of Allah among whom the sultan and obeyed Imam was the prophet (p.b.u.h.), who had the rare speciality of being the leader and at the same time the infallible person, and said:

"If ye obey him, ye shall be on right guidance," because he (p.b.u.h.) is the owner of the law, and he is most fair and the best who recommends it.

"The Messenger's duty is only to preach the clear (Message)", i.e., in spite of this rare case, in which the one who conveys the law is himself the sultan, it is you who should assume the responsibility, and it is you who are responsible for your duties before Allah, because the Messenger's task is to convey the message to you, and it becomes your responsibility.

In this argument, the Exalted Allah removes the responsibility from the shoulders of the Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) to uncover the frail excuses of the one who tries to justify his deeds.

If the ruler is not obedient to Allah, then he is only responsible for the duty placed on him and ye for that placed on you. But when he is the aspect of obedience, then he has only to convey the instructions to you, and you become responsible for performing your duties before Allah, the Exalted.

The Exalted Allah concluded the verse saying:

"Allah has promised, to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds, that He will, of a surety, grant them in the land, inheritance (of power)", i.e., after all this introduction, the Exalted Allah decided to say: "You are the most expected candidate to assume the rein of responsibility when you have two things: faith and doing duties.

Have you noticed how frequent the Exalted Allah repeated the rule to make people be interest in it in many ways? Then He concluded saying:

You will be prosperous not only in your work and family, but I shall also give you the reign of the earth to be its sultan, on condition that you achieve the two things I have mentioned to you, which are ; faith and doing your duties.

If you give up one of the two stipulations, i.e., doing duties, and pretend to be the people of faith, then one side of the equilibrium will be missed. It is not enough to be the sponsors of faith and say we believe, for the Exalted Allah will relinquish you and you will not get the specific support of His Law, as is said by one of the poets:

Ambitions can never be gained by wishes

But only by great effort, can you get the reign of the world.

Only by justice and humanity were the Muslims able to destroy the atrocity of the crowded number of the tyrannical Roman and Persian armies. Was the great number the reason of victory...?

No, it was by support (of the Allah).

If the Exalted Allah had left the companions of Allah to the effect of the material in the Islamic expeditions without support, then only the previous rule (the great number of fighters) would have been effective. But when man gathers within himself faith with doing duties, Allah's support is supplied to change the result of the equation.

Allah, the Exalted, asserted the inversion of the equation saying: "as He granted it to those before them", i.e., support.

The nearest example for our Ummah is when the Exalted Allah appointed Moses (p.b.u.h.) as successor when He described him in the Holy Qur'an saying:

22-then he cried to his Lord: "These are indeed a people given to sin".

23-The reply came:) "March forth with my servants by night: for ye are sure to be pursued.

24-And leave the sea as a furrow (divided): for they are a host (destined) to be drowned".

25-How many were the gardens and springs they left behind.

26-And corn fields and noble buildings.

27-And wealth (and conveniences of life), wherein they had taken such delight!

28-Thus (was their end)! And We made other people inherit (those things!)" (Ad Dukhan)

Our master Moses (p.b.u.h.) was appointed a successor before our Ummah was appointed as the last successor on this earth. When the Exalted Allah said: " as He granted it to

those before them", He meant He is able to reverse the equation.

Were Moses (p.b.u.h.) and his people able to shake the reign of Pharaoh depending on the rule of the material?

By Allah, no. They were rather deemed weak. Pharaoh slaughtered their children and made their women feel shame, but when they joined doing duty with faith, they were able to achieve victory over Pharaoh.

"that He will establish in authority their religion- the one which He has chosen for them". Here appears the virtuous principles that were in the hearts applied practically in reality.

"and that He will change (their state), after the fear in which they (lived), to one of security and peace", after which they never fear to be defeated by the enemy, nor to be dominated by the hegemony of the imperious, as is the case with us today when we can do nothing unless the materialistic oppressive forces permit us to do that.

"They will worship Me (alone)", i.e., perform their duties, "and not associate aught with Me", i.e., they will have faith. This will be their state after they are appointed successors on this earth.

"If any do reject Faith after this, they are rebellious and wicked", the cycle will be turned over and the control of affairs will no more be theirs. Thus they will be ruled by the others.

Now, the important question that we should frequently direct to ourselves is:

Where are we from our duties?

Are we doing our duty of instructing and educating our families?

Are we doing our duty of educating, teaching and developing our children in our society?

Are we doing our duty towards our youth in constructing and encouraging them to build a distinguished civilization?

Are we doing our duty that we should do towards our maidens to make them active and assume their human roles in society?

The girl is confiscated, and is lost by the pretence of calling for her rights. She is directed to turn away from her duties. She no more cares for them. She begins only to ask for her rights.

It is a filthy game.

Are we doing our duty towards the poor to help them keep their self-dignity, and provide them with an honorable living and care, with health care, with social and educational needs?

Are we doing our duty towards our sacred places that our enemies trifle with day and night?

Nowadays, the youth are occupied with children's games. Go to Doha, to Kuwait or Emirates to see the American army a few meters away from people, and the matches are held in great stadiums where spectators cheer whenever the ball touches the goal net.

The closer the enemy becomes to us, the more numerous new playgrounds are established.

The greater danger we live in, the more anesthetics we are given to benumb our feelings. Thus too many occupations are put in our way to prevent us from doing our duties.

How sad I feel on Friday when I see the youth who are like rosebuds struggle to enter the playground. I stop a while and look at their faces and say to myself: "I wonder, does any of them recognize his duties?"

A lot of time is dedicated through media to speak about sports. Nowadays, there are a lot of bulletins on sports, on economy, on weather... but, sorrowfully, there is no one bulletin about teaching one's duties.

Why should we leave people do their duties...! Trivial occupations are more valuable than that...!

How much does a university lecturer have per an hour to give a lecture on one of the detailed scientific researches compared with what a singer or a dancer who exposes her bare body has per an hour?

Have we understood and known how much time we have wasted in neglecting our own duties?

Do just one duty, after which you will find yourself in your way of rationality, health, civilization and renaissance , but on condition that you do it continuously.

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.