



ISLAM - The supreme ideology

Scarcely a week goes by without some piece of sensationalist rhetoric about Islam in the media. The pejorative connotations attached to the term 'Islamic Fundamentalism', evoke fears of an impending religious crusade, reminiscent of the religious wars of Christendom. Islam, much maligned and misunderstood as it is, is a far cry from western orientalist fantasies and stereotypes of the 'despotic east'.

The uniqueness of the Islamic theophany lies in its insistence that only a purely revelatory source of guidance can provide an infallible answer to the ultimate questions of human existence. The Quran testifies to this truth by describing those detached from revelation to be in an utter state of loss:

"By the passage of time, verily man is in a state of loss, except those who believe and do righteous deeds and consolidate each other in the truth and in patience.

Reason and Revelation

The origins of much of the moral and political confusion that pervades the contemporary intellectual climate is to be found in a convoluted understanding of the relationship between reason (aql) and revelation (wahy). The agnostic cynicism of western secular culture is in flagrant denial of revelation, whilst many Muslims who maintain their commitment to Islam, fail to appreciate the relationship between reason and revelation. The use of reason to understand the magnificence and beauty of Allah's creation is of paramount importance in Islam, the Quranic description of Abraham's arguments about the ultimate source and cause of existence furnishes the point about the imperative of rational conviction: - Hast thou not turned thy vision to one who disputed with Abraham about his Lord, because Allah had granted him power? Abraham said: "My Lord is he giveth life and death". He said "I give life and I give death". Said Abraham: "But it is Allah that causes the sun to rise from the East, do you then cause it to rise from the West?" Indeed the Quran abounds in verses that stimulate the intellect to consider how the universe can be anything but the creation of Allah(swt).

The Quranic revelation, which is also fortified by means of rational evaluation, however informs the human mind of realities that transcend purely rationalistic derivations: the attributes of Allah, the day of judgement, the purpose of human life, laws for the fulfilment of human needs etc. Humans are not required to rationally conceptualise realities such as heaven, hell and divine attributes etc., but to assert an unswerving conviction in the source of the Quran-Allah(swt)

The Quran establishes the divine imperative of Allah's sovereignty as the only rightful guide to fulfil the multifaceted issues and problems of human experience, be they related to individual conduct or the affairs of political management. Reason does not therefore play the role of constructing laws but is involved in the interpretation and application of divine laws to the problems and realities of a given situation.

Allah's sovereignty is an obligation, a mercy and a protective shield against the inevitable frailties of using reason to devise laws. Islam stands against the domination of man by man - a problem that continues to relentlessly inflict the modern world in the form of religious

persecution , economic exploitation and political oppression. Islam thus stands for the liberation of human beings by the guidance and mercy of Allah.

The naive optimism of Western Enlightenment philosophy displaced any significant reference to the divine in favour of an abstract objectification of 'reason' and thus created a crude juxtaposition between reason and revelation. The moral subjectivity and nihilism of the modern world that has caused the disintegration of family life and the inability of humans to make decisive judgements about what is 'right' and 'wrong' are slowly undermining the faith in the exclusive objectivity of 'reason'. It is western philosophers themselves who concede to the impossibility of a genuine secular morality on the grounds that it is illogical to infer normative propositions from factual premises. Hence human reason is of no use when it comes to making laws. The supremacy of Islam lies in the fact that the Quran oversees and moulds the cultivation of the human intellect so that it never contradicts the divine order. The science of *ijtihad* and the whole growth of Islamic jurisprudence is a concrete example of how Islam establishes the correct relationship between reason and revelation.

Spiritualism and Materialism

The dichotomy between the 'spiritual' and 'material' is an outgrowth of a secular consciousness ; a way of thinking that is struggling to comprehend the nature of the human condition and ascribe values to human action without the indispensable aid of divine guidance. The annals of history are littered with examples of the extremes to which humans go in devising systems of meaning and value. The monastic orders that were created by the philosophical obscurities of medieval Christian theology vilified the instinctive urge of procreation as a debased and animalistic desire. The underlying idea was that spiritual enhancement was locked into a zero sum relationship with material prosperity- one could not worship God without rejecting the world. The other extreme is materialism, an incessant pursuit for material satisfaction that only considers the temporary world as the ultimate material end in itself. Marxism is an example of an extreme form of materialism that rejects the reality of the transcendental order , arguing for material fulfilment as the exclusive prerequisite for human fulfilment.

Islam however does not project an image of the world to be inexorably preconditioned into an antagonism between the 'spiritual 'and 'material', for the vision of Islam is the vision of truth from the Creator Himself. Islam gives a positive recognition to human instincts and considers the world to be a place where human potential can excel in to an ever closer relationship with the Creator , but such excellence can only be accomplished when human actions are in accordance with Sharia and are motivated by the sincere intention to seek the reward of the Creator. Any action based upon the laws of Allah and motivated by the sincere intention to please Him mix the spiritual (belief in Allah's sovereignty) and the material (the actual action) into a harmonious organic unity, thus every such action becomes an act of worship. The Quran then is the tie that unites the spiritual with the material. Imam Shafi enunciated that Islam covers the three domains within which all human action falls: man's relationship with himself, man's relationship with others and man's relationship with Allah , hence any and every action can potentially become an act of worship.

Islam's rejection of the supposed division between the 'spiritual' and 'material' is clearly exemplified in the life of the prophet Muhammed(SAAW) . The prophet(saaw) was once approached by three people who had confused Islam as a *deen* that derides natural human

instincts. They said "Henceforth, we shall fast every day of our lives , we shall pray all night long , and we shall never touch a woman" To this prophet replied: " As for me , I shall fast some days of the year and shall eat on others; I shall pray and I shall sleep; and I shall take women in marriage. Whoever wishes not to follow my sunnah should not be said to belong in my fellowship". The famous dua that is often recited also captures Islam's mixture of the spiritual and material: " Our Lord give us goodness in this life and the life hereafter, and defend us from the torment of the fire". Islam stops humans from falling into ascetic self-denial or the excesses of rampant materialism , and such a uniqueness is exclusive to Islam , for Islam stands alone as the beacon of revelatory guidance.

POLITICS

Following on from Islam's conceptual dissolution of the 'spiritual' and 'material' domains, is the salient reality that Islam is an inherently political doctrine. Sheikh Nabahanni , the famous jurist and political thinker of our age, quite aptly described the Shahada as a simultaneously spiritual and political doctrine. It is spiritual for the obvious reason that it is firmly rooted in the belief in Allah , but of equal political significance because Allah alone is the sovereign law maker. Politics is therefore not part of Islam , for this denotes that in origin it is a distinctly separate sphere of existence which is then eventually amalgamated with Islam; politics is the inherent core of the Islamic imperative of Allah's sovereignty - Islam thus cannot be described except in political terms. The definition of 'politics in Islam' is the organisation of society according to the laws of Allah with the sincere attempt to manage the affairs of people so that their rights are safely guarded. Hence the discourse in western circles about the dangers of mixing politics and religion apply squarely to those philosophies that endorse the practice of organised religion and thus conceive of the origin of politics as being governed by a logic that is wholly different to that of religion. This is exactly why so much of the western orientalist criticism about Islam is untenable , for Islam is not a religion that is struggling to synthesise itself with the supposedly different domain of politics, it is a way of life that is inherently and quintessentially political. As Omar bin Khitab is known to have said" There is no Islam without a society , there is no society without a leader and there is no leadership without obedience".

The Way Forward For Muslims

The supremacy of Islam is not something that we should simply celebrate with a nostalgic emotion to the glories of the past , neither is it something that we should discuss simply on the level of a doctrine. Islam is not here to be merely talked about as the truth it is here to make its' mark as the vortex of historical change and to be lived and experienced by all as the undeniable truth. The duty on the Muslim ummah is to invite to the khair, enjoin the good , forbid the evil and work for the resumption of the Islamic way of life , so that the supremacy of the Islamic ideology can be appreciated by its' eradication of oppression and liberation of all human beings from the throngs of falsehood and despair: " It is He who sent his Messenger with the guidance and the deen of truth , that He may make it conquer all other religions , even though the idolaters may detest it".

Unity of the Ummah

Once again as Muslims we find ourselves in the position where we are deliberating and discussing the issue of unity, or the lack of it, in context of the Muslim Ummah, and once again this suggests that as a Global Ummah we remain to feel largely disunited. Hence, if we examine our current reality as the Ummah of RasoolAllah(SAW), this notion is confirmed as this very Ummah continues to be denied the position in the World Arena as One Ummah, One Nation, One State [Ummatun Wahidah], as our Blessed Lands that have been carved and severed into smaller entities, remain disunited and divided.

Disunity, division and disarray arose not just as a mere coincidence. The fall of Muslims from "the best nation sent to mankind" [Surah 3: Al-Imran Verse 110] was a direct result, a consequence, of the massive military, cultural and missionary savage invasion of the Muslim World by the Kuffar, such that, Muslim Land was torn apart and certain systems and ideologies were forced upon our lands, and these remain to exist today. The Kuffar not only colonized the Muslim Land but also the Muslim Mind using Ideological Warfare, as foreign concepts and ideas were fused with the Ideology of Islam. They 'divided and conquered' instilling many diseases into the heart of the Muslim Ummah.

Primarily, the disease of Assabiyah [Nationalism] was implanted in the minds of the Muslims, whereby a false bond based solely on family, clan and tribal ties was propagated. Nationalism arises among people when the predominant thoughts and ideas they carry are that of achieving domination and supremacy over others. It initially begins with the family, whereby one member asserts his authority to achieve leadership in the affairs of the family. Once this is achieved, the individual aims to extend his leadership to the wider extended family. The family would then attempt to achieve leadership in the community they reside in. Following this, tribes would compete amongst each other; all trying to dominate others in order to enjoy the privileges and prestige that comes with this false sense of authority. This attitude and frame of mind further breeds and enhances arrogance and ignorance, along with extreme pride. The Messenger Muhammad (SAW) clearly emphasized that: "He is not one of us who calls for Assabiyah [Nationalism, Tribalism and Partisanship], fights for Assabiyah or dies for Assabiyah." [Muslim, Bukhari]

This disease of Assabiyah forms an artificial bond between people and as such has been disseminated amongst the Muslim Ummah, although, it is in direct conflict with Islam. The Ideology of Islam has made it explicitly clear that the only bond that should exist between Muslims must be a Unique Bond, that of, the Aqeedah (Belief) of Islam.

A further disease implanted in the Ummah was the idea or thought of Secularism whereby the emphasis is placed on detaching life's affairs from the Creed. The Secular Thought was introduced into the minds of the Muslims, hence, hindering the correct political understanding of Islam. Many Muslims adopted a secular mentality as they severed the Creed of Islam from their life's affairs and "keep Islam in the mosque" or "no politics in the mosque" is forever reiterated.

The rapid invasion and illegal occupation of the Muslim Mind with ideas and concepts as such, has left a lasting effect as our disunity is reflected in the decadent position we alone occupy today. Muslims all over the Ummah suffer oppression, subjugation and humiliation, and this is a direct consequence of the Kuffar breeding Nationalism within us, henceforth, the problem of Palestine continues to be viewed merely as a Palestinian problem and the crisis in Kashmir and now Kosova remain to be considered Kashmiri and Kosovan crises alone.

As Muslims we are neglectful of our duty to RasoolAllah(SAW) when he(SAW) said: "One drop of Muslim blood is worth more than the Ka'bah and it's surroundings." [Bukhari, Muslim] Our Ummah has been bled dry and we have witnessed this and are the guilty bystanders. The Kuffar have succeeded in infesting our Ummah with Kufr concepts and ideas. They have succeeded in placing leaders over us that are treacherous and ruthless 'puppets', all part of a grand master plan. The sons of this Ummah are being slaughtered at the hands of the Kuffar on a massive scale; our sisters are being robbed and cheated of their honour time and time again and the children, the future of this Ummah, starve to death because of the West's barbaric savagery, namely, sanctions.

As Muslims we must be aware and vigilant of the conspiracy of the Kuffar to keep Muslims disunited. Their main aim and agenda is to destroy the Muslim Ummah itself, either directly through military and economic coercion or indirectly using 'Ideological Warfare'. What they fear most is Muslim Unity and Revival and thus everything they do is geared towards preventing this. As a consequence, they have manipulated Muslims, setting up and prioritising their own political divides.

At this crucial time, Muslims are not only victims of the Kuffar yet victims of other Muslims also. Our platform should not be one of pessimism, rather, one of optimism. Those Muslims, who claim that we will never attain unity due to the state of our current situation, are harboring a defeatist mentality that has no venue in Islam. They are constructing their Views based entirely on the reality that surrounds them and fail to recognize the legitimate reality of Al-Qur'an whereby Allah(SWT) clearly states:

"Allah has promised those who have believed and performed the good deeds, that He will of a surety grant them authority on Earth, as He granted it to those before them. And that He will establish in authority their Deen which He had chosen for them and that He will change their state of fear into one of peace and security." [Surah 24: an-Nur Verse 55] and also: "It is He Who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the Deen of truth so that it shall prevail over all other Deens, even though the disbelievers may detest it." [Surah 9: at-Tawbah Verse 33]

Therefore, Unity is not an unrealistic vision or objective: it will be a visible reality [Insha'Allah] as Allah(SWT) does not legislate dreams in Al-Qur'an al-Karim.

In conclusion, Unity is what we must strive for: not on the basis of it being desirable, rather, on the basis of it being an Islamic Obligation defined clearly by Allah(SWT) and His Messenger Muhammad(SAW). It is therefore obligatory upon us to tear down the imaginary political borders and boundaries currently dividing our Ummah. It is an obligation that we dismantle and demolish the Kufr concepts and ideas, such as Secularism and Nationalism, that cast a dark shadow over our lands today, and also it is an absolute necessity that we strive continuously to unite the Muslim Lands as One Land under the Khilafah State. And victory [by the Will of Allah] will be granted to this Ummah.

Finally, the Messenger Muhammad(SAW) said: "Allah showed me the whole Earth, the East and the West, my Ummah will be in charge of all He showed me." [Ahmad]