Artıcle-Alparslan KUYTUL

**The Decline of Our Ummah and Its Reasons – 9**

All praise be due to Allah, Who made us an ummah and showed us the way to be a strong ummah and the precautions we have to take to avoid the decline of our ummah. Peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad (saws.), who struggled day and night for our guidance and laid the foundation of a world state within a short time. And peace be upon all my brothers and sisters, who are concerned about the state of our ummah and who endeavour for its resurrection.

In our last two articles, we explained laziness as one of the viruses, that caused the decline and collapse of our ummah, and divided it into two parts. The first part is concerning the time before the decline started, while the second part is concerning the time after the decline started. I stated nine matters regarding the first part and explained them briefly. Concerning the second part, I explained hopelessness and said, that the material decline of our ummah made many people fall into hopelessness regarding our future and that this resulted in increasing laziness. I will now continue with the second reason of the second part and at the same time the eleventh reason for our laziness.

11. The following and imitation of Western Civilisation: Although many people thought, claimed and imagined, that if we get involved in the Western world and imitate them, we would progress quickly and catch up with them, the complete opposite happened, and this wrong admiration and imitation procrastinated our reawakening. And we turned into lazy people who always follow others and expect everything from them.

Ibn Khaldun detects this truth in his Muqaddimah and says: “When a nation lives in wealth and comfort by following another state, they will accept their lifestyle. As a result, they will lose quick temper, impulsiveness and courage and consequently, they will never be able to build a state.” Because they will become a population, which does no longer produce or see producing as a necessity, which does not find such a power or desire in themselves and which does only consume. I.e. following the footsteps of others will make them lazy. Explaining, that defeated nations imitate victorious nations, he says: “The defeated take the conquerors as role models. They even start believing, that the conquerors' rituals, creeds and even their religion are the reason for their victory. That they make their homes and their art look like the homes and art of their conquerors demonstrates their occupation.”

Indeed, just as Ibn Khaldun states, the defeated imitate the conquerors and become lazy. First, they start taking material things like inventions and technology from them and claim, that they will not take their morals and culture. But this only remains a claim and dream and in the second stage, they start taking material customs like their way of clothing. In the third stage of imitation, they start taking cultural elements like their language, law and art and they collapse.

After the collapse, the imitation continues even faster and stronger and the fourth stage begins. In this stage, they take the conqueror’s social and moral norms as well as their human values and criteria. They start seeing life and the human with the conqueror’s sight and logic, although these are outcomes of their religion and their religion is based on shirk. They do not attach importance to the life in the dunja but only to its gifts and see the life of the dunja as a place where all desires are fulfilled and all gifts are limitlessly and lawlessly used. They worship their nafs. For this reason, they see everything as permissible and all harams as halal. They also worship humans and do not see them as servants of Allah. They think, that the human, who was created from Allah, given his livelihood and protected by Allah, is completely free, can make laws however they wish and live however they want. By giving humans the rights of Allah, they see them equal or even superior to Him and do not obey Allah but His creatures. But all these faults of Western civilisation have been forgotten because they decided from the beginning, that imitating them would be the only way to rise.

Afterwards, the fifth and last stage begins, and they take their belief and ideologies, as well, and disappear. They are no longer existent, but the others are. They transformed into others. Whatever they do, they do for them and their ideology. There is nothing they do for themselves anymore. Because they do no longer exist. Therefore, the Holy Qur’an states in Surah Hud, “And do not incline toward those who do wrong, lest you be touched by the fire”1

All forms of shirk are a denial of the rights of Allah, ingratitude and the person throwing themselves into jahannam and therefore huge cruelty against Allah and the person themselves. Therefore, all polytheists are tyrants. The verse states, that if we incline towards those polytheists and start being like them, fire will touch us, and warns us. This fire did not only touch us in the akhira but also in the dunja. We lost our worth and culture. By getting involved in other civilisations and imitating them we became even lazier, declined further and lost our power. Subsequently, the unjust attacks, tyranny and fire of the disbelievers and oppressors touched us and in accordance with the Sunnah of Allah, we were punished.

In order to get rid of this imitation, which is one of the reasons of laziness, there is no other way but neglecting Western civilisation, missing our own civilisation and trying to build it. With such a fresh iman we can recover and free ourselves from laziness. And this is exactly what we are trying to do.

12. Defeat and captivity: Ibn Khaldun says in his Muqaddimah, “Nations, which are defeated and taken captive, become lazy and their hope and aims decrease. The increase of generations declines”. This analysis is true for almost all states and nations, as well as for the ummah which is a community in faith.

When ummahs decline and collapse due to the reasons we explained and will explain further, the strong states, which caused their collapse or which take advantage of it, take them captive and rule over their government, politics, state system, economics, jurisdiction and army, education, media companies and several other areas. This will cause hopelessness and laziness within those ummahs. Because just as feeling self-confident and free as an individual or state will make a person step into action, feeling captive and weak will erase a person’s ability of action and make them lazy. Moreover, captive populations become mentally lazy and come to a state where they cannot produce ideas. Captivity makes a population so lazy, that as Ibn Khaldun says, “If they would give a slave poison, he would not even stand up and drink water, even if his livers would burn”.

Defeated and captive populations develop an inferiority complex and an understanding of inability and this leads a population to laziness. Sometimes this goes even further and comes to a sate of “we will not make it anyway”. I.e. defeat causes that individuals and states become insecure, develop a psychology of captivity and inferiority and as a consequence, become lazy.

Explaining to which state defeated and captive populations come, the Holy Qur’an gives the ummah of Musa (as.), the Children of Israel, as an example. When Musa (as.) said to them, “O my people, enter the Holy Land, which Allah has assigned to you, and do not turn back [from fighting in Allah's cause] and [thus] become losers”2, they answered, “O Moses, indeed, within it is a people of tyrannical strength and indeed, we will never enter it until they leave it; but if they leave it, then we will enter”3. The reason why they say this is that they lived under the oppression of Pharaoh and the Copts for centuries as captives, they lost their identity and got accustomed to worthlessness, they lost their longing for an own homeland and came to a state where they could not even imagine owning one. As Ibn Khaldun states, “Those, who endure suffering and violence of another nation, who fall into the indulgence of exploitation, cannot build nations”. Because in populations like these, features like courage and dignity get lost.

Inaction and laziness arise. Such populations cannot reawaken until new and free-spirited generations come and Allah until sends them a leader who activates them. Although Allah sent them Prophet Musa (as.) to awaken them and free them from captivity, the Children of Israel, who lost their ability of courage and action, did still not awake. Although Prophet Musa (as.) wanted to make them owners of a homeland, they could not take risks and as a result, they were punished by walking around in the desert of Tih from one point to another for 40 years without any state or homeland. Why in the desert and why for 40 years?

Because in the desert it was easier for them to get accustomed to freedom and gain a free spirit and this way the generation, that had no free-spirit and became lazy and inferior, should come to an end and an active and hardworking generation should come. Especially in the last 30-40 years, the same factors can be seen in the activation of the Islamic world. I.e. when the oppressed and inferior generations went and freer generations came, a movement started or was accelerated. This is not forgetting Allah’s will or being blind or ignorant regarding His help but investigating and stating Allah’s sunnah concerning populations. The Western world knew, that free generations will come and that the Islamic Movement will start again. This is the reason why they established dictatorial systems around the whole Islamic world. Those dictators and kings retarded the starting of this movement. But finally, Allah’s will was done and the movement began.

Being freed from captive psychology and laziness is possible by seeing the moral superiority despite the material defeat. Therefore, the Holy Qur’an states, “So do not weaken and do not grieve and you will be superior if you are [true] believers. If a wound should touch you - there has already touched the [opposing] people a wound similar to it. And these days [of varying conditions] We alternate among the people so that Allah may make evident those, who believe, and [may] take to Himself from among you martyrs - and Allah does not like the wrongdoers”4. The verse states, that victory cannot always be given to the Muslims, that these days and success will alternate among the people, that the Muslims must not get tired or lazy in this case. At the same time it clearly expresses, that even if the Muslims are materially defeated due to their own mistakes, they must always see themselves superior morally and in terms of the values they believe in and their lifestyle. If this verse would have been understood by the Muslims in the period of decline and collapse, they would not have gotten tired and lazy. This verse would even motivate a defeated and captive population, save them from laziness and bring them back on track, let alone a declined population of believers.

With the hope to continue in the next article with the other reasons for our decline… May Allah protect you.

1. Surah Hud, 113

2. Surah Al-Maidah, 21

3. Surah Al-Maidah, 22

4. Surah Ali-Imran, 139,140