**ARTICLE-ALPARSLAN KUYTUL**

**THE DECLINE OF OUR UMMAH AND ITS REASONS – 3**

I start by praising Allah, Who guided humankind to the right path through His laws, and by sending peace and blessings upon His Prophet, who struggled day and night to make this ummah come into existence, and by sending Salam to all my brothers and sisters who work hard to be an ummah again.

In the last article, we explained what some of us consider to be the reasons for the downfall or decline of our ummah, when in fact they are not reasons but consequences. I stated, that in this article we will discuss the real reasons for our ummah to come to this present state. Let us start with them:

1. The Qur’an Al-Kareem declares, that those ummahs, which do not fulfil their duty, will be split and taken away and another ummah will be brought forth. In Surah Al-Maidah it states: “O you who have believed, whoever of you should revert from his religion - Allah will bring forth [in place of them] people He will love and who will love Him [who are] humble toward the believers, powerful against the disbelievers; they strive in the cause of Allah and do not fear the blame of a critic. That is the favour of Allah; He bestows it upon whom He wills. And Allah is All-Encompassing and Knowing”1 The verse explains a Sunnatullah. I.e. Allah (awj.) explains the law according to which He removes one community and brings forth another.

Allah (awj.), Who made the laws of all creatures and the whole universe, also defined laws for the downfall, decline or rise of societies and He rules over them in accordance to these laws. When the Qur’an is read from this point of view with the aim to understand Sunnatullah regarding societies and with the aim to detect these laws, it is evident that this divine book is full of such verses. The stories of the previous tribes are told in order to make us detect these laws, live in accordance with them, and take necessary precautions to escape a downfall. But those, who only see the Qur’an as a book about believe, ibadah and ahlaq, will not understand the stories of the previous tribes and the verses, that explain Sunnatullah, and they will read the stories in the Qur’an like fairy tales. However, with these verses, the SoverAlparslan eign and Lawmaker wants to explain His own Sunnah, His tradition. On the one hand, these laws make us learn about Allah (awj.), and on the other hand, they make us understand, under which conditions duty is given to or taken from communities by Allah, in which circumstances He demolishes them and what stages this demolition passes.

The irtidat, i.e. apostasy in the verse can stand for a society that leaves Islam and becomes kâfir. At the same time, it can stand for leaving or moving away from Islamic life or for abandoning the Islamic order and establishing another order instead. When mistakes like these are made, Allah (awj.) takes away their honour which He gave them and splits them. Then, He replaces them by another community, that can fulfil this honourable duty, or He makes another community reach a state in which they can fulfil this duty and hands it over to them. Because those, who are chosen as ummah, are a commissioned community that is responsible for the whole world.

As I stated before, the word ‘ummah’ derives from the same root word as the word ‘imam’ and those, who are an ummah, are the imams, the leaders of the world. They are responsible for all sins and injustice and obligated to avoid them. At the same time, they are obliged to establish the faraid (religious duties), abolish the haram and create justice. The goal of Islam is to protect and secure religion, mind, property, life, and generation. Consequently, the community, that is an ummah, is obligated to put this into practice. As long as they fulfil this duty, Allah (awj.) will support and help them. However, when they escape their duty and fall into laziness, Allah (awj.) first warns them by making them experience small calamities. If they do not understand, bigger disasters follow and finally, the ummah falls to pieces. Regarding big punishments, that come after small punishments, the Qur’an Al-Kareem states in Surah As-Sajdah: “And We will surely let them taste the nearer punishment short of the greater punishment that perhaps they will repent”2 The verse does not only apply to one tribe, but this Sunnatullah applies to all ummahs. Because “you will never find in the Sunnah of Allah any change, and you will never find in the Sunnah of Allah any alteration”3

Before the defeat in the First World War caused its splitting, this ummah had also experienced smaller calamities, started losing some wars, was exposed to divisions and dissensions in itself, and showed signs of decline. When necessary lessons were not taken, and provisions were not made, the rest followed. The ummah started to decline and to collapse. The First World War was only a last stroke, hitting a building that was already about to collapse. After an ummah collapses, it is split. In this respect, Allah (awj.) informs us about His Sunnah in His Book and states in Surah Al-A’raf: “And We divided them throughout the earth into nations”4 This is a divine punishment for those who do not fulfil their duty.

After being split, every piece, every state undergoes various tests, does penance for their sins and their laziness, and is exploited and oppressed. The verse in Surah Al-A’raf, which states that ummahs, who do not fulfil their duty, are split, further states as follows: “And We tested them with good [times] and bad that perhaps they would return [to obedience]”5 It is part of Sunnatullah, that they must undergo such tests to correct their mistakes. Although this is like a slap of lenity or of force on the one hand, it is Allah’s (awj.) mercy on the other hand. Because otherwise, they will not understand their mistake and their sin will remain until the hereafter. The penance in this world avoids this. After the generation, that does penance, in every state new generations are created, that understand their duty and the meaning of being an ummah. This is also Sunnatullah and everything happens as part of Sunnatullah. In Surah Al-Mu’minun it is stated as follows: “Then We produced after them a generation of others”6 I.e. after a community’s duty is taken away because they do not fulfil it, and after the community is consequently split, in each of its pieces new generations are created that are able to carry this flag. Just as after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the ummah was split into nation states and in every state new generations were created. Today, in each of these pieces new Islamic Movements have arisen, these generations and communities underwent various tests andcertain progress has been achieved, even if not as big, as it should be. This new generation, that was created, will also undergo different tests. It will be raised, brought to maturity, and taught to struggle and sacrifice for Allah. It will dissociate itself completely from batil (superstitious) and turn to haq(truth), and they will be brought to a state, in which they can carry this honourable flag of Tauhid, the flag of this ummah, and subsequently, the flag will be given to them. Now, the flag has been taken away from those, who did not fulfil their duty, and a new generation was commissioned. The Sunnatullah, that was valid for the previous ones, is now valid for this new generation.

Why does an ummah not fulfil their duty? And in which tasks does it especially show neglectfulness?

Humans are in general apt to being lazy, rather than to work. Working is hard for the human nafs, whereas laziness is easy. This is a test for all humans. They have to discipline their nafs and lead it to work by struggling against it. When they do so, they will see, that working is nice, while laziness is ugly. Moreover, the consequences of working are Allah’s (awj.) appreciation and help, as well as success in dunja and akhira, reaching wealth and power in the dunja, and being able to avoid injustice and oppression, and to establish justice. However, the consequences of laziness are the punishment of Allah (awj.), the loss of duty and honour, as well as poverty, derogation, and oppression.

Sometimes, people do not fulfil their duties because they are lazy, whereas sometimes, they neglect their duties because they dive into the gifts of the dunja and they are worldly-minded. For those, who forget and leave the purpose of their existence in the dunja and their duties, and who completely turn towards the gifts of this dunja, Allah (awj.) gives the contrary of their longings. Just as He does not give these people the akhira, He does also not give them the dunja. Because it is of His Sunnahs, that He gives the akhira as well as the dunja to those, who turn towards the akhira, and that He does neither give the akhira, nor the dunja to those who turn towards the dunja. Because Allah (awj.) wants to warn all Muslims, who dive into the dunja, and He wants to bring them to reason. Even if giving failure to those people is a punishment on the one hand, it is due to the warning His grace and mercy on the other hand.

The Qur’an Al-Kareem states in Surah Al-Baqara as follows: “And spend in the way of Allah and do not throw [yourselves] with your [own] hands into destruction [by refraining]. And do good; indeed, Allah loves the doers of good”7 The verse explains, that those, who do not struggle on the way of Allah with their property, who do not fulfil their duty of infaq ( to please Allah without asking for any favor or hoping for a return), who are miserly and worldly-minded, and those, who do not fight with their lives on the way of Allah (awj.), who are lazy and cowardly, throw themselves with their own hands into destruction. But at the same time, Allah (awj.) indicates one of His Sunnahs. I.e. leaving the jihad with property and life does not only jeopardise the Muslims’ akhira (afterlife) but also their dunja (worldly life). It causes that they lose their whole power and honour and that the duty and honour, that Allah gave them, is taken away. Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari (ra.) explains the revelation of this verse as follows: “We said, Islam has expanded to the whole region. From now on, let us increase our property, our camels, and our date fields. Then this verse was revealed.” This way he explains, that the meaning of this verse is that leaving jihad and focussing on gaining property, leaving the duty or thinking that the duty is already done means, that the ummah throws itself with its own hands into destruction. And is not this exactly, what has happened? When the ummah left their duty and focussed on the dunja, when it entered the tulip era and started living in luxury and comfort, did it not start losing all its power and tasting its defeat? Did it not face the danger of decline and downfall and then finally collapse? Did not the Sunnatullah, that is valid for all communities, prove that it is also valid for us? Now those, who do not see the real reasons for our decline such as this one, say: “For our salvation, we must gain wealth”. I.e. they say, that we must dive deeper into dunja. And they forget, that the reason why we reached a state, in which we could no longer fulfil our duties, was in fact wealth and luxury. They want to give the patient poison, mistaking it as medicine.

With the hope to continue with the other reasons… May Allah protect you.

1. Al-Maidah, 54
2. As-Sajdah, 21
3. Fatir, 43
4. Al-A’raf, 168
5. Al-A’raf, 168
6. Al-Mu’minun, 31-42
7. Al-Baqara, 195