Artıcle-Alparslan KUYTUL

**The Decline of Our Ummah and Its Reasons – 8**

All praise be due to Allah, Who created us as caliphs on earth and honoured us by making us an ummah. Peace and blessings be upon His Prophet, who created a strong ummah through all the suffering he endured day and night. And peace be upon all my brothers and sisters, who struggle to reawaken our ummah.

           In our previous article, we explained four reasons and solutions of laziness which is as an important reason for the decline of our ummah. Let us continue.

5. A false view of the life of the dunja: People, who love the dunja, think, that they have a long life ahead of them when they are young, so they work hard for the dunja. However, when they grow older, they realise, that this is not the case. They give up on dunja, step aside and prefer to stop working. While until yesterday they loved the dunja, today they completely leave the dunja. Thus, they go from one extreme to the other. They start saying, “I will die soon, anyway”, and become lazy. Whereas in Islam, the dunja is the field of the akhira and the human must work until the end of their life to achieve high degrees in the akhira. I.e. knowing, that even a few minutes before death, they will receive the reward of their deeds in this dunja or in the akhira, will save them from laziness and drive them to work, even at an old age or in deadly illness.

6. A false understanding of frugality (kanaat): Islam teaches and commands the Muslims to be frugal and to content themselves with less. This way they are grateful for what Allah gave them, reach inner peace, save themselves from greed, do not belittle the gifts they were given, and do not disrespect Allah. Moreover, if a person is frugal and grateful, the gifts, that were given, will be increased. Because the Holy Qur’an states: “And [remember] when your Lord proclaimed, 'If you are grateful, I will surely increase you [in favour]; but if you deny, indeed, My punishment is severe.'”1.

           The correct way of frugality is, that a person does not fall into greed, but works with all their power, and is satisfied with the result and with whatever Allah gives them afterwards. But over time this understanding was lost and instead of being grateful and showing frugality towards the result and the outcome, frugality was shown towards working. However, Islam does not praise frugality towards working but on the contrary, criticises it. The Holy Qur’an states: “So when you have finished [your duty], then stand up [for another]”2. It does not say, ‘When you have finished your duty, be content with it and do not stand up for another’. Under the condition that the other duties towards Allah are not neglected, and that it is not intending to be rich and live a luxurious life, but to help the poor, working hard to strengthen the Muslims and making Islam rule on earth was praised in Islam. Because this dunja is the place of working and making the justice of Islam rule over the world.

           While some Muslims adopted such a false understanding of frugality and became lazy in worldly issues, as well, some others did not show any frugality in worldly issues, and even fell into greed in this regard, but in terms of iman, ibadah, akhlaq and jihad they are content with less. They are happy, even if they do not fulfil only one per cent of their duties towards Allah. They do not want to think about the tasks, which they do not fulfil, and they regard themselves as the ant in the story of the limping ant. However, they are neither an ant nor are they limping. Moreover, the story of the limping ant does not teach to be happy doing less, but it teaches, that you must walk until the end of your energy and life on the way you know to be right, even if your opportunities are limited.

7. Being greedy: Just as being frugal in terms of deeds makes a person lazy, not being frugal in terms of the result and being greedy makes a person lazy, as well. Because greedy people are never satisfied with the result and always want more. When this is not possible, they get depressed, lose their will to work and consequently, become lazy. I.e. when a person is frugal in terms of deeds and working they become lazy, and when they are not frugal in terms of the result and if they are greedy, they get demotivated, stop working and become lazy, as well.

8. The laziness and kibr (arrogance) as a result of a state’s power: When states reach the top, they will also start to decline. One of many reasons for this is that the fact, that the state is powerful, leads its officials and citizens to lethargy, laziness and kibr.

           Those, who see, that their state is very powerful, start to think, that this power will never slip out of their hands. They forget, that countless big empires have disappeared throughout history and they start to have kibr. As Allah is the enemy of the arrogant, He punishes those who have kibr. And since kibr leads a person to laziness, it makes them lose all their power. Because the punishment comes according to the respective deed. Consequently, with the laziness, that comes as a result of kibr, the arrogant is punished by losing all their power. Just as Sheikh Edebali said to Osman Ghazi: “Son, there are people, who are born at dawn and who die at the adhan of the evening. Be of good cheer, my son. You are strong, wise and eloquent; but if you do not know how and where to use this, you would be thrown away by the wind of the morning. Then your anger and your nafs come together and defeat your mind. Therefore, always be patient, determined and resolute.”

9. Handing over the work to authorities: To hand over the work to others, lazy people believe and want to believe, that authorities will do all the work. Because if they do not believe this, they will have to do the work themselves. However, a state does not only function with the work of its authorities, but the work of its citizens is also very important. Seeing the authorities as very competent and thinking, that they will do whatever is necessary themselves, will lead a society to laziness.

           Even if a state is an Islamic state, nongovernmental organisations or jamaahs are necessary. Without intentions like being a state in the state, building an opposition against the caliph or causing fitna and without performing such actions, there should be jamaahs who help in the education and awakening of society and help the state fulfilling its duties by expressing their point of view to lead the state in the right direction and give advice. Unfortunately, this was not the case. Why did tariqats arise in the Islamic State but no jamaahs? Why did schools in fiqh and philosophy arise but no jamaahs? The tariqats, fiqh schools and madrasas performed big services for the state, of course. But they did not deal with the state’s development or imminent dangers but rather worked within their own branch. They could not and did not perform the tasks of a jamaah.

           The Muslims did not leave the spreading of taqwa and ilm completely to the state and helped the state in this regard. But in terms of raising the awareness of large masses and working for their awakening, conveying them the message of the Qur’an, seeing imminent dangers and taking precautions etc. they left everything completely to the state. They did not build a mechanism to warn the state when it made mistakes. This was a crucial reason for our decline. Today, the fact that all developed states attach importance to nongovernmental organisations and support them financially is an important factor that expands the life of their systems.

10. Hopelessness: The factors, that I stated above as reasons for our laziness, are related to the time before our decline began. However, hopelessness, that overcame us after our decline started and that continues in many of us until the present time, is a very important reason for our laziness, as well. Because a hopeless person will be lazy and unmotivated.

           After the Tawhid, the most fundamental message of Islam, was forgotten, the love for the dunja covered our hearts, we became lazy and entered the period of decline, we faced the technology of the West in the 18th century and were shocked. We even confused civilisation with technology and started to believe, that the West was civilised.

           We forgot, that we laid the foundation of science, forgot the golden ages of the civilisation we built, that we were the superpower of the world for over thousand years and that we taught humanity science, justice and civilisation. When we fell behind due to our own faults and realised, that the gap between the West and us widens against us, people who fell into hopelessness thinking, that such a big difference cannot be removed, that we will never recover and that we will never reach them, increased. Those, who fell into hopelessness, became lazy.

           That a person embraces the work they do or will do depends on their hope. If a person is hopeless, they will not embrace their work. The Muslims, who saw, that the world of kufr is strong and the Muslim world is weak and who consequently fell into hopelessness and laziness, should have known, that Allah (cc.) states: “How often has a small company overcome a large company by permission of Allah; and Allah is with the patient”3. So, if the Muslims had said “ya Allah”, had overcome laziness and embraced their duties, even if they were inferior in number and lagging behind in technology, it was still possible, that they escape this situation and overcome their enemies. History is witness to this.

           Moreover, it was necessary to realize, that even if the West was developed materially, spiritually they were collapsing. And even a material collapse of the West, that was not obvious for that generation to see, is for us today clearly visible. But just as it takes only a few minutes for a small boat to sink, while a big ship, due to rescue works, sometimes sinks in weeks; a ship with the size of Europe and America will also take a long time to sink, but finally it will sink nevertheless. Because it is in a spiritual sinking. The accelerating of the sinking of this vampire and octopus named Europa and America depends on the Muslims’ working. When we cut off the arms of this diseased octopus, that is forced to exploit the Muslim world even more to avoid sinking, it will not be able to cling on us and it will sink rapidly.

           That the gap between the West and us is wide should not have distressed and scared the Muslims in the period of decline this much. They should have known, that in this dunja there is Bast Al-Zaman. I.e. that Allah widens the time for the servants He wants and makes them perform much work in little time. It narrated, that some of the Awliyah performed the work of one day in one minute and the Messenger of Allah (saws.) covered a distance of thousands of years at the Miraj in one moment. This shows us, that if Allah is pleased with us, He will make us cover a long distance in little time and then we might cover a distance of 200 years in maybe 20 or 30 years, inshaAllah. Those, who do not understand the widening of time with such examples, should think of their dreams of the dreams of others. Sometimes years or even a whole life are seen in a dream of only a few seconds. This is evidence for the widening of time.

           If the Muslims were hopeful in the period of decline, they could have worked more and escaped laziness. But this was not the case and hopelessness overcame the whole body. Just as what we said about hopelessness is concerning the Muslims in the period of decline, it concerns the hopeless Muslims of today, as well. There are two more reasons why some Muslims of today fall into hopelessness. Let us leave them to our next article and end this part at this point. With the hope to continue with this topic… May Allah (cc.) protect you.

1. Ibrahim, 7

2.  Al-Inshirah, 7

3. Al-Baqara, 249