

Radical Change, a Vision Inspired by Divine Revelation

﴿وَقُلِ اعْمَلُوا فَسَيَرَى اللَّهُ عَمَلَكُمْ﴾

“Tell them, O Prophet, “Do as you will. Your deeds will be observed by Allah” [At-Tawbah: 105]

(Translated)

In the previous article, we discussed the creation of humankind as Allah's successor on Earth, and we cited the example of Prophet Abraham as a Quranic model of the Muslim who acts with certainty, unwavering in his resolve due to desires or doubts. We stated that the most important characteristic of this believer is his belief in the unseen.

When we speak of belief in the unseen, the Quran clearly and decisively states that salvation lies in actions based on insight, awareness, and certainty. If this belief does not translate into tangible actions, it remains merely empty slogans, and this is what Allah (swt) detests: ﴿كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾ **“How despicable it is in the sight of Allah that you say what you do not do” [As-Saf: 3].**

In Surah Al-Baqarah, which initially clarified that the Quran is guidance for the righteous, those who believe in the unseen and establish prayer, Allah (swt) mentions another group to Muslims as a warning against becoming like them; a group who were not guided by revelation.

These are Banu Israeel, who Allah (swt) bequeathed the Scripture, whom He chose and favored above all people. Yet, with utter ingratitude, they denied Allah's blessings, claiming their hearts were veiled. They killed Allah's prophets and distorted the meaning of the verses.

In the duality of word and deed, of belief and error stemming from the fallible nature of humankind, a dilemma arises—one of Satan's traps: As a Muslim, I must enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, offer sincere advice for the sake of Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw), and perform righteous deeds. However, as a human being, I am prone to slips and errors, and I may fall into what I have forbidden or neglect what I have commanded. Does this then make me a hypocrite? Here Satan begins his work: he whispers to the Muslim to refrain from good deeds and to abandon enjoining good and forbidding evil, lest the Muslim become a hypocrite.

But in Surah Al-Baqarah and the verses that address Banu Israeel, the thoughtful observer will find a way out. For Allah (swt) addresses these people, saying: ﴿يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ

أَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِي الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِي أُوفِ بِعَهْدِكُمْ وَإِيَّايَ فَارْهَبُون * وَأْمِنُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتُ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَكُمْ وَلَا تَكُونُوا أُولَ كَافِرٍ بِهِ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَاتِي ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا وَإِيَّايَ فَاتَّقُون * وَلَا تَلْبَسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوا الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ * وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ * أَنْتُمْ مَعَ النَّاسِ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَتَسْؤُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ * وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ

﴿وَأَنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ * الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا رَبِّهِمْ وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ﴾ **“O children of Israel! Remember My favors upon you. Fulfil your covenant and I will fulfil Mine, and stand in awe of Me alone * Believe in My revelations which confirm your Scriptures. Do not be the first to deny them or trade them for a fleeting gain. And be mindful of Me * Do not mix truth with falsehood or hide the truth knowingly * Establish prayer, pay alms-tax, and bow down with those who bow down * Do you preach righteousness and fail to practice it yourselves, although you read the Scripture? Do you not understand? * And seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, it is a burden except for the humble— * those who are certain that they will meet their Lord and to Him they will return” [Al-Baqarah: 40-46].**

Allah (swt) began His address by reminding them of His favor upon them, obligating them to believe in the revelation He sent down to them, and warning them against selling His verses for a paltry price. Allah (swt) mentioned all of this to us so that we would not fall into the same error they did. Then, with utmost clarity, Allah (swt) warns and rebukes ﴿أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَتَسْؤُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ﴾

“Do you preach righteousness and fail to practice it yourselves” [Al-Baqarah: 44].

Therefore, the response to the argument of abandoning the enjoining of good due to the possibility of falling into it, is in striving, and in training oneself to adhere to the truth and constantly holding oneself accountable. And because Allah (swt) knows that the matter is difficult, He directs us directly by saying: ﴿وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ﴾ **“And seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, it is a burden except for the humble”** [Al-Baqarah: 45].

Yes, enjoining good and forbidding evil, working for Islam, and adhering to revelation are difficult obligations for the soul, and it is hard for a Muslim to strive against his own desires and be driven to action, but Allah (swt) says: ﴿وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ * الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا رَبِّهِمْ * وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ رَاجِعُونَ﴾ **“Indeed, it is a burden except for the humble * those who are certain that they will meet their Lord and to Him they will return”** [Al-Baqarah: 45-46]. And what else but his belief that he would meet his Lord instilled peace in Ibrahim's heart when he was thrown into the fire? And what else but his certainty of meeting Allah (swt) that kept Musa steadfast in the face of Pharaoh? And what else but the people of the trench and the people of Gaza remained firm in than their certainty of meeting Allah (swt), before whom all burdens become insignificant and all trials become a source of peace and tranquility?

Certainty motivates action and generates resolve and determination, propelling the Muslim forward in the arena of life, working to support Allah's Deen, undeterred by obstacles and unhindered by trials. He acts with insight, knowing the truth and knowing that he is on a frontier for which Allah (swt) will hold him accountable.

Whoever has tasted the sweetness of belief knows that there is no salvation for him or his Ummah without it. And whoever knows the power of Allah (swt) and the power of His Deen, and that it is the truth beyond which there is only falsehood, strives and exerts his utmost effort so that this Ummah may attain its rightful authority and that Allah's Deen may regain dominance on earth. On the authority of Ma'qil ibn Yasar (ra), who said: The Messenger of Allah (saw) said: «الْعِبَادَةُ فِي الْهَرْجِ كَهَجْرَةِ إِلَيَّ» **“Worship during the time of bloodshed is like emigrating to me”** [Narrated by Muslim]. The wording of Imam Ahmad is: «الْعَمَلُ فِي الْهَرْجِ كَهَجْرَةِ إِلَيَّ» **“Doing good deeds during the time of bloodshed is like emigrating to me.”** In Al-Mijam Al-Kabeer of Imam At-Tabarani, it is worded: «الْعِبَادَةُ فِي الْفِتْنَةِ كَهَجْرَةِ إِلَيَّ» **“Worship during the time of bloodshed is like emigrating to me.”**

In times of tribulation, widespread bloodshed (Harj), the triumph of falsehood, and the pervasive confusion and bewilderment, a Muslim's steadfastness and efforts for change become a great act of worship. The Prophet (saw) tells us that, in the sight of Allah (swt), it is equivalent to migrating for His sake. This is a profound Hadith in which the Prophet (saw) informs us that great rewards come from great deeds, and that steadfastness during times of tribulation and working when people are lost and preoccupied with trivialities are among these deeds. This is a profound insight for the discerning, for Islam is a Deen of action, sacrifice, and change; a Deen of dynamism, not stagnation; a Deen of giving, not laziness; a Deen that encourages action and abhors inaction, weakness, and excuses. Allah (swt) has made this Ummah the best nation brought forth for mankind: by its enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and by its belief in Allah (swt).

Such is the state of the believer: knowledge and action, belief confirmed by the limbs through active deeds in the life of the Muslim as a whole and in his Ummah until he surrenders his soul to its Creator, guided by the light of the Hadith of the Messenger of Allah (saw), the Hadith narrated by Imam Ahmad and others on the authority of Anas (ra) who said: The Messenger of Allah (saw) said: «إِن قَامَتِ السَّاعَةُ وَبِيَدِ أَحَدِكُمْ فَسِيلَةٌ، فَإِنْ اسْتَطَاعَ أَنْ لَا يَقُومَ حَتَّىٰ يَغْرَسَهَا فَلْيَفْعَلْ» **“If the Final Hour comes while you have a shoot of a plant in your hands and it is possible to plant it before the Hour comes, you should plant it.”**

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir
by Bayan Jamal

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