بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Numerous, Yet Defenseless: Why Growth Is Not Strength

News:

Muslims will outnumber Christians worldwide by 2035, report says. (Source)

Comment:

According to new projections released by the Pew Research Center, Muslims are expected to outnumber Christians worldwide by 2035, marking a significant shift in the global religious landscape. Between 2020 and 2070, the number of Muslims is projected to increase by approximately 80 percent, from 2.02 billion to 3.64 billion. A principal factor behind this shift is the difference in fertility rates. Pew reports that Muslim women have an average of 3.1 children, compared with approximately two children per woman among non-Muslims. This disparity contributes substantially to the faster growth of the Muslim population. The projections draw on worldwide census data, fertility rates, religious conversions, and migration estimates. Collectively, these findings point to a substantial transformation in the world's religious composition over the coming decades.

While the projected growth of the Muslim population may be a source of optimism, numerical expansion alone does not translate into greater security, dignity, or justice. Indeed, as Muslim populations grow, so too do the challenges confronting an Ummah already subjected to division, oppression, tyranny, displacement, and foreign interference. Across the world, Muslims continue to endure violations of their Deen, blood, and honor. The significance of this demographic growth must therefore be considered alongside the conditions in which the Ummah lives. The challenge is not simply to celebrate an expanding Muslim population, but to recognize the responsibility that accompanies it: the obligation to establish a unifying polity that reflects our beliefs and possesses the strength to protect our identity, lives, honor, and dignity.

The notion that growing numbers alone amount to success is clearly contradicted by the reality facing Muslims today. This contradiction is particularly evident in Gaza, where the natural growth of the Palestinian population has been devastated by extraordinary levels of death and displacement. While high Muslim fertility rates contribute to the projected expansion of the global Muslim population, Gaza illustrates how mass killing, the destruction of families, and the collapse of essential services can undermine the very foundations of population growth. The question, therefore, is not simply how rapidly the Muslim population is growing worldwide, but what demographic growth means when communities across the Ummah are struggling to survive and Islamic identity itself faces mounting challenges.

Historically, the expansion of Islam has not been driven by birth rates alone. Its spread across numerous regions was facilitated by the Khilafah (Caliphate), which carried the Deen to distant lands and brought its message to every doorstep. Where

Islamic governance upheld justice, accountability, the protection of life and property, and the dignity of individuals, Islam offered an alternative to prevailing systems of exploitation and inequality. Over generations, the practical application of Islam contributed to the widespread acceptance of the Deen.

Ultimately, a rising population does not necessarily translate into a stronger Ummah, greater adherence to Islam, or the establishment of Sharia. Nor should the expansion of Islam be understood primarily through birth rates, as though its future rests solely on the number of children born into Muslim families. Historically, Islam expanded through the foreign policy of successive Caliphates, which presented the world with an alternative way of life, carried its message far and wide through dawah and jihad, and responded to the calls of the oppressed. The strength of Islam is not measured merely by how many people identify as Muslims, but also by the existence of a Khilafah that the Prophet (saw) described as a shield. Abu Huraira (ra) reported that the Prophet (saw) said: «إِنَّمَا الْإِمَامُ جُنَّةٌ يُقَاتَلُ مِنْ وَرَائِهِ وَيُتَّقَى بِهِ فَإِنْ أَمَرَ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَعَدَلَ كَانَ لَهُ بِذَلِكَ أَجْرٌ وَإِنْ يَأْمُرْ بِغَيْرِهِ كَانَ عَلَيْهِ مِنْهُ» **"Verily, the leader is only a shield behind whom they fight, and he protects them. If he commands the fear of Allah Almighty and justice, he will have a reward. If he commands something else, it will be held against him."**

A growing Ummah without such a shield remains vulnerable to loss, oppression, and exploitation. Its demographic growth cannot, by itself, compensate for the absence of Islam as a governing system. Without our political shield, we will remain a target of our enemies, as our Prophet (saw) described when he said: «يُوشِكُ الْأُمَمُ أَنْ تَدَاعَى عَلَيْكُمْ كَمَا تَدَاعَى الْأَكَلَةُ إِلَى قَصْعَتِهَا. فَقَالَ قَائِلٌ: وَمِنْ قِلَّةٍ نَحْنُ يَوْمَئِذٍ؟ قَالَ: بَلْ أَنْتُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ كَثِيرٌ، وَلَكِنَّكُمْ غُثَاءٌ كَغُثَاءِ السَّيْلِ، وَلَيَنْزَعَنَّ اللَّهُ مِنْ صُدُورِ عَدُوِّكُمُ الْمَهَابَةَ مِنْكُمْ، وَلَيَقْذِفَنَّ اللَّهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمُ الْوَهْنَ. فَقَالَ قَائِلٌ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، وَمَا الْوَهْنُ؟ قَالَ: حُبُّ الدُّنْيَا وَكَرَاهِيَةُ الْمَوْتِ» **"The people will soon summon one another to attack you as people when eating invite others to share their dish. Someone asked: Will that be because of our small numbers at that time? He replied: No, you will be numerous at that time: but you will be scum and rubbish like that carried down by a torrent, and Allah will take fear of you from the breasts of your enemy and cast wan into your hearts. Someone asked: What is wahn, Messenger of Allah? He replied: Love of the world and hatred of death."**

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