

Qhutbah, Insha Allah, Friday, February 2, 2007

Alhamdu lillah, wa ash hadu ala ila ha ill lallah

Bismillah hir Rahman nir Rahim

This Qhutbah, Insha Allah, is some thoughts on a society of submitters. Submission is a Divine universal message addressed to all humankind. It envisages a social system human order and a civil society in which everyone without distinction of colour, race, and clan may pass their life with self-respect. Submission vitalizes basic universal values that we all must accept. It forms the ground for all sound activity.

It is the heritage of all divine guidance to the human race. By its very nature, it seeks a pluralistic (a social organization in which diversity of racial or religious or ethnic or cultural groups is tolerated) public order consisting of different languages and creeds. No people have ever been without guides from God in the form of Prophets and Messengers. God has given the earth and its bounties to all generations of men and woman and not to a particular section, class or the so-called chosen ones. God's revelation tells us that all that lies between heaven and earth and all its resources is harnessed to serve humanity. [24:20] GOD showers you with His grace and mercy. GOD is Most Kind towards the believers, Most Merciful. Everyone can thus have his or her rightful and undeniable share. God wants a sound human order in which no man is left without food, clothes and shelter, as these are necessary provisions and our God given unalienable right.

Submission is so rational. We learn from the Quran that no institution, convention or practice in any aspect of public life stands justified on the plea that it has come down to us from the past, that our forefathers followed its path and that it is part of our legacy. This kind of argument is shallow and it is exposed in several places in the Holy Quran. *Examine All Inherited Information* [7:28] They commit a gross sin, then say, "We found our parents doing this, and GOD has commanded us to do it." Say, "GOD never advocates sin. Are you saying about GOD what you do not know?" *Maintaining the Status Quo: A Human Tragedy* [2:170] When they are told, "Follow what GOD has revealed herein," they say, "We follow only what we found our parents doing." What if their parents did not understand, and were not guided?

The Quran talks about our worship practices to purify our soul, learn self-discipline and to remember God frequently. We have to totally surrender to the rules and regulations as pronounced by the Supreme Law-giver. This is obligatory on every submitter in his own capacity. The Quran also talks about public approach viz. matters between humans, public dealings and group activities. Here, there can be mutual consultations and deliberations and decisions taken by those who are in charge among us. [4:59] O you who believe, you shall obey GOD, and you shall obey the messenger, and those in

charge among you. If you dispute in any matter, you shall refer it to GOD and the messenger, if you do believe in GOD and the Last Day. This is better for you, and provides you with the best solution. Submission comprehends all aspects of life with their respective categories.

The dynamic principle or deriving force behind a healthy and robust society will have to be the classic “*Nahi unil munkar and amr bil Maruf*”. [3:104] Let there be a community of you who invite to what is good, advocate righteousness, and forbid evil. These are the winners. How do we know what is good? *Maruf* means generally recognized or well known. In essence, values are such that when they are pointed out they are recognised as being cherishable in human conduct and dealings. They would be universally acceptable truths that our hearts would be drawn to it if not immediately, then even after awhile. It would thus become well known and desirable to all. All remnants of vileness (*Munkar*) have to be rooted out from society and only admirable elements should be established. It has to be completely prohibited in the interest of humankind. Would we God willing, not like to see it banished from society?

God wants us to be pious and punctual on our personal religious performances but He also wants us pay due attention to matters beyond. If our collective thinking is sound then our society will be hale and hearty. Society should not contain unacceptable and unrecognizable features (*Munkar*), which are disparaging to human sensibility and on the contrary it should be embodied with the most cherished values (*Maruf*). Even if there are people who are very religious, society could be hounded by chaos, disorder and anarchy. The entire society has to comprise of people who follow pure Quranic teachings. This situation has its own chain reaction, it is self-perpetuating because only in a well grounded public order can a levelheaded human flourish.

We will have to commit to commit ourselves whole-heartedly to implement God’s values around us. Every unwholesome feature will have to be dismantled. We will have to preserve our integrity and reason in a collective disintegrating and straitened environment. However, we have to still obey the classic “*la ikra ha fid deen*” – No *Compulsion in Religion* [2:256] There shall be no compulsion in religion: the right way is now distinct from the wrong way. Anyone who denounces the devil and believes in GOD has grasped the strongest bond; one that never breaks. GOD is Hearer, Omniscient. We cannot enforce one rule and break another. That is why God says *How to Spread God's Message* [16:125] You shall invite to the path of your Lord with wisdom and kind enlightenment, and debate with them in the best possible manner. Your Lord knows best who has strayed from His path, and He knows best who are the guided ones.

The Quran remarkably distinguishes its way of group life from all other styles of collective living and their public setup. It is so wise that it even proclaims that even false gods should not be abused. [6:108] Do not curse the idols they set up beside GOD, lest they blaspheme and curse GOD, out of ignorance. We have adorned the works of every

group in their eyes. Ultimately, they return to their Lord, then He informs them of everything they had done.

In a submitter society, all due equal respect would be paid to prophets and messengers, as there would still be different religions in a submitter social order. *More Proofs* [30:22] Among His proofs are the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and your colors. In these, there are signs for the knowledgeable. This means that all people should be respected. These are part of our primary values. God knows in advance that there will be a global civilization with different complexions.

There is no irrational code in submission, no superstitions, no rigid penances and nothing that cannot be achieved or is unattainable. God wants meaningful interaction between people. The Quran talks of agreements, pacts and pledges that have to be adhered to by all those who participate in them. Universal disciplinary values for society are enjoined. All transactions, decisions and intercommunication should be exercised with politeness, restraint and kindness in all disputation. Every contract is binding only on those who participate in it and come to an agreement without fear, coercion or trickery. *Murder, Suicide, and Illicit Gains Prohibited* [4:29] O you who believe, do not consume each others' properties illicitly - only mutually acceptable transactions are permitted. You shall not kill yourselves. GOD is Merciful towards you. There should be no secret deals and if there is any occasion for this it intent should be the common welfare and nothing else. [58:9] O you who believe, if you have to confer secretly, you shall not confer to commit sin, transgression, and to disobey the messenger. You shall confer to work righteousness and piety. You shall reverence GOD, before whom you will be summoned. [58:10] Secret conspiracy is the devil's idea, through which he seeks to hurt those who believed. However, he cannot hurt them against GOD's will. In GOD the believers shall trust.

We have a non-negotiable, ever renewing and revitalizing obligation enjoined upon us. *Monotheism: Natural Instinct* [30:30] Therefore, you shall devote yourself to the religion of strict monotheism. Such is the natural instinct placed into the people by GOD. Such creation of GOD will never change. This is the perfect religion, but most people do not know. *The Devil is the Other Alternative* [36:60] Did I not covenant with you, O Children of Adam, that you shall not worship the devil? That he is your most ardent enemy? These are principal conditions of its own survival A powerful physique and high intelligence will not help us. Half measures and mere lip service also would prove self-defeating and we cannot make adhoc compromises. A public order, which fails to protect higher values, never stops its degeneration into a crowd of uncommitted individuals bound to no one. There is nothing to fall back upon. All efforts to infuse it with life will go in vain as it has lost its intention and meaning. If we sleep over this, our soul suffers and we are doomed. Society gets corrupted en masse and gets disfigured beyond recognition. Worship of God alone may restore it to the fullness of its purpose. All socio-political systems talk about protection of life and property. Submission teaches

us all that and much more. We seek refuge under God's omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent umbrella.

Our contact prayers with God is our source of strength and it should never lose its priority even if our own needs are far more pressing. Due to more worry about personal obligations; the soul gets permeated like a plague. Some people look at their soul very casually and others with nearly total neglect and the devil takes them in his vice like grip. *Invisible, Devilish Companions* [43:36] Anyone who disregards the message of the Most Gracious, we appoint a devil to be his constant companion. Their faith lacks vigour and energy. It cannot glow with God's light. They thus get their material and social conditions worsened in this life and with even more terrible consequences in the Hereafter.

The only course to reverse the tide of general decay in all personal and social conducts will be the recognition of God's truth that personal duties to God are in nature also related with public duties to society. Both aspects of faith, one expressed in personal duties towards God and the other externalized in helping others like charity, feeding and clothing the poor are mutually sustainable, self-perpetuating and inter-dependant. *The Commandments* [2:83] We made a covenant with the Children of Israel: "You shall not worship except GOD. You shall honor your parents and regard the relatives, the orphans, and the poor. You shall treat the people amicably. You shall observe the Contact Prayers (Salat) and give the obligatory charity (Zakat)." But you turned away, except a few of you, and you became averse.

A mass upsurge for doing what is most pleasing to God and shunning all that would gain His displeasure would reform all individuals and their social order all at once. It would impel the masses from within to return to their Lord and Master through their obligatory duties to get strength from Him and to put their society in order. [89:27-30] As for you, O content soul. Return to your Lord, pleased and pleasing. Welcome into My servants. Welcome into My Paradise. Society would shine with godly values that all humankind will cherish and would be clean of all undesirable features. In all matters of public order, there should be no "*munkar*" and there should be no conflict with any of the "*maruf*".

Submission removes our shackles and unloads our burdens. At one time there were primitive communities with a simple mode of life. Now there are more advanced and expanding societies with a high degree of organizational setup. There are complex patterns of diverse activities. Manpower is distributed. Relationships are more intricate. There may be new features to old values. Even though there are technological advancements, human problems have increased. However, in whichever age we live, submission admits new values all along; it continuously rejuvenates and refreshes us. It allows us to be a great civilization. We may see various problems encroaching upon us and less opportunities of good living but there are no chains that are unbreakable if we follow the path of God. This is God's promise. May God have mercy on us all.