

CONDITION OF THE UMMAH

PART 8

FROM PAST TO PRESENT UMMAH IN A TEST

September 19th 2001

SIFTING TIME

It has been almost twelve years since I had a deep conversation with a Muslim scholar regarding the condition of the Muslim *Ummah*. It went something like this:

Sheikh: We are in a sifting time and very soon the torture of Allah SWT will come.

Me: Torture to whom?

Sheikh: Torture from Allah SWT to us; the condition will deteriorate and very soon the *masajid* will be closed.

Me: Who will close them?

Sheikh: Allah SWT will close them because we do not respect Him in His *masajid*, we do not do what He asks of us, and we neglect His message.

This conversation has stayed with me and I can see his predictions unfolding right in front of my eyes. I do not know the unseen and neither did the Sheikh, but we know the *sunnah* of Allah SWT, and His *sunnah* never changes.

We have lost so much of our identity and religion that we have forgotten how to even think like Muslims. We have to relearn how to think, act and react as Muslims. One of the basic tenets of Islam is *Qadr* or destiny—good or bad. If something happens without our will, something that we didn't initiate or chose, it means it is our destiny. It is written for us and there is nothing we can do about it. However what we do have control over is how we react to a given situation. Muslims have certain obligations towards Allah SWT when destiny strikes:

1. Thank Allah SWT and be grateful, whether what happened was positive or negative.
2. Believe without a doubt that it is the best for us and Islam, even though we may not see it as such. It has to be the best because Allah SWT planned it who is the All-Knowing, All-Seeing, All-Hearing, Wise Lord and the best of planners.
3. If what occurred is a calamity against us, we have to ask Allah SWT for *al afw wal 'aafia*—safety and well-being.

These are the foundational etiquettes for Muslims to follow when faced with destiny. Another etiquette is to ask Allah SWT for wisdom and guidance to understand the situation. We have to be humble and poor to Allah and beseech Him SWT in the following words:

Oh Allah! What do you want from me?

How do you want me to act or react?

What is the wisdom behind this situation?

This is when we are faced with conditions that we did not initiate or generate. However we are responsible for the destiny that is caused by our decisions and the choices we make. This is the reason why, as Muslims, we must ask ourselves before we do anything or make any decisions...

What am I doing?

Why am I doing it?

Is the act that I am going to do will be pleasing to Allah SWT and is according to the teachings of the Prophet SAW? Or

What I am about to do is actually against the teachings of Allah SWT and His Prophet SAW and is only going to satisfy my own desire and shayateen?

This thinking leads to the actions and also governs them. Allah SWT said:

And that there is not for man except that for which he strives (An-Najm 53:39)

Rasul Allah SAW has said:

"The reward of deeds depends upon the intentions..." (Bukhari)

To begin with, Muslims have to be very critical about their actions because they are slaves of Allah SWT and a slave does not do anything except according to the wishes and pleasure of his master.

In addition, the second criteria that a Muslim has to consider before doing any action is its outcome.

Rasul Allah SAW has said:

"Should you wish to act, ponder well the consequences. If good, carry on; if not, desist." (Ibn Mubarak)

He SAW also said:

"There should be neither harming nor reciprocating harm." (Sunan Ibn Majah)

According to *shari'ah*, closing the door of *mafasid* or harm is more important than doing beneficial actions. It means that if we want to do something that we think is right but can cause harm, we have to delay it until the situation becomes favorable and our actions no longer will cause harm to anyone.

Once a situation happens, there is nothing we can do about it except to ask Allah SWT for wisdom on how to understand the situation. We also have to recognize where it is coming from and how we should handle it according to Allah SWT and His Prophet SAW's teachings, and not any other way.

Sifting times are difficult and scary as they sort out the believers from hypocrites and disbelievers, and these outcomes are often conclusive and irreversible!

IS ISLAM THAT CHEAP?

The Muslim Ummah went through a religious momentum in last few decades when people adopted the edicts of Islam like beards and *hijab* without developing the *iman* and proper understanding of the religion first. This is why when the trial¹ arrived, many brothers shaved their beards and sisters removed their *hijab*. Wonder what will happen if the situation gets worse and anti-Muslim sentiments increase? The first victim of the situation will be us and at the same time the biggest criminals will also be us!

Today Muslims are thinking about and discussing everything from American foreign policy to the politics of Middle East; everything except Allah SWT!

Have we thought about ourselves and what Allah SWT wants from us?

Have we thought about what we are doing as Muslims?

What we are showing Allah SWT?

Have we tried to learn what Prophet SAW advised us to do in such circumstances?

In this time of confusion and chaos when Non-Muslims are running towards God we have closed down our *masajid* and our scholars have given people license to hide their Islam. Our leaders are running away and are advising others to run as well. *Running away from what and to what?* If the situation gets tougher do we even have proper networking abilities to maintain ties with each other? What planning do we have? What will we do if our families are attacked? Do we have a communication system in case a community member is harassed or attacked? Do we have any system of dealing with crisis or tragedy?

We are acting like chicken without heads without any *iman* and *yaqeen* in Allah SWT. It is as if the *iman* has been snatched from our hearts!

Let's compare our behavior to that of Ali (RA) at the time of *fitna* when his life was in danger. In order to protect him, some young Muslims assumed the duty of his body guards and encircled him when he stepped out. He (RA) asked them about what they were doing. They said they were trying to protect him. Ali (RA) asked them whether they were trying to protect him from his enemies or from his destiny. They said the enemy. At that Ali (RA) told them that his enemies cannot do anything to him without it being part of his destiny and no one can be protected from his destiny. He (RA) made them leave and chose to rely on Allah SWT alone.

This is the real *iman* and *yaqeen* in Allah SWT!

¹ This is referring to the rise of anti Muslim sentiment in United States after the events of September 11, 2001.

Is our Islam so cheap that we are willing to sell it for some illusion of protection and safety?

Can anyone other than Allah SWT grant us safety?

Where is our dignity?

DIGNITY vs. DISGRACE

Dignity is the status of the heart which Allah SWT gives to those who elevate Him. Allah SWT said:

Whoever desires honor (dignity) - then to Allah belongs all honor. (Fatir 35:10)

Dignity has nothing to do with the material status, race, gender, or age. It is an internal status, not external. It is not determined by whether or not we face abuse or torture from others, but rather by how we behave when abused. Bilal (RA) faced unbearable hardships at the hands of his enemies, was he humiliated? No! When tortured, he would say "The only one! The only one!" (*Ahad, Ahad*). His dignity did not allow him to turn to anyone except Allah SWT and let him smile while others cried for him.

The dignity we receive is according to the dignity we have for Allah SWT. The more we have Allah SWT in our hearts and in our lives, the more He SWT will elevate us and increase our dignity. When Allah SWT is absent from our hearts and our lives, then can we expect anything other than disgrace?

For example, is living in haram and earning haram income not a disgrace? Buying life insurance after Allah SWT promised to be our insurer is not a disgrace? Burying the dead and still not preparing for our own deaths is not a disgrace? What are we waiting for? Do we know when we will die? If not, then how come we don't say enough is enough and make *tawba* (repent)? Why don't we open a new chapter with Allah SWT with pure income and good deeds?

True dignity is determined by how we die and where we are buried. The Muslims who die in the state of poverty but with Allah SWT in their hearts are dignified; whereas those who die in luxurious houses surrounded by their wealth but far removed from Allah SWT are humiliated and disgraced.

Verily the endings are according to the deeds—good or bad.

Our ending is of paramount importance as it determines our final destination—whether it will be heaven or hell.

TYPES OF DIGNITY

There are two types of dignity—dignity in this life and dignity in the afterlife.

Dignity of this life is limited but very powerful. It is an honor Allah SWT grants people by allowing them to believe in Him, to work for His deen, by doing good deeds, by making people love them and be attracted to them.

But it is nothing compared to the dignity of receiving angel of mercy to accompany one in the grave, of being brought closer to Allah SWT on the Day of Judgment, and most of all the dignity of being able to see His SWT's most beautiful face.

THERE IS A TIME FOR EVERYTHING

Allah SWT sent Rasul Allah SAW with the message of Islam which spanned over a period of 23 years—13 years in Makkah and 10 years in Medina. The message of revelations in both these places was very different. Two-thirds of the Qur'an which was revealed during the 13 years in Makkah contains very few regulations. It focuses on building *iman* and *yaqeen*, sacrificing and spending for Allah SWT, and building brotherhood. In Makkah, the *jihad* was of the tongue, meaning struggle to spread the message of Allah SWT.

So do not obey the disbelievers, and strive against them with the Qur'an a great striving. (Al Furqan 25:52)

Allah SWT and His Prophet SAW did not command Muslims to retaliate, break statues, or hurt anybody despite all the sufferings they were enduring at the hands of the disbelievers in Makkah. It never took place!

Those who claim to be Muslims, the followers of the Qur'an and believers of the Prophet SAW would not hurt others or retaliate because he SAW never did it or commanded it. If we do what he SAW never did or commanded then where are we learning this behavior from and who are we following?

Another point to note here is that everyone who left from Makkah and went to Medina made *hijrah* (immigration). *Hijrah* meant to sacrifice everything for Allah SWT—spouse, children, house, wealth—everything of *duniya* was left behind for Allah SWT. This level of sacrifice was an ultimate proof that their hearts were ready to implement the rules of Allah SWT and to put His commands above everything else. Now we must ask ourselves...

Is the ummah ready to do that today?

Are we ready to migrate from Makkah to Medina?

Can anyone claim that we are living in Medina today?

According to Shari'ah do we have a khalifah today?

The answer to all of these questions is a resounding NO. First of all, we are not ready as a nation to implement the rules of Allah SWT. Second, we do not have a *khalifah* to enforce the laws of Allah SWT. If there is no *khalifah* then there is no *imara*; if there is no *imara* then there is no *qadi*; if there is no *qadi* meaning there is no *shari'ah*. According to *shari'ah* itself, the *shari'ah* is *mu'attala*—suspended or in paralyzed state. At this time we cannot implement the rulings of *shari'ah* including *hudood* or punishments.

Hudood are carried out by the *Qadi* who gets the command from the *Khalifah* who has a group of scholars for consultations. An ordinary person cannot implement *hudood* even if all the evidence is apparent. Everything has to follow a certain sequence. It is this sequence that our *ummah* is missing today!

SEQUENCE IS PART OF SHARI'AH

A person, for example, cannot wash his feet before his face while making *wudu* and cannot perform *sujood* before *ruk'u* while praying, we cannot take anything else in Islam out of sequence. In order for our acts to be accepted by Allah SWT, they have to follow the

sequence as taught by the Prophet SAW. The same goes for the revival of the *deen*. We cannot revive the *deen* the way we like or the way we think it should be! It must follow the same sequence as how Allah SWT first sent it down.

We witnessed the disastrous consequences when Taliban in Afghanistan broke this sequence and tried to implement the *shari'ah* on people who were not ready for it. This sad chapter of our history teaches us many lessons, one of which is that Islam cannot flourish without proper education and mercy.

Taliban came into power in a war ravaged country. Islam was all but eroded from people's lives due to years of communist rule followed by external and internal fighting. Most of the population of Afghanistan consisted of women and children facing poverty, neglect, and ignorance. To come into power over people like this and start implementing *shari'ah* forcefully without first educating them about Allah SWT was not only unwise, it was callous. Forcing helpless, impoverished women to cover and stay indoors instead of taking care of their needs and providing for them was sure to back fire. The rules came so fast and forcefully that people couldn't deal with them. *Hudood* punishments which are a way to protect the society from evil became the acts of evil itself at the hands of ignorant leaders. The entire religion suffered because of the ignorance and hastiness of illiterate few.

Aisha (RA) said, If the first thing to be revealed was: 'Do not drink alcoholic drinks.' people would have said, 'We will never leave alcoholic drinks,' and if there had been revealed, 'Do not commit illegal sexual intercourse,' they would have said, 'We will never give up illegal sexual intercourse.' (Bukhari)

Islam must be applied gradually and sequentially. Look at the consequences of not following the sequence properly.

Take for example those sisters in this *ummah* who wear *hijab* but they do not do it for Allah SWT; they wear it to pacify their husbands, fathers or brothers. That is why even though their appearance is of a Muslim their hearts are diseased—full of envy, jealousy, greed, desire for accumulation of *duniya*—all because they do not have the reality of *iman*. This reality shows up when the calamity strikes.

What does Allah SWT care about—our appearance or what we have in our hearts? Where is our dignity and honor? Who are we trying to fool?

Islam is mercy! Today Allah SWT has lifted his mercy from us because we are not merciful to ourselves, our families and humanity.

RECAP OF HISTORY—WHAT WENT WRONG

During the 20th century almost the entire Muslim world was colonized by European powers. Under the colonial rule, there was systematic destruction of the religion by the enemy. They burned books, killed righteous scholars and installed corrupted scholars in their places in order to create hatred for religious figures. Overtime people became distant from the learned scholars and from the religion itself.

With the abolishment of Ottoman Caliphate in 1924, Islam as a power declined and Muslims were left without any leadership. With the lack of religious guidance and constant

brainwashing by the colonial rule, the Muslims turned towards *duniya*. They adopted customs and habits which had nothing to do with Islam. Ignorance spread until Islam shrank to only few rituals and acts of worship. Muslim world remained in this state until just a few decades ago when Islam began to revive.

The efforts for this revival began approximately 300 years ago with the movement led by Sheikh Muhammed Ibn Abdul Wahab in Saudi Arabia. He invited people to the absolute oneness of Allah SWT and to the strict following of the *sunnah* of the Prophet SAW. Before long he tried to enforce his message through harsh measures in an environment that was not ready for it. It earned him opposition that hampered and slowed down his *da'wah* efforts. After his passing the religious momentum of his movement began to subside and *da'wah* never really spread among the masses.

Muslims in the rest of the world remained deep under colonialism and were kept systematically distracted by sports, media, alcohol, gambling etc. In such an environment an Islamic intellectual revival movement was formed in Egypt in 1928 called *Ikhwan-al-Muslimeen* or Muslim Brotherhood. It gained popularity very fast especially among the educated Muslims. This was followed by another movement in Pakistan called *Jama'at-e-Islami* in 1941 under the leadership of Abul Ala Maududi. Both these movements called towards Allah SWT and very soon had large following.

Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt became very influential and started engaging in political activities. They resisted British rule in Egypt and even sent a volunteer force to fight alongside the army in the war of 1948 against Israel. Their political activities made them a threat to the Egyptian government. The organization was disbanded in 1948 which was soon followed by the assassination of its leader Hasan Al-Banna. Thousands of its followers were arrested, tortured and killed and the movement had to halt its educational activities and go underground.

Similar revivalist movements took hold in Syria, Algeria, and other parts of the Muslim world and faced the same ill fate. It is important that we study and comprehend what the problem was with these movements!

The movements started off as *da'wah* to Allah SWT and spiritual revival of the Muslims. However, they all lost focus and shifted their purpose from *da'wah* to Allah SWT to politics. These movements never lived the thirteen years' period of Makkah time when the sole teachings were to build *iman* and *yaqeen* and to sacrifice for the message. All of these movements rushed to go to Medina by establishing Islamic governments. They failed to follow the *sunnah* of the Prophet SAW and failed to respect the *sunnah* of Allah SWT.

These organizations were satisfied with a few million followers and considered themselves ready to move from the phase of *da'wah* to the phase of armed conflict. They overlooked the fact that a lot of their followers were not spiritually strong to deal with the pressure. Their souls never had *tazkiyah*—purification and development—which is a pre-requisite of receiving victory from Allah SWT.

All these movements took different turns and adopted one aspect of Islam as an ideology. Some of them went to *jihad*, others became occupied with '*amr bil ma'roof wa nahi anil munkar*, yet others focused on gaining scholarly knowledge. None of them ever succeeded

or will ever succeed because they are all making the same mistakes. They are not willing to learn from it either.

ISLAM NEVER GOES FROM TOP TO BOTTOM

There are Muslims who complain that we have nothing and the enemy is controlling everything. They insist that we have to do something about it. These people forget Makkah time when RasulAllah SAW had absolutely nothing and his tribe controlled everything. Rasul Allah SAW had lost all the support and had nowhere to go. In such circumstances Allah SWT took him on a vacation known as *Isra* and *Mi'raj*. He SAW came back with concrete *iman* in the One who is running the show, and was no longer concerned about the situation.

This is all what we have! As a matter of fact, this is all what we will ever need. Our strongest weapon is our *iman* and *yaqeen*. We should not be pre-occupied with gaining the victory since victory is in the hands of Allah SWT; instead we should be focused on preparing our hearts and souls to receive the victory from Allah.

Let's look at what happens when the victory from Allah SWT comes and we are not ready for it...

Allah SWT opened the door of *jihad* for Muslims in Afghanistan with the Russian invasion. According to various reports there were between 70 to 700 fighter groups operating in Afghanistan. They were never united. Didn't they know Rasul Allah SAW said,

"Allah's hand is over the group." (Al Bukhari)

Weren't they familiar with the ayah?

And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided. (Al Imran 3:103)

Why do we lack the most basic element of Islam—the unity—without which we will never go anywhere?

Even with this division, Allah SWT granted them victory over their enemy. And then what happened? They were engaged in internal fighting for years! If they had *tazkiyat-un-nafs*—purified hearts, would that happen?

Don't all these Muslim leaders know what Rasul Allah SAW said?

"If two Muslims confront each other with swords and one of them kills the other, then the killer and the slain will both be in Hell." A man said: "O Messenger of Allah, (we understand about) the killer, but what about the one who is killed?" He said: "He wanted to kill his companion." (An-Nasai)

This is why during the *fitna* at the time of Ali (RA)'s *khilafah*, most of the companions of the Prophet SAW broke their swords and locked themselves at home. They were ready to be killed but were not willing to kill another Muslim.

Islam cannot be established outside unless it is first manifested inside of people. It does not go from top to bottom instead it goes from the bottom up. Once the people conform themselves according to the will of Allah SWT, He gives them *tamkeen*—elevation and

upper hand. It is not the weapons, knowledge, money or status that brings victory, rather the belief and reliance in Allah SWT. Allah SWT reiterates this message repeatedly in the Qur'an especially in the surahs beginning with the names of the Prophets. These surahs were revealed as consolation and assurance for the Prophet SAW that he is not the only one suffering at the hands of his adversaries, and that the previous Prophets had also faced similar opposition before they received Allah's support.

Imam Shafi'i was asked whether we get calamity and trial first and then Allah SWT gives us the upper hand, or we receive the upper hand first and are then trialed. He said that Allah SWT will never give people upper hand until He trials them first.

Again we see the sequence and the *sunnah* of Allah!

If the leaders of the revivalist movements remain patient and focus on spreading the *da'wah* and bringing people to Allah SWT, eventually the majority will be with them. At this point they wouldn't need to fight for the change, instead Allah SWT will gift it to them.

Allah SWT said:

Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves. (Ar-R'ad 13:11)

Rasul Allah SAW has said:

Your leadership will be a reflection of you (the people). (Mishkat)

This is the constitution of Allah SWT. He SWT does not require us to change anything around us. He SWT is telling us to change our insides and He will change the outside.

We are guilty in front of Allah SWT because we never allowed ourselves the right amount of time and effort to change our inside.

You know what it means if we change inside?

We will not need billion people to change the world rather just a few will be more than enough!

BITTER TRUTH

We have established the understanding that any Islamic revivalist movement will fail unless it follows the 23 years revelation period and the sequence of *da'wah* that Allah SWT has ordained. We also know that we are not in Medina because Muslims there were already nurtured with *da'wah* and were solid in their *iman*. Now we need to place ourselves during the time of revelation in Makkah to see where we go from here. Let's back track our way through time in Makkah.

During the 9th and 13th year of revelation the hardships and trials were at their highest peak. Muslims had no protection in Makkah and even the neighboring cities like Ta'if had become hostile. At this time Rasul Allah SAW advised Muslims of only one thing—patience!

The message was simple—be patient and Allah SWT will open for us.

That was the peak of *iman*, the peak of torture and hardship!

Are we in this state of *iman* and *yaqeen* today?

No!

Let's go further back between 6th and 9th year of revelation when Muslims were brutally tortured, were unable to pray in public, and even exiled to a valley in the outskirts of Makkah. Muslims at this time belonged to two groups—slaves or very poor, and a few wealthy ones like Abu Bakr (RA), Uthman (RA) and Khadija (RA). The wealthy were spending their money to free the slaves, to assist the poor Muslims and to spread the *da'wah*.

Are we in this state?

No!

Now let's go even further back in time which was between 1st and 3rd year of revelation, to the very beginning of *da'wah*. People who embraced Islam at the beginning of *da'wah* had to hide their faith, yet they had an obligation to fulfill! They had to invite their families, friends and tribes to Islam.

Are we doing that?

No!

The truth is that we are not even at the beginning of Makkah! We are just at the edge of entering the beginning phase of Makkah. Allah SWT is so merciful with us because if Makkah time starts vast majority of the Muslims will leave Islam! Our *iman* and *yaqeen* is so weak to the point that we will not be able to handle any further pressure. We have become slaves of *duniya* and if it slips from us even a little bit, we cannot take it. The bitter truth is that we have become so disgraced and our Islam has become so cheap that we are willing to trade it in for delusionary comforts of *duniya*.

WHAT ARE WE DOING HERE ANYWAY?

This is the situation of Muslims whether they live in a so called Muslim country or a Non-Muslim country. The trials for Muslims living in both types of lands vary though their fundamental responsibility remains the same—living their lives according to the will of Allah SWT, spreading goodness, and inviting others to Islam!

Those of us who choose to live in a non-Muslim land have a very important question to answer:

What are we doing here?

Why are we here?

What is our intention of living here?

Those who are here for *duniya*, will be finished; and this is what Allah SWT is doing now! It is as if Allah SWT is saying, 'you are here for *duniya*, I will take the *iman* from your heart.' Very soon we will enter a time with only two options: either we really embrace Islam and die for Allah, or the *iman* will be removed from our hearts. Now is the time to make wise choices and real decisions!

Those who decided to live in a non-Muslim land by the will of Allah SWT, now have to purify their intentions. According to the majority of Muslim scholars living among the non-Muslims is unacceptable unless it is for one of the following reasons:

- Be an inviter to Allah.
- To gain useful knowledge such as medicine, agriculture, engineering etc. for yourself and the Muslim society you came from.
- A short trip for business or trade. This also has a condition that you will not hide or deny your Islam. (Meaning you have to show yourself as a Muslim with the character, personality and appearance.)
- To immigrate from a land that is hostile and causes *fitna* to your deen, to a less hostile land where you can establish Islam in your life, in your family and the surrounding society (a land where you can guard your journey of faith.)

How many of us are living here with the intention of being representatives of Islam?

If so, what actions do we do that confirm our intention?

WILL THE TRIALS INCREASE OR DECREASE?

The answer is fairly simple: If we wake up from this heedlessness and go back to Allah SWT, He will make it easy for us and alleviate our trials. However if we reject the message that Allah SWT is giving us and keep running back to *duniya*, the next steps will be harder. If we do not realize our responsibility as Muslims and do not make efforts for this religion, then we will face the wrath of Allah SWT. That time will be tough and not many people will be able to handle it, and only sincere few will be saved.

What saves people at the time of trials is their belief, trust and reliance in Allah SWT. If we are missing these essential qualities then how can we expect to be saved?

WE HAVE WORK TO DO

Everywhere you go, you will come across Muslims who are complaining. They complain about America, about the United Nations, about the enemies, and the list goes on and on. Everyone is busy doing what they believe in. What about us? What are we doing? What are our scholars doing?

Shaytaan is doing his job. Can we keep complaining to Allah SWT that shaytaan is doing this or that? That is his job! He is doing what he is supposed to do!

What about you and me?

What are we doing?

What is our job?

It is evident that there are many plots against Islam but we have to believe without a doubt that Allah SWT is the best planner and that He can bring goodness from any tragedy. Sure the situation is bitter against us and the enemies of Islam are exploiting the situation, but we should not blame anybody because we also have work to do. If each one of us fulfils his responsibility, the situation will change!

The road ahead is tough but it is traversable. Today the highest *jihad* is to spread Islam through our example. The following actions will give you strength to remain focused and steady during this journey:

- Sacrifice your income,
- Sacrifice your time,
- Set a role model wherever you may be,
- Be kind and generous to your neighbors—both Muslims and Non-Muslims,
- Sincerely pray to Allah SWT to save you. Allah is the savior, no one else!

It is time we stop pointing fingers to others and hold ourselves accountable. If each one of us starts changing ourselves, Allah SWT will surely change the conditions around us.

We need to:

- Make *tawba*
- Set intention to devote our lives for *da'wah*
- Make sincere effort to start building *iman* and *yaqeen*
- Sincerely cry to Allah SWT to protect us from being hypocrites
- Beg Allah SWT to let us die as Muslims with dignity.

Do not play games any longer as Allah SWT can snatch *iman* from the hearts any moment, and then no *duniya* or government would be able to help us.

Today every Muslim has to be a nurse—well wishing caretaker—for Muslims and Non-Muslims alike. Most people do not mean ill, they are simply naïve. They do not know what is going on and they are not aware of their governments' dirty policies and tactics underneath the table. They are overwhelmed with the race of *duniya* and do not question what they are told.

They are not the criminals, we are! We have the eyeglasses but neither do we wear them nor do we share them with others to allow them to see the true picture.

WHY DID ALLAH SWT ALLOW THIS TO HAPPEN?

Allah SWT shakes things up in order to wake us up. Humanity has fallen in deep heedlessness and has severed its connection with Allah SWT. Muslim and non-Muslim alike are in deep state of *shirk* (associating partners with Allah). We are all behaving as if Allah SWT does not exist anymore. Allah SWT has to remind us that He is there watching it all!

Please wake up before it is too late. We need an honest, truthful and real journey of *iman* towards Allah SWT. This is a call from Allah SWT—a reminder for some and a disgrace for others!

It is especially a reprimand for those Muslims who are born into this faith but have neglected it completely. Allah SWT is showing them that He SWT does not need them. Those Muslims who are supposed to be the standard bearers of this religion are hiding during difficult times and it is new-Muslims who are taking the lead in *da'wah* activities. It is high time we heed the warning of Allah SWT

And if you turn away, He will replace you with another people; then they will not be the likes of you. (Muhammed 47:38)

There is mercy in every act of Allah SWT. If we wake up and return to Him SWT and accept Islam as our responsibility, it will be a mercy for us. However, if we remain in the same state we are currently in then Allah SWT will abandon us and we will be replaced by those who are better than us; at that time it will no longer be a mercy, but a tribulation.

ARE WE BETTER THAN THE PROPHETS?

Finding a path which leads back to Allah SWT is not difficult. He SWT is waiting for us. All it takes is an honest call to Allah SWT. We need to cry to Allah SWT and beg Him to make us steadfast in Islam and save us from any and all hypocrisy.

Iman and *Yaqeen* in Allah SWT cannot be built in an easy environment. The situation has to be tough in order for the faith to take root and to develop. Now the condition is favorable, but what is missing is our sincere desire to be faithful people.

This is the time to stand up and show our Islam to the world. What is the worst that can happen? People will spit in our face? So what? Are we better than the Prophets of Allah SWT? All messengers and prophets have borne difficulties and ridicule from people. This is part of the package; unless people call us liar, crazy, insane, and do not deride us, we are not really engaging in *da'wah*.

Protect your Islam! Show dignity for your Islam and Allah SWT will give you dignity in this world. Do not put your head down and be embarrassed or Allah SWT will disgrace you. May Allah SWT give us strength and not trial us with more than we can bear.

IT'S TIME FOR ACTION!

It is common knowledge that America's foreign policy is corrupted which gives rise to poverty, hardships, and corrupted regimes all over the world. This has destabilized many Muslim countries and broken their economy. All these factors are contributing to the growth of vigilante groups who are seeking to avenge these misdeeds done to the Muslim world.

Revenge is a new phenomenon in the Muslim world which has no basis in Islam. Neither Allah SWT nor His Prophet SAW or any of the Muslim scholars have ever permitted revenge. When Rasul Allah SAW saw his uncle Hamza (RA)'s mutilated body he was very upset and said, "If Allah destines me to win over the Quraysh, I will cut thirty of them into pieces." No sooner had the Prophet finished his threatening words, then a revelation came down to him while he was still standing in his place with the following verse:

Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His way, and He is most knowing of who is [rightly] guided.

And if you punish [an enemy, O believers], punish with an equivalent of that with which you were harmed. But if you are patient - it is better for those who are patient.

And be patient, [O Muhammad], and your patience is not but through Allah. And do not grieve over them and do not be in distress over what they conspire. (An-Nahl 16:125-127)

At the time of conquest of Makkah, when Prophet SAW had authority over all those who had made his and his followers' lives miserable, he treated them magnanimously saying, "No blame will there be on you today. Go, you are free."

These are the teachings of Islam...and this is what the humanity is waiting for! Today, we have become the enemy of Allah SWT and His Prophet SAW by our manners and actions. We are following our desires and emotions and labeling it as Islam. None of what we are doing is according to the teachings of Allah SWT and His Prophet SAW.

It is true that the condition of the Muslim world demands actions, but what actions?

I believe in Allah SWT, His book, and His promises. Allah SWT made it clear that if we have *iman* and *yaqeen* in Him SWT, He will change the condition. So what makes sense: continue to have meetings and arguments or build faith and start taking actions that will bring Allah SWT's support?

It is time for action, not political or social action but action with the Owner of all the heavens and the earth, the King of kings, the Protector and Savior!

We need Allah SWT on our side at all times. If we do not have Allah on our side, we will lose and will never succeed!

We have to remember that the time will get rougher, not easier. The only one who will be able to save us is Allah SWT. He SWT has the keys to reverse all situation; only if he wishes and ordains it, and only if we deserve it.

He Alone has the keys of the unseen treasures, of which no one knows except Him. He knows whatever is in the land and in the sea; there is not a single leaf that falls without His knowledge, there is neither a grain in the darkness of the earth nor anything fresh or dry which has not been recorded in a Clear Book. (Al-An'am 6:59)

For each (such person) there are (angels) in succession, before and behind him: They guard him by command of Allah. Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves (with their own souls). But when (once) Allah wills a people's punishment, there can be no turning it back, nor will they find, besides Him, any to protect. (Ar-Ra'd 13:11)

Do not worry or concern yourself about how you will die, instead worry about what the status of your heart will be when you die. Death is not a big deal; big deal is how you will meet Allah SWT and how people will remember you.

Don't be concerned about what the enemies of Islam will do to you. Be concerned about what Allah SWT will do to you!

Let this call be a call of mercy to you and not of disgrace. Embrace Islam, show your Islam, build *iman* and *yaqeen*, give Allah SWT dignity by accepting the responsibility of His *deen* on earth, do all that you can for Islam before your time runs out.

Remember, this earth will either be a witness to us or against us!