

THE FACTORS DISCOURAGING US FROM WORKING AND ITS SOLUTIONS

Dear brothers and sisters...

When we look through the pages of history books we see that the Islamic Ummah has gone through good and bad moments. The Qur'an defines the Ummah as follows: "(O Community of Muhammad!) You are the best community ever brought forth for (the good of) humankind." (Al Imran, 3:110)

When we compare the reality of today to our past we see that there is a great gap among them. We see that this Ummah which the Greeks of Byzantine and Persians of pre-Islam period were afraid of is today in dire situation.

My beloved brothers and sisters...

If we want to understand the reasons of underdevelopment of Islamic Ummah, first of all, we need to research the first years of emergence of Islam. As we inspect the time of the Prophet (PBUH) we see that he had explained us the factors preventing us and discouraging our enthusiasm in the path of development. The four of these reasons which I think are the most important ones are as follows:

- 1- Nearness to Allah (SWT)
- 2- Ignorance
- 3- Inferiority complex
- 4- Ambiguity of priorities

1-NEARNESS TO ALLAH (SWT)

The nearness of man to Allah (SWT) is his real power source. If you want to analyse boldness and timidity, stability and its being lack, greediness and self-devotion these concepts may only explained through the degree of nearness of man to Allah (SWT). If everybody checks his soul he realizes that he quickly rushes into the things that he is closely familiar with and abstains himself from the things that he is doubtful about.

For example, a man pays the Zakat of his properties and belongings as charity because he knows that this is the way that someone attains the pleasure of Allah (SWT). He spends his youth on the path of Allah (SWT) because he knows without a doubt that this is the way of getting the consent of Allah (SWT). His goal is Allah (SWT) and his desire is His consent.

"Only those are the believers who have truly believed in Allah (as the Unique Deity, Lord, and Sovereign), and (believed in) His Messenger (including all that he has brought from Allah), then have never since doubted (the truth of what they have testified to), and who strive hard with their wealth and persons in Allah's cause. Those are they who are truthful and honest (in their profession of faith). (Hujurat, 49:15)

You see those who do not have a certain faith in an incessant hesitation and dillydallying. They do not perform the religious obligations and remain in puzzlement, disappointment, weakness and laziness.

The degree of certainty embodies itself in the sincerity of our prayers. Imam Bediuzzaman explains this fact with those words: “You should know that your strength lays only in sincerity and truth.” Imam urges the servants of the Qur’an to read this treatise (21st flash) once in a fortnight. Our certain belief to Allah’s mercy, blessing and benefaction spurs us to demand our needs only from Him.

Our certain belief to Allah’s wrath leads us to be afraid of Him. Our certain belief in that Allah (SWT) encompasses us with His knowledge and sees us causes us to obey His orders. Our certain belief in Allah’s power causes us rely only on Allah (SWT) and abstain from thinking that what makes us reach our goals are instruments.

The scholars have said as follows: “If any heart becomes the host of a certain belief it gets overwhelmed with light and there won’t remain any trace of doubt, trouble and grief and it gets overflow with love, fear, consent, praise and trust for Allah (SWT). As an arrow splits the air the man can split and pass through all difficulties and nuisances. He says as follows through the tongue of his heart, as Imam Nursi also says, “O Allah (SWT)! You are my goal and I would like to attain your pleasure.” There is not any problem if He gets pleased with you even if the all universe turns away from you because If He accepts an action and everyone else rejects it, it has no effect. Once His pleasure has been gained and He has accepted an action, even if you do not ask it of Him, should He wish it and His wisdom requires it, He will make others accept it. He will make them consent to it too. For this reason, the sole aim in this service should be the direct seeking of Divine pleasure.”

When Allah (SWT) loves somebody calls the angel Jabrail and He says ‘I love my so-and-so servant, you also love him’. And Jabrail loves him. Then Allah (SWT) calls out to the settlers of the heavens and He says, ‘Allah got pleased with his so-and-so servant, you also love him!’ and the settlers of the heavens love him. Then he gets recognizance on the earth. (Bukhari/Muslim)

2-IGNORANCE

Some Muslims have been ignorant about both religious and worldly matters. This is the main reason of the situation which we get into today.

When we research the relation between Islam and science we witness that there is a strong relation between faith and science. The more the man increases his knowledge the more he gets the certain faith and knowledge about Allah and his taqwa increases. Allah (SWT) explains that the ones who most fear of Him is knowledgeable people who know him very well as follows: “Do you not see that Allah sends down water from the sky? Then We bring forth with it produce of various colours (shapes and taste); and in the mountains there are streaks of white and red, of various colours (due to the flora or the variety of stone and rock), as well as raven-black; And likewise human beings, and beasts, and cattle, diverse are their colours. Of all His servants, only those possessed of true knowledge stand in awe of Allah. Surely Allah is All-Glorious with irresistible might, All-Forgiving.” (Fatir, 35:27-28)

The knowledge is encourager and supporter of the man and the faith is the encourager and supporter of the knowledge. We see the strong connection between them only in Islam. Unless we do not turn to knowledge-getting activities by moving forward from a sincere faith we are not able see again those honourable days.

Imam Abu al Hasan an-Nadwi says follows in his book titled ‘What did the world lose with downfall of Muslims?’; “If the Islamic world want to regain the control of its independence, get rid of the chains of the others and be leader it should be independent in the field of education, even more it should be pioneer in education.

Imam Said Nursi has put forward a quite comprehensive conception which is depended on our historical nobility on this issue. He made the signature of our ancestors an instrument of revival of present time and elevation of the future in perspective of the data gained through the endeavours of modern science and important development in academic life.

Based upon this, he has established a reformist perspective on the issue of education. He aimed reformation in interpretation of the Qur’an (tafsir), faith (aqeeda) and rhetoric (balaghat) and enlivening the spirit in its nobility and incorporating with the positive sciences. He touches upon this issue as follows: “The light of the conscious is the religious disciplines of knowledge. The light of the mind is positive sciences of civilization. The truth reveals when both come together and the tenacity of the student increases and he rises with two wings. Once they segregate from each other, the former causes to bigotry and the latter causes to deceit and doubt.”

Thus; Imam Said Nursi has called all Muslims to study universal disciplines of knowledge which are products of human intellect.

3-INFERIORITY COMPLEX

One of the important reasons of weakness in benefits of endeavours for development and lack of encouragement for that is psychological dimension. The psychological defeat does not necessarily mean that there is lack of energy and power but that these two cannot form a positive change. Thus; the man abandons his ideals and goals for the sake of ideals and goals of the other people.

Although the psychological decadence is for the sake of personal principles and ideas it may cause the man to abandon the main principles and to change for personal benefits. In the same way, it involves in the defeated man the capacity to aggrandize the behaviours, attitudes and morals of his defeater and accept the consequences and, furthermore, he adopts his defeater’s ideas.

Ibn Khaldun says as follows regarding this issue; “The person finds a quality of perfection in the ones who defeat him and he embraces it. For that reason, you see that the defeated imitates the defeater in clothing and behaviours and the like.”

Even though it is not a general principle mostly the defeated one does not enjoy the freedom and he does not have principles appreciating the free will. Since the free will is the focal point in terms of ethics, the condition and reason of existence of ethical rules is to become free. The meaning of becoming free of man is embracing the ethical rules. Therefore; lack of practice of

ethical rules indicates that there is a partial problem regarding the personal freedom and that the people do not have the will to carry out their responsibilities. If the ethical values do not lead the man to the better we need to review these values.

Imam Bediuzzaman Said Nursi has touched upon protecting the ethical values and lofty principles in many treatises and assigned one of his sermons to this issue. When someone inspects the solutions of Imam he sees that his ideas are divided in two main groups. One is to be model and personal attributes and the other is akhlaq (ethics) and sulukiyyat.

Moving forward from these two groups of main principles Imam Said Nursi has underlined the importance of spiritual and ethical power. Imam says as follows; “What will elevate us to the heaven of knowledge and Truth and will make us discover is only religion of Islam because the symptoms indicate this.”

It is concluded from this quotation that Imam attaches great importance to the spirituality and it is understood that the spirituality can be increased through tenacity, optimism, hope and work force for development. The importance of ethical principles has been stressed.

The conceptualization of ethical and spiritual power of Imam Said Nursi resembles to two sides of a banknote which can purchase the true Islamic civilization abandoning worldly civilization which is full of lies, despotism, nationalism and leading corruption among peoples and states.

4-AMBIGUITY OF PRIORITIES

To care about determining the priorities and paying attention to instruments for realizing something is the most important reason of being successful in handling the usual responsibilities in our life. Relying completely on Allah’s (SWT) will is not contradicted with that. Already, to be neglectful of using material instruments, lack of determination of priorities and then to claim that we are relying on Allah’s will is not appropriate to the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH). It is an indication of inability and not a lawful reliance but a pretentious reliance (false tawakkul). This is indicator of weakness of sincerity.

There are good examples for us in the migration of our beloved Prophet (PBUH) because it is an event which distinguishes the truth from the false and it was the revival of the Ummah. While the Muslims had been weakened due to oppression and tortures they became self-independent with migration. They were free in their countries. They shaped their lives according to the laws which Allah (SWT) revealed to His prophet.

Allah (SWT) wanted the hegira (migration) to take place through observing the physical rules and instruments in order to teach us the necessity to incorporate the reliance of the will of Allah with using instruments and observing physical factors. Otherwise, Allah (SWT) was able to materialize the migration without involving any human effect as He did in Isra and Mi’raj event.

The Prophet (PBUH) encouraged his Ummah to adopt the method of using and embracing the worldly instrument in order to be successful by choosing his companion for journey,

preparing food, determining support team, hiring a guide, not using the usual way and the like.

We need to attach the success after obeying the worldly factors totally to the bestowal of Allah (SWT).

When we review the embracing the social and physical instruments and factors for the modern day in terms of Islamic world we see that Imam Bediuzzaman Said Nursi had adopted a critical method. The former generations may have not understood totally this fact. The negative events which are results of democratic and social animosity of the West are put forward with empty slogans as if they are source of pride by overlooking the teaching historical events. Thus, these examples and slogans reminded to people the development experience of the companions and the blessed predecessors (salaf al salihin) regarding the politics and law. For example; Imam Said Nursi shows the true sources of the slogans “liberty, egalitarianism and fraternity” which were the basis of so called French Revolution in experiences and policies of companions such as Imam Umar and Ali and the commanders like Salahaddin al-Ayyubi.

When Imam Nursi declared his judgements about the West he had known them very well. He used to take the aspects of this civilization which were appropriate to the needs of humanity into consideration and encourage the ummah to adopt and embrace the physical and social rules, instruments and factors and attain what is useful for development and reviving of them. By that way, Imam Nursi has proved that he evaluated the West with a distinguished, critical and fair method. Furthermore, he realized this thoroughly by comprehending the factors and causes and evaluating the symptoms well.

Also, the well-directed main principles which Imam put forward by abandoning the negative aspects of the Western civilization and focusing to its values with a pragmatic perspective which made the Islamic Ummah focal point but at the same time was ready to serve to all humanity prove the success of the method of Imam.

At this point, the method of Imam deserves the name of al fiqh al akbar (the great jurisdiction) because it is a comprehensive and dynamic method which contains the intellectual politics and can lead to the Muslims to a position and an exemplary state which the Qur’an promises.

As can be concluded Imam Nursi confirms embracing instruments and encourages taking advantage of the Western science and intellectual development. He defines these sciences as the sciences developed out of lands of Islam.

We can summarize all these in two hadiths the Prophet (PBUH) which are regarding seeking refuge in Allah (SWT) from the factors discouraging us from working:

O Allah! I seek refuge in you from the grief due to the personal discouraging events in the past and from the anxiety due to the discouraging ambiguities in the future and from the material weakness and from the laziness and from socially unethical cowardice and from stinginess and from the pressure of debt and from the reproach of people.

Powerful (tenacious – embracing the instruments – determining the priorities) believer (who has certain belief and complete sincerity) is more blessed and loveable than the weak believer

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in the presence of Allah (SWT). Take care of everything useful for you (If you want to be a powerful Muslim take care of useful things... everything which is useful for religion and the world, everything which is useful for individual and to the Ummah...)

Take care of it, work for it, go after it and extend your hand for it. Demand help from your Lord so that you do not become weak. When you confront with a disaster, do not say “I wish I had done so-and-so”! Say “my Lord knows the best of everything” because “I wish...” comes from the Satan.