

Who Is Responsible?

Scholars! It is they who do not perform their responsibilities in respect to the people. They should give awareness, consciousness and direction to the people and they do not do so.

All our geniuses and great talents occupy themselves with philosophy, theology, Sufism, jurisprudence, principles, literature, meanings, expression, novelties, conjugation and syntax. Through all the years of research, thought and their own scholarly anguish, they write nothing other than 'practical treatises' on how to achieve cleanliness for the ritual prayer, types of uncleanness, the rules of menstruation, and the doubts which arise in ritual prayer.

They leave aside writing treatises on how to speak with people, treatises on how to communicate the religious truths and the philosophy of the pillars of the religion, treatises on how to communicate consciousness and awareness to people, treatises on the understanding of the traditions of the Prophet and the personalities of the Imams, treatises on the revolutionary purpose behind Karbala, introductory treatises on the family of the Prophet and the Shiite movement, treatises on the expression of thoughts and treatises on the faith of the people. All of these treatises are written, but all of them are written without responsibility, without the role of a commander. They pass their responsibilities on to the ordinary speakers in the mosques, not to the mujtahids (religious leaders whose directions for the practice of the faith are followed).

This is why the task of introducing the Prophet's family, the task of the advertisement of religion and the study of the truths of Islam fall prone to the 'failures of the old schools of religion'. It is for this reason that a group of young people, in order to study Islamic sciences (and to carry jurisprudence forward), enter the schools. If talented, through great efforts, they become jurisprudents or mujtahids or faghih [theologians]. This group is imprisoned as teachers and removed from the community. Those who do not succeed in studying properly, because they do not have the ability, talent or spiritual strength, but, in exchange, have warm, often artistic, voices, are obliged to propagate and advertise the truths of the religion. The third group, who have neither this nor that; neither the science nor at least a voice, take the third way. They become dumb and speechless. They take themselves to the 'sacred door' and, as things would be, they move ahead of both mujtahids as well as the speakers in the mosques.

In the midst of this, be just! What will the fate of the people be? What is the fate of their religion? It is not necessary to think very hard. No. Just look.

It is this. A country which is full of faith and love, a nation which has the Qur'an and the *Nahjul Balaghah* of Ali, a people who have Ali, Fatima, Hassan, Husayn and Zaynab, have a red history but a black fate. They have a culture and the religion of martyrdom, but it is dead.

We see a dream appeared to Joan of Arc, a sensitive and imaginative girl, for her to fight in order to have the king returned. For centuries, her dream has given the inspiration of freedom, sacrifice and the sense of revolution and courage to the enlightened, aware and progressive French people.

Whereas Zaynab, the sister of Imam Husayn, who takes a heavier mandate, the mandate of Husayn in her Ali-like hands, continues the movement of Karbala, which opposed murders, lying, terror and hysterics. She continues the movement at a time when all of the heroes of the revolution are dead and the breath of the forerunners of Islam has ceased in the midst of our people, when commanders of the Islam of Muhammad and the Shi'ism of Ali are gone. But she has been turned into 'a sister who mourns'.

I hear reproachful cries towards the scholars who are responsible for these beliefs, ideas and thoughts of the people. I do not know whether these cries come from the throat of Ali or from the depths of the unconscious consciences of the people.

What are you busy with? Where do you speak from? Why do you not speak? Throughout all of these years, where is one book for people telling them what is in the Qur'an? In place of praise, eulogy, prayer, poetry, song, lamentation and spider webs about the love of Rumi, why have you sealed the lips of Ali among people? A Persian speaking person cannot easily understand what Ali has said, but all of the works of La Martine, the French lover, can be read in Persian, that do you say? All the songs of the ancient Greek woman, Bilitis, with dubious morals, can be read in Persian but the words of Ali, one saying of Ali, cannot be read.

Where is one small, short, correct, recital about the real lives, beliefs and behavior of the Imams? You speak so much about their essences, generousities and miracles but where are the books about them? You breathe their miracles and for their birthdays and days of their deaths you have festivals and mourning ceremonies. Where are the treatises for the Shiite people, enamored of Ali, that say who Ali was and who Fatima was and how their children lived and how they thought, what they did and what they said?

Our people, who spend their lives in love with the Shiite saints and who cry over the difficulties they faced', who serve them for months and years, who glorify their name, spend money, give their sincerity and their patience to them, deserve to know the real lives of each one of their Imams. Their lives should serve as examples for each one of them. Their lives, thoughts, words, silences, freedoms, their imprisonments, punishments, martyrdoms, should give awareness, life, chastity and humanness to people. But people know them only by their number. [That is, the 6th Imam, the 8th Imam, etc.].

If an ordinary person mourns for Imam Husayn and on the anniversary of his death (*'ashura*) strikes his head with his dagger and bears the pain even with pleasure, and still knows Husayn in an oblique way and misunderstands Karbala, who is responsible? If a woman cries with her whole being, if the recollection of the name of Fatima and Zaynab burns her to her bones and if knowing it is worthwhile, she would, with complete love, give her life for them, and yet, if she does not thoroughly know Fatima and Zaynab, who is responsible?

Neither this man nor this woman knows one line of their words. None of them have read one line about their lives. They can only recall Fatima beside her house at the moment when her side was struck and they only know Zaynab from the moment when she leaves the tents to go together the bodies of the martyrs. They only know her from the morning of the day of 'Ashura up until noon, from then on they lose her. Their awareness of Zaynab ends the day when her work and great mandate, the legacy of Husayn, just begins. Their knowledge about Zaynab ends here. Then, who is responsible?

And, thus, educated and open minded boys and girls judge the situation and say, 'What is the use of this religion of crying and lamentation? What can such a religion do?' Mat knots do all this excitement, love, lamentation and cries for Husayn, Fatima and Zaynab untie for a backwards, imprisoned nation which needs awareness and commitment to negate oppression and in order to seek freedom.

'What pain does this 'religion of remorse', these 'ancient wounds', 'historic lamentations and cursing' treat for our deprived, illiterate women who want their freedom and clear vision. Does one reach the heart of the problem by doing away with love and hatred? People are busy with feelings which passed centuries ago in foreign lands. They relate to lives passed living among strangers. They do not know persecution. They have not sensed the chains of oppression around their necks, nor the oppression which, when falling upon their human shadow, causes them pain. They have never burst in anger or become boiling hot under the remembrance of the chains of oppression which a Caliphate one day hung around the neck of a sick person.

They have not thrown up their hands and struck their daggers upon their heads until they leave their senses. They have not seen them when their consciousness returns, when their heart grows quiet, when their sins become pure, when all responsibility falls from their shoulders, when they even cheat at the scales of Divine justice and when they tamper with their deeds for the afterlife.

'As a result, when they have performed enough dirty deeds to compare with stars in the sky, foam of the waves of the sea and sands of the desert, with a small amount of surgery, by striking their dagger upon their heads, they completely change their situation and become as innocent as the moment when they were born from their mother's womb, then even God owes them something.'

If people believe that the advantage of the friendship of Ali and their faith in the sanctity of Ali will result in a chemical and acidic reaction which accords with the Qur'an:

'God will change their evil deeds into good deeds. (25:71),

in other words, the soul of this very treason which they commit in this world will change its essence in the other world and it will take the form of good deeds, then who is responsible?

If this imamate and sanctity of Ali, which has for centuries had the strength of a movement desiring justice, seeking freedom and a fighting spirit opposed to oppression and despotic institutions, and if this movement can free awakened and aware people and give them liberty, justice, chastity, independence and motion and if it could change them both socially and individually and if the movement could bring about an intellectual revolutionary leadership which fights against classes and gives life and consciousness to a society and they have not shown this, who is responsible? If the value, influence and effect of following Ali, Fatima and the Imams are transferred from this world to another world and its effect is only measured after death, then who is responsible?

If the promises and covenants of our fathers to this family have had no effect upon their thoughts, their time, their lives and society and if their sons, seeing this ineffectiveness, remain cut-off from their promises and links with this religion and this family, then, who is responsible?

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