

Forming the Generation that Strives for the Highest Ranks in the Sight of Allah (swt) Alone

RasulAllah (saw) said: **«مَنْ التَّمَسَّ رِضَاءَ اللَّهِ بِسَخَطِ النَّاسِ كَفَاهُ اللَّهُ مُؤَنَّةَ النَّاسِ، وَمَنْ التَّمَسَّ رِضَاءَ النَّاسِ بِسَخَطِ اللَّهِ وَكَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَى النَّاسِ»** **“Whoever seeks Allah's pleasure by the people's wrath, Allah will suffice him from the people. And who ever seeks the people's pleasure by Allah's wrath, Allah will entrust him to the people. And Peace be upon you.”** (Tirmidhi)

The goal that Muslims have for every one of their actions is in seeking the Pleasure (Ridwaan) of Allah (swt) and nothing else. So, whether we fast during the holy month of Ramadan, perform Salah, seek Islamic knowledge, enjoin the good and forbid the evil, rule by Islam, undertake fighting in Jihad in the Path of Allah (swt), save a human life, raise children of tender age that cannot fend for themselves, look after aging, frail and ill parents, become honest in trading, become kind to animals, trade, cultivate land or undertake industrial production, we do them all whilst seeking the pleasure of Allah (swt).

Thus, Muslims have that focused goal in seeking the Pleasure (Ridwaan) of Allah (swt) and not to please his whims and desires, according to what he perceives of worldly benefits. However, if one's action becomes corrupted between seeking the pleasure of Allah (swt) and the pleasure of people, then this act of drawing close to Allah is Haraam, inviting the Wrath of Allah (swt) upon us!

Allah (swt) said, **«الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَءَوْنَ»** **“Those who do good deeds only to be seen (of men).”** [Surah Al-Ma'un 107:6].

Imam at-Tabari commented on this ayah, **«الذين هم يراءون الناس بصلاتهم إذا صلوا، لأنهم لا يصلون رغبة، ولا رهبة من عقاب، وإنما يصلونها ليراهم المؤمنون فيظنونهم منهم»** **“Those who make Salah so that people see them when they pray, because they do not pray with a desire for a reward, nor a fear of punishment, instead they perform Salah so that the believers see them and they think about them.”**

The Prophet (saw) said in the hadith of Jandab reported by al-Bukhari, **«مَنْ سَمِعَ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ بِهِ، وَمَنْ يُرَئِي يُرَئِي اللَّهُ بِهِ»** **“If anyone works to make people hear him, Allah will make people hear him and if anybody works so that people will see him, Allah will make people see him alone.”** [Bukhari].

Riyaa' (showing off) is not piety, for piety is seeking the pleasure of Allah (swt). Riyaa' is showing off in order to please the people and achieves nothing but the anger of Allah (swt). RasulAllah (saw) said, **«يَكُونُ فِي آخِرِ الزَّمَانِ دِيْدَانُ الْفَرَّاءِ، فَمَنْ أَدْرَكَ ذَلِكَ الزَّمَانَ فَلْيَتَّعِزَّ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ، وَهُمْ الْإِنْتَسُونَ، ثُمَّ تَظْهَرُ قَالِيسُ الْبُرُودِ فَلَا يُسْتَحَى يَوْمَئِذٍ مِنَ الرِّيَاءِ، وَالْمُتَمَسِّكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِدِينِهِ كَالْقَابِضِ عَلَى جَمْرَةٍ، وَالْمُتَمَسِّكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِدِينِهِ»** **“At the end of the time, there will be the worms of (Qur'an) reciters. So, whomever lived at that time, let him seek refuge in Allah from the cursed Shaytan and from those (reciters), for they are the most rotten. Then there will appear hooded garments, and at that time they will have no shame from committing Riyaa'. The one who holds to his Deen during that period will be like the one who holds his hand on a live coal, and the one who holds to his Deen will have the reward of fifty men. The Sahaba asked: Will they be like fifty of them or us? He said: Fifty of you.”** [Al-Haakim]

Therefore, the one who yearns for a high rank with Allah (swt) cares not for how people perceive his good deeds. The one who is truly driven by Taqwa will enjoin the good and forbid the evil, regardless of whether the people are pleased with him doing so or not. He

who will speak the truth firmly and act decisively to account the people and the rulers regardless of the blame of the blamers.

So, those who seek the pleasure of Allah will not bother about the false accusations of the people for they will avoid being a people pleaser and having a fear of rocking the boat mentality which can result in the fear of being accused or stereotyped by people in society as an extremist, fundamentalist and so on. Knowing that this false negative portrayal of Muslims by the Kuffar West is constantly produced through whatever mode and means are available to it.

Then there is the status quo in general in Capitalist societies which is according to your status based on wealth, or lineage, or access to power and privilege. Such a ranking can either prevent the one who perceives himself to be of a higher status than others from listening to good advice from others or it can also prevent the one who perceives himself of a lesser status from accounting others for their wrongs.

Allah (swt) said, ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَاهُمْ﴾ **“O mankind, truly We have created you from male and female and made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another. Truly, the most honourable of you with Allah are those with the most Taqwa. Truly, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.”** [Al-Hujurat 49:13]

Thus, the believer discards worldly ambitions, and fixes his gaze firmly on seeking the pleasure of Allah (swt) and the Akhirah, establishing his relations based on Islam, without consideration of lineage or wealth.

RasulAllah (saw) said, ﴿إِنَّ مِنْ عِبَادِ اللَّهِ لَأُنَاسًا مَا هُمْ بِأَنْبِيَاءَ وَلَا شُهَدَاءَ يَغِيظُهُمُ الْاَنْبِيَاءُ وَالشُّهَدَاءُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ بِمَكَانِهِمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى﴾ قَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ تُخَيِّرُنَا مَنْ هُمْ؟ قَالَ: «هُمْ قَوْمٌ تَحَابُّوا بِرُوحِ اللَّهِ عَلَىٰ غَيْرِ أَرْحَامٍ بَيْنَهُمْ وَلَا أَمْوَالٍ يَتَعَاطَوْنَهَا فَوَاللَّهِ إِنَّ وُجُوهُهُمْ لَنُورٌ وَإِنَّهُمْ عَلَىٰ نُورٍ لَا يَخَافُونَ إِذَا خَافَ النَّاسُ وَلَا يَحْزَنُونَ إِذَا حَزَنَ النَّاسُ وَقَرَأَ هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ ﴿أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ﴾» **“There are people from the servants of Allah who are neither Prophets nor Shuhadaa – the Prophets and Shuhadaa will envy them on the Day of Resurrection for their status with Allah (swt). The Sahaba asked: Tell us, O Messenger of Allah, who are they? He replied: They are people who love one another for the spirit of Allah (meaning, the Qur’an) without having any mutual kinship or exchange of property. I swear by Allah, their faces will glow and they will be sitting on thrones of light. They will have no fear (on that Day) when the people will be afraid, and they will not grieve (on that Day) when the people will grieve.”** Then he (saw) recited the verse: **“Truly, the Awliyaa’ (allies/friends) of Allah will not fear, nor shall they grieve.”** [Abu Dawud]

Therefore, even though such believers are not better than the Prophets or the Shuhadaa, they will have such honour that even the Prophets and the Shuhadaa will acknowledge their high rank. So, let each believer play his part during this Blessed month of Ramadan, and in the many months and years ahead, in laying the firm foundation for a new era of the rise of Islam, forming the generation that strives for the highest ranks in the sight of Allah (swt) Alone.

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