

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allāh, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Why Do You Condemn What Happened in Paris but You Are Silent About Assad and Palestine?

This is a question that was posed to me by some brothers whom I perceive to be sincere and Allāh knows what the hearts conceal. It has also been raised by others on the Internet who clearly have hidden agendas in posing such questions and Allāh knows best. Allāh, the Most High said:

﴿ وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا ﴾ (36)

And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart - about all those [one] will be questioned. [Al-Isrā: 36]

The following points will help to answer this question:

1. There is not a Muslim nor an impartial non-Muslim who does not acknowledge that the maltreatment of the Palestinian people or the Syrians is wrong and unacceptable. As for what is taking place in Palestine, large numbers of Jews acknowledge this and speak out against it openly. Thus, it is not necessary to point out something to Muslims that they already know. Actions of injustice can never be convincingly presented as being beneficial, good or sanctioned by Islām and no Muslim will ever be convinced that such actions are acceptable.
2. On the other hand, with respect to ISIS, Qaeda and their offshoots, they ascribe to Islam and attempt to justify their evil actions through texts of the Quran and Prophetic traditions. Therefore, from this angle they are a greater danger to Islam and the Muslims because they are able to ascribe their evil ways to Islām itself. Because the purity and authenticity of Islamic teachings is the very basis upon which the well-being and safety of Muslims is tied to, the deeply-grounded scholars of the Muslims have recognized that repelling their evil from Islām and the Muslims is more severely required than repelling worldly, physical harms.

Ibn Qudāmah said:

“If the innovator does not disbelieve on account of his innovation, then no doubt the affair between him and Allāh is not as severe as that of the disbeliever. However, as it pertains to criticism of the innovator, then rebuke of him is more severe than that of the disbeliever. This is because the evil of the disbeliever does not affect others¹, as no attention is given to his speech. In opposition to the innovator who invites to his innovation, because he claims that what he is calling to is the truth. Therefore, [the innovator] is a reason for the misguidance of the creation and his evil directly affects the Muslims. So publicly displaying enmity towards him, boycotting him, hating him, humiliating him, rebuking him and warning against him, because of his innovation, is more severely (required).”²

3. Furthermore, speaking about world affairs and engrossing people in them is a central component of the methodology of the Muslim Brotherhood. They use political events to stir the emotions of the Muslims and consequently use them as a recruiting tool to ensnare people because they rely upon large numbers of people to attain their objectives. They do not actually teach Muslims the correct creed by which they would be able to comprehend why these affairs take place and how they are related to Allāh’s names and attributes, His divine decree and preordainment, and His wisdom and justice.

Al-Qaeda and ISIS also employ this type of reasoning to make Muslims feel guilty about what they view as their apathy towards the plight of the Ummah, which is a ploy to give the extremists moral and religious supremacy. If this is conceded, then it can lead the apologetic Muslim down a dangerous path. Seeking to atone for his indifference, a Muslim who has been convinced by this rhetoric can be easily manipulated into perpetrating actions which oppose Islām and comprise injustice.

Given the above, the following question then arises: What should a Muslim living in non-Muslim countries do when the Muslims are in such a predicament?

﴿لَا تُكَلِّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا﴾

“No person shall have a burden laid on him greater than he can bear.” [Al-Baqarah: 233]

¹Meaning, they cannot directly affect the principles and practices of the religion of Islam, as how many Muslims would listen to a non-Muslim define their faith?

² *Mukhtaṣar Minhāj al-Qāsidīn*, p. 98.

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymīyah answered this question when he spoke of those who are unable to establish justice through the instruments of rulership and a legitimate Jihād³ in which the required conditions are fulfilled and barriers are removed. He said:

“...they implement that which they are able from sincere advice with their hearts, supplicating for the [wellbeing of the] Ummah (Muslim nation) and loving good and its people –and they implement what they are able of good– then they will not be brought to account for what they are incapable of.”⁴

If this is the advice for someone living in the land of the Muslims, then what about Muslim minorities living in the West amongst non-Muslims? Guidance for this situation can be taken from the conduct of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions towards the harm they faced in both Makkah and Madinah.

There comes in the Ṣaḥīḥ of Imām al-Bukhārī upon the authority of Usāmah b. Zayd:

“For the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions used to forgive the pagans and the people of Scripture, as Allah had ordered them; and they used to be patient with their harm. Allāh, the Most High, said:

﴿وَلَسْمَعْتُمْ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا أَذًى كَثِيرًا وَإِن

نَصَبْتُمْ وَأَنَّ تَقْتُلُوا فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ﴿١٨٦﴾

“And you shall certainly hear much that will grieve you from those who received the Scripture before you and from the pagans.” [Āl-‘Imrān: 186]

³ One of the special manifestations of “Jihād” is a just, conventional war which is waged in order to repel aggression or to combat and remove injustice. All nations assume the right to wage war for these reasons, and “Jihād” in this context is instituted islamically for that purpose. However, this "Jihād" is regulated and has strict conditions and cannot be announced and waged haphazardly by individuals, vigilantes or groups.

From its main conditions is that it is waged under a ruler, in the presence of clear military leadership (and not with chaos and disarray), except in the case of a sudden attack by an enemy where self-defense is sanctioned immediately without recourse to the ruler of the state; and this scenario also has guidelines and rulings with affairs ultimately being referred back to the ruler.

During the 20th century, this orthodox, classical understanding of “Jihād” was distorted through the ideas of numerous thinkers who wished to restore the Islamic Caliphate, wrongly treating it to be the ultimate goal of Islam. They all operated on the premise that all Muslims states are apostate regimes, and will remain so until they establish a Caliphate.

⁴ *Al-Ta’līq ‘Ala al-Siyāsah al-Shar‘īyah*, p. 462.

There are many proofs like this in the *Sīrah*. On one occasion, the Prophet (ﷺ) witnessed Yāsir’s family being persecuted in Makkah –and some were actually killed– and he consoled them by saying:

“Be patient, O family of Yāsir, for verily your promise is Paradise.”⁵

4. For the above reason, persistently talking about these issues and bombarding the Muslims with these affairs, which they hear on the news and read in the newspapers, is a distraction from the true foundations of rectification. It charges them up emotionally, gets them angry and at the end -because they are not able to regulate these emotions and feelings with sound knowledge, the correct methodologies for reform and firm unwavering faith in Allāh’s names, attributes, His divine decree and ordainment and His wisdom and justice - they are left as prey for vultures.
5. Finally, we deplore all forms of oppression, whether it is committed against Muslims or non-Muslims and the power of supplication - for the one who believes firmly in the truthfulness of the Prophet (ﷺ) - is never to be belittled.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Fear the supplication of the oppressed, even if it is a non-Muslim, for verily there is no barrier between it and Allāh.”⁶

And we ask Allāh to grant the Muslims relief and recompense them for their patience and suffering; we also ask Allāh to halt the oppression against them.

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⁵ *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Shaykh al-Albānī declared it *Ṣaḥīḥ* in his notes upon *Fiqh al-Sīrah*, p. 103.

⁶ *Al-Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah* (no. 767).