Where are we heading to?

We are in the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century. In spite of all the turmoil in the world, and in spite of all that the Muslim ummah is going through, Muslims remain optimistic that the present century is the century of Islam in-sha’Allah.

Thanks to science and technology, the world has become a global village. The TV, internet, and print media help news and views to be disseminated instantly from anywhere to anywhere. Muslims are very much a part of this world and not isolated from the events and developments taking place around the world, whether in countries of the Muslim World or elsewhere.

Muslims hold sacred the universal message of Islam conveyed by God’s universal Messenger. “Say, ‘O people, I am God’s messenger to you all’” (al-A’raf, 7:158). God sent him as a mercy to all. “We have only sent you as a mercy to all the worlds” (al-Anbiya’, 21:107). It is incumbent upon Muslims to convey the message of Islam to the entire humankind. It is an amanah (trust) that has to be fulfilled. In his farewell sermon, when the Prophet (SAW) asked his audience of over a hundred thousand whether he had duly conveyed God’s message to them, they unanimously cried out that indeed he had. The Prophet (SAW) then advised those present to spread the message to those not present. Therefore, the onus of fulfilling the trust by spreading the message of Islam will remain on Muslims till the end of times.

The forces of evil never give up their vicious ways; rather they fight tooth and nail to subdue and subjugate the forces of good. Throughout history, Muslims who have tried to spread the message of Islam in letter and spirit have always been persecuted by tyrants and oppressive powers. They are helped by their collaborators who may even include some treacherous Muslims, who for worldly gains become agents to Satan and his forces. In face of such adversity, Allah (SWT) teaches us to be patient and to stand up for the truth without fear of being blamed by those who blame. “O you who believe, be patient and call for patience, and bond together and revere God that you may succeed” (Aal Imran, 3:200). “…They strive in the cause of God and do not fear to be blamed by those who blame” (al-Ma’idah, 5:54).

Allah (SWT) tells us not to give in to inequity and not to be apologetic, but to keep on the struggle (jihad) against disbelievers with the Qur’an. “So do not give in to the disbelievers: strive hard against them with this Qur’an” (al-Furqan, 25:52). Our weapon against satanic forces and ruthless regimes is the Qur’an. True believers are always mindful of Allah (SWT). They have the hereafter (akhirah) uppermost in their minds. This motivates them to become resolute and dauntless in spreading the truth even if it costs them their lives.

Let us recall the conversation of Rustum, the commander of the Persian army and Rabī’ ibn ‘Amir, an ordinary soldier of the Muslim army. This story is documented in the archives of history. Rustum asked Rabī’ through an interpreter, “What is your object in waging war against us?” Rabī’ replied, “God sent us to get people out of en-
slaving one another, into worshipping equally the one God, out of hard and narrow living into an easier and wider one, out of injustice of the absolute power of the ruler into the justice of Islam.”

Indeed the world with all its resources and spaciousness has literally shrunk upon its inhabitants because of the injustice, exploitation, and wicked designs of forces of evil. The Muslim ummah has been raised to serve humanity, to free people from the shackles of oppression, and to establish justice on earth through promoting good and forbidding evil. “You are the best nation ever to be produced before mankind” (Aal Imran, 3:110).

Forbidding evil is not easy. The efforts of those who do this are countered in many ways that include persecution, torture, and killing. This is exactly what many of our scholars, teachers, and activists went through, and this is exactly what many of them are going through now. But the resolve of the true believers in spreading the message and light of Islam will never be dampened, because ultimately the truth has to triumph and prevail. This is the will of Allah (SWT). “They try to extinguish God’s light with their mouths, but God insists on bringing His light to its fullness, even if the disbelievers hate it” (al-Tawbah, 9:32).

The evil designs of the wicked that wage war against Allah (SWT) begin to turn against them and work against them. We have seen this before and we are witnessing it now, especially since 2001. We have to understand our position and act with patience and prudence without adopting any means that transgress the rules of reason and revelation. No matter what happens, falsehood is bound to vanish and truth has to prevail. “Say: Truth has come and falsehood has vanished. Indeed, falsehood is bound to vanish” (al-Isra’, 17:81).

Muslims should join those people of conscience who have vehemently condemned the recent assassination of two U.S. citizens—Anwar al-Awlaki and Samir Khan in Yemen. We believe that this action that was carried out by our government and approved by our President is in clear violation of the Fifth Amendment that states, “No one shall be deprived …of life, liberty or property without due process of law.” It goes without saying that we do not subscribe to the militant views or ideology of violence preached or practiced by anyone, Muslim or non-Muslim. However, the target killing of human beings without due process of law is a precedence that does not augur well for our country, and the principles upon which it was built.

The shift of policy of capturing suspects during the Bush administration to the policy of assassinating them in the Obama administration is a step in the wrong direction. America is swerving away from the very principles of justice that once made it hold its head high.

We offer our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families, and pray for justice and peace to prevail.

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