Fard Kifaya – Part 2M

Brothers and sisters in Islam

A few weeks ago we had a Khutba about understanding our duty towards Islam and understanding our role in this religion. We mentioned the Prophet (pbuh)'s Hadith (PBUH) "whom so ever Allah (swt) wills for him a good life and guides him to goodness, Allah (swt) will make him to understand and master the understanding of ***religion*** (من يرد الله به خيرا، يفقهه في الدين)."

It is relevant that we examine the meaning of the word ***religion*** here. ***Religion*** here is not just the laws and regulations of practicing the ritualistic worships of Islam. It is not just related to understanding the rules for Salah or the rules for fasting; it goes far beyond.

The ***Religion*** of Islam is a way of life. It is a system of beliefs, values, and rules that we enact, live by, and live in every moment of our lives and every breath we take. To live this life as Muslims we need to understand how we can do that in the best of ways and experience Islam every instant.

Last week we looked at the mandatory commands from Allah (swt) to us and recognized that mandatory things are divided into two types: individual mandatory obligations (فرض عين) and what scholars refer to as sufficiency obligations (فرض كفاية) .

Individual obligations are those which are mandatory for each one of us to perform, e.g. mandatory worships, mandatory being honest, mandatory being good to our parents, and all other mandatory things that are individual obligations. However, sufficiency obligations are used to refer to a category of obligations that need to be met by some and not necessarily all. In other words, if some people meet that obligation then the rest of the community is released from that obligation. A famous example of sufficiency obligations is the funeral prayer (صلاة الجنازة).

To better understand the sufficiently obligation, we studied it more carefully to recognize that if that obligation is not met by anyone then everyone in the group will carry the guilt and the burden of not having that obligation met. So if it is not met it becomes an obligation for everyone to ensure that this obligation is met. Fard Kifaya in Arabic the Arabic term for that. So it is a group obligation, when everyone says other people will do it and no one does it then everyone is guilty of not meeting that requirement.

As we keep all this in mind, let us now discuss our mission in this earth as Muslims, and we do have a mission. Our mission is to get people, starting with ourselves, out of worshiping humans into worshiping Allah (swt); we are commissioned to make people live in the justice of Islam as opposed to the injustice of other religions; and we are commissioned to take people out of the narrow vision that they put themselves in and into the wider scope that Islam makes available to all of us.

So we have a mission. We are an Ummah with a mission. We are not just an Ummah that works hard to feed itself and satisfy its own pleasures. We are not commissioned to just bring food to the table to eat and enjoy life. We are an Ummah that has a mission of spreading the knowledge: the true knowledge of Islam that Allah (swt) has given to us. We have a mission to make available to all the light of the Islamic belief (إيمان); the

light that we all see and is in our hearts and every single one of us knows and recognizes first hand the beauty, strength, and magnitude of that light.

As we look at other belief systems and other ideologies we just recognize that we have the true knowledge in Islam and we look down upon the other ideologies as inferior and corrupt. We do have the truth in our hands and our mission is to spread it.

So we do have a mission, and that mission can't be spread without a strong Ummah; an Ummah that has its weight and respect in this world, an Ummah that is looked up to rather than down at, and Ummah that understands its mission and undertakes its full responsibilities with strength, confidence, and with full energy.

Now, if we put all these pieces together, and if we truly understand our duty in this life as Muslims, then the conclusion is we have a serious responsibility; a serious Fard Kifaya has not been fulfilled. The Fard Kifaya of spreading the light of Islam has not been fulfilled and the collective effort of our Ummah in this regard is inadequate. We also know that there are lots of enemies out there that are trying to impede that mission.

We have a beautiful model of the early Muslims and how they fulfilled their mission in availing Islam to humanity. We have a beautiful model of the many centuries of Islamic progress that led to its vast spread all over the world; and everyone acknowledges that, not just us.

When you put all these pieces together we know that there is a big mission that falls on our shoulders; each one of us has a responsibility. When you sit down and examine the whole picture, you will recognize that we need to get out of narrowing the domain of our responsibility of our own selves, our own families, our own jobs, our own earnings to the bigger picture, the bigger responsibility because we will all share the guilt if the mission is not fulfilled.

We are not to sit around waiting for some miracle to happen somewhere with someone else waking up and realizing the importance of the mission and carrying the tasks all on their own because we would be taking the chance that if they fail to meet the obligation, then we all share that failure and we all share the guilt before Allah (swt) and before ourselves.

Moreover, and as Muslims, we should be the elite. We have to be the elite, we have to be in the leadership, and we have to be the best in whatever it is. We have to be the best in knowledge, we have to be the best in trade, we have to be the best in social aspects, we have to be the best politically and economically, and we have to be the best in military power, because that's the only way that the mission can get accomplished, because that way others will look up to you and try to follow and imitate you.

Many people think that we can spread Islam by going around and knocking on doors and inviting people to Islam. Well, the few people what would open the doors take a look at you as they look at the status of the Islamic Ummah and how many of them would respond; a very inefficient approach. Our efficiency can go much higher if we were an Ummah to look up to. We would have the same efficiency that the West is using to penetrate our communities and spread its ideology in our societies. With their military and economic might, they don't have to do much; they can easily dazzle our young and persuade our old that they have the right approach to life. As a result, our people follow them blindly and chase their lifestyle and even kill themselves as they work hard to achieve it.

So, as members of the Islamic Ummah, we need to get serious about our responsibilities. It is no longer Fard Kifaya that we can rely on others to achieve for us. Each one of us has the ability to make a difference but we are not using or utilizing these resources effectively or at all.

Let us look at a simple fact, if you have an input there must be an output, and each one of us receives an input. We receive lots of bounties from Allah (swt), we breathe; that's an input. We eat, we have homes that shelter us, we are clothed, and we have means of transportation. We have all these and many other conveniences of life and we have all these resources; these are all inputs. Each one of us asks himself or herself what's my output? What have I produced? If I die today what have I produced? What have I left behind? To return all these favors those were given to me. What is my output in return of all these resources and all this consumption that I have had all these years of my life?

People claim that they are worshipping Allah (swt) and that they are good Muslims, they pray, they read Quran that's all input. Your prayer is an input, don't consider prayer as an output, because if it is an output, who is the beneficiary of that? You pray to Allah (swt). Is Allah (swt) the beneficiary to your prayer? We know that Allah (swt) is in no need for any of the things that we do. The only beneficiary of your prayers is yourself so it is still an input. You read Quran, you are gaining knowledge; that is an input. Where is the output? ask yourself. I ask myself the same question all the time: what have I produced? what am I producing now? What is my output?

We cannot live our lives just as consumers; we have to produce, and we have to produce in quality because our input is quality. Allah (swt) gives us quality, if you look at what you have, its all quality. And you have to produce in the same proportion to that input otherwise you are a very inefficient system: as simple as that, it is a law of physics.

So, each one of us, think about your inputs; for each one of you who is a student, parents are paying, governments are paying, resources are dedicated in many ways for your learning, that's all input, that's all consumption, where does it go? Are you producing in the same proportion as the resources that have been allocated to you? Are you taking your duties as a student with the sincerity and seriousness that is proportional to the amount of money, the amount of organization, the amount of manpower, and all the resources that have been dedicated for your education? Ask yourself.

You as a merchant, as a professional, as an employee, etc., you earn money, you get fame, you get position in society, etc. These are all inputs. What do you do with them? Where's your output? Even as a retired person, you received ample inputs in the past and you still receive more, you harvest the benefits of your past inputs and you still breathe and you still eat and you still have your position in society. What is your output in return?

In Islam, there is no such thing as retirement where you stop producing; as long as you have an input, you have to produce. Retirement age is the time of your life that you have the most wisdom and the most seniority. This is the peak of your career, the peak of your life, that's where you produce the most knowledge, social aspects, organization, wisdom that can be shared with others. You must produce, in whichever way you can find to produce, you have to produce: volunteer, help, write, speak, and educate. There are so many forms of output. Allah (swt) did not just produce one form for us; He made many numerous forms of production and for output that each one can find his or her

own comfort where they can be the most efficient and most productive. Output has to be proportional to the input and the input is quality and the input is abundant. Even those who claim that they have limited input, they still receive an input. Not as much as others but much more than many others as well.

Producing is our contribution to the wealth of our Ummah and to its strength. Each one of us in their own ways should produce as part of fulfilling the Fard Kifaya. Meeting the individual obligations of Fard Ain is not enough. It is just like studying for a certain degree and thinking that it is enough to complete the core courses. You can't graduate with core courses only; you also need to undertake elective courses. Each student in that degree program takes the elective courses that are most suitable for their interests, skills, and abilities. That way, we have a complete set of skills to cover the need in that profession as distributed in the different students graduating with different sets of electives and disciplines.

So is the case for us Muslims, the core is our Fard Ain, that we are all committed to. However, we can achieve our status as an Islamic Ummah without each one of us assuming as set of Fard Kifayas to commit to and to achieve. The collective commitment of the two Fard Ain and Fard Kifaya qualifies us to graduate with the degree of a successful Ummah.

Allah (swt) opened all these doors for us so we can see around us and find ways to be productive and to be useful and find ways to lead in our fields and even in more than one field. How can we lead in more than one field? How can a doctor lead in engineering? How can an engineer lead in social sciences? How can an economist lead in political sciences? You simply do not just confine yourself to one area. No mature person spends all of his/her life learning a narrow line of knowledge while ignoring all others. Such a person would not be a useful member of the society. In addition to your main field of study and knowledge, you need to learn and gain expertise in other fields. One example is that you need to learn communication skills so you can talk and communicate with others; explain your self as well as be able to understand them, negotiate and debate ideas and concepts, lobby and recruit others to your point of view.

So, in your field and outside your field you have to be productive, we have to get out of the narrow thinking that I am a carpenter, I cannot think about anything but wood and nails; no, absolutely not. We examined the earlier Muslims and we discovered Ibn Rushd excelled in Islamic theology, Islamic law, Mathematics, Medicine, and Philosophy, while Al-Khwārizmī was a mathematician, astronomer, astrologer and geographer. People understood the multidisciplinary nature of this life, we are rediscovering that nowadays and as Muslims we are supposed to be the ones at the forefront of discovering that because we need it the most. It was not seeded in our upbringing, we were not brought up to appreciate this kind of things and we need to spend effort in doing that.

It is very important to constantly and every moment of our lives to be mindful of what our obligations are, both Ain and Kifaya. It is very critical that we constantly ask the question: what is my output because I know that there is an input. This is vital because understanding our role is part of understanding our religion. As you see, it takes a comprehensive understanding of our religion and our roles as Muslims to enable us to get out of the narrow visions and limited and confined approach to life to the wide and broad scope made available to us by Islam. With proper understanding comes proper implementation and hence success; success in this life and in the hereafter. Success in this life means a strong and powerful Islamic Ummah that plays the lead role in this world and demonstrates the true image of Islam to the rest of humanity. A strong

Islamic Ummah that can lead the blind to the light, the ignorant to knowledge, and the misled to the truth. A strong Islamic Ummah that can enforce and maintain peace on earth.

It is critically important to be reminded that on the Day of Judgment we will be questioned by Allah (swt). The Hadith of the Prophet (pbuh) tells us that the very first things that we will be questioned about on the Day of Judgment are four things; the youth that Allah (swt) has given to us, the prime years of our physical fitness, health, and energy, what have we done with it? (Input/output), how have you consumed your youth? He gave us life, what have we done with our years of life? (Input/output), He gave us wealth, how did you earn it? Did we earn it the Halal way, and how did you spend it? (Input/output), and then the last one, He gave us knowledge, how did you use it? It is all questioning whether our output was in return for His Input.

Are we going to wait to get the answer on the Day of Judgment or are we going to try and figure it out now? Each one of us has to find the answer to these four questions. And when you think about, these are the four most critical inputs and outputs that any human being goes through, youth, age, wealth, and knowledge. We do get plenty of inputs in these four areas. So, what is our output in return?