

Until when will the silence remain upon the desecration of the sanctities of Allah in Lebanon?

Critical times pass over the Islamic Ummah: hardship in life, apprehension upon the outcome, threats from all directions, wars, big and small, desecrations and savage pursuits from the foreign invader and from his agents, the rulers of the Muslim lands. From East to West the Ummah faces weakness, disgrace and humiliation; fragmentation, division and loss; Palestine humiliated, Iraq torn, Afghanistan in agony from the yoke of the invader and his savagery and from wars that do not end; Sudan hit with factional fighting and civil wars; the Ummah as a whole afflicted with the lashes of the whip of oppression, poverty and disease which covers the Muslim lands, from Morocco in the West to Indonesia in the East.

As for the people of Lebanon, they too have been afflicted by what has afflicted their brothers around the Islamic world. They are yet on the brink of moving out of one calamity that they return and fall into another worse than it. Wars followed by wars; hatred and tribulations have covered the land from end to end. The story of Lebanon is one of disquiet, migration, destruction and loss.

In the middle of all this dust and fog, the sons of the Muslim Ummah remain clutching to their *deen*, strong and proud due to their *iman*; never content, regardless of the justifications and excuses, that the sanctities of Allah be desecrated; angered when the symbols of Islam are disgraced and always ready to rise up in support of them. Thus the Ummah rose the day the Qur'an was disgraced in Guantanamo, and it rose the day its Prophet (saw) was sought to be disgraced in the Danish newspapers, and it rose the day the Pope, Benedict XVI, attacked the Prophet of Islam (saw) in the September of last year when he said, "Show me just what Muhammad brought that was new and there you will find things only evil and inhuman..."

Further yet is what would make one upset: two weeks ago, Patriarch (of Lebanon) Nasrullah Peter Sfeir in his sermon on the last Sunday of September and on his return from the Vatican took up the subject of the Laws of Islam related to the woman, saying, "The Quran speaks of the superiority of men over women and his authority over her...and this inferior status of the woman finds practical application in family rights". He then discussed in detail some of the laws of the Shari'ah, highlighting that the Islamic Shari'ah discriminated between man and woman, reaching his conclusion that, "this understanding of marriage is the subject of debate" and that there was development and reformation on the understanding of marriage in Tunisia. He went on to say, "However, the greater portion of the Islamic countries have not ceased upholding the ancient Islamic Shari'ah, and the road to change is still long"!

We ask the Patriarch: why chose to discuss this subject in his 'Sunday sermon' in front of the general public? Is there not in this an incitement of the Muslims? Does he not consider this as "effecting sectarian feeling"? Why the insinuation, nay, why the declaration that the status of the woman in Islam is one of inferiority, and that the laws of the Shari'ah are ancient, and that the road to change is long?! Is there not in this the suggestion that the laws of Islam are outdated and backward and thus in need of reform and development?!

Before the Patriarch finished his sermon, he touched on the topic of 'fundamentalism' indicating that many considered it a deviation from the true Islam. He said, "The Muslims consider that religion and State are one matter, whereas the Christians do not consider the Church and State as one matter. From this understanding branch out many detailed issues relating to fundamentalism which in the eyes of many is a deviation with respect to true Islam." We ask the Patriarch again: why raise the topic of 'fundamentalism' and that it is 'a deviation from the true Islam' in front of the general public in the 'Sunday sermon'?! Are not those who lead the war against what they call 'fundamentalism and extremism' the colonialist Western states, headed by America?!

As for that which is graver and worse, it is what occurred in the last ten days of Ramadan, the days of the revelation of the Qur'an, just a few days before Eid; on the 22nd of Ramadan to be specific, corresponding with the 4th of October, that which no one would think would occur in our lands, that which one would think would only occur at the hands of the disbelieving foreigner, occurred in 'Rumiyah Central Prison' where the Noble Qur'an was torn and desecrated, and books of the Shari'ah were torn, in front of some of the prisoners.

After some of the families of some of the prisoners reached the Rumiya prison to meet their sons who had been detained from about 7 months without trial, they were informed, to their surprise, of some of their sons having been abused and mistreated inside the prison in what is known as the 'Islamic wing of the building'. The height of the shocking conduct reached the desecration of the Noble Qur'an. This heinous crime was accompanied by the humiliating of the families also as they came to visit their relatives, over and above the mistreatment of the prisoners which included verbal abuse and cursing of their honours and sanctities as well as the shaving of their beards by force.

When the families found out about the reality of the treatment of their sons and of the Qur'an they expressed their anger and condemnation, and were angered at being prevented from meeting their sons as per the usual manner of meeting. At this the voices of the prisoners rose in *takbeer* and protest, and in turn the warden of the prison sought support from the security forces accompanied by ambulance vehicles to enter building 'B' of the prison. They started their bloody actions to quell the situation resulting in significant wounds to the prisoners who were then transported by the ambulances. All of this occurred in front of the families who came to visit their sons. In the following week the families were prevented altogether from visiting and this only increased their fear and anxiety about the condition of their sons.

This is the latest incident in the chain of savage occurrences which resemble what occurred in Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib. It shows the extent to which the audacity, nay the insolence has reached in the war on Islam Muslims in Lebanon being fought by proxy on behalf of America. It also exposes those with black hearts.

We place these facts in front of the public so that the Muslims in this land may realise and carry their responsibilities in light of what has occurred and what continues to occur, whether in be in Rumiya prison or in Yarzah prison, where the wardens have reached the apex of audacity and insolence against the oppressed slaves of Allah.

O Muslims,

What has occurred touches your belief, so it is for you to rise to the defence of your Lord's Book and to the removal of the oppression upon the youth of your Ummah, and it is for you to take an honourable stance in rising up on your feet in defence of your *deen*, to account those who walk in the path of your enemy and to seize the hand of every *iblis* who desecrates your sanctities. Do not fear in your defence of the sanctities of Allah the reproach or blame of those who reproach. Allah (swt) says,

[الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ]

"Those to whom the people said, 'Indeed the people have gathered against you, so fear them' but this (only) increased them in iman and they replied, 'Allah suffices us and He is best disposer of affairs'" ('Aal-Imran: 173).

Thus we turn toward the various groups, Islamic movements, scholars and to those of the politicians who are sincerely concerned about the affairs of the people to say to them: it is upon your shoulders to account all those responsible for what have occurred and what continues to occur, irrespective of those with the government and those in opposition outside the government. It is upon you to hasten in seeking to achieve the truth, and to stop the transgressions against the dignities of the people and their sanctities and bodies, and to work with all of what you have being given of power to release those imprisoned with right immediately, and to account the wardens of the prisons of Lebanon. You must also correct the conditions of these prisons which at present are not suitable for animals let only human beings. The number of casualties, according to human rights organisations, has reached a frightening level, such that in Rumiya prison alone ten people were killed in the last year, three of whom were killed in the month of September alone. It is upon you to initiate immediately work to expose all those responsible and those involved in these criminal actions, and to ensure that such people are punished severely according to their grave crimes. These are of those people about whom the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, **"Two types of people from the people of the Fire I have not (yet) seen: (one of them) a people with whom are whips like the tails of cows with which they hit people..."** and he (saw) said in regards to them, **"Allah torments those who torture people in the world."**