



Walaa (Loyalty)

It was the case with the Arabs before Islam that the individual would be brought up in a tribe that protected his money, his life, and his honor such that the individual became proud of his tribe. This pride would remain with the individual, whether his tribe was doing right or wrong. It caused the individual to have his/her loyalty to the tribe, and it became a norm for the society to be loyal primarily to one's race and tribe. Consequently, it became the source of the convictions and the concepts about life that the society and its individuals carried and adhered to.

Islam, however, made the WALAA to the Islamic Aqeedah. This loyalty (WALAA) was used in the Qur'an to mean: To protect; to follow and submit completely with acceptance and love. It made the Aqeedah the basis from which the convictions and concepts about life emanated. It completely revolutionized the concept of loyalty in the hearts and minds of all who entered Islam, as seen in the speech of the Creator, when Allah (swt) says,

"O you who believe, do not take your fathers and brothers as allies if they chose disbelief over Iman, and whoever does this, they are evil doers." [At Tauba: 23]

"You will never find any people who believe in Allah and the last day loving those opposed to Allah and His Messenger, even though they be their fathers, sons, or their brothers, or their tribe." [Mujadilah: 22]

When Muhammad (saaw) became a Prophet (saaw), he invited people from the Meccan society to Islam. This invitation was extended to all people in the society without any restriction to any specific group, tribe, or race. Those who responded to this call became a part of his (saaw) group.

This initial group, who we affectionately call the Sahabah (raa), included Bilal, a black man from Ethiopia; Suhayb, a white man from Rome; Salman, a Persian slave; Ali, Hamza, Abu Bakr and Uthman, all from the high class or elite of Mecca; and Ammar bin Yassir and Ibn Mas'ud, from the common class of Mecca.

Whereas before Islam, there would have been tribal and racial barriers between the members of such a group, through Islam, these barriers were eliminated, and the loyalty or WALAA was only to Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saaw) and to Islam. This revolutionary understanding of WALAA gave the Muslims the true sense of freedom and liberty. They were liberated from their whims, wishes, color, tribe, and social class, and would submit only to Allah (swt).

The loyalty to Allah (swt) alone was not just the characteristic of a select few who helped Muhammad (saaw) in his dawa, but rather was a characteristic that was transferred to the entire society upon establishment of the Islamic State.

This is because the State was established with the Islamic Aqeedah as its basis. This resulted in a society that reflected in all of its aspect the loyalty to Allah (swt) through the observance of the halal and the haram and the fulfillment of all the individual and collective obligations that Allah (swt) gave them.

As a consequence of this clear vision of where the individual's and the State's loyalty lies, the Islamic State embarked on a campaign to carry Islam to the whole world. This led to the annexation of lands as diverse as Iraq, Egypt, Yemen, and the heart of the Africa. Because the Islamic State was carrying a Message to these lands, the basis of which is loyalty to the one Creator, Allah (swt), it was quickly able to melt the differences between these various groups without resistance from them.

Islam caused them to shift their loyalties and alliances towards its Aqeedah, away from the kings, races, philosophies, and lands, to the extent that these newcomers started learning Islam even better than some of the Arabs who carried it to them. People like Imam Bukhari, Imam Muslim, and Salahuddeen Al Ayubi, were of non-Arab descent and made phenomenal contributions to the Islam. They adopted the Islamic Aqeedah, learned Islam, and then worked wholeheartedly to understand and implement ALL the rules of Islam.

Had nationalism, racism, or social class served as a reference in the Islamic State and its society, Salahuddeen Al-Ayubi, of Kurdish origin, would never have worked as hard as he did to liberate Jerusalem from the European Crusaders.

Had the Sahabah (raa) focused on themselves, their race, their tribe, or their color, and had they not expended all their efforts towards the dominance of Islam, Islam would not have been established. With the adoption of the Islamic Aqeedah, people no longer remained as Arabs, Whites, or Blacks. They refused to remain as slaves to these false masters; rather, they relied on and submitted to the real Master, Allah (swt), the Highly Exalted.

Nowadays, when we look to the Muslim Ummah at large, we find it separated along the lines of a large number of national entities, each observing and preserving its own boundaries and preserving loyalty to these boundaries. We find the Muslims having their loyalty to false gods such as color, race, tribe, and the artificial political borders that divide our Ummah. Some still think of themselves as Arab, Pakistani, Indian, or African American.

Carrying labels such as Arab, Pakistani, Black, or White means that we have not yet eliminated our differences the way that Islam eliminated the differences of the Muslims before.

This resistance contaminates our allegiance and loyalty to Allah (swt) alone. It robs us of true freedom and liberty and places us under a new form of slavery. One which is far worse than the slavery which existed in the plantations, or in the British occupation of the Muslim mind-set in the sub-continent, or in the French colonies in North Africa. Those who were enslaved then, knew that they were slaves and worked to liberate themselves.

However, in today's slavery, we often don't even recognize our condition and turn our backs to any efforts at liberation. Today, all of humanity is suffering under this slavery. The Muslim Ummah is the only one that can lead mankind out of this misery. To do this, it must once again establish its loyalty (WALAA) to Allah (swt) alone, submit only to Him (swt), and reject, refuse, and disassociate itself from racism and nationalism. Then, and only then, will humankind come to know the true nature of freedom and liberty.