

Ideal Human in the Thoughts of Rumi, Iqbal and Gülen

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Today I would like to express my opinions about what the characteristics of Ideal Human (Insan-i kamil) in the thoughts of Mawlana and Fethullah Gülen are. Actually being the student of Fethullah Gülen since my childhood, I will emphasize on the thoughts of Fethullah Gülen, touch a little bit upon Mawlana's thoughts and learn much about Iqbal from Pakistani colleagues.

Mawlana Rumi is one of the many scholars and spiritual leaders, where both Iqbal and Gülen got inspired from.

About 700 years ago in Anatolia, present day Konya, Turkey, spiritual master and poet Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi uttered this lament, "Sine hahem sherha sherha as firaq, tabegoyem sherh-i derd-i ishtiyak". "I want a heart that is split, chamber by chamber by the pain of separation from God, so that I might explain my longings and desires to it. [1]" Rumi spent his entire life searching for those who shared similar longings, whose love of God was as unquenchable as his, a mirror to his soul.

In an interview with Turkish journalist Nuriye Akman, Turkish spiritual leader and poet, Fethullah Gülen said, "I am looking for a person who is troubled on the inside; one with whom I could talk about the Islamic world, the situation in Turkey, and share my troubles. I am searching for a troubled heart. [2]" He goes on to say that he has many close friends yet none with whom he can share everything. "A friend in thought needs to be like you; needs to burn inside like a fireplace; have a strong bond with, yet remain humble.

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References:

1. Al-Quran: 21-107.
2. Dr. Asad Nimer Busool In God we Turst, P:14, Chicago U.S.A.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Al-Quran, 25-52.
6. Al-Quran, al hajj: 39.
7. Ibid al hajj: 40.
8. Al-Quran (Al Baqrah: 190-191).
9. Al-Quran (Al Baqrah: 193).
10. Shibli Numani, Seerat an Nabi.
11. Al-Quran: 9-5.
12. Ibn Hisham, seerah, vol:2, P: 279.
13. Al-Quran (Al baqrah: 2-256).
14. Ibid, 88:21-22.
15. Ibid, 36-17.
16. Sunan ibn Majah, Kitab al-Manasik Hadith' No: 3029.
17. An-Nawawi, sharah Sahih Muslim, 16:220, 7:20.

Ummah and relinquished the path of moderation and tolerance that Islam prescribed for its followers. They were a large group of tens of thousands of Muslims, composed mostly of individuals who had memorized the Qur'an and who devoted themselves to much worship prayer and fasting. They declared the totality of the companions of the Prophet and whoever of the Muslims were with them to be apostates, and disbelievers and took up arms against them.

It has been generally observed that we at both levels individuals as well as collective commit extremism in Ibadaat and other religious practices. It is extremism that ultimately leads to intolerance hatred & violence. We transgress the limits that religion has prescribed for us. We tend to add to our acts of worship things that carry no genuineness or authenticity. We should remain confined within the borders marked out by Islam for us. Our deen (religion) is simple and close to human nature. It is easy to follow and practise. But we have made it complicated by constantly adding things uncalled for and for which we are not authorized by Allah or the Prophet. Islam has suggested the middle path. It avoids and stands for moderation and tolerance.

Teachings of Islam keep to the middle path by avoiding extremes. Its pendulum does not oscillate between two extremes. The purpose of Islamic teachings is to create balance and equilibrium in human life. It aims at temperance and moderation in thought and behavior both in individual and collective life.

﴿فَذَكِّرْ ۚ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُذَكِّرٌ ۚ لَسْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمُصَيِّرٍ﴾

“his task is to remind them and so remind, he needs only to remind! He is not a task master set up over them” (14)

There is as such no compulsion in acceptance or profession of Islam on non-believers. Coercion in any form or denomination does not exist in Islamic teachings. It is in the Divine plan that a man should be given absolute freedom to think and act. God does not snatch this from man at any moment of his life time and neither the Prophet is allowed to do so. Every Message of God has said after delivering the message:

﴿وَمَا عَلَيْنَا إِلَّا الْبَلْغُ الْمُبِينُ﴾

“We have to responsibility except to convey (The message)”(15)

The Prophet (Sallallahu alahi wasallam)during his farewell pilgrimage warned the Ummah against extremism in ‘deen’. He said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ! إِنِّي كُنتُمُ الْغُلُوفَ فِي الدِّينِ، فَإِنَّمَا أَهْلَكَ قَبْلَكُمْ الْغُلُوفَ فِي الدِّينِ﴾

“O people! he on your guard against extremism in deen (religion) because extremism in deen had destroyed (nations) before you” (16).

In the light of this hadith we should assess and evaluate the activities of those groups from among Muslim Ummah who are traveling on the road of extremism. The exercise of ‘takfeer’ and declaring things arbitrarily & hurriedly ‘haram’ are the chief hallmarks by which could be recongised today. They do it without any justification or against anyone with whom they disagree. Shaikh al-Islam Imam Nawawi said:

“Extremists are fanatic zealots who exceed bounds in words and deeds and are “bigots”. (17)

In treading the path of extremism today are we not repeating the history of Khawarij who existed in the time of the sucessors of the companions. They were cut off from the mainstream of Muslim

right in the beginning and it will last till Doomsday. This ayah of Surrah at-Twbah revealed after almost 22 years of Prophet's relentless struggle in the field of dawah. As a result of this dawah work the whole peninsula of Arabia converted to Islam. There was a small number of mushrikeen left who were trouble makers. They did not refrain from conspiring against the believers. Allah also wanted to cleanse the Holy places from the Polytheists. This was declared that no polytheist would enter Kaa'bah. This ayah was specific to those mushrikeen. Even at that time those from among mushrikeen who did not violate the treaties and who did not help the oppressors in driving the believers out from their homes, were exempted and the believers were asked to abide by the treaties made with non believers.

We have also been taught that Muslims when invade a country, they should first present to non-Muslims the message of Islam, if they accept it, they would be our equals and enjoy all rights and freedom as the Muslims do. If they want to practise their own religion they would be allowed to do so under Muslim rule provided they pay the jizya (head tax on free non-Muslims under Muslims rule). But if they neither accept the first condition nor the second, than the sword will decide between the two. It all gives the impression that a believer is all time in the battlefield waging 'Jihad' against the infields.

Such type of indoctrination has also led us the path of fanaticism and extremism. This goes against the very basic teachings of Islam. The Qur'an declares:

﴿لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ﴾

“There is no coercion in religion Distinct is the way of guidance now from error” (13).

The Prophets are simply assigned the task of conveying the message to the people around them. They are not to coerce them into believing in what they have received from God Almighty. They Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) is addressed at many places in the Qur'an that:

with the enemies against the Muslims. They were all united to strike a final blow to Muslim community of Arabian Peninsula. They decided and prepared to wipe them out. The Muslims were fighting against heavy odds. The near famine conditions prevailed in Madinah and scorching heat of summer was at its peak. The harvest season had just arrived. There was a great shortage of material resources to wage war. The mushrikeen pinned their last hope on those allied forces that arrayed against the Muslims. The gravity of the situation was realized by every one in Arabia. They realized that the cause for which they had been striving for the last twenty two years was at stake.

If we bear this background in our mind we shall be able to appreciate and understand the import of the ayah of Surah at-Tawbah. The Prophet had already entered the concluding phase of his mission. He accomplished the task assigned to him by Allah (Subhan hu wa Talla). Since the believers had gained by then full control over Arabia, it was necessary to wipe out polytheism and all its offshoots from Arabia in order to ensure that the land would always remain exclusive base for Islam. Secondly since the believers were now in control of the 'Kabah' it was not appropriate to allow polytheistic practices to continue in the shrine of one true God.

Under these circumstances Allah had given the 'mushrikeen' three options.

- (i) The 'mushrikeen' (the polytheists) should surrender and submit to Islam.
- (ii) They are given four months notice from hence, they must vacate the land.
- (iii) Otherwise they would be killed.

This ayah of Surah at-Tawbah does not refer or apply to mushrikeen in general. But it applied to only those polytheists who had violated the treaties and a large group of renowned mufasssareen (commentators of the Qur'an) hold this view. If it applied to mushrikeen in general then there is no point of spreading dawah after that and the doors of dawah were closed

misinterpreted. Again the same mistake rather blunder is being committed by them. They quote this ayah completely out of context. We are required to interpret and understand this ayah in its social and historical context. This ayah be studied against the background of the campaign of Tabuk. Backgrounds of the battles of Tabuk and Badr are identical. Both the battles of Tabuk and Badr have one major point in common. On the eve of Badr the very existence of Muslim community which was in the formative stage was at stake. The Quraysh stirred up the whole peninsula against Muhammad and his companions. Muhammad led the Muslims and organized their ranks. As he looked over the Quraysh army and compared them with his thin ranks and poor equipment, he felt quite apprehensive. He prayed to God for a very long while, and heard repeating the following words:

((اللَّهُمَّ إِن تَهْلِكْ هَذِهِ الْعِصَابَةَ الْيَوْمَ لَا تَعْبُدُ بَعْدَهَا فِي الْأَرْضِ))

“O God, if this little army perishes, when will you be worshiped again?” (12).

Similar was the situation when the campaign of Tabuk took place. Caesar of Byzantine Empire has gathered a large army on Syrian border to attack Madinah. They had recently defeated the Persians and they were drunk with power. They wanted to obliterate the rising Muslim community. And the Prophet was vigilant and alive to the situation. Any slackness on the part of the Muslims would have been disastrous.

The Gassanid Christian tribes inhabited the Syrain border. Joining their forces with Caesar the chiefs of Ghassanid and other tribes began to muster their troops. In the meantime the *munafiqeen* (the hypocrites) of Madinah, built a mosque called Masjid-e-Dharrar to sow seeds of dissension among the Muslims of Madinah and tried to dissuade them from joining the battle against the Byzantine Empire. They had close links with Byzantine empire and conspired against the Muslims. There were also still some die-hard mushrikeen (Polytheists) in Makkah who had evil designs and harboured enmity against the believers. They also joined hands

that there was no reason other than that they were disbelievers. And it was sufficient justification to attack and destroy them. The opponents of Islam found the opportunity to give this impression to the people at large that Islam was spread by sword. But on scrutiny it has been proved that the tribes, to whom these raiding parties were sent, had already made preparation to attack Madinah" (10).

It would be worthwhile to draw the attention of the readers to Surah al-Fath meaning 'Victory' where victory refers not to the conquest of Makkah or even miraculous triumph in the battle of 'Badr' but to the Truce of al-Hudabyia which averted bloodletting and fighting with the Quraish who had gathered with their allied tribes to prevent the Prophet and his 1400 followers (in 6 A.H) from entering Makkah to perform umrah or lesser pilgrimage.

The Quran has declared "Treaty of Hudaybia" as "Fathe-Mubeen" (a clear victory) whereas, in fact, no battle took place between the believers and non-believers. All the clauses of Treaty were apparently against the interest of the believers. But it turned out to be a blessing in disguise for them. All this was done to avoid conflict and clash and to pave the way for an amicable and peaceful atmosphere in which they could spread dawah and convey Divine Message to people around.

The same is the case with the ayah of Surah at-Tawbah:

﴿فَإِذَا انْسَلَخَ الْأَشْهُرُ الْحُرُمُ فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ
وَخُذُوهُمْ وَأَحْضُرُوهُمْ وَأَقْعُدُوا لَهُمْ كُلَّ مَرْصِدٍ﴾

"But when these prohibited months are over (for fighting) slay the idolaters wherever you find them, and take them captive or besiege them, and waylay them at every out post" (11)

This ayah of Surah al-Tawbah is today frequently referred to by both Muslims and non-Muslims in case of war against non-believers. It is often quoted by Muslims and non-Muslims to justify the killing of non-believers. It is very much misquoted and

Keeping in view these points let us examine the application of these ayat to the present day situation of the Muslims.

How do we apply these ayat to our present day situation? Are there any similarities between the present situation and the situation that was found at the time of the revelation. At that time the believers were harassed, oppressed and persecuted simply for the reason that they accepted a new faith. The unbelievers were not prepared to allow them to practise and preach their new religion.

Are we harassed, oppressed and persecuted today for our faith and religion? Are we not allowed to reach out to the people to convey the last message of God to humankind? Do we really fight those who fight us in the cause of Allah? Millions of Muslims have settled in the west and America. They have built up thousand of mosques and Islamic centres in these countries. There are a large number of Muslim minorities countries especially in the west and America. A lot of literature on Islam is available there. A large number of Tarbiyah programs and family circles of Darsi-Quran have been preaching and promoting Islam for the last three or four decades. The Muslims are free to believe and practise their faith. There is no curb on them to spread dawah to non-Muslims.

Biographers and historians, in general, have described the battles fought during Prophet's life time without discussing or referring to the causes that led to wars. Although Hadith literature and people like Ibn Sa'ad have mentioned the causes that sparked the battles. But still the history of Gazawaat portrays the Prophet and the believers as people carrying swords from time to time to invade neighbouring countries, declaring wars against the tribes who had not submitted and surrendered. This led to a general perception that all the battles waged by the believers were offensive and were launched to spread the message of Islam. Whereas the truth is otherwise. Allama Shibli has remarked about this in his book, "Seerat an Nabi": "Our historians in general, while describing the battles that the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) dispatched the raiding parties to attack a certain tribe or clan did not mention the causes of these attacks which gave the impression

this purpose. At the same time those misguided people have no right to either enforce the false laws of their own and drive the people to bondage of others than God. In order to put an end to this 'Fitnah', both persuasion and force may be used.

All those ayat quoted above that allowed and commanded believers to fight (in self-defense) against those who fight against them, reveal the following important points in respect of 'Qital':

- (i) Permission was granted to believers to take up arms (in self-defense) for the first time after emigration to Madinah.
- (ii) The offensive was launched by the enemy.
- (iii) They were allowed to defend themselves against the attack because they were driven away from their homes for no other reason than that they embraced a new religion.
- (iv) They were asked to fight those who fight them in the cause of Allah. In the cause of Allah (Fi sibeel Allah) is very important point to be pondered and reflected upon.
- (v) They are commanded not to transgress. Because Allah does not like the transgressors. Transgression includes killing of non-combatants-----the elderly, the women and the children; mutilation of dead bodies; destruction of fields and live stock; targeting places of worship of other faiths etc.
- (vi) 'Fitna' (wrongful persecution) is worse than killing, 'Fitna' means when you do not tolerate others who hold opinions of belief contrary to you. You do not allow them to practise or preach their new religion. You Victimize, harass and persecute them.
- (vii) Fight them till mischief and persecution come to an end and the Law of God prevails.
- (viii) If they desist, then cease to be hostile to them against those who harass and persecute.

“Fight against those who fight against you in the way of Allah, but do not transgress. For Allah does not love the transgressors. Wheresoever you find them drive them out from where they drove you out (For though killing is sinful) wrongful persecution is even worse than killing”.(8) (al-Baqarah:190-191)

In ayah 193 of the same Surrah:

﴿وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةً وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ لِلَّهِ فَإِنْ انْتَهَوْا فَلَا عُدْوَانَ إِلَّا عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

“Fight them till mischief ends and the Law prescribed by Allah prevails. But if they desist, then know, hostility is only against the wrong-doers” (Al-Baqarah:193)

In the ayah referred to it is said: “Fight against those who fight against you”. This ayah who refers to the initiative, taken by the non-believers. It is non-believers who have waged the battle. The second part of the ayah “in the way of Allah” is also meaningful in this context.

The excesses referred to in the ayah 190 of Surah al-Baqarah are acts such as taking up arms against women, children, the old and the injured, mutilation of the dead bodies of the enemy, uncalled destruction of fields and live stock and other acts of injustice and brutality. In the Hadith all these acts have been prohibited.

‘Fitna’ means persecution, victimization of those who want to practise their new faith. It refers to a situation whereby either a person or a group is subjected to harassment and intimidation for having accepted as true, a set of ideas contrary to those held, and for striving to bring about reforms in the society by preaching what is good and correcting what is bad.

The unbelievers, the polytheists (the Mushrikeen) the atheists are allowed to hold on to the their beliefs and to worship who and whatever they wish. In order to deliver those people from their error, Muslims are required to preach and tell them where their good lies. But Muslims ought not to resort to force to achieve

to offensive tactics, it is wise and prudent to hold on to strategy of passive resistance.

On their arrival in Madinah a new community came into being. To protect the nascent Muslim community at Madinah two steps were taken. First; to protect it from internal criminals the hudood laws and punishments were introduced. To guard against the invaders believers were asked to take up sword. In this situation the Qital was launched against the aggressors. They were commanded by Allah to fight against their enemies when their very existence was at stake. Soon after emigration to Madinnah in the first year of Hijrah, the believers were permitted to take up arms (in self-defense).

﴿أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلِمُوا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾﴾

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ﴿٤٠﴾﴾

“Permission is granted to them (to take up arms) against whom war is made, because they were oppressed---”

“Who were driven away from their homes for no other reason than they said, “Our Lord is God”.

They verb *yukatalun* in the ayah 39 is in passive form which clearly means that the war started from the other side. It explicitly tells us that the unbelievers took the initiative in fighting. They were the aggressors. It also explains that the believers were permitted to take up arms because they were Oppressed and persecuted. The next ayah 40 tells us the wrong done to the believers that they were driven by persecution from their homes for no other reason that they said, “Our Lord is God”.

Just before the battle of Badr in Rajab or Shaban, the believers were commanded to fight the enemy in self-defense.

﴿وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٤١﴾﴾

﴿وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَخْرَجُواكُمْ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ ﴿٤٢﴾﴾

situation, the similarities between the present situation and the original one be studied thoroughly.

Take up the case of 'Jihad' which is very much confused with 'Qital' (the fighting). 'Jihad' is a misunderstood term not only by non-Muslims but also by a majority of Muslims who take it for war waged against the infidels till the latter surrender and submit themselves to Islam.

Jihad is a comprehensive term that covers all kinds of struggle in the way of Allah. The word 'Jihad-e-kabeer' was used in Makkan Surah when the believers were not allowed to take up sword against the oppressors or invaders. In Surrah al-Furqan (which is revealed in Makkah Allah addresses the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W)

﴿فَلَا تَطْعِ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ وَجَاهِدْهُمْ بِهٖ جِهَادًا كَبِيْرًا﴾

"Listen not to the non-believers but strive against them with the utmost strenuousness with it. (The Quran)" (5).

"(Wa jahidhum bihi jihadan kabeeran)"

Here the believers are told to wage war, Jihad-i-Kabeer, against the non-believers with the Quran and not with the sword. 'Jihad', in fact, is a life long struggle against evil at all levels. It requires a Muslim like any other committed humanist to engage in a peaceful moral struggle to root out injustice, exploitation, ignorance, poverty and all kinds of evil. Jihad also means, in very specific circumstances and situation to wage war, or to do battle, though in Arabic language the word 'Qital' more accurately gives that meaning. The Muslims are advised to physically resist and fight against those enemies who subject them to persecution and repression and drive them out of their homes. If they cannot put up resistance, they are advised to migrate to other lands and countries as did the Makkan Muslims when they migrated first to Abyssinia and later to Madinah. In such situation and circumstances the believers are advised to put up passive resistance rather than resort