

THE REVIVAL

THE COVENANT

By

GAMAL EL BANNA

In the Name of Allah,
Whom no one else we worship but Him

Introduction

This COVENANT was written in the year 1982 as one of the cultural messages books of the International Islamic Union for Work, i.e., since a quarter of a century. If compared to my previous book entitled "Our Faith" presented by "The Call for the Islamic Revival", one would find one main line of thought. In this Covenant, one would find a new, simple and spontaneous kind of thought that does not lack depth, and this is a proof that the author retains the same line of thought since 1946, when he published the book entitled "The New Democracy".

The author highlights certain points that proved important with time, and he thought is retained, thus his style represents "unity with diversity".

Since the message books of the international Islamic Union for Work are not for sale but for free distribution, and the remaining copies are not so many, we have reprinted these books in the name of "The Call for the Islamic Revival", so as not to be forgotten, and to be included with other books of "The Call for the Islamic Revival".

Ramadan 1428 AH
September 2001 AD
Dar El Fikr El Islami Publishing House

The covenant

(1)

The first step on the righteous path is to be honest and remove the roots of evil from our hearts:

- a- It is not due to naïveté, ignorance of priorities or mere chattering that we begin with this sentence. If one's soul is lacking the deep feeling of honesty and goodness, and an alert sense of the necessity to uproot evil and resist evil tendencies, then it is no use to try to do anything. The so called "The advanced world" is deteriorating and floundering, not because it is ignorant or poor, on the contrary, education and abundance have reached unprecedented limits in this world, but this "advanced world" suffers from the scourges of evil to whose arms it flung itself, instead of uprooting evil. It is unbelievable that the developed countries have spent millions on warfare, destruction, and wretched-ness, more than spending on keeping peace, construction, bliss and happiness, and they throw away to the sea tons of aliments or using them to feed animals, whereas there are millions of people in Asia and Africa suffering famines. It is impossible to justify such folly in the "rational world" except by the fact that the "advanced world" is dominated by forces of evil and darkness.
- b- We mean by "evil" the tendency to hurt or harm others intentionally without proper justification or laws set by Islam or the other heavenly monotheistic religions, which are intended to curb crimes and keep peace. Accordingly, all sorts of harm insult, embezzlement, exploitation, injustice, humiliation, and violation are considered under the categories of evil deeds, and evil reaches its worst horrid degree in the phenomenon of torture.
- c- Evil appears when values and higher ideals are missing, and when selfishness, egoism, arrogance, and pride prevail. Let us remember that the phrase uttered by Satan "I am better than the human being", is the starting point of his evil. Other aspects strengthen evil like environmental factors, deviations of upbringing, and factors of heredity.
- d- The "heart" as a term in the Quranic sense, means the center of sensations, emotions and perception, thus the tool helps the human being to differentiate between goodness and evil and between the righteous path and deviation from the truth. Hence the Holy Quran puts emphasis on the "sound heart", and the prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said in one of his hadiths (sayings) "in the body lies one organ, if it is sound, the whole body is sound, and if it is unsound, the whole body is degenerated... it is the heart".

(2)

We would not be honest indeed, unless our hearts are linked to Allah the Almighty. Other ways to reach the ultimate truth like sciences, arts, ethics, literature, and philosophies are limited. The only power that harnesses the human soul from deviation and succumbing to the evil, gives strength to the human should and realizes peaces with one 's self, society, and the whole universe is the divine providence and guidance:

- a- Laws, systems, and governing policies fail to ingrain into the human soul the sense of goodness, benevolence, and avoidance of evil and injustice, as these systems are not concerned with such aspects, not to mention doubts that shroud whatever comes from these systems. Sciences fail to perform this task as well due to their neutral abstract nature, and thus they are liable to be used in goodness or evil. Arts and literature fail to perform this task as well because they are nothing but expression of the human soul. With its strengths and weaknesses, pros and cons, and thus they sublimate and refine the human soul in some cases, and degrade it in other instances. Even in the field of philosophy, we find in it dialectic controversies, relative truths, and subjectivity of its prominent figures, thus philosophy is far from the ultimate truth, as it is related only to the cultural elite, it did not have the acceptance of the majority of people, accordingly, doctrines, systems and axioms of philosophy laid down by human beings are imperfect by nature, and thus could not control the human soul.
- b- The human soul cannot submit to the control of any power other than the divine power, as it is greater than any earthly power. Allah the Omniscient, Creator of the human soul is the One who knows best the inner recesses and workings ***"It is not permitted to the Sun to catch up the moon, nor can night outstrip the day; each swims along its own orbit"*** (36:40). Muslim believer could not fall prey to utter despair that lead to committing suicide or to atheism, as their absolute faith in Allah is more powerful than any other influence, and when believers die, they respond to the divine call as the Holy Quran says: ***"O righteous soul, in complete rest and satisfaction* Come back to thy Lord-well pleased and well pleasing unto Him* Enter thou among my devotees, enter thou My heaven*"*** (89:27-30).
- c- Alongside with the feeling of serenity, security, and purity, faith leads Man and his life by an unfailling guidance to reach eternal peace, and this is not something insignificant. Faith in Allah grants us immunity against many temptations and lusts in the course of life, to which the human soul might fell prey. This faith grants us might to confront terrorism and tyranny, and this might leads to the revolution when the conditions and circumstances are suitable and ready, so as the human soul is not to be torn between the will on one hand, and the lack of readiness of the conditions and circumstances. This is not to be considered as a form of submission but a realization of the long-term policy, and a waiting period for the ready and suitable the conditions and circumstances, as faithful believers do not fear death, as they perceive it as martyrdom, as Allah promises all believers one of the two rewards in their struggles: martyrdom or victory.

(3)

Hence, the importance of the existence of religion, as religion is the only revelation of Allah's message, while prophets are the people who are commissioned to reveal and explain Allah's message. This is the main characteristic that differentiates between religion on one hand, and theories and philosophy on the other hand, as the latter is not linked to Allah's revelation to the prophets, thus, its idea of Allah is confined to the limitations of the human nature.

Human progress has proved the importance of religion to each individual and each society, thus religions has appeared since the existence of Man, and they reflected the first kind of belonging. Heavenly religions have the powerful instinctive influence on Man, becoming essential part to every individual and every society.

All the three heavenly monotheistic religions are one faith, as every one of them is like a part of an edifice, and differences between them are due to the progress of Man, and due to misperceptions, distortions, and acquired interests as well. Islam in this procession of heavenly monotheistic religions is the sealing of the divine revelation and the crown of peace:

- 1- In the previous chapter, we mentioned that we could not be honest unless we link our hearts to Allah and let Him govern our life by His will and for this to be accomplished, people need religion.

This is the only means by which Allah's message is delivered through revelation to Mankind, and via prophets who undertook the mission of conveying and explaining Allah's message. These features of religion are not present in theories and philosophies, and they are confined by the limitations of the human nature.

Religion solely presents the true perception of divinity, which cannot be denied by the mind, but the mind cannot reach this perception by itself, as it does not resemble an equation.

Religion has its own methodology and pattern in reaching facts, and it is not concerned with quantity but the essence, whereas science fails to deal with the essence of things. The human means to prove and fact is not confined to the human mind - even when governed by the human mind- as the sound natural instinct might reach the conclusion of the existence of Allah, and science cannot refute this fact. We do not know the essence of the divine revelation, but we believe that this revelation is form Allah, and the proof is the soundness of its message, and its miraculous nature, as it far surpasses all the findings of all geniuses and philosophers.

Another proof is the truthfulness of Allah's prophets, and the fact that it is far-fetched hypothesis to claim that they were not saying the truth, as liars cannot say facts that are compatible to the pattern of things. Accordingly, we staunchly believe that the divine revelation is true, even if we do not wholly know its essence or source.

- 2- History and evolution have proved the truthfulness of religion and its originality, as it is distinctive because:

- (a) Religion presents the perfect perception of divinity that can be absorbed and comprehended by the human mind. Philosophers, theorists and defenders of pagan beliefs fail to do this, and this is made clear by the comparison between these crude perceptions and the divine perception presented by Islam as the true religion of Allah, the Perfect, the Most-High, the Absolute, Who was not born and Who did not give birth to anyone. Allah is the source of life and creation, He can be reached by minds and hearts, not by eyesight, and He is Unique, as nothing is like Him.
- (b) The heavenly monotheistic religions represent objective perfection "individually and socially" and it is not prone to be influenced by any surroundings, even powers of time and place.
- (c) The appearance of the messengers of these religions, i.e., the prophets, is a proof of the divine message, as their sole mission is delivering Allah's message without getting an earthly reward or position, etc... as if they were born specifically for their

mission. Hence, their existence proves the existence of the divine message, and that this message has but one source, Allah the almighty Himself.

- (d) On the other hand, what verifies and confirms the above-mentioned fact is that prophets were not scientists, nor philosophers, and thus no one can claim that their heavenly message was the fruition of their thought and philosophical research. Prophets were ordinary people like any other people, and they worked in professions of ordinary people, but Allah had chosen them, granted them power, knowledge, and protection from weaknesses and defects.

3- That is why people everywhere embraced religions since ancient times, regardless of the systems of production and governance, and the differences of times and places. In this era of ideological doctrines, religions are still the most important set of beliefs for most people, and they cannot be compared to democracy, capitalism, communism, etc... It was not by mere chance or coincidence that most of these doctrines are hostile toward religion, claiming that religion is the opium of the masses, for these doctrines were envious of the originality, depth and devotion of people to religion. Thus, the high stature of religion is unsurpassed by philosophies and theories, as it is perfect qualitatively, and more comprehensive quantitatively. Religion sets the moral foundations of the human civilization, and grants the individual perpetual self-power that govern one's life: which is one's conscience, and grants people a life-plan which is based on moderation and not succumbing to lusts and whims, specially to women, wealth, and authority. Religion grants to society a set of systems to preserve peace, to free people from tyrants, and to secure the dignity of the human soul.

4- Some might think that we live in the era of "atheism", and this is not true, for everyone needs religion. The one who believes in atheism would consider it as his "religious belief", for which he would fight, like believers who fight for their religion. The wretched ones who do not take religion seriously is the ones "who made their fancies their god" as the Holy Quran says, and they worship their lusts and passions, and other idols like movie stars or sports champions etc... communism has become a religion in itself while it considers all religions as its enemies, the prophets of communism are Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, and Vladimir Lenin, the god of communism is the dialectical materialism, and the believers of communism are in the political party of those who are driven by ambition, cupidity, and envy.

5- Religions were sometimes manipulated and distorted to people by mean personalities, mercenaries, and corrupted entourage of kings, and sometimes religions were misinterpreted by people themselves, but this is not the fault of religions, and they are not the only ones that were subjected to distortion, for other calls to freedom and equality etc... were distorted as well. These attempts of distortion prove the high stature and the importance of religions, for likewise no one adulterate metals like lead or iron, but some people adulterate precious metals like silver and gold.

6- it is normal and expected, from the Islamic point of view, that religions differ, and this difference is not a source of annoyance, for every nation or "Umma" had its own prophet to guide it to the path of faith in its own language, while considering the circumstances of his society, religions are not based on miracles, although it resorted to them in some instances, but religions rely on considering laws of Allah, which He set for the progress of societies. Hence, the slight differences among the three heavenly monotheistic religions, but their main principles are the same, especially the principle of the existence of one God, Allah, and the Creator of the universe, who represents absolute perfections, resurrection, eternal reward and eternal punishment. The unity of all human beings is a secondary matter in religion, what is more important is peace among diversity of religions, that the three heavenly monotheistic religions are derived from one divine source, complementing one another, that the Torah, the Bible, and the Holy Quran, as well as other holy scriptures were descended from Heaven, and their differences reflect the differences among the nations. The Holy Quran says that other earlier holy scriptures were subjected to distortions, misinterpretations, and omissions, due to acquired interest or many consecutive translations. This fact of the differences among the three heavenly monotheistic religions is noted in the sayings (Hadiths) of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), which tells us of the previous religions before Islam and that they are like a pretty edifice, but it lacked a wall, and that Islam is the missing wall or part in this edifice. Other sayings show that all prophets are equal brothers and that the Day of Judgment. No one could possibly give himself the right to pass judgments on people's

differences; otherwise, he would fall on the trap of polytheism, by pretending to be a god who passes judgments. It is selfish and naïve to think that entering Paradise is confined to Muslims, whereas non-Muslims are condemned to Hell for eternity. This view contradicts the soul of Islam, and its teachings, for no one is allowed to deify himself or to play the role of a god who would pass judgments on people who would enter Paradise and those who would not. Man is not allowed to interfere with the judgment of Allah, and no one could say that Paradise is confined to Muslims.

Even Islam itself is not confined to Muslims, it is an accessible religion to all people, and we might find non-Muslim people who are nearer to Allah the Almighty, who, according to the Holy Quran: *"...saying with their lips what was not on their hearts"* (3:167). In a famous argument by El-Imam El-Ghazali, he said that people after the mission of Prophet Muhammad are divided into three categories:

- a- People who did not hear of the call of Islam and they never heard of it, and they would enter Paradise.
- b- People who heard of the call of Islam and witnessed the prophet's miracles and his great traits and characteristics, and they did not believe in him, thus they are the non-believers, and they are condemned to hell for eternity.
- c- People who heard the call of Islam, who came after the death of the prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and they do not follow thoroughly his orders and interdictions, but they believed in him, and El Imam El-Ghazali hoped that this category would enter Paradise by the grace of Allah, especially that they did not hear what would entice them into embracing the Islamic faith.

This argument shows that most non-Muslims are from the first and third category mentioned above.

7- Yet, this does not deny the fact that Islam is the seal of all religions and the crown of peace in the succession of religions. It is the last faith that acknowledges the other previous heavenly religions especially Judaism and Christianity, this fact should remove any reasons for enmity of these two religions towards Islam, and this fact could establish peace among religions.

(4)

We should follow the example and model of all prophets, and cast away any admiration of the tyrants whose policy is superiority and arrogance.

- 1- By viewing the human political history, we see that humanity was submitted to tyrannical rulers who ruled by absolute power and their goal was to reach of the Roman Empire, and the rulers of the European countries who are influenced by the Roman Empire and followed its path. We believe that the most important factor that led to the corruption of the political thought is whereas the prophets and their companions and disciples are ignored. The roman civilizations and its savage heroes (Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Emperor Augustus) among others, is what paved the way for certain historical characters, i.e., Machiavelli and his theories which absolutely separate politics and moral values, Napoleon, Lenin, Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, and their likes, as well as Adam Smith and Karl Marx who separated economic aspects from the service of society, which led to the rise of capitalism and communism, and the spread of the materialistic component in societies as the most important component in them. For the sake of honesty, these kings, emperors, should be presented in their true nature as tyrants who oppressed their people and adopted policies of superiority and supremacy, and they used power and deception as tools to support their authority and sovereignty.

We must show prophets as leaders who opposed and resisted this tyranny and made the truth face of the tyrannical power, morals in the face of opportunism, and they showed the principle of the dignity and holiness of the human soul.

Prophets had succeeded in varying degrees in their mission to save humanity from the rule of darkness and tyranny, this is the pattern drawn in the Holy Quran, as it tells us how Moses faced the Pharaoh of Egypt, and shows that the heavenly religions were the major stages of history, and prophets were the leaders of people.

- 2- Islam considers all prophets as equal brothers and it acknowledges, as the Holy Quran says “... ***we make no distinction between one and another among them...*** “ (3:84). The Holy Quran mentions some prophets by name, while it mentions that some of them are not revealed in the Quran or to the prophet Muhammad(PBUH), “***Of some messengers We have already told thee the story, of others We have not...*** “(4:164). Hence, we could not say conclusively that Buddha, Plato, Confucius, or Akhenaton are prophets or not, but we could say that this is a possibility as long as their sayings do not include polytheism.
- 3- In the personality of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) we find the ideal model of the man who has a mission or a call, and the man who is a statesman - no prophet was allowed to be a statesman except prophet Muhammad (PBUH) - except for Moses whose life is full of myth in the Jewish narratives, and his influence was confined to the Israelites, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had the traits of political leaders; wisdom, verity, goodness, purpose, justice, and a quest for liberating humankind. His biography as a political leader proved that it is not impossible, though difficult, to build such utopia, as he built in Al Madina an ideal society, and so did the four wise caliphs after him. Thus, humanity no longer needs Plato’s vision of the Republic as a source of inspiration, or even any other utopian vision, as the nation built by prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is truly better, and its real, not fictitious. We should liberate ourselves from the admiration of tyrants and refuse their policy of supremacy and superiority. We should follow the example of the seal of all prophets, prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

We need to cling to justice as our criterion in every action or judgment so that honesty and goodness do not turn into naïveté, and ignorance, and to avoid submission to unbridled passions and ambiguous situations.

- 1- Although honesty and straight-forwardness and avoidance of evil in every from is the necessary preparation before any actions or policies, but there is the possibility of honesty and goodness turning into naïveté and ignorance, and ignorance, and avoidance of evil might give in to all sorts of weakness and submission. Another negative possibility is that one's passions might drive one to a kind of extremism that might make one sees mirage and aspirations as reality.

Hence, the need for precise tool of control to prevent deviance, and this tool should be constant and not liable to change according to different places, by which one can regulate one's behavior, and this tool is not external or distant, but it stems from within one's mind: this tool is the sense of justice.

Justice is the backbone of society, and cannot be overlooked; otherwise, inequity and unfairness would prevail. Yet, justice is one level among other qualities, i.e., virtue is more sublime than justice is, and love is more sublime than virtue. Yet not all these levels can be compulsory for all people, for they cannot bear to have all these qualities, and these qualities have no definite boundaries or control in any society, that is why justice is the main principle. What agrees with justice cannot be questioned, and has to be abided by and accepted. We should ingrain in ourselves the sense of justice and equity and acquire the habit of abiding to it to avoid any temptations.

- 2- When any given society sets criteria of justice, its level might tend to perceive that the poverty of the poor and submission of the weak is something just. Religions, on the other hand, are original and they set principles that are more sublime than any social rules, political and economic influences. Justice, in particular, is the main distinctive feature of Islam, and every believer who adheres to Islam in a conscious, deep manner acquires the sense of justice so that it is ingrained in the conscience of the believer. Thus, if a believer deviates from the path of justice, this ingrained sense makes him reconsider his position, and repent or atone for this sin.
- 3- In addition to this sense of justice, which is ingrained in the conscience of the believer in Islam, Islam does not confine justice to mere mottoes, slogans, or individual trends. As Islam sets the principles of justice that should be applied in any Islamic society, and these principles are found in the Holy Quran and the sayings (Hadiths) of the prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and they were applied in the society of Al Medina during the era of the prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his wise caliphs.

(6)

Therefore, as not to commit errors of judgment, to understand the true nature of things, and to produce our judgment using insight and guidance, we should use our minds.

We should learn as much as in our capacity, as means to develop our mental faculty and to learn about the means of application. We should use our knowledge within the framework of honesty, goodness and justice.

The human mind is the tool bestowed on us by Allah to be able to differentiate between right and wrong, whereas the heart is the toll to differentiate between good and evil. The mind is the source of power, whereas the heart is the source of honesty. What we seek is combining both sorts of wisdom to reach the ideal of the Quranic expression: "the powerful and the honest one", as power without honesty is the path to deviation and corruption, and honesty without power is the path to weakness and failure.

The matters that cannot be imagined by the human mind is the Divine Being, and what is beyond death and the hereafter, as the human mind cannot realize these metaphysical aspects of existence, and philosophers' theories prove this fact. Hence, in this regard, the human mind should accept what the revelation presents to us, and if the mind dares to question this metaphysical aspect, it would not reach to anything but confusion and floundering, and man should not waste his best bliss from Allah, the mind, in thinking of such metaphysical aspects:

- 1- The Holy Quran tells us about two tools in the human soul, the heart and the mind. The heart in the Holy Quran is a concept that differs from the biological organ in the human chest, and the mind is a concept that differs from the biological organ inside the human skull. The Holy Quran explains that the heart has some kind of an insight to differentiate between goodness and evil, and it is a tool that serves the human mind as well. The Holy Quran tells us that the human mind is the tool by which Man perceives the universal phenomena like life, death, heavenly bodies, plants, etc...

The heart, which is armed with the sense of justice, would differentiate between goodness and evil, and prevent us from extremism and sins, the mind helps us to discern the laws that govern the universe, and to discover the resources and powers of nature and how to use it to enrich human life, in order to achieve the will of Allah in granting dignity to Mankind. That is why there are many Quranic verses that exhort thinking, considering and using our mental faculty, and warning against ignorance and indifference. The Holy Quran says that those who do not contemplate the miracles and wonders of Allah in nature and in the human soul are ignorant people who are less than animals "**... For the worst of beasts in the sight of God are the deaf and the dumb, those who understand not**" (8:22). "**... They are like cattle - any more misguided: for they are heedless**" (7:179).

We see that it is necessary to use our mental faculty to learn as much as possible more knowledge and skills and we believe that negligence and indifference to learning is some sort of destruction to society and a blatant violation of the Quranic teachings. We should remember that the very first verse of the Holy Quran begins with the word "read". The spread of ignorance among Muslims in the modern age is among the major reasons of their weakness and deterioration on the materialistic level and moral stature.

- 2- In most religious texts, we find many references to the limitations of the human mind, and the tendency to accept things without thinking. Yet, this is a huge mistake, as everything is liable to be considered and questioned except for the Divine Being, the hereafter, the resurrection, eternal reward in Heaven or eternal punishment in Hell etc... as the human mind fails to realize these metaphysical aspects of the hereafter, and philosophers proved this. Hence, the human mind has nothing but to accept the divine revelation about these metaphysical aspects of Hereafter. As for other matters, things have to be considered and questioned to reach its causes and the divine wisdom behind it. The first kind of questioning is a daring enterprise

that result in a state of floundering confusion, whereas ignoring the second kind of thinking and questioning is considered negligence and failure, and a kind of waste to the mind as the most precious bliss which Allah bestowed on mankind.

Hence, this distinction should be clear and most religious scholars despite their exhorting to accept totally without question the matters of the Hereafter. Yet they do not deny that the workings of the human mind, as it is the reason that every one is responsible for his deeds, hence the reward for good deeds and punishment for bad ones. Faith and belief should be based on conviction not compulsion, and this is done through the human mind, mankind should better glorify the mental capacities of the human mind, not lament its limitations.

(7)

Work is the expression of life, creativity, and personal fulfillment. It is the means of every one to fulfill one's duty toward one's society, and this is one's contribution in building one's society.

Hence abundant individual contribution leads to the general welfare of the whole society, as people give before they take, and no one has anything before one gives. This makes any society victorious over the biggest challenge faced by backward societies, i.e., development, and makes society able to face the corruption of the international politics.

One of the main characteristics of work in the modern age is its association with knowledge.

We believe that work must be provided for everyone, there is someone for every kind of work, and any disruption to this principle is the result of disorder in policies and systems. Work in Islam is the proof of faith, reward and punishment. Everyone should work and try to serve Allah and society whatever his kind of work, and one should perform one's work with knowledge, skill, proficiency and devotion.

- 1- Work is the proof of life, as all creatures work, move, grow and breathe, and these are major indicators of life. Existence lies within the framework of time and place, and work is the very thing that fills the void in this framework, and lends meaning to it.

Work for every human being is the expression of life, and of human character and its social contribution that embodies its thought, skills and duty. The more abundant these contributions are, the more welfare the society would enjoy, and satisfy its needs without feelings of shortage, as people give before they take, and no one has anything before one gives. This makes any society victorious over the biggest challenge faced by backward societies, i.e., development, as failure in facing such challenge threatens these backward societies being not able to face the corruption of the international politics. Thus backward societies would submit to the hegemony of tyrant, merciless countries, and even might be threatened by military aggression.

- 2- Work in the modern age is closely related to knowledge and it is based on it. Sloppy, careless, or slow work is something of the past and cannot exist now, as work nowadays is closely linked to modern technology.
- 3- We believe that there is work for everyone, and that unemployment not inevitable. Retraining workers would channel unemployed people through the fields needed in the work market. It is assumed that there is no field that does not need workers; otherwise, there would be disruption in the policies of the working force or other educational social, economic, and political systems.

Islam regards work in high esteem as a proof of faith. The Holy Quran does not mention "those who believe" unless followed by "who work deeds of righteousness", thus, we conclude that doing deeds of righteousness is the fruition of faith and proof of belief. Reward or punishment in the Hereafter will be based on the kind of work done, as the Holy Quran says, "*This day shall ye be recompensed for all that ye did*" (45:28).

- 4- All the above-mentioned facts prove the high stature of work in Islam, for each individual and each society. Each one of us should work in the service of Allah and one's society, because it is part of one's duties, for which one would be rewarded in one's life and in the Hereafter. Thus, one would contribute in providing life of quality and abundance, as long as one's work is associated with knowledge, skills, mastery, and devotion.

(8)

Community is commitment, and the strength of any community or society is when they apply two basic rules: freedom of thought and justice in work, and we have to submit ourselves to them.

- 1- Once two people meet together, a certain commitment takes place; as relationship, rights, and obligations towards each other etc... and step by step these commitments should be placed in the right way in order to prevail the justice upon the person and its community.

This issue was discussed in details in many political, and social studies, where some of them prevailed the man's role upon the state (as representing the society) or vice versa, and it was in very rare cases where right arrangements were applied, without the prevalence of one side on the other one.

- 2- We already solved this issue by three main lines :
 - a. When there is a community, there should be a **commitment**, and if somebody disagrees with this commitment, he could leave the community and live on an island on his own. (but even in this case, from the Islamic point of view, he should be committed to the nature)
 - b. Concerning **thinking**, it is supposed to be **free** unless it touches others' dignity and reputation, as this thought represents the "conscience" when it concerns a belief, and the "reason" when it is related to studies and researches, and they should be free without any restrictions even when there are some irregularities related to this freedom because freedom with irregularities is much better than a restricted one.
 - c. As for **work** or what could be taking a practical shape (specially in case of economics), should be subject to decisive **justice** as it should be protecting a party against the unfairness and injustice of the other party by setting the necessary measurements and getting the guarantees to prevent any sort of injustice. Restriction in this case must prevail.

We cannot neglect that we are part of the human civilization's path since the Ancient Egyptians until the modern age, and all the populations on earth participated in a way or another in it. We cannot also neglect what the others did and presented to the humanity, because we believe that we are all one family living on one planet. In this respect, we should not ignore the modern civilization, simply because we are part of it and because it represents progress and we practically live in it and our attitude towards it should be like what Islam taught us : " look for wisdom wherever it is", so our position depends on our choices.

The modern civilization that Europe or the West are its leaders today, is not the result of their participation only - even if all the glories and the sins, are returning on them - as it started with the humankind existence, and each population had offered its part. But trying to monopolize it by one population and showing superiority to other populations is unacceptable, as every people has its own pride of its country and culture. It is also unacceptable for any population to become egocentric, to confine itself within its own frontiers and deny the civilization outside its borders, even if it was their golden era of history, because the modern civilization, in spite of some negative aspects, offered an unprecedented progress to humanity, and the idea of denying and confining became archaic and irrelevant. It comes against the Quran' wordings that God the Almighty created us tribes and populations just to get acquainted, not to deny or neglect each other. And following some positive aspects from this civilization shouldn't be faced with such sensitivity, as it also goes against the Islam position, that accepted the previous regimes if they weren't against its applications, and that the Islamic guidance in the Quran and the Sunna push us to always search wisdom and justice wherever they are and ... ***"and never let hatred of anyone lead you into the sin of deviating from justice. Be just : this is closest to being God-conscious" "... and do not deprive people of what is rightfully theirs"***.

There is no contradiction between our respect for our countries, traditions and cultures and between getting the guidance in many images and modern life styles, this is a part of the world's equivalence where there are always new modifications and renovations that give more values to life. We should distinguish between pride and stagnation. Pride comes from confidence and positivity, while stagnation is imitation and negativity. The first enriches, and the second weakens. Un-fortunately the second aspect exists in most of the Islamic countries!!

Islam believes in globalization, human relationship, and the humankind unity. He also admits the existing differences and the special characteristics of each race and religion. Islam builds this relationship according to what unify them and what they agree upon or: "we agree on what we accept and give excuses to each other for what we disagree on".

We understand that Islam is a great message of liberalism, that God sent to people to free them from darkness. Its substance based on the honesty of people, the justice in the society, and the peace with the universe. This is why Quran symbolizes it as “the Book and the Balance”. The Quran put the instructions and the regulations that realize this balance. We understand that worships even representing an important part of Islam are not all of it. They are means but not an end. Good work, good conduct and the reforming systems established by Islam for the communities’ welfare come over and surpass it. Islam have set interactions and mechanisms to correct people’ mistakes and weaknesses built on repent and forgiveness, dissipating sins by good deeds, and considered these means enough to remedy to weakness and negligence (specially in worships), but for evil and injustice, put very hard sanctions to curb the evil, here are the wisdom behind God’s sanctions. We refuse imitation, and being committed to our ancestors’ doings should be first based on understanding which can lead us to admiration or rejection of what they did, and we mustn’t be embarrassed because we have to understand the clear and obvious Text in Quran and Sunna. The Quran guides us in this by insisting in many verses to “See”, “look”, “understand” and not to follow blindly the ancestors.

- 1- One of the most misunderstanding of Islam is ignoring its liberal character and its main message and objective to realize the honesty for people, the justice for the society, the peace with the universe and neglecting the Quran’ regulations and guidance symbolized by the Book and the Balance that can realize this message and create the Islamic society that applies these rules in every field of economy, sociology and politics.
- 2- By neglecting this character, the concentration on, or even the limitation to the worship has reduced the wide aspect of Islam, made important manners disappear, and instead of being a Message that lives in the good heart and the correct reason, became rituals, forms and taboos. Worships replaced the good work and good conducts and considered them as an unimportant issues.
- 3- Islam has set certain means to correct the human weaknesses that are considered as a “mechanism” built on repent, forgiveness and good deeds, means that are part of the worship itself, as it couldn’t be corrected by force or by external interference; this would destroy worship and affect good intention and will, as it will allow some aspects of importunity and open the door for exploitations. On the other hand Islam has set hard sanctions against injustice to lower the evil impact.
- 4- We believe that the greatest reason for Muslims’ backwardness is their mis-understanding for Islam, that is due to the negligence of the Quran (the Book) and Prophet Muhammad’ Sunna. They preferred to count on the Salafis’ works, committed themselves to Salafis’ Madhabs¹, and closed the Ijtihad. Muslims by this prevent themselves from their power, and from this revolutionary’ spirit of the Quran. They opened the doors to weak hadiths or even that we ignore and we doubt the reason behind their appearance, to be the origin of their laws. The spirit of Islam has faded out by the agglomeration of explanations, explications, and copying etc... its particles prevailed on its basics. We have to get back to the Quran and the Sunna in order to give back Islam its role and without any commitment to the past. For the Quran it only needs to be read with deep belief and clear mind. As for the Sunna, we must reconsider the Hadiths and Fiqh, and apply new criteria set by modernists.

We think that sticking to what has been written 10 centuries ago, is completely against Islam basics, and is considered as a proof of incapability, laziness, and lack of confidence of the modern Muslims in their minds and souls as they are much more capable than their Salafis due to the new methods they can use in printing and indexation that didn’t exist before.²

¹ ways of understanding the Quran set by the four principal scholars of Islam

² This message has been distributed as a booklet to the Islamic Union for International Work in the eighties of last century, and wasn’t for sale. It was distributed on Union’s members only.