

The Influences of the Belief in Resurrection

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If, at a time, it was imagined that mind and intelligence taking the place of God and armed with knowledge, it is possible to lead the society to happiness and tranquility today, such an imagination and misconception, would find no place for itself in the human society. This is because experience has shown that the advancement of knowledge also cannot overcome the human problems.

Indeed it cannot be denied that the efforts of the scholars have yielded great results in the field of inventions and discoveries, which have changed the lives of humans but in exchange have brought forward new, complex and bigger problems as presents. Problems such as weapons of mass destruction, devastating wars on the face of the earth, new and killing diseases, and spread of psychological sicknesses and suicides are some of these problems.

On the other hand, the passing of times and experience have shown that setting up of laws or external pressure for the purpose of training and controlling man is not very efficient. This is because those people who possess power and the others, each one trample the laws beneath their feet or find a way to escape from it. Whereas, if the factor which controls man is belief and internal to man, the results shall be definitely better.

Accordingly, Islam has placed the training and controlling factor of man within himself, and with the faith in Allàh and a sincere conviction regarding Resurrection, it has paved and evened out the way for him to become a true human and so also for his development and perfection, such that should a person or a society, really act upon these Islamic teachings, or at the least, achieve a firm conviction regarding the Universal Resurrection and the life after death, then he has laid out the foundation for his and his society's happiness. Here, we shall mention .concisely only a few examples of the influence of this liberating and constructive belief

Spiritual Tranquility .1

It has been proven by experience that material luxuries, successes and pleasure seeking on his own, cannot take man to his objective and to ease and happiness. That which can make life sour for man in spite of having all the material luxuries is anxiety and mental and psychological disturbances. These anxieties and disturbances, more than anything, cause suffering to man and is the reason for an increase in suicide and drug tragedies, which threaten the present

civilization.

Unfortunately, this present century of ours, in spite of the advancement of knowledge, sophistication of technology, the diminishing of the hours of work and also the simplification of the various works which previously were performed with great difficulty, and similarly the quantitative and qualitative increase in the various types of amusements, as also their being in the reach and use of the general public, have not only not reduced the anxiety and the disturbance of the mind, but according to the sociologists and the psychologists, the spiritual diseases are on the ascent.

One of the main reasons for this new chaos and the spreading of the spiritual diseases is the feeling of emptiness in the life and it being without a purpose. The twentieth century man has, by turning away from religion and placing aside the necessary and life-constructing beliefs of it, entangled himself in an empty and purposeless life and has painted for himself a terrifying face of death and as a result has become caught in life-taking sufferings which he could never have even imagined.

Professor Young one of the famous psycho-analyst and one of the well-known assistants of Freud says: "Two thirds of the people, from all over the world, who have consulted me are people who are educated and successful in life, the major trouble of them being the emptiness and aimlessness in life and this major trouble is causing them suffering, anxiety and disturbance of mind.

The reason for this problem of man in the twentieth century is haughtiness resulting from sophistication in technology, shortsightedness and prejudice which resulted in their losing their religion, and even now, until they do not revert to the correct religious beliefs, they shall not attain tranquility, because irreligiousness means emptiness and absence of purpose in life."^[1] Not only does lack of belief in life after death, fill the life of man with anxiety, distress and purposelessness, but also tends to strike out at the instinct of the love for permanence of man. In other words, man who is always seeking perfection and eternity will never be satisfied with this limited material world and in no way shall achieve his tranquility in this cage. Whereas, the belief in resurrection and an eternal life fulfils this desire and in its light shall obtain the spiritual tranquility, and shall attain freedom from the sufferings and diseases resulting from this .anxiety and disturbance of the mind

Justice and Social Security .2

Great efforts have taken place in various human societies, so that by some means, justice and social security be established and the violations and crimes diminish or cease altogether.

However, one fundamental problem which exists in these efforts is that they desire to compel the individuals to a desired state by setting laws and building prisons and in short, by using an external control, but this method did not have any effectiveness, and was tested time and again.

This is because if the control is only by means of laws and other controlling tools, which work on an individual externally, then the leaders and chiefs who exercise control over the people shall consider themselves exceptions to the law or may find means to escape from it and thus abscond.

In addition, in the courts also, important factors like recommendation, bribes presentation of forged documents and thousands of other deceptions, play a pivotal role. In short, that which is not exercised is the Truth and that which is not heard is the complaints of the oppressed. It is because of this lack of effectiveness of the laws and other methods of control, that the national security and the defense budgets are always on the increase and the prisons are increasing day by day, whereas if, alongside these measures and laws, an internal control also existed, the results would be much better.

That is, if an individual (or a society) believes that after death, he would have to be present in a court in which he shall witness the reality of his deeds and their results without the slightest reduction and should he have any objection, the parts of his body which performed the deeds would stand witness against him and in addition to this, in such a court, no bribes, friendship, recommendation and reconsideration exist.

In such a circumstance, how much would crime, violations and revolts diminish in the society? It is possible to claim that basically, with the presence of such a faith and belief, the occurrence of such acts of crime and violations, is strange and unanticipated and would, in all totality, become effaced and cease to exist. Of course, since varied instincts and numerous and at times contradictory, tendencies exist within man, violations and crime cannot be totally uprooted from the human society, however at the very least, the part played by these beliefs and the internal control with regards to the happenings which usually take place in material, godless and irreligious societies, is beyond question and denial.

Another point being, it should not be concluded that thus, no offence and crime exist in the Islamic and religious societies or that the state of these societies are, according to statistics, cent per cent better than the other societies (which indeed is), because two fundamental factors serve as a hindrance for the total uproot of offences and crime in the human and religious societies, and they are as follows:

i) The varied and at times contrasting instincts of men, shall continue to incline man towards

uncleanness. ii) Weak beliefs of the people with respect to Allàh and Resurrection after death. Hence, however much the beliefs of the people with respect to Allàh and life after death become stronger and deep-rooted, calmness and security shall increase in the society and as a result, the quantity of offences, crimes, treason, criminals and prisoners shall decrease

Stimulus for service and performance of good deeds .3

One who does not have faith in Resurrection and life after death and seeks the rewards of his deeds in this very world, does not have sufficient stimulus for fulfilling the needs and wants of other individuals. Hence if he sees a miserable person, he shall not come forward to help him out of his misery, except if it has some benefit in store for him.

For example, by providing this service, he can use that person to his benefit. On the contrary, one who has faith in life after death and knows that the rewards for his deeds shall be received by him completely in the other world, with regards to helping the poor and the helpless and fulfilling the needs of the needy and for all good deeds in general, is strongly motivated. His stimulus is not the worldly benefits, but seeks his rewards from Allàh and knows that Allàh shall grant the best of the rewards in this world and the hereafter (the day when he is most in need of the rewards).

:Regarding this, Hazrat Ali ('a) says

One who, with respect to the (rewards of) the day of Resurrection, “من أيقن بالخلف جاد بالعطيّة” has firm belief and conviction, shall behave in a goodly manner while serving others.”[2]

This sentence of Hazrat Ali ('a) very clearly relates the stimulus for serving others and the performance of good deeds in the light of the belief in resurrection. On the other hand, some of the Qur'anic verses mention the lack of stimulus in the unbelievers and the deniers of the day of Resurrection, for serving others, in this fashion

Have you considered him “أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يُكَذِّبُ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَذَلِكَ الَّذِي يَدْعُ الْيَتِيمَ وَلَا يَحْضُ عَلَى طَعَامِ الْمِسْكِينِ” who calls the Final Judgement a lie? That is the one who repels the orphan. And does not urge the (others) to feed the poor.”[3]

The belief in the day of resurrection and the day of rewards and punishments become reason that man on the one hand, reforms his connection with Allàh, while on the other hand, adjusts and makes right his connection with the creations of Allàh. As a result, giving charity and helping others is not difficult for him, because he is convinced that the rewards for his deeds and much more than what he anticipated, shall be given by Allàh in this world and the hereafter.

In short, the belief in life after death also breathes a meaning into the life of this world, and

instills a sense of responsibility into the hearts of the people. It compels them, to the understanding of the responsibilities, righteousness and truthfulness in serving others and performance of good deeds and helps them from refraining from the uncleanness in the same measure as the strength of their conviction in the rewards and punishment of the day of resurrection.

Liberation from baseness and pollution .4

One, who does not believe in his eternal life, cannot choose for himself objectives beyond his material and animal needs. As a result, all of his objectives shall be summarized in the fulfillment of his carnal instincts and attainment of the base and worldly lusts. Such individual or individuals cannot have a search for things other than profits, pleasures or attainment of wealth and power.

Once such a thing happens, man is ready to indulge in every crime and submerge in every kind of lust and dirtiness, so as to achieve his base and materialistic objectives. As a result, laws, morals, piety and service of people and... do not mean anything to him. On the contrary, one who believes in resurrection, considers the life of the world to be a preamble to his eternal life and, all his efforts and striving is directed towards the selection of high, lofty and eternal objectives which can help him in the future and which can make him happy and successful.

Hence, he shall not drown himself in lust and base and transient worldly objectives. He shall not get entangled in uncleanness and shall not indulge in crimes and offences and shall not be willing to commit suicide or inflict injuries to his body and soul. He shall tolerate the difficulties and the sufferings of life for the purpose of reaching his lofty objectives. In short, he shall choose a clean life and a goodly path for himself.

The Holy Qur'an mentions one of the reasons for the pollution of the polluted ones of the hell, in their own words, to be the lack of belief in resurrection and states

قَالُوا لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ الْمُصَلِّينَ وَلَمْ نَكُ نُطْعِمِ الْمِسْكِينَ وَكُنَّا نَخُوضُ مَعَ الْخَائِضِينَ وَكُنَّا نُكَذِّبُ بِيَوْمِ الدِّينِ
They shall say: We were not of those who offered the regular prayers. And we used not to feed the poor. And we used to enter into vain discourse with those who entered into vain discourses.

And we used to belie the Day of Judgement.”[4]

Thus, four basic reasons for facing the punishment and suffering on the day of resurrection has been mentioned, one of which is the lack of faith and the denial of the resurrection

Moderation in the acquisition and consumption of Income .5

An individual or a society which does not believe in life after death, shall, in every economic matter, strive to increase its income by means of deceit, trickery, fraud and treachery, or by performing less shall try to achieve a greater benefit. In addition, when he has gathered wealth, he shall not spend it for the goodness of himself or the society, but indulge in extravagance and lavishness and in reality drags the financial resources of the society towards destruction.

On the contrary, the individual or the society which has faith in life after death, not only takes into consideration the Divine and the human criteria for acquiring of the wealth and never strives to collect wealth in every manner possible, but even during consumption of the wealth, always takes into consideration the rights of the society.

Unfortunately, that which is destroying the material resources of this world in this era of ours is the lack of consideration of these two important points. In other words, in the twentieth century, the western civilization, and man in general, with the advancement of knowledge and technology, has extracted the god-given resources in every way possible, without giving thought to the protection of the environment or the rights of the coming generations and after that, in its consumption also has not exercised moderation and consideration to the social rights. Consequently, it has destroyed the economic resources and the environment of the world as well as corrupted them.

Here, it is interesting to note that man, after years of destruction of the economic resources and the environment, and extravagance in the consumption of the divine bounties, has now sat back to reflect upon the protection of the environment and more interesting is that the researches of the scholars have shown that the only serious and effective way to protect the environment and to give importance to the economic resources and to safeguard the rights of the future generations lies in the religious teachings and amongst them the belief in the continuation of life after death.

With this and the other religious beliefs, it is possible to have an effective check on the pollution of the water, jungles, the incessant consumption of the underground resources and.... etc.

In addition, on the basis of this belief, it is possible to establish the foundations of a correct economic connection in the society and thus stop the economic trickery, fraud and treachery in check. Hazrat Ali ('a) has very sweet and eloquent statements in this regard. Amongst them, in one of his letters to one of his governors, who had misused some funds from the public treasury, after reprimanding and rebuking him, says

فسيبحان الله! أما تؤمن بالمعاد؟ أو ما تخاف نقاش الحساب؟"

Glory be to God! Do you not believe in Resurrection and do you not fear the accounting and"

the questioning (of that day?"[5] Hence, if one believes in the day of resurrection and does not forget it, he will never misappropriate the funds from the public treasury. A prominent example and a practical and perfect model of this reality is Hazrat Ali ('a) who has narrated the incident of himself and his brother Aqeel, whereby he states: " By God, I saw Aqeel disturbed and in a state of abject poverty. He wanted me to give him some of your wheat (public treasury) and I saw his children whom due to poverty had their hair disheveled and their skin darkened, as if color had been applied to their faces. He would keep visiting me and repeat his request. He imagined that I had given in to his requests.

Then I heated an iron piece and brought it close to him. He wailed out in a manner as a sick person would in pain. He was near to be scalded by the heated iron. I told him "May the criers cry over you as a mother cries over her burnt child. You wail of the iron which man has playfully made hot and wish to drag me into the fire, which the Powerful God has heated by His anger? You moan due to the suffering and I should not moan from the burning due to the anger of the Creator?"[6]

The Holy Qur'ân also, after threatening them with the sentence, "Woe unto the defrauders in :measuring", says

أَلَا يَظُنُّ أُولَئِكَ أَنَّهُمْ مَبْعُوثُونَ لِيَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ النَّاسُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

What! Think they not that they shall be raised. For a Mighty Day. On the day when men shall" stand before the Lord of the worlds?"[7] From these verses, it can be clearly understood that the belief in Resurrection refrains man from overcharging and other illegal economic actions. Perhaps the reason that the Holy Qur'ân mentions the name of the overchargers and threatens them, could be that one of the important economic problems and offences during the time of the revelation of the Holy Qur'ân and also throughout the eras, was and is, overcharging. Anyway, one of the most important results and effects of the belief of Resurrection, is moderation in the consumption, and non-performance of treachery and offence in the way of acquisition of income and also non-destruction of the economic resources and the .environment

Steadfastness in Jihad and the battlefield .6

One of the other most important effects of the belief in Resurrection is steadfastness in the battlefield and perseverance on the path of Truth. This is because, one not having faith in life after death, when confronted by an adversary, does not have the stimulus for being steadfast and at times being killed. As a result, he is always in a state of fear, hesitation and disturbance and at an opportune time shall readily take to flight. Such a person shall not only not show

steadfastness in the battle-field, but also, during his entire life, whenever he encounters any obstacle in the course of a divine or human objective, he shall change his course and altogether deviate from his path, objective and ideas. But one who believes in the life after death and considers it to be better, wider and more perfect, in the battle-field, not only does he not choose flight, but even fear does not overcome him. He believes in the Holy Qur'an, which mentions the final outcome of a soldier of a religious war and knows that eventually, he would either be victorious, or attain martyrdom and eternal happiness. The Holy Qur'an mentions the final outcome of a soldier fighting for truth as:

قُلْ هَلْ تَتَرَبَّصُونَ بِنَا إِلَّا إِحْدَى الْحُسْنَيْنِ وَنَحْنُ نَتَرَبَّصُ بِكُمْ أَنْ يُصِيبَكُمْ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابٍ مِنْ عِنْدِهِ أَوْ بِأَيْدِينَا فَتَرَبَّصُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ مُتَرَبِّصُونَ

Say: Do you wait for us but one of two most excellent things? And we wait for you that Allàh" will afflict you with punishment from Himself or by our hands. So wait; we too will wait with you." [8]

In short, the belief in the life after death is the cause for steadfastness, perseverance and incessant strivations in the battlefield and also during the entire life of a person and in all occasions which demand strife and struggle. The Holy Qur'an while mentioning the incident of a group from the Bani Israel who were under the command of Hazrat Saul (Talut) when embarking on a war with Goliath (Jalut) explains beautifully and subtly the mentality and the characteristics of those accompanying Hazrat Saul and the part played by the belief and the lack of belief in Resurrection saying

فَلَمَّا فَصَلَ طَالُوتُ بِالْجُنُودِ قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مُبْتَلِيكُمْ بِنَهَرٍ فَمَنْ شَرِبَ مِنْهُ فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي وَمَنْ لَمْ يَطْعَمْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي إِلَّا مَنْ اغْتَرَفَ غُرْفَةً بِيَدِهِ فَشَرَبُوا مِنْهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِنْهُمْ فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَهُ هُوَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ قَالُوا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا الْيَوْمَ بِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ قَالَ الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا اللَّهِ كَمْ مِنْ فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً كَثِيرَةً بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ وَلَمَّا بَرَزُوا لِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَتَبَّتْ أَقْدَامُنَا وَانْصَرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ فَهَزَمُوهُمْ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَقَتَلَ دَاوُودُ جَالُوتَ وَآتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَهُ مِمَّا يَشَاءُ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ لَفَسَدَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ

So when Talut departed with the forces, he said: Surely Allàh will try you with a river; Whoever then drinks from it, he is not of me, and whoever does not taste of it, he is surely of me, except he who takes with his hand as much of it as fills the hand; but with the exception of a few of them they drank from it. So when he had crossed it, he and those who believed with him, they said:

We have today no power against Jalut and his forces. Those who were sure that they would meet their Lord said; How often has a small party vanquished a numerous host by Allàh's

permission and Allàh is with the patient. And when they went out against Jalut and his forces they said: Our Lord pour down upon us patience, and make our steps firm and assist us against the unbelieving people. So they put them to flight by Allàh's permission. And Dawood slew Jalut..."[9]

The faith and belief in resurrection and life after death, made the Muslims and the soldiers at the time of the advent of Islam so much desirous of martyrdom that they did not in the least fear death and without any fear, alarm or disturbance of mind, they would bravely rush into the ranks of their enemies. This unbelievable morale and bravery was a cause for astonishment and perplexity for the unbelievers. As a result, the hypocrites, for justifying their fearfulness and the fearlessness of the real soldiers of Islam, said

إِذْ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ غَرَّ هَؤُلَاءِ دِينُهُمْ...

And when the hypocrites and those whom in their hearts is a disease said amongst themselves: Their religion has beguiled them." [10] The purport of the hypocrites from the above sentence was that the real soldiers and Muslims have been deceived by the faith in the resurrection and are warring, with manifest bravery and valor, for the purpose of the meeting their Lord.

It is interesting to know that during the Revolution and especially in the 8 years of the Holy Defense, we ourselves were witness to such morale and bravery that no justification other than the love for martyrdom, exists for it. And more interesting, the enemies and those weak in faith also made the same judgement as that made by the hypocrites of the era of the advent of Islam, that "these adolescents and youths have been deceived." Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that the effects of the belief in the resurrection are exhaustive, we shall content ourselves with these few examples, with the hope that we ourselves be among the true believers of the day of resurrection and also with the hope that Allàh, in every state and circumstance, especially on that Day, be our Helper

Notes:

[1] Muh'ammad Taqi Falsafi, Ma'ad az Nazar Rùh wa Jism, Vol. 1, Pg., 24.

[2] Nahjul Balàghah, Short sayings, Wisdom 138

[3] Ma'un (107):1-3

[4] Muddassir (74):43-46

[5] Nahjul Balàghah, Subhi Saleh, Letter No, 41

[6] Nahjul Balàghah, Subhi Saleh, Sermon No. 224. Translation by Dr. Syed Ja'far Shaheedi.

[7] Mutaffifeen (83):4-6

[8] Taubah (9):52

[9] Baqarah (2):249-251

[10] Anfâl (8):49