

Mind and Freedom

Tonight the son was eager to hear his father's experiences with the materialists and he didn't prepare any question in advance. He was ready to hear his father:

F My first experience with the materialists was before reaching puberty. I acquired my religious personality from the social environment where I grew up; my parents were honest believers; the school atmosphere was religious; and the city where I lived when I was young generally followed religious culture and practices. That's how I passed my childhood and was about to reach adolescence. I was a good believer in theory and practice, but... What kind of belief and faith? I followed and did what others did. I didn't know that such kind of faith wouldn't endure or last against the first encounter of doubt. This actually happened when I was thirteen years old; I was given a lot of attention from my geography teacher who was a communist and was planning to draw me closer to his beliefs and then enroll me in the communist party.

That was after he noticed my excellence at school and my ideological interests which were different and distinctive from those of my peers at that level of junior high school. The preliminary discussions between us were about simple insignificant religious matters. He intended to influence my thoughts while I intended to influence his. I was unaware of his plan of changing my ideology. After a few meetings, I noticed that he was avoiding direct clash with my religious thoughts. After a while he manipulated the discussion from simple cases to deeper concepts over ideology, the creation of the universe and monotheism. He gradually moved to discussing the existence of God but in a gentle way avoiding any direct clash which might end up with a strong reaction from me because of what I carried from my environment.

He had profound knowledge about the psychology of dealing with youth who have just begun to shape their own ideologies, and at this age, they also feel so confident and bumptious. Young people at this age deny what they don't believe in even if all mankind have unanimity upon.

This attitude might finally result in revolt and disobedience which is the basics for building new thoughts and ideologies. That's why missionaries and messengers try to attract the youth who make up a large proportion of people in adolescence in order support their thoughts and ideologies. The youth would

sacrifice themselves without caring for the harm they may get afterwards (as the cave companions did). You can see in the Arab world that the [political] parties originate among young students in schools and these thoughts become part of their daily lives until their graduation from university. It's extremely rare that an ideological stream chooses men in their forties or businessmen, or those who have large families.

S That's right Dad! I also noticed that most of the parties form students' unions which become the most powerful and active of all unions.

F But this is before getting the authority in their hands

S And after getting the power?

F Afterwards, they don't give people a chance to live at ease unless they show unconditional support. It's an opportunity for those to seize power in an illegal way and be in a position to crush people, deny them their basic rights and transform the government apparatus into a fearful tool against people.

S Do you think, Dad, that it is better to keep the authority in the hands of ideologists or in the hands of dictatorial and opportunists

F First of all, the question should be about the ideology. If the ideology is not Islamic, then it should not be considered as the best option. It should be rejected whether it's been carried by the ideologists or opportunists. If the ideology is Islam, the believers are responsible for protecting it. Neither rich nor those who believed in Islam after its victory are eligible for this responsibility. For, if we won, they would say: Weren't we with you? And if the infidels won or had a share, they would say to them: didn't we support you and prevented the believers from hurting you?

S OK Dad! Will you please continue about the teacher of geography?

F Yeah! This man utilized his knowledge about the psychology of the youth and discovered my love for reading just like your love for reading so he encouraged me to solve the problem of God existence by reading books. Thereby he advised me to read the book "The Origin of Kinds" written by an Egyptian unbeliever called Salama Mousa. But when he saw that I couldn't find the book, he lent it to me. Soon I started reading it.

S As far as I know, the book "The Origin of Kinds" is written by Darwin the one who established the theory, isn't it?

F Yes! The original book was written by Darwin and he was the one who formulated the theory of evolution and development. He has said: "All kinds of animals are from one origin and later they evolved and varied through natural selection according to the law of survival of the fittest, which assumes the survival of the fittest and death of the weak ones." Darwin chose this title for his book but the Coptic author (Salama Mousa), who was a representative of the Western ideology in the Islamic world, tried to

publicize these thoughts amongst Muslims.

He also named his book “The Origin of Kinds” and extracted his concepts from Darwin’s book. The book was written in a simple style to attract young people and to turn them away from religion much more than the original book of Darwin did.

S Why did Salama Mousa do that?

F Darwin did believe in God while Salama Mousa was not only an unbeliever but also a propagandist of the disbelief in God. Salama Mousa presented the theory in an attractive way avoiding the principal weak points. These weak points were mentioned by Darwin in his original book, which if one reads, he would feel that the author didn’t try to find an alternative for the faith in God, while Salama Mousa tried to mislead young people by claiming that the Darwin theory is an undisputable scientific fact and that this fact is the alternative of the myth which says that God is the creator. God is far greater than what those ignorant ones claimed.

S Well! What else?

F I read the book carefully... My belief started to crack... What is happening here? I’m facing scientific facts that said: Human species are not created by God, they evolved through a number of random steps; those steps were repeated many times and provided a countless numbers of types and species with different properties and characteristics; the weak species became extinct while the stronger ones survived during their evolution; therefore human beings are created in the same way. He claimed that science was supported by many facts and undeniable evidence and archeological discoveries. Should I respect my mind and accept those so-called scientific facts? Or respect my parents and society and accept what they taught me?

S It must have been a hard choice for you then!

F The information in the book was supported by striking photos which consolidated those facts. But he organized the information in a misleading way as to perplex and confuse simple minded readers. I was like a villager who has just come to the capital of his country wondering about everything with a feeling of awe, daze and happiness.

It was the first time I’ve read a book that destroys religion completely; it showed how what my people, society, family, everyone I knew including myself believed in was wrong; All traditions, religious practices, prayers and social relationships were false. What we believed in or practiced was either derived from religion or related to religion somehow and because the whole religion is based on faith of God, then everything would collapse if what this book claims turns to be true.

S This was a terrible feeling for anxiety could tear a human being and turn him into a feather in a blowing wind. I experienced this condition when you started your program with me. When you separated me

from the school of traditional faith to get me enrolled with a free will in the school of real faith. You've done well, Dad!

F Anyway, I decided to choose between my mind and my social environment... It's true that my social environment was precious to me but my mind was more precious. I was a young man who respected his mind which was capable of showing me the right path. So should I choose my mind but then... No... No... If I followed my mind then I would be disobeying my parents whom I loved and respected and respecting them was a moral and religious obligation...

What? Moral obligation? And religious obligation? What is moral? What is religion? God's law? What's God's law? Who is God? What is God? Is He the One, my mother told me about, or the one Salama Mousa called a myth? Should I follow women's opinions or the opinions of authors, intellectuals and prominent scientists? O God! What should I do? O God... Did I say "O God"? How can I call God when I doubt him? What was inside me that made me say "O God"... Was it myself, or part of myself, or what? A wind stormed inside my mind; I started reviewing everything... I decided to swim against the current but if I couldn't, I would rest on the bank to find out the right direction then swim again.

S What happened after that?

F After a long deep thinking, I decided to deal with the case rationally as well as morally. The rational approach means that I had decided to investigate the problem by research and rational examination and to judge the case accordingly. And if I reached a conclusion ñwhatever it wasñ I would believe in it and follow it whether it matched the inherited thoughts or not and whether the social environment agreed with it or not. However, from the moral point of view, it was fair not to show any hostility and conflict with the society because I was still in the investigation stage of ideology. So conflicting with the inherited and traditional customs was not rational before reaching the correct final conclusion.

S This was quite a sensible and rational decision.

How long did it take you to study the ideological issue?

F It took about two years. I was in doubt all the time and was trying to find a way out.

S What about your religious obligations during those couple of years... I mean did you, for instance, abandon prayers?

F Good question... I didn't make the mistake that young people usually commit during the doubt period... The majority of young people who encounter this stage, which is full of doubts about their religion, leave their prayers. After they pass this difficult period, however, they find it too hard to start praying again because they've quit calling God and ***"By no means! But on their minds is the stain of the (ill) which they do!"*** But I rationalize the problem this way :I thought after the doubt period I would reach one of two conclusions:

- o Either I would believe in God and the fact that religion, Heaven and Hell are reality,
- o Or I would discover that all the above-mentioned concepts are myths.

After considering both approaches, I thought which one was safer and better for my future: stop praying or continue it? The answer was quite clear... So I decided not to cease praying.

S You were like a student studying for an exam. But he/she is in doubt about whether a chapter is included or not in an exam and then he decided to study that chapter anyway to be on the safe side.

F Yes, exactly! In our Islamic history, there were many ideological streams posing doubts about the religious principles. Scholars and Imams confronted them with intellectual arguments and provided reasoning for every case. Those who are doubtful sometimes submit to rational proof and sometimes they wander away. Imam Jaafar al Sadeq has solved this problem when he tried the “precaution method” with Ibn Abi al-Ojae

S Who was this person, what did he say to him?

F Ibn Abi al-Ojae did not believe in the hereafter. So Imam Sadeq argued and said to him: “You see, if the truth was what you say, then we would all survive. But if the truth was what we have said – and it truly is, then we would be saved while you would be doomed.”

So, if the case is what you say (there is no God, Heaven or Hell), then we all will be saved from punishment. But if the case is what we say (the existence of God, Heaven and Hell), then we’ll be saved, while you’ll be punished. In both conditions, a believer will always be safe, but unbelievers would have 50% chance of survival. Thus, what does a sane person do when there is a possibility of danger?... And what kind of danger?... The danger of being in Hell. This method (precaution method) is what we adhere to in our daily life, and it is what I applied concerning the prayer, as I didn’t cease to pray throughout the doubt period.

S Dad! God was supporting you.

F That’s how I continued my prayers as I was looking for God, in order to find Him myself as you found Him yourself.

S But I found Him in no time.

F O Son! This is because of the program that God helped me to prepare for you... But in my case, I was navigating without any guide or compass.

S May God help you Dad! Please tell me how you spent your journey from doubt to faith?

F After I decided not to follow the inherited and traditional ideology and thoughts, I considered the fact that every single idea (without exception) might be either true or false and that the sole reasoning is the

mind. As I avoided following the ancestors, I decided not to be deceived by the superficial concepts, as well. So it wouldn't be rational to accept and confirm Western ideologies just because they came from the West and from technologically and industrially advanced countries.

The Western civilization has both the good and the bad. It's not wise to adopt what is bad through guidance to good aspects. Should we, for instance, import AIDS as we import medical sciences from the West? Or should we be selective and take science and leave the disease? Is it acceptable to follow their footsteps in everything because we respect their progress in technology? It's not wise to admire everything in the Western society. It is necessary to question every idea even if it's presented by someone who claims that it is a scientific concept. That's how I found out that Salama Musa had deceived me by presenting Darwin's theory as a confirmed scientific fact when later I found out that Darwin himself didn't fully believe what Salama Musa advocated. Salama was simply misleading his readers by leading them to Hell.

S So you started your research by rejecting both the imitation of traditional customs and the dazzle of every new or modern thing.

F Yes! It was so. I began reading books which were either proving the existence of God or denying His existence. In the beginning, I read the books, which were written by those scholars or semi-scholars, that were available in the bookstores... I found sincere attempts and honest intentions for guiding people to the right path but they addressed the older generation. Those sincere ones know neither today's language nor today's culture. Therefore, if the youth read those books, they will neither understand the language nor the content. Hence, the reader would abandon reading such books after just looking at the strange style of writing and the content of the first page. On the other hand, books which propagate atheism follow another strategy. Such books don't provide the reader with a direct and frank infidelity.

They usually provide the reader with information which is genuinely true but follows a wrong track. So when the reader pursues reading, he/she will find him/herself following a track that takes him/her far away from religion. He will neither be given an infidel's concept nor asked to publicly declare his deviation from religion, but he's inspired as if he had chosen freely to devalue religion without being asked to. The declaration of infidelity was a very rare concept that was adopted by the Eastern Bloc and the Soviet Union who were controlled by communism. It was just when the political parties began spreading the materialistic ideology, known as Dialectics Materialism.

It was a necessary step to penetrate politically inside the Soviet Union. Hence, Materialistic concepts, in this situation, were a conspiracy against Muslims to make them join the Eastern Bloc. The Western culture, which I carefully studied for many years, is not an atheistic one; it has an anti-religious attitude which means that it doesn't deny the existence of God frankly but it tries to create a kind of religious doubt as if it attempts to weaken human faith in God without fully destroying the concept of the Creator.

S What is the secret behind this, Dad?

F The same as the one in the communist concept... This is also some kind of preparation to encourage joining the Western policy because Christian people in the West do believe in God but they don't want Muslims to comply with their religion. This is because they know that Islam doesn't allow its followers to be enslaved by others "***And incline not to those who do wrong***", so they are bound to create suspicions about our religion and to separate Muslims from Islam to facilitate their politicians' intention. The colonization masters had utilized this condition in recent centuries. The Christian's missionaries were the first ones who involved in colonizing Muslims' countries. If you wish to know more details, you can read the book entitled "Missionaries and Colonization" to be more familiar with the facts.

S What is about Zionism?

F Zionism is a political-religious movement. In the last century, Western policy was dominated by Zionism. American Jews control 95% of the political and economic fields in America, while they don't make more than 5% of the American society. This new emerging force has played more decisive role in opposing Islam and alienating Muslims from their religion in order to attach them to the Western culture. They started by occupying Palestine which acted as nucleus for their greater vision of establishing greater Israel that spreads between the Nile and Euphrates rivers and using the whole world to serve their intentions as God's chosen people, as they claim. The Western powers have proved their enmity towards Islam during the last century.

This attitude can be proved through the double standard they have adopted towards Judaism, Christianity and Islam. They have extended their assistance and an unconditional support to Israel, the only country with religious system in the Middle East, while they have declared an open war against Iran and Sudan because of their inclination towards Islam. If the West is against religion, why do they support Israel? And if they are not against Islam, why are they against Iran and Sudan?

S Father! Do you remember Salman Rushdy's crisis?

F May God bless you. Salman Rushdy is an example of what I am saying. He did not claim that God is a myth. He mocked of the personality of the Prophet of Islam, his conduct and thoughts. The whole Western World, with its political and cultural institutions, moved to defend the intellectual freedom which was, according to them, demonstrated in Salman Rushdy's personality.

This paradox was carried further to the Western judicial system when a group of Muslims filed a lawsuit against Rushdy in the UK. The case was rejected! They found out that British law stands against slandering Christianity and Judaism but does not do the same for Islam! Therefore, according to the British law Rushdy cannot be punished for offending thousands millions of Muslims in the UK and across the world.

Can you see, son! If someone slanders Christianity or Judaism he would be persecuted but not if he slanders Islam. So freedom of expression works on one direction only, when it is alright to slander Islam and Muslims!

Similarly, it is the freedom of the dress code. If a woman in a western country decides to walk in the street nearly naked, no one will interfere with her individual personal freedom which should be protected by law. She is only using her right to choose the way she dresses! But when Muslim female students wear head scarves in France as their choice to dress, the French Minister of Education approved personally of expelling them from school! No personal freedom was practiced or protected!

S What vulgar bias they have practiced against Islam. It is an obvious fight against Islam under the name of freedom! Women have the right to reveal their bodies but are not permitted to wear head scarves! A writer has the right to slander Islam but not allowed to criticize Judaism!

F Another striking example is the case of Rogieh Garouy, the Marxist French philosopher who has embraced Islam after deep study and scrutiny. He was a respected cultural figure in France and enjoyed freedom of expression before embracing Islam. But, this freedom was taken away after he became a Muslim. He was persecuted for his research regarding the actual number of Jews killed by Nazis during the Second World War

S Is it a crime to discuss and question a historical event? Where is the freedom of intellect, then?

F Because it was about Jews.

S It is Zionism, then, that stands behind mottos of personal and intellectual freedom to serve its intentions and attack Islamic ideology.

F And the freedom of trade; it was intended to lift the boycott of Israel. Upholding free trade meant not mixing politics with trade. When Libya, Iran, or Sudan policies were not acceptable to the West, they applied economic sanctions on them and freedom of trade did not exist anymore for Muslim countries.

S Father! The same thing happened with democracy. They uphold democracy when it goes along with Western interests. They advocate people's right to choose their leaders through ballot voting while they support dictatorships against people's will when they choose Islam. This has happened in Turkey and Algeria in recent years. Democracy is not meant to be for Islam or to be a choice for Muslims, for example, Nixon, a president of the U.S.A., in his book "The Leaders" said: "If democracy was applied in Egypt or Saudi Arabia, it would be a catastrophe!"

Western deceit and double standard have been disclosed to the whole world.

Source URL: <https://www.al-islam.org/journey-fact-fakhri-mashkoor/mind-and-freedom#comment-0>