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## **Essential Centers**

If we carefully study the patterns of `jahiliyah' life throughout history, we find that `jahiliyah' society has many morbid symptoms and phenomena, from which the lights of belief, religion and guidance have been extinguished.

Also we discover the main centers on which human and social construction of the ignorant societies stand. These basic centers can be summed up as follows:

## 1. Ideological Deviation

The history of civilizations and their ideology, throughout the stages of the `jahiliyah' life, tell us that there is an ideological abnormality and deviation from the faith of monotheism.

This problem is regarded as the basic center and general rule for all ignorant beliefs beginning from the ancient nations, mentioned by the Holy Qur'an and ending with the ignorance of Arabs, Greeks, and including our modern, material civilization.

Therefore, man, in these ignorant societies, is abnormal and deviated in his thinking, understanding, and even in his explanation of existence and life. This ignorant man always thinks about material things, while he refuses moral and spiritual values. That is because ignorant thinking concerning the universe and life is simple and primitive.

This kind of thinking has made ignorant societies unable to recognize the existence of Allah and believe in His Apostles. Also this material thinking has made them unable to believe in One Allah, having perfect attributes and being far above the qualities of the created world.

Therefore, these ignorant societies turn to inactivity, refusing belief in the Creator, and believing in primitive images as idols to be worshipped instead of Allah. These images take on the cloak of godhood in these societies, and all morals are based upon satisfying the requirements of these images.

## 2. Emotional and Psychological Deviation

Throughout its different periods, 'jahiliyah' (global ignorance) stood on devious emotional and psychological principles. That is because the pure innate and sound psychological trends do not accept abnormality and deviation. Rather they accept the idea of righteousness and behavioral balance, and they help belief to flourish.

However, an ill and complicated personality always inclines towards straying from the line of psychological righteousness and balance which belief follows. So, the corrupt personality, which suffers from schizophrenia and weak will, or the personality which suffers from self-conceit, spite, haughtiness, selfishness, and sexual perversion always follows the ignorant system to express its ill complexes and psychological deviation. The Holy Qur'an often speaks about this ill personality.

It analyses its construction and depicts its inner content to make man aware and to teach social understanding which, in turn, make him avoid falling into this deep abyss. Allah, the Exalted, says:

"There is a disease in their hearts, so Allah added to their disease and they shall have a painful chastisement because they lied". Holy Qur'an (2:10)

"And they denied them unjustly and proudly while their soul had been convinced of them; consider, then how was the end of the mischief-makers". Holy Qur'an (27:14)

Through its diagnosis and analysis, the Qur'an points to the place of the illness and the starting point of the deviation bringing about a 'jahiliyah' in various stages of man's evolution. It is emotional deviation and psychological disease from which the 'jahili' (ignorant) person suffers.

He turns away from truth and guidance because of the influence of this disease. Although the truth is clear, the ignorant person refuses it and tries to get rid of the rules of psychological righteousness and rational beliefs and behavior.

Imam Ali (a.s) deeply analyses and describes this ill, ignorant, immoral and psychological situation by saying: "Desires had deflected them and self-conceit had swerved them. Extreme ignorance had made them foolish." "The sons of vanity, the brothers of fanaticism, and the horsemen of ignorance proved him to be true."

"So, they put out what was hidden in their hearts from the fires of fanaticism and the spites of ignorance." Consequently, in every period and generation, 'jahiliyah' (global ignorance) is distinguished by fanaticism, haughtiness, deviation, and psychological and moral abnormality.

#### 3. Behavioral Deviation

Among the basic center which contributes in creating and distinguishing the 'jahiliyah' society and individual is the state of behavioral abnormality and deviation. Deviation from righteousness and absorption in abnormal practices and habits are the most prominent marks among all ignorant societies.

In addition, these habits are the most visible social forms which show deviant, ignorant content. In our time we see marital and child abuse, child pornography, drug addiction, alcoholism, prostitution, homosexuality, political oppression and arrogance, and the coveting of wealth and power as signs of our modern day `jahiliyah'.

The Qur'an speaks about this ignorant deviation by unveiling this common feature among all ignorant societies. It says:

:So surely those who are unjust shall have a portion like the portion of their companions, therefore let them not ask Me to hasten on". Holy Qur'an (51:59)

"Soon will I (allow to) turn away from my signs those (who) unjustly are proud in the earth; while (even) if they see all the signs they will not believe in it; and (even) if they see the right way, they will not adopt it for a way; and if they see the way of error, they will adopt it for a way; this is because they belied Our signs and were heedless of them." Holy Qur'an (6:146)

"... and hinder (others) from the path of Allah and seek it to be crooked; these are in error far away (from the right path)." Holy Qur'an (14:3)

"So the roots of the people who were unjust were cut off; and all praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds." Holy Qur'an (6:45)

In this manner, the devious behavioral society is constructed and is a distinguishing mark of the ignorant individual throughout different periods and the succession of his generations until Allah inherits the earth and what is on it.

In other words, everywhere and every time the ignorant person plays, corrupts, commits crimes, spreads ruin and destruction, goes deeply into evil, and scorns all human values and life principles without any concern or sanction, he is guilty of 'jahiliyah'.

This ignorant person reaches this definite, inescapable result because he feels no sense of responsibility to the Almighty, Just Creator, and refuses to believe in the reward and punishment due on the Day of Judgment.

## The Results of Ignorant Deviation

Throughout history, mankind has been the scapegoat and the victim of ignorant deviation in his life. Mankind is responsible for the sins of its crimes and the results of its deviation.

The Qur'an refers to this fact and explains the results of such deviation and ignorant corruption which despoils life and turns it into an inferno and torture. Allah, the Exalted, says:

"... O mankind! your rebellion is against your own selves,..." Holy Qur'an (10:23)

"Mischief has appeared in the land and the sea on account of what the hands of people have wrought, that He may make them taste a part of what they have done, so that they may turn (away from evil)." Holy Qur'an (30:41)

The Qur'an has given this warning and shown the danger of it in order to urge man to resist 'jahiliyah' and face its crimes and deviation so that each person will be able to play his role and shoulder his responsibility in resisting jahiliyah and defending the will of life and the welfare of mankind.

Ignorant regimes like communism, capitalism, existentialism, racism, etc., and their corrupt influences on man are clear evidences of man's sufferings and misery. A closer look at the past and present history of 'jahiliyah'; will show:

1. The prevalence of materialism, and the absence of rational thought, which rises above material things and greedy selfishness and self-interest and balances the moral, material, and spiritual powers of man, respecting the interests of others, and honoring their rights in life.

This stonehearted material current has led to the death of moral values and victory for the opportunist selfish criteria. It has deadened the conscience of man and made him lazy in his awareness and sensitivity.

2. The appearance of conflict and crimes among men instead of love, peace, agreement, and cooperation. Chaos and social alienation have replaced stability, moral discipline, and balanced law. Thus, life becomes a jungle of conflict and an oasis of blood, hidden behind the bars of oppression, terrorism, and deviation.

The analysis of Imam Ali (a.s) for this awful phenomenon in the ignorant life is very accurate when he said: "And idols were worshipped, kinship was disregarded, and raids were made." "In vices which trampled the people under their hoofs, and trod upon them with their feet, and stood on their toes." "You ate filthy food. You shed blood of each other, and you disregarded your kinship"

So, this phenomenon of wars, destruction, and bloodshed, is the great common trait among all ignorant societies of the earth. And it is the terrible matter from which the angels asked in astonishment:

"... will You (O Our Lord) appoint therein one who will cause mischief and shed blood..." Holy Qur'an (2:30)

The modern materialistic 'jahiliyah' sheds more blood than in the past. We have the power of mass death and destruction to the point of "overkill".

We have learned and used the most diabolic methods of torture, murder, cannibalism, sexual perversity, violent crimes, and abuse. For this reason, peace has disappeared from the earth and the beating of peace and love has stopped in every heart.

3. The collapse of the individual's personality, and the absence of personal sanction–the death of the human conscience–which the Qur'an describes through its words:

"Thenceforth were your hearts hardened as stones or harder still..." Holy Qur'an (2:74)

When the conscience has died, human feeling has also disappeared along with the feeling of sympathy, justice and responsibility toward the humanity of others.

Thus, man has withdrawn into the darkness far away from the circle of light. He has lost the criteria, dispelled the will of good, mixed the values, and refused guidance and awareness.

These definite results of the 'jahiliyah' trends, which man has reached, are the bitter results caused by deviation and distance from the straight path of Allah and the call of the Prophets.

They are the results about which the Qur'an speaks and has put man face to face with them in order that he may know his responsibility and choose his role in life. The Qur'an describes these results as oppression, crimes, tyranny, going astray, deviation, cruelty, and animalistic. It says:

- "...but they behaved haughtily and they were a guilty people." Holy Quran (7:133)
- "... while (even) if they see the right way they will not adopt it for a way..." Holy Qur'an (7:146)
- "... and if they see the way of error, they will take it for a way..." Holy Qur'an (7:146)
- "...who went astray before and led many astray and went astray from the right path". Holy Qur'an (5:77)

"Corruption has appeared in the land and the sea on account of what the hands of men have wrought..." Holy Qur'an (30:41)

"...and We did them no injustice, but they were unjust to themselves". Holy Qur'an (16:118)

When the Qur'an places these facts before man and describes for him such phenomena, it wants him to rise against his ignorant reality and change the form of life and civilization so that he will be able to build

his life according to the guidance of belief and his society according to its rules and message.

This process begins by building his personality and changing his own psychological content.

# How can we get rid of ignorant backgrounds?

Generally, nations and peoples suffer from deep-rooted pagan `jahiliyah', which is regarded as the most dangerous one in history. It is the source of ignorant thoughts and the ill deviations from which the ancient nations suffered.

Today, the disease of ignorance and phenomena that afflicts the different nations and cause them to live in the ugliest scenarios in modern material civilization. In other words, modern man naturally and usually practices unbelief, atheism, moral corruption, oppression, aggression, greed, domination, exploitation, wars, destruction, and social chaos.

Even the Muslims, who believe in Islam, are forced or satisfied to follow these ignorant currents and decline into their deep abysses with the exception of those true believers who have understood this destructive danger, and who avoided it and refused to follow it.

Therefore, if we analyze society and its modern civilization, we will be able to divide both the individuals and their societies into three parts:

- 1. An ignorant society whose life embodies all ignorant aspects such as communism, capitalism, materialism, deviated religions, idol worship...etc.
- 2. Society in which individuals believe in Islam, but do not embody its beliefs in their lives nor apply it to their actions. Their society is also deviated and lost. It has no Islamic identity nor does it represent the original ideology. It imitates others in laws, art, literature, concepts, and method of life, in a manner which makes the social aspects and the form of general life similar to the ignorant form and the lost life which does not know originality and discipline.

Therefore, in such a society, it is usual to see nightclubs, bars, dissolute women, prostitution houses, usury banks, the system of the material life, the patterns of art, and the kinds of material culture, immoral literature, etc.

3. The faithful individuals who conform to Islamic beliefs, but are too few to form a social current to enable them to change the regime of life and mark Islam on the personality of the civilization stand apart and isolated in their society. They are deprived of the legitimate benefits of a healthy society.

Therefore, the total application and the full conforming to Islam, as a faith, a way of life, law, and behavior in order to achieve the sincere worship for Allah, the Glorified, are not naturally applied in the life of our societies nor embodied in our public life.

For this reason, in our life, concepts, behavior, regime, and laws, there are many ignorant foundations and non–Islamic concepts which came to us from both Eastern and Western ignorant and material thoughts. Such thoughts feed our own thoughts, our life, and our concepts.

Regarding this cultural invasion and influence, Muslims should sincerely do their best and devote their efforts in order to make essential changes, uproot 'jahiliyah' (global ignorance) and demolish its rules and pillars.

Therefore, Muslims should build their personalities and their society according to Islamic values, ideas, and principles. The following Qur'anic verse should be their example in life:

"And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong, and these it is that shall be successful." Holy Qur'an (3:104)

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