

Sincerity to Islam

Tameem bin Aws Ad-Dhari narrated that the Prophet (saw) said three times: «الدين» **«Religion is Naseeha (Sincerity)»**. The Companions of the Prophet (saw) asked “To whom Oh Messenger of Allah?” The Prophet (saw) said: «لله، ولكتابه، ولرسوله، ولأنمة المسلمين، وعامتهم» **«To Allah, to His Book, to His Messenger, to the Imams (leaders) of the Muslims and to their common folk.»** [Reported by Muslim]

There is much for the Ummah to reflect upon this hadith particularly at a time when we have lost the Islamic Khilafah (Caliphate) for more than a hundred years. The word ‘Naseeha’ has a broader meaning that cannot be confined to giving advice alone. Linguistically, the word ‘Naseeha’ means being sincere as mentioned in the dictionary Al-Muhit which denotes the word ‘Nasaha’ to ‘Khalasa’ i.e., to be sincere. Accordingly, advice is given only when a person is sincere to what he advises. Otherwise, it will not be considered as advice due to the absence of sincerity; in that case a person gives instruction to others only to deceive him or misguide into the abyss. Thus, giving advice is the effect of being sincere to others, which the word ‘naseeha’ means i.e. to give advice sincerely. Prophets conveyed the Messages to the people with sincere advice (naseeha) without expecting any recompense from them. Allah (swt) mentions the sincere advice of the prophets in Surah Ra'd. In the Quran mentions that Prophet Nuh (as) said **﴿أَبْلَغُكُمْ رَسُولَ رَبِّي وَأَنْصَحُ لَكُمْ وَأَعْلَمُ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾** **“I am conveying to you my Lord’s messages and giving you sincere advice. And I know from Allah what you do not know.”** [TMQ 7:62]. Prophet Hud (as) said: **﴿أَبْلَغُكُمْ رَسُولَ رَبِّي وَأَنَا لَكُمْ نَاصِحٌ أَمِينٌ﴾** **“I am conveying to you my Lord’s messages. And I am your sincere advisor.”** [TMQ 7:68]. Prophet Salih (as) said: **﴿فَتَوَلَّى عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَاقَوْمِ لَقَدْ أَبْلَغْتُكُمْ رَسُولَ رَبِّي وَنَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ وَلَكِنْ لَا تُحِبُّونَ النَّصِيحِينَ﴾** **“...And He said “O my people! Surely I conveyed to you my Lord’s message and gave you sincere advice, but you do not like sincere advisors.”** [TMQ 7:79]. Prophet Shoaib (as) said: **﴿فَتَوَلَّى عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَاقَوْمِ لَقَدْ أَبْلَغْتُكُمْ رَسُولَ رَبِّي وَنَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ فَكَيْفَ آسَى عَلَى قَوْمٍ كَافِرِينَ﴾** **“...And He said “O my people! Indeed, I have delivered to you the messages of my Lord and gave you sincere advice. How can I then grieve for those who chose to disbelieve?”** [TMQ 7: 93].

In the above hadith, the description of Islam being ‘Naseeha’ to Allah, His Book, His Messenger, to the leaders and to the common folks has broader meanings as Imam Nawawi commented on the hadith by saying,

“As for the sincerity to Allah (swt), its meaning refers back to having iman (faith) in Allah, and the denying of partnership to him, and abandoning the misinterpretation regards to His Attribute, and describing Him (swt) with the qualities of completeness, perfection, and greatness whilst declaring Him completely free from any defects or deficiencies. Sincerity to Allah means obedience to Him, refraining from the disobedience to Him, loving and hating for His sake, keeping good relations with those who obey Him, having enmity towards those who disobey Him, performing Jihad against those who disbelieve in Him, recognizing and thanking Him for His favors, being sincere in all affairs and calling and urging to everything mentioned above, and showing kindness to all people or to all those whom it is possible.” Imam al-Khattabi said, “The reality of this attachment refers back to the servant being sincere to himself, since Allah (swt) does not need the sincerity of anyone.”

As for the sincerity to His Book, it is to believe that it is the Speech of Allah (swt) and His Revelation, and that nothing from the speech of creation resembles it; no one from the creation is able to match it. Sincerity to His Book means to give it due respect by reciting it rightfully as it should be, reciting it beautifully while having *Khushu'*, correctly reciting its letters, defending it from the misinterpretation of the people who make *tahrif* (corruption and changes) and from the onslaught of those who attack it, believing in what is in it, affirming its rulings, understanding its sciences and examples, taking heed over its warnings, pondering over its amazing matters, acting upon those things that are clear (Muhkam), submitting to those that are Mutashabih, searching for its generality, particularity, abrogation and abrogating, spreading its sciences and calling for it and for the those which we have mentioned of being sincere to the Book.

As for sincerity to the Messenger of Allah (saw), it is to believe in his Message and in all what he comes with, obeying him in what he ordered and prohibited, supporting him in life and in death, showing enmity to those who are his enemies, being ally with those who have allegiance to him, respecting his rights and honor, reviving his method and Sunnah, spreading his da'wah (call), and his shari'ah (law), denying any allegation to the call, giving full attention to the sciences of Hadith and understanding of its meaning, calling for the ahadith, having mildness and kindness in learning and teaching the ahadith, giving due importance and manners when reading it, withholding from speaking about it without due knowledge, giving due respect to its people because of their attachment to it, taking on board its manners and conduct, loving the Ahlul-Bayt (family of the Prophet), and his Companions, and avoiding those who introduce bida' (innovations) into his Sunnah and those who attack any of his companions.

As for the Sincerity to the (legitimate) Leaders, it is to help them upon the truth, obeying them in it, enjoining them with it, reminding and advising them with kindness and gentleness, reminding them of that which they are heedless and neglectful of, helping them fulfil those rights of the Muslims that have not reached them yet, not to rebel against them, and encouraging the hearts of the people with obedience to them. Imam al-Khattabi says, "Amongst the sincerity to them is praying behind them, performing Jihad along with them, giving zakat to them, and not to rebel against them with the sword when injustice or bad treatment appears from them. And that they are not praised with false praises, and that du'a (supplication) is made for their righteousness." All of this is based upon the fact that what is meant by the leader of the Muslims is the khalifah, and other than him from amongst those who take charge of the affairs from the people of affairs. This is the predominant view (about Imams of Muslims). Imam al-Khattabi then also says, "And it may also refer to the Imams who are the scholars of the Religion. And that sincerity to them includes accepting what they report, following them as regards rulings, and to have good thoughts about them."

As for the sincerity to the general Muslims, "they are those who are other than the rulers. Sincerity is to guide them to what is beneficial for them, both in the Hereafter and in this life, keep harm away from them in such a way that one who is sincere teaches them of what they are ignorant of as regards the Religion, helping them in this by words and actions, concealing their faults, fulfilling their needs and wants, removing what is harmful to them, bringing what is beneficial to them, enjoining them with good and forbidding them from evil, with gentleness, sincerity, and compassion for them, having respect for their elderly, and respect for their young, giving them good admonition, not acting deceitfully towards them, loving the good things for them which he would love for himself, hating the bad things for them which he would hate for himself, protecting their wealth, reputation, and other than that, with

sayings and actions, encouraging them to take on the character of all that we have mentioned, from all the types of sincerity, enlivening their feeling for acts of obedience”. (Imam Nawawi’s Sharh Sahîh Muslim (2/38]).

Sincerity to the religion is obligatory upon all in their own capacities including those who are excused and weak as Allah (swt) says, **لَيْسَ عَلَى الضَّعَفَاءِ وَلَا عَلَى الْمَرْضَى وَلَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ مَا** ﴿لَيْسَ عَلَى الضَّعَفَاءِ وَلَا عَلَى الْمَرْضَى وَلَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ مَا﴾ **“There is not upon the weak or upon the ill or upon those who do not find anything to spend any blame (to stay behind from fighting) when they are sincere (Nasaha) to Allah and His Messenger.”** [TMQ 9:91].

Oh Sincere Muslims! When Islam is absent from the life, when the Quran is not implemented amongst the people, when the Message of the Prophet (saw) is denied, not to mention the continuous defamation against him, it is obligatory for every Muslims in their own capacities to be sincere to Islam, Allah, His Book, His Messenger (saw), and to the Ummah. Sincerity is needed for the intentions, words and actions. Accordingly, it is upon the rulers in the Muslim land to be sincere to Islam by implementing Islam completely, severing the ties of colonial masters and serving for the interests of the Ummah as they are capable to do so. Mere rhetoric words devoid of sincere actions are regarded to be insincere to Islam. It is upon the Muslim armies to be sincere to Islam by supporting the establishment of Khilafah, liberating the occupation of Muslim lands and removing the oppression of weak and oppressed as they are capable to do so. Siding with the oppressive rulers in their oppression is not regarded to be sincere to Islam. It is upon the Muslim scholars to be sincere to Islam by encouraging the Muslims for the return of Islam into the arena of life. Mere academic studying of Islam without calling for its implementation in the reality is regarded to be insincere to Islam. When Muslims are afflicted all around the world whose affairs are not managed according to the dictation of Islam, it is upon the common Muslims to be sincere to Islam by looking at the Ummah as a whole and not as divided by artificial colonial borders and calling for the establishment of Khilafah that protects the Ummah, implements Islam and carries it to the world.

﴿وَذَكِّرْ فَإِنَّ الذِّكْرَ تَنْفَعُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

“And remind, for indeed, the reminder benefits the believers.” [TMQ 51:55]

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