

Collective Spirit and Sense of Responsibility

(Translated)

One of the important issues, and fundamental issues, in Islam is the issue of collective work, and the collective spirit among Muslims and within Islamic society. Islam has been keen to form the collective spirit among Muslims, and the sense of responsibility towards others. This is in contrast to the capitalist thought that has an individualistic tendency, and is the enemy of the collective spirit.

So reflect with me over the hadith of the Messenger of Allah (saw) who said, « مَثَلُ الْقَائِمِ عَلَى حُدُودِ اللَّهِ وَالْوَاقِعِ فِيهَا كَمَثَلِ قَوْمٍ اسْتَهَمُوا عَلَى سَفِينَةٍ فَأَصَابَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَعْلَاهَا وَبَعْضُهُمْ أَسْفَلَهَا، فَكَانَ الَّذِينَ فِي أَسْفَلِهَا إِذَا اسْتَقَوْا مِنَ الْمَاءِ مَرُّوا عَلَى مَنْ فَوْقَهُمْ فَقَالُوا: لَوْ أَنَا خَرَقْنَا فِي نَصِيبِنَا خَرْقًا وَلَمْ نُؤْذِ مَنْ فَوْقَنَا. فَإِنْ يَتْرَكُوهُمْ «**The example of those who maintain Allah's limits (Hudood) and those who surpass them is like the example of those who share a boat. Some would occupy its upper deck and some its lower deck. The occupants of the lower deck would have to go to the upper deck to have access to the water. If they said, why don't we drill a hole in our part (to directly access the water) and do not cause any inconvenience to those above us. If those on the upper deck let them do what they wanted, then all of the passengers would sink. However, if they prevented them from doing so then all would be saved.**» [Bukhari]

This Hadith of the Prophet (as) is evocative in embodying the thought through a visualization that no one who visualizes it can help but accept the depth of the thought, and the correctness of the judgment. The hadith linked the fate of the individual with the fate of the society in which he lives. So he and the community will either survive together, or perish together. This is in contrast to the capitalist thought that has established individualism, to the point that it has formed a conviction among its adherents, that whoever interferes in what does not concern him, will encounter that which does not please him!

That is why you see crimes and obscenities taking place in Western societies in public, and among crowds, without anyone intervening to support the oppressed or prevent the oppressor. The murderer kills, the adulterer rapes, and the thief steals, while the people around him watch, and perhaps record the scene for memory and entertainment. You find that the murderer, thief, or rapist only takes into account the police and security forces. He does not care about the number of people around him, large or small, as long as there is no security or police among them. How many scenes have been captured by cameras and shared by thousands, depicting a weak woman or a defenseless child being killed or tortured in cold blood, without anyone around him moving a muscle, so they pass by as if nothing happened. This is because of the individualistic outlook and individualistic thinking that capitalism has established in Western societies, to the point that they have come to believe that no one has the right to interfere in their private affairs, and that they themselves have no right to interfere in the affairs of others.

