

THE IDEAL REVOLUTION
BY
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THE IDEAL REVOLUTION BY THE IDEAL PROPHET

At the time of the advent of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) the whole world was in a state of wide-spread moral disorder. Religions were at war with one another. Monarchs stricken with land-lust planned to grab the neighbouring countries. They also tyrannised over their own subjects. The then-prevailing conditions are succinctly described in the Quranic verse :

ظهر الفساد في البر و البحر

“Corruption has appeared on land and sea”
(30 : 42).

There was chaos everywhere. The Jews and the Christians made confusion worse confounded by claiming to monopolise truth. The Holy Quran refers to this religious intransigence by saying :

و قالوا لن يدخل الجنة الا من كان هوداً او نصارى

“And they say, ‘None shall ever enter Heaven unless he be Jew or Christian’ ” (2 : 112).

They further claimed, as the Holy Quran points out :

نحن ابناء الله و احباؤه

“We are sons of Allah and His loved ones”
(5 : 19).

Here in India, the Hindus flaunted similar claims of the sole possession of divine truths and looked

down upon others as the scum of the earth.

It can be well imagined that the masses then, as now, must be the victims of indescribable atrocities. Religion, (which should bring salvation,) in its decadent state had become a millstone round their necks. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) redeemed the suffering humanity by an ideal revolution which forged bonds of fraternity between the rich and the poor. It was a death-blow to the imperialism of those days. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) was immune against the contagious influences of the gorgeous monarchies. He commanded such devotion as was unknown to the contemporary kings. But even this absolute sovereignty did not adversely affect his affectionate attitude to the poor nor did it instil in him a desire or an ambition for monarchical rule as was the fashion in those days.

Ideological Break with Past

Contrary to the fashion of his time, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) laid the foundations of genuine democracy. God commanded the Holy Prophet to conduct the affairs of the state in consultation with the people in these words :

شاورهم في الأمر

“Consult them in the administrative affairs.”

By this revolution, a way was opened for the poor to have a say in the governance of their affairs. It eliminated all chances of exploitation of the poor by the Capitalists. It also left little or no room for

the splitting up of society into "Haves" and "Have-nots".

On the top of all, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) did not claim for himself any exemption from the divine laws. It was and still is the rule that the king is considered above all laws. In countries where there is Personality Cult, the person in power is not subject to the law of the land. He cannot be summoned by the courts. His actions cannot be discussed in the legislature. This reduces the sovereignty of law to nullity and breeds all sorts of corruption. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) had a deep insight into human nature. He did not claim to be above the divine law and thus sealed off all avenues for mischief. He said:

انى اخاف ان عصيت ربي عذاب يوم عظيم

"I fear, if I disobey my Lord, the punishment of an awful day" (10:16).

No Privileged Class

This was a genuine revolution as it proclaimed that all are equal in the eyes of law. In a monarchical system it is said: "The king can do no wrong." It means that law is subservient to the will and whim of the ruler. It scatters all moral basis of law and provides incentive for aggression and exploitation. Capitalism thrives under monarchy. But it dies a natural death under a system inaugurated by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him), because it upholds the supremacy of

law. It leaves no room for favouritism or nepotism. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) did not award lands to his relatives, although they were the first to fight the enemies. His uncle Hazrat Hamzah (God be pleased with him) met a martyr's death. His cousin Hazrat Ja'far (God be pleased with him) died fighting. Thus the Holy Prophet himself and his dearest and nearest bore the heaviest responsibilities in propagating Islam. But they never aspired for any rewards for their heroic deeds. Thus the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon) did not create a Privileged Class. As a matter of fact by his own precept and example as well as of his dearest and nearest, he made the emergence of such a class impossible. Thus he bridged the yawning gulf between the rich and the poor.

Public Treasury and the Poor

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) allowed the poor to claim a share in the Public Treasury. His one proclamation was :

من مات و ترك مالا فلوا رثه

“If any one died and left some property, it was for his heirs”.

His other proclamation which supplemented the first one was :

من مات و ترك ديناً او ضياعاً فالى و على

“If any one dies and leaves unpaid debts and small children, they should come to me (the

Holy Prophet). I would pay the deceased's debt and would upbringing his children."

Duty of the Rich

God has allowed the poor to share in the wealth of the affluent persons. The Holy Quran says :

و مما رزقتهم ينفقون

"They spend out of what We have provided for them" (2 : 4).

There is an ideal social philosophy enshrined in the verse. God grants riches and commands the rich to spend a sizeable portion of it on the welfare of the poor out of what He has given them. Thus it is evident that all wealth held by the rich people really belongs to God. It is incumbent on them to spend their money to ameliorate the lot of the destitute and the indigent. With a view to creating an incentive for spending on the poor, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) laid down a humanitarian formula by saying:

المخلوق عيال الله فان احبهم الى الله انفعهم لعياله

"The whole humanity is the family of God. God loves him best who is helpful to His family."

He supplemented this sacred formula by saying:

ان العباد كلهم اخوة و آدم من تراب

"All men are brethren and are descendants of Adam who was born of clay."

There is an empty formula bruited about, under the secular regimes which also say that men are brethren among themselves. But this equality is devoid of economic significance.

No Racial Distinction

In his Farewell Sermon, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) proclaimed :

لا فضل لعربي على عجمي ولا لعجمي على عربي ولا لاسود على احمر
ولا لاحمر على اسود

“No Arab is superior to the non-Arab nor is the non-Arab superior to the Arab nor is the Black Negro superior to the White Man nor is the White Man superior to the Black Negro.”

The irrefutable plea for the equality of human beings was supported by another formula:

ان اباؤكم واحد و ربكم واحد

“Indeed you are the progeny of one father and the creatures of One God.”

Thus the principle of equality was based on biological reasoning. The human dignity was ensured by the divine declaration :

ولقد كرّمنا بني آدم

“We have honoured the children of Adam”
(17:71).

It contains a severe denunciation of the exploitation of a human being under any guise or guile.

As the question of superiority cannot be ignored, the apprehensions on this score have been set at rest by another Divine proclamation :

ان اكرمكم عند الله اتقاكم

“Most honourable among you, in the sight of Allah, is he who is the most righteous among you” (49:14).

A man who cherishes an ever-present fear of God will scrupulously refrain from enslaving other human beings even though he may have the means of doing so. Thus a God-fearing industrialist or a tycoon will be full of the milk of human kindness.

No Class War

Thus Islam scores a distinct triumph over Communism and Socialism, because it eliminates exploitation by establishing real pulsating fraternity and by making the affluent Section answerable to God for their treatment towards the poor. Socialism and Communism declare that the rich are necessarily and unavoidably the enemies of the poor. Thus these philosophies kindle the fire of class-war. If under Capitalism, it was the Possessing Class which victimised the Dispossessed Class, under the Socialistic Regime, it is the Dispossessed Class which wreaks vengeance on their erstwhile masters and bosses by dispossessing them.

Islam saddles the rich with the responsibility of fulfilling the needs of the needy. It also enjoins the poor to abuse their minds of all jealousy. As a matter of fact, when the rich behave benevolently and do so as a duty, the question of jealousy does not arise. Once Sa'd bin Muaz came to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him). The Prophet addressed the gathering and said :

قوموا الى سيدكم

“Stand up to receive your leader.”

Thus the Holy Prophet bound the hearts of the rich and the poor with "hoops of steel" and left no room for ill-will. He impressed upon the wealthy people the indispensability of the poor by saying :

الا تنصرون و ترزقون بضعفاء كم

"It is the poor who help you and the abundance of your wealth is due to their services."

God enjoins the rich to be generous to the poor, not for any mundane ends, but to seek the pleasure of God:

ابتغاء مرضات الله

It is further emphasised thus:

ويطعمون الطعام على حبه مسكيناً و يتيماً و اسيراً انما نطعمكم لوجه الله لا نريد منكم جزاء و لا شكورا

"And they feed, for the love of Him, the poor, the orphan, and the prisoner, saying, We feed you for Allah's pleasure only. We desire no reward nor thanks from you" (76:9-10).

Lest the rich should lord it over the poor after doing some acts of benevolence, God warns them against this attitude by saying:

لا تبطلوا صدقاتكم بالمن و الاذى

"Render not vain your alms by taunt and injury" (2:265).

In the light of this directive, a rich man does not put a poor man under a debt gratitude by rendering him financial aid. He just does his duty. He cannot demand and command his whole-sale subservience. He ruins his own charity, if he parades it in such a way as to hurt the poor man's sentiments or to inflict on him a corrosive sense of inferiority.

Spiritual Comradeship

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) was so keen on maintaining an atmosphere of fraternity that he invariably used the words *sāhib* and *akhee*. God used *sāhib* and *akhee* in the Holy Quran:

ماضل صاحبكم و ما غوى

“Your Companion has neither erred nor has he gone astray” (53:3).

“When he said to his companion grieve not” (9:40).

The second word also occurs in the Quranic verse:

انما المؤمنون اخوة

“Surely all believers are brothers” (49:11).

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) addressed a slave, Hazrat Zaid (God be pleased with him) thus:

انت اخونا و مولانا

“You are our brother and friend.” When Hazrat Umar went to Mecca to perform *Umrah*, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) addressed him thus:

يا اخانا لا تنسانا من دعائك

“My brother! When you are in Ka‘bah and are engaged in prayer, do not forget to pray for me also.”

This request for “remembering him in prayer” by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) enraptured the heart and mind of Hazrat Umar (God be pleased with him). He said:

و فقال كلمة لا يسرفني ان لي بها الدنيا

“This expression from the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) has filled me with such pleasure as I could never get even if the whole world had been given to me.” Can there be more inspiring expression than this? Can the followers of other religions expect such expressions of fraternal equality from their spiritual preceptors? Even in the Muslim Society today, the religious leaders do not allow their followers to feel free in their presence. It is because they are more concerned with their personal prestige than with the prestige of the teachings of Islam which have eclipsed other rival religious and secular doctrines by constant emphasis on the principle of equality and fraternity. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon) set an attractive and elevating example by his own conduct.

Priestcraft—A Danger

The Holy Quran has warned the believers against the economic ravages of the theologians and high-priests. The Holy Quran says:

يا ايها الذين آمنوا ان كثيراً من الاحبار و الرهبان لياكلون اموال الناس
 بالباطل ويصدون عن سبيل الله

“O ye who believe! surely many of the priests and monks devour the wealth of men by false means and turn men away from the way of Allah” (9:34).

It is now an open secret that some ulama also have a hand in bolstering Capitalism by devious interpretations of the Quranic injunctions. The above-quoted verse draws pointed attention to their ex-

plottation of society. The Muslims are forewarned against the aggrandizement of the theologians in complicity with the Possessing Class. To make the warning effective, the money-grabbing tricks are denounced as obstacles in the way of God, because equitable utilization of national wealth for the national welfare is regarded as synonymous with the way of Allah. These accomplices of the Capitalists are severely warned against the consequences of their dealings with them. The Holy Quran says :

يكنزون الذهب و الفضة و لا ينفقون في سبيل الله فبشرهم بعذاب اليم

“And those who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah—give to them the tidings of a painful punishment” (9:34). It would thus be seen that accumulation of wealth into a few hands is repugnant to the spirit of Islam.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) also laid bare the cause of capitalistic tendency in the Muslim society. Addressing the Muslims, the Holy Quran says :

فاستمعوا بخلاقهم فاستمتعتم بخلاقكم كما استمتع الذين قبلكم

“They enjoyed their lot for a short time so have you enjoyed your lot as those before you enjoyed their lot” (9:69).

A time was to come when the so-called Muslim divines would adopt the repulsive technique of the Jewish highpriests. They would fabricate fiats to justify their aggrandisement. Islam delineated the causes of moral decay culminating in a mad pursuit of worldly riches. The aim of all this

is to discipline our avocations and hold in leash our lust for riches.

Welfare Funds

The Holy Quran has directed the opulent sections to take interest in the welfare of the poor. It says:

و في اموالهم حق لسائل و المحروم

“And in their wealth was a share for one who asked for help and for one who could not” (51:20).

Islam has established certain funds for the welfare of the destitute. They are:

(1) *Fitrana*

At the end of the month of Ramazan, the fasting Muslims celebrate Eid. It is compulsory to pay *fitrana* before the Eid prayers. If a regular machinery is set up for the collection of the *Fitrana* money, it can run into crores which can be utilized for the uplift of the poor people. This fund can grow from year to year.

(2) *Zakat*

It is for the Islamic State to collect *Zakat* which also will bring ample money to ameliorate the conditions of the down-trodden people.

(3) *Wills*

The rich people should will a part of their legacy for the benefit of the poor people. In this connection, the examples of the Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him)

are really worthy of emulation.

(4) *Charity*

Every Muslim is exhorted to be charitable. This is referred to in the Holy Quran :

المتصدقين و المتصدقات

“Men who give alms and women who give alms” (33 : 36).

If the Quranic injunctions are properly implemented, they can bring into being a prosperous and progressive society and plan out poverty and starvation.

The Holy Prophet's Own Example

As the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) has been held up by God as the Sublime Exemplar (اسوة حسنه), he took pride in a voluntary poverty by saying :

الفقر فخرى

He lived at the level of a common Muslim. He ate simple food and wore simple dress. When he breathed his last, Hazrat Aeyshah (God be pleased with her) said :

ما ترك رسول الله عند وفاته درهماً ولا ديناراً لا شاة ولا بعيراً ولا
أمة ولا عبداً

“He, the Prophet of God, at the time of death left neither any *dirham*, nor *dinar*, nor goat, nor camel, nor maid-servant nor man-servant.

His mortal remains were buried in an ordinary grave. This is a rare instance of a sovereign and the beloved of God who exemplified in his person

human equality both in life and in death.

The Holy Quran does not reduce all to the dead level of meaningless equality. It says :

ولكن درجات بما عملوا

“And for all are degrees of rank according to what they did” (46:20).

Every one is graded in the Islamic social set-up according to the beneficial nature of his actions. Thus there is a wholesome gradation which is not detrimental to the genuine well-being. As a matter of fact it is conducive to social welfare.

George Bernard Shaw on Islam and Its Founder

It was the Ideal Revolution by the Ideal Prophet which evoked jubilant acknowledgement from George Bernard Shaw who observed: “If any religion has the chance of ruling over England and Europe within the next hundred years, it can only be Islam. I have always held the religion of Muhammad in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to possess the assimilating capacity to the changing phase of existence which can make its appeal to every age. I believe that if a man like Muhammad were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it much-needed peace and happiness. I have prophesied about the faith of Muhammad that it would be acceptable to the Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be accepted by the Europe of today.”

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