

Nature of Modern Problems

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Introduction

Man falls prey to misunderstanding which becomes the root cause of all negative thinking. But at the same time, we must bear in mind that negativity is a superficial emotion. Man's nature is much more powerful and as such is an eternal ray of positivity. Once his nature gets addressed, man follows the straight path with utmost conviction.

According to a verse in the Quran,

God will surely help him who helps His cause (22:40)

"Help" here does not have a mysterious connotation. It means that God shall put an end to all sorts of undesirable propaganda against those who get up to perform the work of God by activating the divine nature inside their direst opponents.

The following verse of the Quran reiterates the importance of being eternally hopeful and conveys there being no room for frustration or despair in the scheme of things as laid down by God.

Do not despair of God's mercy; none but those who deny the truth despair of God's mercy. (12:87)

Problems today

People underestimate the gravity of modern-day problems like pollution of water and air, rising levels of carbon emission, global warming etc. In my opinion, these problems are indicators that point towards the beginning of the end. These indications are a reminder for man so that he realises that nobody has the power to intercede in God's scheme of things.

The beginning

The beginning of this process can be traced back to the first man – Prophet Adam. He and his wife were asked to dwell in Paradise without paying any price for it. Explained in the following verse of the Quran, this instance had a crucial lesson for man:

We said, O Adam! Live with your wife in paradise and eat freely from it anywhere you may wish. Yet do not approach this tree lest you become wrongdoers. (2:35)

In other words, God created the first pair of humans - Adam and Eve and settled them in paradise. There was however one condition for their stay that they must not go near the forbidden tree. But Adam and Eve could not for long resist the continuous incitement by Satan and eventually ate the fruit of the forbidden tree. This transgression from the prescribed limit, even by a Prophet was not to be tolerated in God's scheme of things. This was however a temporary ouster from paradise for man. The important lesson therefore is that **man possesses restricted freedom** and any transgression would lead to man being declared as a transgressor and permanently ousted from paradise.

Underestimation of the problem

Man often underestimates the commandments laid down for him to follow. Prophet Adam had also underestimated the restriction and thought, “*What is haram in eating the fruit of the Forbidden Tree?*” However, it is imperative to bear in mind that **underestimation of an issue does not change the course of its result**. It is beyond the capacity of man to do so.

It is man’s destiny to be permanently ousted from paradise and no one has the power to alter this course. The signs of this event have begun to show up already and if man is removed from this life-sustaining planet and taken to a planet where there is no water, air or food then what would happen to him, how he will survive - needs no elaboration.

Philosophically justified transgression

Prophet Adam was ousted from paradise because he had become a transgressor. He had crossed the limit on a small issue; however, today’s man has crossed the limit in every aspect. Prophet Adam’s transgression was a result of temptation and wasn’t philosophically justified as are the evils of today. Predicting the coming of an age abounding in ideologically justified evils, a Hadith states:

In the time to come, there would emerge 30 dajjals (deceptions). (Musnad Ahmad)

Charles Darwin for example, propounded the theory of the origin of species. In his theory, God played a trivial role of producing an amoeba, rest of the creation came into existence due to natural processes of selection and survival. Darwin therefore accepted a reduced-form of God.

Upon thinking, it can be realised that it is more than ridiculous to believe in God as being merely the Creator of an amoeba. Nobody can fear or be accountable to such a God. Darwin’s theory, therefore, displaced God from His position of greatness and shrouded the world in a philosophically justified idea where God had little or no role to play. It is the coming of such an age that has been alluded to in the following hadith:

Before the Doomsday, there will come an age marred by many deceptions. (Abu Dawud)

Wrong concept of freedom

Bentham (d.1832) gave a philosophy according to which freedom was everything. This idea was taken forward by John Stuart Mill, who in his *Essay on Liberty* attributed utmost importance to freedom. These thoughts gained such wide acceptance that for today’s man, freedom has become *summum bonum*. People believe in the notion of unlimited freedom. A shameful example of this is the legalisation of homosexuality and its general acceptance by the present society based on the reason that every human being has the freedom to choose whatever he wills, even if it is homosexuality – choice is their prerogative. This is a diversion from nature but nobody is against it. Everybody is favouring it and so the whole society is to blame. In the words of Khalil Gibran:

No leaf falls down without the silent consent of the whole tree.

People are often of the view that if one is doing an evil practice but is harmless, why should anyone else bother. But in the words of a philosopher:

Man radiates himself every moment.

Researches show that if a person does something wrong, he doesn't do so in isolation; it has a wrong impact on the whole society. For example, consider smoking. One who smokes is an active smoker and those who are around him and do not smoke are passive smokers. Similarly, is the case with swine flu. There were big farms in Mexico where breeding of pigs took place. The pigs of these farms became infected with the flu virus. But those who contracted swine flu were not only the ones who consumed the pork from this farm but also those who consumed no pork at all.

Man has crossed all limits

Man was made to dwell in this world for the purpose of his test. He was required to avail the life supporting system and live his life within the prescribed bounds. But he chose to digress. Man failed to exercise his freedom within the restricted bounds. He reduced God to the status of being an 'appendix' and has come to the brink of being permanently ousted from the perfect world of God. Here I am reminded of my meeting with an Arab in UK. He said that he had observed people deeply and discovered that **today's man has detached the blessings they receive from their benefactor**. He has ousted God from his world. But just as man ousted God, God shall oust him too.

Shocking reports pertaining to global warming are flashed in the media now on a daily basis. The large reservoirs of fresh water are fast melting and mixing with the salty water in the oceans thereby increasing the water level. Several meetings are taking place world over to resolve this crisis but the truth is that no meeting can resolve the problem. The only hope is man seeking *tauba* or earnest repentance from God. According to a Hadith,

Tauba is nothing but strong sense of repentance (Ibn Maja)

Conclusion

Seeking repentance from God will enable man to find out where we missed the train and where we went wrong. According to a verse in the Quran,

Had he not been one of those who acknowledge the glory of God, he would certainly have remained inside the fish till the Day of Resurrection (37:143-44)

The beginning of the end has started and may be held only if man repents at the global level. Muslims have the responsibility of spreading the word of God and must stand up for it. 50% of the work is to be done by the *dai*, rest gets done through God's succour. God has provided opportunities like religious freedom, inquisitiveness in people about the word of God, the age of communication and press in which the word of God can be spread far and wide, etc. The *dai* needs to avail all these opportunities and do *dawah* to spread the word of God. All the Muslims therefore must reassess and re-plan the expenditure of their time and money or else the following prediction of the Bible shall come true soon:

There will be crying and grinding of teeth till eternity!