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“HIKMAT-E-KALIMI” AND “HIKMAT-E-PHIRONI” AND THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SITUATION OF THE ISLAMIC WORLD: AN EXPLANATORY STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Allama Iqbal, a great philosopher and poet of the East, has not only been an ideological and political leader for the Muslims of the sub-continent in the 20th century. Even today, through his life-instilling revolutionary poetry, he serves as a beacon light for the entire Islamic Ummah in view of their daunting challenges and vulnerability vis-à-vis the West and its pervasive intellectual, political and technological intellectual supremacy. In the subject study, the political and social situation of the Islamic world in the backdrop of their glorious past has been analyzed in the light of Allama Iqbal's famed Masnavi “Pas Che Bayed Kurd Aiy Aqwam-e-Mashriq” with a focus on its two segments namely “Hikmat-e- Kilami” (Wisdom of Moses) and “Hikmat-e-Fironi” (Wisdom of Pharaoh). Besides critically reviewing Allama's overall thoughts and ideology, a practical solution has been presented in this article for the Muslims, in general, and the youth ad Islamic leaders of the Ummah, in particular, to come out of their current chaos and crises.

INTRODUCTION

Allama Iqbal's Masnavi, i.e. a long ode (“Pas Che Bayed Kurd Aiy Aqwam-e-Mashriq” (So, what should be done O people of the East) was published in 1936. Iqbal was convinced that the extraordinary success of Muslims in the past was only due to their religion. Therefore, through this Masnavi, he has reminded the Muslims of their forgotten lesson. In the famous sermon of Allahabad, he said:

“One of the lessons I have learnt from Islamic history is that Islam kept the Muslims intact during difficult times. However, Muslims have not protected Islam. Today if you, being inspired by the life-instilling ideology of Islam, again focus your attention on it, your scattered and meagre potentials will get

re-assembled, and thus your existence will be protected from death and ruin” (1).

In this Masnavi, Allama has explained the results of his deliberations with remarkable comprehensiveness and eloquence. Yusuf Salim Chishti once commented to Allama that if all his poetry is considered a body, his Masnavi, *Pas Che Bayed Kurd Aiy Aqwam-e-Mashriq*” would be entitled to be called its heart. To this, Chishti says, Allama smiled as if someone had told him what exactly was in his heart (2).

In the eyes of Iqbal, Islam is a combination of both religion and politics. This feature of Islam distinguishes it from all other religions in the world. Moreover, the reason for this is that according to Islam, the soul and the substance are not two separate entities; instead, they are two aspects of the same reality. Therefore, a person’s spiritual life cannot be separated from his material life. Furthermore, there cannot be any difference between religion and politics. Since Iqbal has clarified the mysteries of religion and politics in this Masnavi, it can rightly be said that this Masnavi is the summary or essence of all the religious thoughts of Iqbal. Yusuf Salim Chishti writes about the above Masnavi:

“The nature of this Masnavi is completely different from other works (of Allama). It does not contain ghazals or poems, nor is it the blending/incorporation (tazmeen) of any couplet. Likewise, it is not a criticism of any philosopher, a description of nature’s phenomena, or a story of an individual. Rather, in it have been explained the mysteries and secrets of religion and politics, and by being aware of them, the nations can not only gain prominence in the world but also fulfil God’s will” (3).

Although all the topics of the Masnavi mentioned above are essential, the “Hikmat-e- Kilami” (Wisdom of Moses) and “Hikmat-e-Fironi” (Wisdom of Pharaoh) are the two subjects of particular significance in the sense that in them have been explained the benefits of following the path of sound and the harms of following the path of evil. Through them, people of the East have been told that now it is up to you which path you choose.

The chapter of “Hikmat-e-Kalimi” consists of 32 verses, in which the thoughts and teachings of the prophets are mentioned in the first sixteen verses, while in the following sixteen verses, the attributes of the “Mard-e-Momin” (a true believer) who follows the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) have been described. The question arises that if it contains the teachings of the prophets, why then was the term “Kulimi” used? In this context. Yusuf Salim Chishti writes:

“Iqbal chose the word “Kalim” (Moses) over “Nabavi” (prophetic) as the title of the next chapter is “Hikmat-e-Fironi”, and he preferred the word Kalim to Firon because the word for the title of the next chapter is more appropriate. The second reason is that the word Nabi means the one who gives news, but Kalim means the one who speaks to Allah. Therefore, the status of Kalim is higher than that of a prophet. Every Kalim is a prophet, but every prophet is

not Kalim. This word is reserved only for Prophet Musa (peace be upon him). The third reason is that the word Kalim has gained unique greatness and popularity in the literature of Muslims. The poets have used this word so much that now this word has come to be known as an icon for divine teachings and guidance” (4).

In his Masnavi, Iqbal presented to the people of the East a new and revolutionary vision for rebuilding their political and spiritual life after liberation from Western colonialism’s clutches. Slavery had utterly changed the meaning of religion and politics. Unfortunately, the Islamic world had forgotten the “Hikmat-e-Kalimi” and began to consider the worship of the ruling power as piety under the influence of the “Hikmat-e-Fiorini”. Dr Abdul Mughni has explained in a nutshell what exactly “Hikmat-e-Kalimi” and “Hikmat-e-Fironi” are all about, as follows:

“Hikmat-e-Kalimi” is a message of revolution, which can annihilate the Pharaoh of our time into the Nile by smashing all Samaritan talismans of the present time. This is not the act of a vulture; instead, it is the feat of the eagle who can build a new world according to its passion and courage. Such an act emerges from the combination of glory and beauty. Compared to this, those people are the victims of Pharaoh’s wisdom who, by pledging allegiance to the strangers, can build a temple out of the clay of Ka’aba”(5).

In “Hikmat-e-Kalimi”, Iqbal first told us that when the prophethood initiates divine injunctions, it rejects the entire monarchic order. This means that the prophethood guides humanity towards submission to Almighty God instead of surrendering to these worldly rulers. Before a prophet, a king’s palace is just an old temple. Allah’s prophet smashes the regime of all deities except the divine order:

تا نبوت حکم حق جاری کند
پشت پا حکم سلطانی زند

در نگاہش قصر سلطان کہنہ دیر
غیرت او بر نتابد حکم غیر (6)

Prophets were always sent down when humanity was suffering from despair due to the supremacy of infidelity. Therefore, Iqbal says that a prophet infuses new hope and enthusiasm into his age. He is free from the greed of worldly wealth, splendour and power. The wisdom of the prophet is pure from reasoning and hysteria. Out of his consciousness emerges a new nation. This means that whatever level of human intelligence still may err and go astray; therefore, the prophet is blessed with the wealth of passionate love. Thus, Iqbal has expressed his thoughts in the following manner:

عقل عیار ہے سو بھیس بدل لیتی ہے
عشق بیچارہ نہ ملا ہے، نہ واعظ نہ حکیم
بے خطر کود پڑا آتش نمرود میں عشق
عقل ہے محو تماشائے لب بام ابھی (7)

Iqbal says that Hikmat-e-Kalimi, by conveying a message of awakening to the wretched and the voiceless, asks them to get up and wipe out the traces of all old deities. By old deities, it meant the idols of slavery, materialism, race and lineage, deity other than God or Allah, that is, destroying them all by having full belief in Allah so that you could achieve success in this world and the life Hereafter.

After this, Iqbal explains that when the companionship of the prophet is achieved, that is, he is wholly and faithfully followed, only then a person becomes a “perfect man”. Then Iqbal tells us the characteristics of a true believer and thus addresses the youth, O believer, adopt poverty as instead of wealth and treasure, it is the truthfulness and credence, and the sympathy and empathy for others, which is your real wealth. Be an eagle and not a vulture. When a believer perishes in the path of divine truth, Allah Himself rectifies his affairs. Iqbal says O believer; unless you get inspiration from the divine magnificence, you will not be able to realize divine comeliness:

تانه گیری از جلال حق نصیب
هم نیابی از جمال حق نصیب (8)

Iqbal explains in “Hikmat-e-Kalimi” that following the prophets is necessary to fight the pharaonic forces. The following gives such power only to combat the pharaonic powers. Allama then expresses his thoughts under the title “Hikmat-e-Fironi”. What is Pharaonic wisdom? Dr Abdul Shakoor sheds light on this in these words:

“Hikmat-Fironi” is such a brutal system of Pharaonic monarchy that divided the soul of the nations of the East into two halves after it captured the Eastern world into political, intellectual and ideological slavery, and which Allama himself had witnessed in his life” (9).

In “Hikmat-Fironi” Iqbal described the harmful effects of western civilization in addition to all the evils, conspiracies and tricks of the people of the West in a nutshell. Iqbal warns the people of the East that the wisdom of the rulers of the West is full of deceit and trickery. It is the soul’s destruction and the body’s building up. In essence, it is materialistic, gluttonous and carnalistic, with no attention towards spiritual passions and the heart. Even before this, Iqbal had been informing the Muslims and especially the youth, about the duplicity and materialism of wisdom of the Western rulers and the harmful consequences thereof:

“I advise the youth that they should keep away from duplicity and materialism. The biggest mistake of the people of Europe was that they separated religion from government. Thus, their civilization was deprived of moral spirit and turned towards worldly materialism” (10).

Today, materialism is at an extreme in the Islamic world. Along with the people, the leadership of the Muslim countries is also treading on the same path. Western countries have increased the trend of materialism in Islamic countries based on scientific technology, cultural invasion and military

superiority. The goal of every Islamic country has become to strengthen its national economy. Political, social and economic policies are formulated by referring to Western thinkers' opinions more than prophets' teachings. Most Muslim countries' people and rulers have become Muslims by name. They have no interest in Islamic beliefs, Islamic rites and worship. However, they claim to be Muslim but inside devoid of the Islamic spirit. Because of these concerns, Iqbal repeatedly warned Muslims that materialism, like that of the West, will ultimately lead them to atheism. Iqbal tells us that the system of education formed under the influence of Pharaonic wisdom could produce only mentally enslaved people and not scholars:

مکتب از تدبیر او گیرد نظام
تا بکام خواجه اندیشد غلام (11)

The British government introduced such an educational system under the supervision of missionary institutions. It made such books a part of the curriculum, by reading which Muslims become alienated from their religion of nature and put aside the education of good mannerisms. This was a conspiracy meant to render a Muslim, a weak and vulnerable believer, if he did not get converted as a Christian. This idea of Allama Iqbal became a reality, and everyone saw that the current education system was against Islamic principles and Islamic values:

گلا تو گھونٹ دیا اہل مدرسہ نے ترا
کہاں سے آئے صدا لا الہ الا اللہ

اور یہ اہل کلیسا کا نظام تعلیم
ایک سازش ہے فقط دین و مروت کے خلاف (12)

Iqbal realized that the reins of the future are in the hands of the young generation; if they are made civilized, capable, educated and enlightened in the true sense, the coming tomorrow will be bright; otherwise, nothing would be able to stop this nation from wandering into darkness. He had concern for the youth in his heart and mind and which he used to express repeatedly as follows:

جوانوں کو سوز جگر بخش دے
مرا عشق میری نظر بخش دے (13)

In both poetry and prose, Iqbal likened Muslim youth to an eagle. He wished that the youth should develop qualities like an eagle. They should fly high like an eagle, meaning their goals should be lofty, so their eyes could see far like an eagle. In other words, they should be able to anticipate and make their plans with foresight. However, today we observe that the young generation is more fond of Western civilization and is entirely aloof from the ideology of Allama Iqbal. Iqbal's so-called eagles move in another direction instead of searching for their destination on the path of self-realization. The youth of today's Muslim Ummah take pride in acquiring nationalities of Western countries. Instead of using the national language of their countries, they make a slogan to learn and speak English.

If we look at the current situation of the Islamic world, we, unfortunately, find that personal interests have taken precedence over self-respect and national dignity all over the Islamic countries. Look at the issue of Kashmir. Almost all the Arab countries of the Gulf are silent over the situation of Kashmir. The main reason for this silence is the trade relations of these Muslim countries with India. India is the most important economic partner of Arab countries and trades more than one hundred billion dollars with these countries annually. On this critical issue, Saudi Arabia, the most important Islamic country in the region, has only said that it should be resolved with patience and that it feels concerned about this. While other Gulf countries like Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman did not bother to issue a statement in this regard. The United Arab Emirates went further than these countries and openly supported India. It termed the change in the constitutional status of Kashmir as an ‘internal matter of India’.

One of the tricks of “Pharaonic wisdom” is that it has alienated Muslims from the action. Though they take pride in their predecessors’ achievements, they have become inactive. Instead of moving forward, they are victims of inertia and stagnation. Any nation in the world that has turned its back on science and art is destined to fall:

آہ قومی دل ز حق پرداختہ
مرد و مرگ خویش را نشناخته (14)

Iqbal has also repeatedly expressed this complaint in his Urdu poetry:

کبھی اے نوجوان مسلم تدبیر بھی کیا تو ن
وہ کیا گردوں تھا تو جس کا ہے اک ٹوٹا ہوا تارا
تجھے آیا سے اپنے کوئی نسبت ہو نہیں سکتی
کہ تو گفتار ، وہ کردار ، تو ثابت وہ سیارہ (15)

Following the teachings of religion, our forefathers got attracted towards science and arts, and resultantly destiny of the whole world was in their hands. In that golden period of our global supremacy, people from Europe and America used to seek admission to the great schools and academic institutions of Muslims to acquire knowledge. Muslims left indelible imprints on all fields of life, such as medicine, surgery, mathematics, astronomy, geography and economics. Pharaonic wisdom is the brutal face of monarchy and secularism. It is a strategy to keep weak nations under the control of the West. There is a conspiracy to attract the nations of the East in general and the Muslims in particular towards materialism and luxury and to extract the Muhammadan spirit from their bodies and enslave them. Unfortunately, in this nefarious objective, the forces of the devil, i.e. anti-Islam, have succeeded.

Given the above, it is necessary that the leaders of the Ummah, as well as the people, must decide their priorities according to the Qur’an and the Sunnah. The only solution for the Muslims to counter conspiracies of the “Hikmat-e-Fironi” is for the Islamic Ummah to rekindle the spirit of self-esteem and self-realization to gain freedom from its intellectual and material slavery of the

West. We must fully utilize our resources, as Muslim countries do not lack natural resources. They need to help each other at the collective level. We have to take guidance from our glorious religion. As the beacon light, Iqbal's thoughts and ideology can greatly help even today to improve the political and social conditions of the Ummah.

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