

Humanity: Between the Trust of Istikhlaaf (Vicegerency) and the Illusion of Fleeting Life

(Translated)

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Mounis Hamid – Iraq

When Allah (swt) created humanity, He did not create us in vain, nor did He leave us aimlessly upon this vast earth. Instead, He appointed us as khulafaa' (vicegerents)—entrusting us with a profound responsibility that neither the towering mountains nor the heavens and the earth could bear. He (swt) breathed His spirit into us, honored us with intellect and free will, and commanded the angels to bow in reverence to our status. Furthermore, He instilled within our very being a secret capacity—one that allows us to ascend to the highest ranks of nearness to Allah (swt) or to descend into the lowest depths of perdition.

Our primary role was to bear witness to the Truth, to act for the good, and to be reformers on earth rather than agents of corruption. We were called upon to cultivate the world according to divine values and to transform our lives into a bridge leading to eternal bliss.

Yet, the great human tragedy began the moment we forgot the ultimate purpose and became preoccupied with the means; the world captivated us so completely that we lost sight of the true destination.

For many, the world has shifted from being a "field" for the Hereafter into an end in itself. People now pant after wealth, as if immortality could be purchased, and chase after status as if true greatness were bestowed by fellow humans. They pursue fleeting possessions—knowing full well they must one day leave them behind—yet the more they love the world, the more they fear losing it. The closer they draw to it, the further they drift from the very serenity they sought within it.

The strange paradox is that humanity chases a mirage, all the while knowing it is a mirage. Man sees death reaping generations around him, sees palaces reduced to ruins, and sees the names of kings and the wealthy consigned to oblivion; yet, deep down, he imagines his own journey will differ from that of his predecessors—as if humanity's long history were merely a lesson he failed to learn.

Many have abandoned the mission of istikhlaaf (vicegerency), replacing it with a culture of consumption. Their primary concern has become taking rather than giving, possessing rather than building, and projecting an image rather than embodying true substance. Souls have drowned in a sea of idle talk and frivolous amusement, letting days slip by without leaving a lasting virtuous legacy, a noble idea to pass on, or a deed that draws one closer to Allah (swt).

Amidst this frenetic preoccupation, the promised Paradise—a realm containing what no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no human heart has ever conceived—has been forgotten. It was forsaken for the sake of fleeting moments of pleasure, a few years of luxury, or the illusory allure of fame and power. Many have traded the

eternal for the ephemeral, certainty for conjecture, and an everlasting treasure for temporary goods that vanish like smoke—only for the reality of life to be laid bare when death arrives.

The greatest crisis facing humanity is not poverty, disease, or a lack of resources, but instead forgetting the very purpose for which we were created. When a person loses sight of the meaning of their existence, all outward successes become mere hollow victories, masking a profound spiritual void.

Yet, when one regains awareness of their true mission, they perceive the world as it truly is: a transit point rather than a permanent abode, a means rather than an end, and a testing ground rather than a place of eternal life. Thus, the divine Dawah continues to echo across the ages, inviting humanity to return to its original purpose: to serve as Allah’s vicegerents on earth—upholding the values of truth, justice, and mercy, while striving for the Hereafter and preparing to meet the Lord. Whoever grasps this truth lives in this world holding Dunya in their hands, instead of in their heart; they traverse it as a wayfarer instead of a captive, turning every step into provision for the Paradise promised to the righteous. Blessed is the one who remembers their mission before their journey ends, realizing that life—however long—is fleeting, and that this world—however adorned—is insignificant.

Herein lies the greatness of Islam: it is not merely a set of rituals performed at specific times or confined within the walls of masajid. Instead, it is a comprehensive way of life that restores a person’s awareness of their own self and their mission. Islam came to awaken humanity from heedlessness, reminding people that they are the vicegerents of Allah (swt) on earth and bear a duty toward their Lord, their faith, their community, and humanity as a whole.

A Muslim’s role regarding this Deen extends far beyond mere nominal affiliation or the outward trappings of religiosity. It entails upholding the Risaalah message of the Deen, defending its values, and embodying its morals in real life. A Muslim is called upon to be a living embodiment of Islam—demonstrating truthfulness, trustworthiness, justice, knowledge, and industriousness. They are expected to be a force for construction rather than destruction, and for reform rather than corruption.

Allah (swt) chose this Ummah to be a witness over humanity, as He—Glory be to Him—declared, ﴿وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ﴾ **“And thus We have made you a just community that you may be witnesses over the people.”** [TMQ Surah Al-Baqarah: 143]. This witnessing is a responsibility of civilization and advocacy, through which the Muslim presents a model to the world, demonstrating the Deen’s capacity to guide humanity and ensures its true happiness. Islam does not need those who advocate it merely through slogans, so much as it needs those who uphold it through practice and action. When a Muslim is sincere and devoted to their community, and sincere in their responsibility toward their Deen and its Risaalah message—and when they reclaim this profound understanding of their Deen—they return to the rightful station Allah (swt) intended for them: as a vicegerent on earth, a witness to the truth, and a bearer of the message of mercy and guidance. At that point, life transforms from a race for the ephemeral and temporary into a journey toward the eternal and ever-lasting, and every good deed becomes a step along the path to the Paradise Allah (swt) has promised His believing servants.