

FROM THE MINBAR

SELF-EXCLUSION: AN OBSTACLE ON THE PATH TO SUCCESS

Khutbah delivered by Imam Dr. Zijad Delic at SNMC on November 9th, 2012 corresponding to Zul Hijjah 24th, 1433 H.

BACKGROUND

Indeed all praise is for God, Lord of the worlds. Peace and blessings of God be upon Muhammad (S), his family, Khulafair Rashidin, all his Companions, and all those who follow in their footsteps until the Last Day. All praise is for God! We praise Him. We seek His help and ask for His forgiveness. We seek God's refuge from evils of ourselves and from our evil actions. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except God, alone, having no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad (S) is His Messenger.

My dear brothers and sisters in Islam ~ As Salamu 'Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatuhu!

INTRODUCTION

There are several obstacles which greatly impact on the state and the direction of Canadian Muslims. Each of these obstacles affects us on individual, communal as well as societal levels and each of these makes a negative impact on our short and long term goals respectfully.

One of the most dangerous and the most destructive obstacle we face is self-isolation/exclusion from the society which we have chosen intentionally and willingly to be our home.

When we choose to isolate ourselves and live in our "safe-zones" we have intentionally chosen to stagnate and stop any way of becoming creative as well as contributing members of our society.

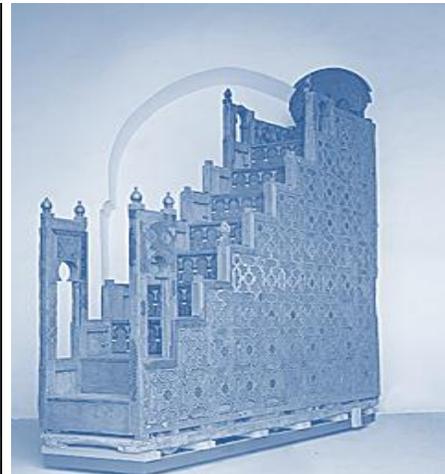
Actually, when we do so, we harm ourselves, our Canadian Muslims community, our faith and the larger society of ours – we prevent ourselves to progress further due to the obstacle on the path as well as restrict ourselves when trying to put our vision into reality.

SELF-EXCLUSION: MEANING & CAUSES

It means favouring the life of seclusion/self-isolation/self-exclusion over community life. In this state a Muslim is content with being righteous himself or herself, remaining indifferent to the outside world.

One may also abide by Islam and try the utmost to establish it but by taking individual initiatives without seeking assistance from others.

There are several causes of this flow which are easily detectable when and if we seriously



and objectively tackle our history and Islamic formative principles. Let me mention a few:

1. Being confined in observing some legal texts that praise life of seclusion (isolation) while disregarding the larger context and their conformity with other texts calling for communal life. Such a Hadith is mentioned in the Bukhari collection: "A time will come that the best property of a Muslim will be sheep which he/she will take on the top of mountains and the places of rainfall (valleys) so as to flee with his/her religion from affliction."

However, there are legal Islamic texts which call Muslims to come under one umbrella, under one banner of the community, remain united and live in cooperation. Let us read some of the Ayat: "Wa Ta'awanu 'Alal Birri Wa Taqwa Wa La Ta'awanu." (Al Maida 2) "Wa Tasimu bi hablillahi Jami'a Wa la tafarraqu..." (Ali Imran 103)

2. Some may be affected by the ascetic lifestyle of seclusion adapted by some righteous predecessors while disregarding circumstances (contexts) which led to such seclusion. The case of Ibrahim a.s. "And I will turn away from you all and from those whom you invoke besides God" (Maryam 48)

Abu Zarr and Ibn Omar r.anhuma when sedition occurred, did not want to fight Muslims considering it a grievous sin; Malik ibn Anas, the Imam of Madinah, spent the last days of his life in complete isolation/self-exclusion. His excuse was that he did it to avoid clashes with the authorities so to spare the lives of Muslims.

3. Having belief that community life may destroy one's character and one's sense of

individuality. Such an approach reflects a profound misunderstanding of the Islamic teachings regarding the reconciliation between a sense of individuality and community life. "Nor can a bearer of burdens bear another's burden." (Fatir 18) "Every soul will be held responsible for its deeds." (Al Muddaththir 38)

Those Muslims who adhere to the first group of our formative texts, totally disregarding reading them with the other texts, are inevitably afflicted with the flaw of seclusion/isolation/exclusion.

The Prophet (S) said: "The believer who mixes with people and is patient over their harm is greater in reward than a believer who does not mix with people nor shows patience over their harm." (Ibn Majah)

Only one who overcomes the "self" can rightly be called powerful/victorious and hence become amongst the 'best of people'. A true believer is optimistic and shuns away any possible wave of pessimism that may infiltrate the heart and mind.

The miserable are those who have not been able to release themselves from captivity of the 'self' and are prone to defeat even if they had conquered the entire world and gained all its material treasure for they are spiritually bankrupts.

4. Lack of awareness of the burdens of community life. All those who work for the community know that community tasks are fairly demanding; sometimes painful, exhausting and time consuming.

5. Considering worship as an excuse for leading a life of isolation due to misunderstanding that mixing with people holds back one's involvement in 'Ibadah.

This Issue 'From The Minbar' presents:

⇒ **SELF-EXCLUSION: AN OBSTACLE ON THE PATH**

⇒ In next issue:
Acceptance & Tolerance in Islam

Khutbah Prepared & Delivered
by Imam Dr. Zijad Delic
Email: imam@snmc.ca
Phone: 613.898.7662

Please EMAIL your comments to the author

KhutbahVol 2 No 19~ By Imam Dr. Zijad Delic "Self-Exclusion: An Obstacle on the Path to Success"~ at the SNMC

Printing Sponsored By **DELTA REPROGRAPHICS**, 889 Lady Ellen Place, Ottawa, ON, K1Z 5L3 Tel: 613.866.8899

Just think of the case of the sahabi who was all the time in the masjid... and then Rasul (S) asked who was feeding him. He was told his brother feeds him, such and such, who comes to the Masjid but works as well, The Rasul (S) said: *His brother is better than him.* 'Ibadah is not an end in itself; it's the means towards the end.

6. Finding an excuse for isolation of oneself when vice and wickedness prevail.

7. Fear from governmental agencies holds one back of getting involved in the community affairs.

8. Maintaining company/relationship with people who choose isolation over community life.

9. Different groups advocating the call of Islam, often working against one another instead of complimenting the work of one another... This is full responsibility of leaders and Imams of the community.

10. Lack of awareness of the consequences of adapting a life of isolation on the part of individuals and Muslim community and with it the future of the next generation of Canadian Muslims.

EFFECTS OF SELF-EXCLUSION

a) On Individuals: Ignorance of their own character and personality; being deprived of the means of correcting oneself; being unable to judge some of own actions because one does not have anything before him/her to judge it against; incapability to use their ability; lack of experience in life; overwhelmed with despair, etc.

b) On Canadian Muslim Community: It will be shaken and weakened; Being mistrusted by the larger society; Being denied Allah's blessings and support, etc.

c) On the larger society (our homeland Canada).

REMEDY FOR SELF-EXCLUSION

1. Full Understanding of the essence of our faith. It is essential for the Canadian Muslims to understand the faith properly; otherwise wrong understanding of the faith could lead to wrong application which could consequently harm us ALL.

a) Islam is the easy way: "YUSR" One of the terms used by the Qur'an in the early Makkah period to describe Islam was "yusr – easy way."

b) Islam is the path of moderation: "WASAT" Moderation which leads to balance is the essential feature of the message

of Islam: *Thus, We have made you into a nation justly balance* (Al Baqarah 143)

c) Islam is not a complex way: "USR" It is human beings who make Islamic teaching difficult and then complexity overtakes them so eventually they become unable to cope even with simple tasks; lose sense of priorities: *He has chosen you and has imposed no difficulty on you in religion* (Hajj 78)

d) Islam is not a path of excessiveness: "TASHADUD" *"Din is an easy path. And whoever exaggerates with it, it would take better of him/her.* (Ahmad)

Islam should be made easy for others especially for youth: In sharing the message of Islam with people, The Messenger (S) was advised: *"It is part of Mercy of Allah that you dealt gently with them. If you were severe or hardhearted, they would have broken away from you."* ('Ali Imran 159)

He, Muhammad (S) guided Muslim community in the following words: *"Whoever leads people in prayer, should shorten it, for amongst them there are weak, old and the ones to attend business. When praying alone, prolong it as much as you wish."* (Bukhari)

Islam is not the path of excessiveness! Islam rejects all its forms: *Guluww, tanattu' and tashaddud.* Not everyone is a "super-human", in our case a "super Muslim." Excessiveness is short lived. Our capacity for endurance and perseverance is naturally short-lived. It blocks other obligations!

Too much of anything is too much! Just think of the case of Abdullah ibn 'Amr whom Muhammad (S) advised the following: *"Indeed, your Creator has right over you, your body has right over you and your family...therefore to give to each their right."* (Ahmad, Ibn Majah)

Isolation could eventually develop into larger problem and even become a threat to the well-being of Canadian Muslims and others!!!

2. Understanding the relation between legal texts which call for a life of seclusion and those calling for living actively within the community.

3. Understanding why some great people chose to seclude themselves from the community. Ibn Omar or Anas ibn Malik lived in the contexts in which they have been able to afford it; we cannot! Each member of the community is its important integral part!

4. Full understanding of the true nature of worship: When one understands the true nature of 'Ibadah (worship), one becomes

more eager to get involved in the community activities: Volunteering.

5. Awareness of the important role of every individual within the society. Engaging with the community was an essential task of all prophets. If we have concerns, then it is our duty to speak up not run away from the community.

6. Remain with the larger group even if we sometimes disagree with them. If we want the change, then we should understand that the change comes with our participation not criticism or self-exclusion.

7. Shunning the company of people who isolate themselves from community.

8. Become fully acquainted with the approach of the Rasul (S) in building and establishing a Muslim community. He was involved not isolated; pragmatic not rigid; proactive not reactive; optimistic not pessimistic; wise not emotional. In him, *we have the best example...* (Al Ahzab 21).

9. At the end place one's trust in God and seek His support. Almighty God says in the Qur'an: *"Then, when you have taken a decision put your trust in God. For God loves those who put their trust (in Him)."* (Ali Imran 159)

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, why isolate ourselves, when we can get ENGAGED and contribute positively to the image of Islam, Canadian Muslims and our homeland – Canada.

AN ACTION ITEM

If YOU like this Khutbah and what we, at your SNMC, do, PLEASE:

Support our activities & projects

~
Please Donate ONE Prayer Spot for \$2,500 (ONLY 10 left) or ONE Block for \$1,000 and be the ONE who will build the Masjid and the Center so that it could help us and our children maintain Islamic Identity and build strong Canadian National Identity, *Insha Allah.*



South Nepean Muslim Community (SNMC)

Web: www.snmc.ca

Email: info@snmc.ca