

We Fast By Choice, They Starve By Siege

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Ramadan teaches us hunger. For 30 days, we push away the plate and feel what it means to go without. We are told this is so we remember the poor, the needy, the oppressed.

And then the adhaan for Maghrib calls, and we break our fast.

But in Gaza, the adhaan comes and there is no food to break it with. The markets are empty. The borders are closed. The siege has turned Ramadan into a cruel joke. They are fasting, yes. But not by choice.

We experience hunger for a few hours and call it worship. They experience starvation for weeks and still say "اِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَاِنَّا اِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ" (İnnâ lillâhi ve innâ ileyhi râciûn).

The difference is everything.

Allah says:

وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ ٱلرِّجَالِ وَٱلنِّسَآءِ وَٱلْوِلْدَٰنِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَآ أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَٰذِهِ ٱلْقَرْيَةِ ٱلظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا وَٱجْعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ وَلِيًّا وَٱجْعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ نَصِيرًا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ يُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱلطَّٰغُوتِ فَقَٰتِلُوٓا۟ أَوْلِيَآءَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ۖ إِنَّ كَيْدَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا

And what is it with you? You do not fight in the cause of Allah and for oppressed men, women, and children who cry out, "Our Lord! Deliver us from this land of oppressors! Appoint for us a saviour; appoint for us a helper—all by Your grace." Believers fight for the cause of Allah, whereas disbelievers fight for the cause of the Devil. So fight against Satan's ˹evil˺ forces. Indeed, Satan's schemes are ever weak. (Surah An-Nisa, 4:75-76)

The cry is there. It has been there for decades. And we answer it with charity, with dua, with social media posts. All of that matters. But none of it ends the siege.

You want to know what ends a siege? An army. A state. A Khilafah that does not beg permission from the United Nations to feed Muslims who are starving.

The Prophet, peace be upon him, said:

"*Whosoever of you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand; and if he is not able to do so, then [let him change it] with his tongue; and if he is not able to do so, then with his heart — and that is the weakest of faith.*" (Sahih Muslim 49a)

We have been stuck at the weakest level for a hundred years. We feel it in our hearts. We speak it with our tongues. But we cannot change it with our hands because we have

no hands. No unified authority. No Khalifah to command the armies of the Muslim world to break the siege and end the suffering.

So we fast by choice, comfortable in our homes. And they starve by siege, trapped in the largest open-air prison on earth.

This Ramadan, ask yourself: is this really what Islam taught us? To eat well while our brothers and sisters go hungry, and call it worship?

The answer is to work for the Khilafah. Educate yourself. Speak to others. Support the movements that are calling for it. The change will not come by itself.

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