

Is Reciting Surah Al-Fil the Solution for Kashmir?

Recently, a curious message has been doing the rounds on social media requesting Muslims to recite Surah al-Fil in order to help the Muslims of Kashmir. The message states:

Assalamualaykum Insha Allah we are doing a round of 20 million recitations of Surah al FIL for the safety & security of all Muslims in occupied Muslim state of Kashmir, , and all Muslims around the world.

Kindly recite 5 times and forward to your Friends and Family

Jazak Allah Khairun

Surah al-Fil has been specifically chosen because Allah Almighty directly intervened to protect the Ka'ba from being destroyed by the army of Abraha and his elephants, **﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ * أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِي تَضْلِيلٍ * وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ * تَرْمِيهِمْ بِحِجَارَةٍ مِّن سِجِّيلٍ * فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ مَّأْكُولٍ﴾** **“Do you not see what your Lord did with the Companions of the Elephant? Did He not bring all their schemes to nothing, unleashing upon them flock after flock of birds, bombarding them with stones of hard-baked clay, making them like stripped wheat-stalks eaten bare?”** Here Allah attributes the action to Himself **“your Lord did”** and **“did He not bring”** leading some to misinterpret this to mean if we make enough du'a, perfect our prayers and purify ourselves then Allah will be pleased with us and directly intervene in Kashmir and elsewhere as He (Most High) intervened to protect the Ka'ba.

This is a dangerous misconception that absolves the Muslim rulers and commanders-in-chief from any blame, in their failure to militarily intervene in order to protect the oppressed men, women and children of Kashmir, Palestine, East Turkestan, Myanmar, Syria and so on.

At the time of the Prophet (saw) the oppressed people of Makkah made du'a to Allah (swt) asking Him to rescue them from the oppressors (الظَّالِمِ) by sending them a protector (وَلِيًّا) and a helper (نَصِيرًا). This responsibility of fighting to rescue them fell on the believers, and it was the Messenger (saw) and Sahaba (ra) who responded and liberated Makkah from oppression. Allah (swt) says: **﴿وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا وَاجْعَلْ لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ وَلِيًّا وَاجْعَلْ لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ نَصِيرًا﴾** **“What reason could you have for not fighting in the Way of Allah – for those men, women and children who are oppressed and say, ‘Our Lord, take us out of this city whose inhabitants are wrongdoers! Give us a protector from You! Give us a helper from You!’?”** [An-Nisaa, 4:75]

Ibn Ashur in Tahrir wa Tanwir comments on this ayah: وَقَدْ سَأَلُوا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَنَصِيرًا، إِذْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا نَصِيرٌ فَتَنَصَّرَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِنَبِيِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ الْفَتْحِ. وَأَشَارَتِ الْآيَةُ إِلَى أَنَّ اللَّهَ اسْتَجَابَ دَعْوَتَهُمْ وَهَيَّأَ لَهُمُ النَّصْرَ بِإِذْنِهِ. **“They had asked Allah for a protector (وَلِيًّا) and a helper (نَصِيرًا), because on that day they had neither a protector nor a helper, so Allah helped them with His Prophet and the believers on the day of conquest (Fath Makkah). The verse indicates that Allah responded to their du'a and mobilised for them the help by the hand of the believers.”**

The early Muslims clearly understood what their responsibility was and the relationship between du'a and action. They did not stay in Medina waiting for Allah to fight on their behalf rather they understood that it was their responsibility to strive their utmost to fulfil the command of Allah, while at the same time making du'a for Allah to give them the victory. It was narrated by Aisha who said, **«مَرُّوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ: enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil, before you make du'a or you will not be answered.»** (Sunan Ibn Majah 4004)

The inaction of the Muslim countries and their armed forces is a very serious issue and one for which Bani Israel were severely punished. When they were ordered to enter the holy

land (Palestine) their response was, ﴿فَاذْهَبْ أَنْتَ وَرَبُّكَ فَقَاتِلَا إِنَّا هَاهُنَا قَاعِدُونَ﴾ “So you and your Lord go and fight. We will stay sitting here.” Allah punished them for their inaction and said, ﴿فَإِنَّهَا مُحَرَّمَةٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً يَتِيهُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ﴾ “The land will be forbidden to them for forty years during which they will wander aimlessly about the earth.” [Al-Maaida, 5:24, 26]

Is it not the case that since the destruction of the Khilafah in 1924 that Muslims have wandered aimlessly about the earth with no one to protect them, all the while the enemies encircle their lands, steal their resources and massacre the people? All of this is a direct result of failing to stand up to oppression. Allah (swt) says, ﴿وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ لَهْذَمَتْ صَوَامِعُ وَبِيْعٌ وَصَلَوَاتٌ وَمَسَاجِدُ يُذْكَرُ فِيهَا اسْمُ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ﴾ “If Allah had not driven some people back by means of others, monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques, where Allah’s name is mentioned much, would have been pulled down and destroyed. Allah will certainly help those who help Him – Allah is All-Strong, Almighty” [Al-Hajj, 22: 40]

The Messenger of Allah (saw) told us the reason for our current situation when he said: عَنْ ثَوْبَانَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ «يُوشِكُ الْأُمَمُ أَنْ تَدَاعَى عَلَيْكُمْ كَمَا تَدَاعَى الْأَكَلَةُ إِلَى قَصْعَتِهَا». فَقَالَ قَائِلٌ وَمِنْ قَلَّةٍ نَحْنُ يَوْمَئِذٍ قَالَ «بَلْ أَنْتُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ كَثِيرٌ وَلَكِنَّكُمْ غَتَاءٌ كَغَتَاءِ السَّيْلِ وَلَيَنْزِعَنَّ اللَّهُ مِنْ صُدُورِ عَدُوِّكُمْ الْمَهَابَةَ مِنْكُمْ وَلَيَقْذِفَنَّ اللَّهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمُ الْوَهْنَ». فَقَالَ قَائِلٌ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا الْوَهْنُ قَالَ «حُبُّ الدُّنْيَا وَكَرَاهِيَةُ الْمَوْتِ» ‘The nations will soon summon one another to attack you as people when eating invite others to share their dish.’ Someone asked: ‘Will that be because of our small numbers at that time?’ He said: ‘No, you will be numerous at that time, but you will be scum and rubbish like that carried down by a torrent, and Allah will take fear of you from the breasts of your enemy and cast *Al-Wahn* into your hearts.’ Someone asked: ‘Oh Messenger of Allah, what is *Al-Wahn*?’ He said: ‘Love of the world and dislike of death.’ (Abu Dawud 4297)

Al-Wahn (الْوَهْنُ) literally means weakness, but in this context means conceptual weakness in the Aqeeda i.e. loving the dunya and disliking death. In the Qur’an وَهَنٌ (wahana) and its grammatical derivatives are mainly used in relation to war and fighting (jihad). Allah says: ﴿وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ “Do not give up and do not be downhearted. You shall be uppermost if you are believers.” [Aal-Imran, 3:139] ﴿وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَدْعُوا إِلَى﴾ “Do not relax in pursuit of the enemy.” [An-Nisaa, 4:104] ﴿فَلَا تَهِنُوا وَتَدْعُوا إِلَى﴾ “Do not become faint-hearted and call for peace when you are uppermost and Allah is with you.” [Muhammad, 47:35] ﴿وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ مُوْهِنُ كَيْدِ الْكَافِرِينَ﴾ “Allah always confounds (weakens) the schemes of the kuffar.” [Al-Anfaal, 8:18]

So the meaning of *Al-Wahn* in this hadith is related to giving up jihad and failing to stand up to the aggressors who occupy Muslim lands.

Only when the regimes and armies in Muslim lands remove *Al-Wahn* from their hearts and do the “right actions” ﴿عَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ﴾ by giving the material support (nusra) for establishing a rightly guided Khilafah (Caliphate), will our Ummah finally find the security and peace it so longs for. Allah (Most High) says: ﴿وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي اللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ﴾ “Allah has promised those of you who have iman and do right actions that He will make them successors in the land as He made those before them successors, and will firmly establish for them their deen with which He is pleased and give them, in place of their fear, security. ‘They worship Me, not associating anything with Me.’ Any who are kafir after that, such people are deviators.” [An-Nur, 24:55]

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