

From Conquests to Tourism

News:

The Turkish tour company, Fest Travel, is opening reservations for a seven-day tour called "Cultural Fusion: Syria" scheduled for April 20-27, 2024, to Syria, where both demographic and infrastructural mechanisms have been turned upside down by the civil war. ([Hurriyetdailynews](https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com))

Comment:

Syria (Bilad al Shaam) is considered a sacred place in the Muslim world for multiple reasons, from being a part of Greater Syria including Palestine to being the stronghold of Salahuddin Ayyubi, the liberator of Al-Aqsa who made crusaders face a humiliating defeat. Syria rose with the rise of Islam when in the seventh century, the Muslim Conquerors came into the region from the Arabian Peninsula, defeating the Byzantines at the famous Battle of Yarmouk. Later to be the first Umayyad Caliph, Muawiya bin Abi Sufyan, became the first governor of 'Greater Syria'. By 1516-17 the provinces of Aleppo, Damascus, and Tripoli were so valuable and brought in so much tax revenue that they were controlled directly by Istanbul. Aleppo was a major international trading center. Damascus was the kick-off point for caravans to Mecca. This was the golden period of Islam.

The last decades of the 19th century witnessed the awakening of the national identity. In this phase, the Ottoman State took Germany as an ally and the defeat of WWI proved to be the jolt that brought down the whole Khilafah State like a house of cards. Muslim lands and people were divided and distributed into nations, boundaries were drawn and flags were assigned. Syria was under the French Mandate between 1920 and 1946. The political instability and the defeat of the Arabs by the Jewish entity in 1948 shocked Syria, especially because Syria considered Palestine a part of Greater Syria. Thawban narrated that the Prophet (saw) said: **«يُوشِكُ الْأَمَمُ أَنْ تَدَاعَى عَلَيْكُمْ كَمَا تَدَاعَى الْأَكَلَةُ إِلَى قَصْعَتِهَا»**. فَقَالَ قَائِلٌ وَمِنْ قِلَّةٍ نَحْنُ يَوْمَئِذٍ قَالَ: **«بَلْ أَنْتُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ كَثِيرٌ وَلَكِنَّكُمْ غُثَاءٌ كَغُثَاءِ 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 people 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 replied: **"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 last enervation into your hearts."** Someone asked: What is wahn (enervation) o Messenger of Allah: He (saw) replied: **"Love of the world and dislike of death."** (Sunan Abi Dawud)

The regimes of the two Assads turned Syria into the present-day humanitarian catastrophe while the Muslim leaders of the world were blindfolded by their countries' flags. Meanwhile, thousands were bombed and slaughtered, cities were destroyed and children were left to mourn over their parents as parents were to mourn over their children.

Meanwhile, we see Turkey trying to mend its severed relationship with the Syrian regime. This along with the last 12 years of empty words is proof that Erdogan and others have been shedding crocodile tears for the scattered limbs of innocent Syrians. This concept of the nation-state and boundaries has given these people a new god, named benefit. Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and others wished to warm their hands on the furnace of the Syrian revolution. As soon as the fire got weak, Erdogan shamelessly changed sides. Also, the result of this revolution did not bring any benefits but it did bring around three million refugees, and Erdogan in his election campaign promised to focus on refugee return. The attempt to start this tourism in Syria is embarrassing. Who would like to go and visit the selected places in Government protection while knowing that his/her Muslim brothers and sisters are in miserable condition in other areas? The idea sounds like rubbing salt in the wounds of our own.

Muslim identity, without it being linked to common thought, and method, coming out of Islamic ideology, cannot make us one Ummah. Islam is not a religion of sharing names and going to the mosques. It is a way of life, commanded to be adopted by Allah (swt). We, the Muslims of this Ummah, feel the pain and hurt of our brothers and sisters but the rulers sitting on top have gone blind, deaf, and dumb. The greed for power and wealth has eaten their *Iman*. Starting tourism in Bashar-controlled areas is beneficial for the Erdogan and Bashar governments as they will be helping each other hoard money owned by the people. Helping the Syrians out and destroying the barbaric regime of Bashaar was easy for Erdogan but he feared the idols he had bowed down to. He thought annoying them would destroy him but he chose to annoy the Almighty and invited His anger. Muslims of Syria do not need a man; they need a system. A system that will avenge the loss inflicted on them and provide them the safety that they deserve.

Salahuddin from this land struck such a terror in the hearts of kuffar, that the echoes can still be heard. We again need the strength of Islam to protect the servants of Allah. We need a Khaleefah who will command the armies to move and rescue the Muslims of the world. The people of Syria started this revolution with the slogan "We only have Allah" and surely the message of the slogan is that the solution only lies in what Allah (swt) has taught us to live by and to die for. Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: Messenger of Allah (swt) said, «لَا يَلُجُ النَّارَ رَجُلٌ بَكَى مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ» **“One who weeps out of fear of Allah, will not enter the Hell till milk returns back in the udder; and the dust raised on account of fighting in the path of Allah and the smoke of Hell will never exist together”**. (At-Tirmidhi, who classified it as Hadith Hasan Sahih).

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