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# IWDM Study Library

# Desktop Talks Houston, TX

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IWDM: I'm doing a segment here for the program and we are addressing the problems that are alarming in society today. Problems of the lack of responsibility, the failure of individual, the family, and sometimes our institutions to accept responsibility and meet these challenges of sin, crime, and just too much ignorance regarding what should be the responsibility of the individual in society.

People must be taught their responsibility as an individual to their family and to their society. There are many, too many people that are losing their sons and daughters in the streets to drugs and they tend to turn too much to the government and to the police department for help. Our holy book advises us to be aware of our own responsibility, individual responsibility. We need help from each other to address individual responsibility, we need help from our families, we need help from our religious places of worship, we need help from our schools, from our system of education and from our schools in order to be kept aware of our individual responsibility.

The American society was founded upon a respect for the native or inherent ability of citizens in society, man, to be accountable for his actions and to carry the great weight of freedom and live a free life, have freedom of expression, and freedom of life. This works for us for as long as we have the correct sense of individual responsibility. When we don't have that correct sense, then that amount of freedom and any other amount of freedom will be too much for us to carry.

We live in a society today that is perhaps giving more freedom to the individual and to the society than we have witnessed perhaps in the history of this nation or in the history of the world. We are hearing from our church leaders, and from our leaders in Judaism, and leaders in Islam, and from the creditable and from the respected people in many professional fields. We're hearing from them now and they are bringing into our attention that maybe we have reached a point where we are abusing freedom and not respecting responsibility.

We have a verse from Quran that reminds us that the needed change in our life when we are suffering these conditions won't come unless we ourselves become accountable. In the holy book the Quran, G-d says, "Never will the condition that is on us change until we change the condition that is on our souls." What does that mean for us? It means that G-d has created us to be morally responsible, to have a moral nature, to be morally awakened and morally alive in our minds or in our conscience. No matter how much we are deprived in society, all of us, if we are sane in our minds should be morally accountable.

In the days of my childhood, what we call poverty now was just an accepted condition for most people that were all around us. We didn't expect to eat chicken every day, we were happy to get it on Sunday. We didn't expect to have the Sunday meal except on Sunday. The daily meal was what we call the meal of very poor people but today, we eat with no consciousness, with no sense of what goes into the meal, how much labor went into this meal, who worked to make this possible and this is causing us to also be unaware of our own responsibility.

Now when G-d says that we want to receive a change, the change that we want for ourselves for a better life until we change what is on our own souls. He is addressing that nature, that moral nature that He created us with, but if we are saying we cannot go around seeing self-destruction in our homes, self-destruction in our streets, violence, senseless violence against our friends, against our family, and friends, and neighbors, we cannot go on seeing that without feeling a burden on our conscience and desiring to repent or to do something to encourage or to invite others to repentance.

The word expression in the Quran is what is on your own souls? What is on your own souls is the word “ala” indicates that there is something burden or there is something placed upon, an obligation or a burden on you. In this case is a burden, both a burden and an obligation. When we are burdened by senseless destruction in our life, then we should also feel the need to do something about it ourselves as individuals.

That's what we're addressing when we say that we are turning too much to government and to the police department for help. If we continue to ignore our own responsibility for our own life and for our immediate environment, and I'm addressing the responsible parents that still have the good conscience to accept that they should be responsible for their home life, for their children's state, the condition of their children, and do it not only with awareness that you have to have a sane atmosphere at home if you expect to survive as a human being, but also knowing that those children are going to grow up and they're going to be become a part of the streets, become part of the street life.

If we don't accept our responsibility as parents, then we are breeding a breed that is going out in the street and carry what is in the home to the streets, and pretty soon we'll be responsible ourselves for neglecting our own children and we will be responsible for the death and violence that they will suffer in the streets. Also, if the whole society would give in to that kind of negligence, what will we have as a country? What will we have to turn to?

The police department cannot survive if the many people, the many citizens of this country accept to ignore their responsibility as individuals. Pretty soon the police department itself will be affected by this growth of irresponsible people and we will be getting a department that can't handle its own problems and we will be getting treatment that we will be blaming the department for, that perhaps started because we ignored the first basic unit in the development of society and that is a home life.

Our religion addresses man as a family. Our religion begins identifying our first father. This is true for the great religion that we have in America. Our religion begins by addressing the first father called Adam. Then it addresses the second father called Ibrahim or Abraham to make us feel that we are family all times, so that we don't forget we are family at all times. If we preserve the home life and work hard to establish healthy and industrious families, that makes for a healthy and industrious society.

When we pass the buck at home and say, "Well, I'm not responsible for this. John is responsible for this or Mary is responsible for this." The mother says, "Well, I can't handle these children anymore." Then the father says, "Well, I give up on them." Understand that when we give up there, we create a situation from a society to give up, throw up his hands too.

When too many homes give up, then society has to throw up his hand. We see so much violence and self-destruction in the inner cities today that I can feel comfortably saying, I don't think I'm exaggerating, that homes have thrown up their hands and also institutions have thrown up their hands and have said, "This is too much for us, this is too much for us to deal with."

Then when you look to the government, to the federal government, we look to the president and say, "Well, he has to solve these problems." He can't solve these problems; we have to turn to G-d. That's the purpose of this presentation, is to say that we have to turn to what has accounted for our survival on this earth as decent human persons and that is to G-d.

We believe in this religion that the universe, the material world is just too much for us to carry without a force, a force bigger than the universe itself. The only force bigger than the universe itself is divine force, but we believe the answer is for us to turn to our legitimate authentic scriptures and have respect for the scripture again, and make all persons who assume the authority to represent that, make them accountable.

I hope I'm not presenting myself as somebody who's critical and think myself better than anybody else. Or think I'm a better representative in the path of G-d than somebody else, that's far from my mind, but I'm aware that if my people don't demand something of me, they will get less and less from me. I'm advising that we demand more and more of the people that represent very important matters for us.

We should demand more of our teachers in our schools, we should demand more of our principals over our schools, we should demand more of our fellow man who attends our church, the member of the church, we should demand more of the preacher who leads the congregation, we should demand more of our Christian leaders, and Jewish leaders, and Muslim leaders, we should demand more of them. The only way to do that, the general following, the members has to become more acquainted with their holy book.

Today people just tend to-- just turn on television and expect for the preacher to tell them all about the Bible, tell them all about the Quran. That's not enough. Our religion teaches us that each of us are responsible to read our holy scripture for ourselves. Muslims are supposed to read the Quran daily for themselves. Every Muslim is supposed to know how to read. If he doesn't know how to read, the obligation is on the members of the family who know to read to help those members of the family who can't read to learn how to read.

We have a literate society here, we have a great advanced system of education, so there is much help for us to turn to, to get reading materials or reading instructions to help members of our family who are not reading and don't know to read to learn how to read. We used have in our membership a program just to teach reading. We used to have a program for the youngsters to teach reading to the youngsters and also to teach reading to the adults. I believe that that is continuing for many of our mosques, our masjids around the country.

If anyone does not know how to read, we have an opportunity for them to get help. A literate society is in a situation not only to exist longer but to prosper, but if we become illiterate, we can't read. We also become illiterate in our minds. We become illiterate in our behavior, so in reading is very important. In our holy book, the word command, read is a command word. G-d says, "Read. Iqra." It's Arabic command word. Iqra is a command word. Read, read. Read in the name of your Lord who created. Iqra bismi rabika ladhi khalaq. Read in the name of your Lord who created.

“Khalaqa insana min alaq.” He created the human being from a small life germ, clot of blood. “Iqra warabukal akram”. Read and your Lord is most generous. “Alathi alam bil qalam”. Who taught humanity the use of the pen to scribe, made him a scribe, made scribes. “Alama insana ma lam ya’lam.” He taught humanity what humanity was not before knowing.

I'm going to conclude this presentation on that note, that unless we return to respect for G-d, respect for sacred matters, respect for our best traditions that account for our longevity as societies, we are lost. We are lost and we will never be able to have happiness and peace for the family, for the streets, for the society, for the nation, or for the world. The world is becoming too small, because of the crowding of the world for us to expect long life if we are not going to accept a responsible life. A life where the individual accept responsibility or share in the responsibility for himself and for the good state of society.

Thank you very much, may G-d guide us more to humanity, to human understanding, to appreciation for the excellence of human beings, and to appreciation for knowledge that G-d reveals. Appreciation for the knowledge that G-d reveals because we wouldn't have this material world and science, the intellect of man and science, and all these things we enjoy, the pleasures and everything else, we wouldn't have these had it not been for creation and the one who created everything, G-d. “Al khaliqu kuli shay”, the creator of everything. Thank you. G-d's guidance be with us always in His mercy and forgiveness. Amen. As-Salaam-Alaikum.