

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Khutbah: The Prophet's (PBUH) Strategy of Change

Allah SWT says:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ
الْمُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٩﴾

⁹It is He Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth so that He makes it prevail over all religions even though the idolaters hate it. (61:9)

Arabia prior to Rasoolullah SAS

- As we are in the season of reflection... reflecting on the life of The Final Messenger of Allah, Muhammad (SAS),
 - Let us examine how Rasoolullah SAS was able to transform the Arabian society and by extension, the world.
- Before Muhammad (SAS), the Arabs were a people of little or no significance.
- The absence of any sense of central protective laws, the Bedouin tribes were left with no alternative but to protect and safeguard their own members.
- Thus, if a tribe member was killed, revenge was inevitable.
- Tribes were almost always in conflict and war with one another.
- And if tribal alliances were formed, it was to support one tribe against another.
- Tribes such as
 - Bakr and Taghlib
 - 'Abs and Zhubyaan

- Aus and Khazraj to mention a few fought each other for decades.
- In addition, the lawlessness that prevailed in Arabia led tribes to engage in unprovoked attacks on caravans and weak settlements, further perpetuating and encouraging the cycle of violence.
- Allah SWT reminded them of this:

وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۗ وَادْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا ۗ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

¹⁰³Hold firmly, all of you together, to the rope of Allah (Quran) and do not be divided.

Remember the favor of Allah on you, when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together, and you became brothers (unified) by His favor. You were on the brink of (entering) a pit of Fire, and He rescued you from it. This is how Allah makes His verses clear to you so that you may be guided. (3:103)

- At the same time other empires such as the
 - Byzantine Empire (Eastern Roman Empire)
 - Roman Empire
 - Sassanian Empire (Persian Empire) surpassed them in terms of their civilization, economic and political stability.
- In short, Arabia prior to Rasoolullah SAS had no practical bond uniting the tribes.

A unique generation

- But when Rasoolullah SAS came, he resurrected this nation in a way that they became the unique generation for humanity.
- They prevailed and ruled the world for centuries.

- Rasoolullah SAS succeeded, by the will of Allah SWT, in making this fierce and stubborn nation,
 - abandon their idols and
 - accept the belief in Divine Oneness of Allah SWT.
- He was successful in recreating them all over again and moving them from darkness into light, by the help of Allah SWT.
- Within 23 years of his mission Islam had become the way of life for most of Arabia.
- For this overwhelming achievement, one asks how can an entire society who, not so long ago, were hostile to Islam and hostile to Prophet Muhammad SAS not only embraced Islam but
 - defended it with lives and their wealth.
 - From being enemies to Islam to becoming the torchbearers of Islam.
- They became the best nation evolved for mankind as Allah SWT says:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ ﷻ

¹¹⁰You are the best community brought out from humanity. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and you believe in Allah.

What were some of the methods of change?

#1 Firm policies inspired by Islam

- Through his resolute policies, inspired by the spirit of Islam, Rasoolullah SAS was able to transform these independent tribal units and elevate them to emerge within the framework of the Islamic Ummah.

- Indeed, the 'Islamic Ummah'—based on faith—that was established by Rasoolullah SAS has been and continues to be a stronger and more enduring bond than the concept of
 - tribalism, nationalism or ethnicity
- Allah SWT says:

أَفَحُكْمَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَبْغُونَ ۚ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِّقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

⁵⁰Do they wish to be judged according to (practices) at the time of ignorance (before Allah's guidance)? Who could be better than Allah in judgment for a people with unshakable faith?

- When Rasoolullah SAS passed away in 632 CE, he had completed his mission and established a social system that far surpassed the tribal system that the Arabs had before Islam, uniting them into a strong unity... from
 - Tribes into one Ummah based on لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله
- In the end, the Arabian Peninsula achieved a cohesive religious unity that it had never known before

#2 Shari'ah in harmony with Imaan

- Another area in changing society is that deeds and Imaan are harmoniously intertwined.
- There is no faith without righteous deeds and there are no righteous deeds without faith in Allah SWT
- While there are some worldly benefits in righteous deeds, the ultimate aim and benefit is with Allah SWT

- So in Islam, Shari'ah or practice did not differ from the creed or faith but enjoyed the same divine authority, which not only regulated religious matters but also all worldly affairs.
 - For all deeds return to Allah SWT for rewards

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ وَيَزِيدُهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِ ۗ

And as for those who believed and did righteous deeds, He will give them in full their rewards and grant them extra from His bounty. (4:173)

- One finds that there more than 50 times this concept is mentioned:

آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ

Faith and doing righteous deeds

- When behavior is meant to have a higher goal beyond human beings, changes will happen.

3 Preparing leaders: The Khulafa'ee Rashideen

- A third point to note is that Rasoolullah (SAS) prepared the Companions in such a way that many of them became leaders most remarkably the Khulafa'ee Rashideen
 - Abu Bakr (RA)
 - Umar (RA)
 - Uthman (RA)
 - Ali (RA)
- By the end of the Khulafa'ee Rashideen period, Islam had reached Palestine, Syria, all Mesopotamia... Damascus, Jerusalem, Cairo, Alexandria, Iraq and Persia, North Africa, Cypress, Europe, China.

- All this great achievement happened first and foremost by the Will of Allah SWT, then with the selfless dedication, commitment and great leadership Rasoolullah SAS.
- In contrast, today often times we find those in leadership position fail to produce leaders who will succeed.
- So, when they die there is a huge vacuum and not to mention the chaos that ensues.
- Rasoolullah SAS was selfless and he just wished if all his Companions can carry the same zeal to propagate the Deen confirming what Allah SWT says:

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- The Sahaabah (RA) understood this to mean that they too have to prepare the next generation to take on leadership in the Prophetic way.

#4: Through his character

- Rasoolullah SAS refined the morals of the society, he softened their nature and hearts, preparing them for progress and advancement.
- He forbade bloodshed and the burial of daughters alive.
- These great deeds accomplished by Muhammad (SAS) indicate that he was one of the great reformers of all times.
- He was a man of enlightened thought, vision, and leadership, known for his noble character, gentleness, humility, and good dealings with people.

- Rasoolullah SAS lived peacefully and calmly among people for forty years, and all his relatives loved him dearly, and the people of his city greatly respected him for his upright principles, noble character, honor, and integrity
- The Prophet SAS emphasized fairness, treating all people equally regardless of their social status, race, or background. His character promoted the rights of the poor, women, and marginalized groups, reshaping societal norms around justice.
- He encouraged compassion and forgiveness.
- He was known for his gentle nature, promoting kindness, patience, and forgiveness.
- Allah SWT describes him:

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ ۗ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ ۗ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ ۗ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

¹⁵⁹(O Muhammad PBUH), it is by Allah's Mercy that you are gentle with them. Had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have turned away from you. Therefore, pardon them, pray for their forgiveness, and consult them in public affairs. Once you have taken a decision, then put your trust in Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who put their trust in Him. (3:159)

- His character encouraged people to practice empathy, forgive others, and avoid revenge, fostering a more harmonious and peaceful society.

- He instilled a sense of personal responsibility. The Prophet's integrity and honesty were central to his character.
- He emphasized the importance of fulfilling one's duties, being truthful, and upholding moral values, which inspired a sense of accountability and ethical behavior in society.

What is holding us back from bringing about these changes today

- The transformation brought about by Rasoolullah SAS took place at a time when there was no mass media, technology, high tech equipment and the likes what we have at our advantage in modern times.
- So what is preventing us from using the Sunnah of Rasoolullah SAS to bring about positive changes in a world so filled with distress, grief, trials and tribulations.
- Today's world is so characterized by an unstable environment. Its future is so uncertain.
- How eager is the world waiting someone, some group with some Divine Guidance to deliver it from its woes!
- How badly is the need to eradicate the evils of hatred, fascism, bigotry, exploitation, racism and injustice!

Imaam Malik (May Allah's mercy be on him) said: The latter generation of this Ummah will never be rectified except by means of which rectified the earlier generation

In Conclusion

- Changes happen on two folds:
 - At the individual level which covers the following:
 - a) Understanding the mission of Rasoolullah SAS

- b) Firm faith and attachment to Allah SWT
- c) Personal character
- d) Being pro-active
- The second area is the collective effort and this includes
 - a) Brotherhood and love
 - b) Shura or mutual consultation
 - c) Discipline within the Jamaa'ah

May Allah SWT help us all to bring about these changes from the self to the world at large