

Islam's Recipe for the Glory & the Betrayal

The past glory

Islam's main focus is to guide humans towards attaining the successes both here and in the hereafter. For that, Islam considers man's conceptual, moral, spiritual and behavioral purification as the most important issue in life. Men and women engage in doing good deeds and detest doing bad deeds only after such a purification. No amount of material gains and scientific progress will bring such purification unless one pursues the correct path conceptually, morally, and spiritually. These are also the indispensable pre-requisites to build any sound civilization. Only a relentless pursuit in making purification of the self helps people qualifying for Allah SWT's visible and invisible mercy –crucial for any success in one's life. So it is revealed: "Indeed he succeeds who purifies his ownself" –(Sura As-Shams, verse 9). But such purification doesn't come through foods, drinks, and money, but through knowledge. And the Holy Qur'an is the only source of such knowledge.

The key to bring revolution in deeds, character, and behavior in people lies in the hand of the individuals. The Holy Qur'an reveals, "Certainly Allah does not change the affairs of a people unless they change themselves."–(Sura Ar-R'ad, verse 11). Hence, engaging in changing the state of affairs is the most important task that decides the fate of humans. And, education works as a real change-maker. Humans could add invaluable worth to their own understanding, morality, and character only through it. In fact, the highest value-adding process doesn't work in industries but through education. Hence, from day one of the revelation of the Holy Qur'an, reading (*iqra*) which implies accessing the Holy Qur'an –the best source of the highest knowledge on earth becomes the first obligation in Islam. Other obligations like five-time prayer, month-long fasting, giving charity and hajj came a decade later. Hence, whoever ignores it, ignores Allah Subhana wa Ta'ala (SWT)'s prescription and methodology.

In fact, the Qur'anic education worked as the most powerful tool to add the highest possible values to the early Muslims. In those early days, the Muslims didn't have any school, college or university, but they had verses of the Holy Qur'an in their hearts. So every Muslim became a full-time moving student and a moving teacher of Islam. As a result, every mosque and every Muslim house turned into an effective learning institution. Because of such sacred educational inputs, the early Muslims grew up with the purified mind and could attain the status of the best people in the whole human history. In any part of the history, did any ruler of the largest country of the contemporary world make any journey of more than five hundred miles only with a single servant and a camel? Even a petty political leader or minister doesn't walk alone. Did any head of the state ever alternate the ride on the camel with his servant? Did any ruler ever pull the rope of the camel while his servant is seated on it? Caliph Omar (R) did it while he made his journey from Medina to Jerusalem to take the city without any war. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his companions not only talked about equality, justice and morality but also practiced those principles. Therefore, although the early Muslims didn't build any pyramid, great wall or other wonders, but could raise an army of the best humans in the whole history. Because of them, Islam could raise the finest civilization on earth.

In those golden days of Islam, the Muslims added incredible value to humans. In no other segment of human history, men and women received such a huge uplift in their worth –as was the case of the early Muslims. What those Muslims could practice 14 hundred years ago, the non-Muslims couldn't think even a hundred years ago. It is significant to note that the equality of man and women, the inheritance of assets by the daughters, the freedom of the slaves and the rule of law are not be included in the menu of social reformations in other faiths. Therefore, occupation of the foreign lands, the enslavement of the weak and ethnic cleansing of the occupied lands was not the savagery only of the ancient Greeks and the Romans, but also of the modern European Christian imperialists. Burning down the Persian capital Persepolis by Alexander –the great icon of western values still works as a legacy closely followed by the modern protagonists of Western

civilization. So, the US Army could raze to the ground the historic cities of Mosul, Raqqa, Deira'zour, and many others without an iota of remorse. Hence, the ethnic cleansing of the Muslims from Spain, the Red Indians from America, the Aborigines from Australia, the Maoris from New Zealand and putting Jews in the gas chamber could be practiced in the West with huge jubilation. Even such colonial barbarity is celebrated as a mark of glorious victory. The Muslims also conquered many lands, but never indulged in ethnic or religious cleansing in those occupied lands. This is why, even after more than 6 hundred years of the Muslim rule in India, Spain, and the Balkan states, the Muslims preferred to stay minority rather than launching any religious or ethnic cleansing. But this has not been the case with the Christian rule in Europe, Americas, Philippines, and many African countries; the original people of these occupied lands were coerced to Christianity within decades. Because of Muslims' tolerance towards other faiths, a significant number of non-Muslims could live peacefully even in Islam's heartlands like Iraq, Syria, and Egypt. Islam brought not only a faith-change, rather moral, cultural and civilizational change. Such change still remains unsurpassed in the whole history.

The physical strength owes to healthy foods and drinks. But the moral strength owes to healthy knowledge and correct understanding. In the annals of human history, the Holy Qur'an indeed proved to be the best source of moral and spiritual nutrition. The relentless current decline of the Muslims also proved its importance; since the Muslims stand deeply detached from the Holy Qur'an, no amount of petrodollars and numerical numbers could arrest their ongoing downfall. In fact, without understanding the Holy Qur'an, moral and spiritual growth of humans is unthinkable. The Holy Qur'an showed its miracles in the life of the early Muslim. It was the first book in the Arabic language, but within a short span of time they could develop a huge wealth of knowledge in diverse fields. In fact, whatever glorious achievements the Muslims achieved in the fields of Tafseer, hadees, fiqh, Islamic jurisprudence, philosophy and moral science, are the works of these early Muslims. They studied and translated a huge number of books written by non-Muslims. Even the works of the Greek scholars reached

to the west through their translation.

The mother of all revolutions

Islam teaches how to prioritize issues in life. The last prophet of Islam (peace be upon him) didn't make any political issues out of the socio-economic backwardness of the Arabs. Nor did he prioritize to revolutionize the Arab economy. Rather he brought a 180-degree shift in the conceptual model: a shift in people's thinking. The prophet (peace be upon him) made his followers fully focussed on akhera (the hereafter). When such a shift was accomplished, the revolution took a gigantic start. Such a shift in focus indeed worked as the mother of an overwhelming revolution in people's thoughts, behavior, attitude, values, culture, spirituality, and politics. The same people, who were the arch-enemy of Islam and kill their own daughters, became the protectors of people and the devoted Khalifa (viceroy) of Allah SWT. As a result, promoting the sovereignty of Allah SWT and practicing His sharia became the way of their life. In fact, believing in the hereafter worked as a key to bring such a paradigm shift in the early Muslims' minds. To succeed in the hereafter worked as a powerful inspiration to do the good deeds; they spent their wealth and sacrificed even their life to enjoin the good and annihilate the wrong. They considered the life on earth as if sitting in an exam hall and the good score a key to get more rewards in akhera. Therefore, in order to get a good score, a true Muslim spends every moment of his life doing good deeds. Such an akhera-centered belief opened the flood gates of good deeds in the Muslim World. In fact, such an understanding added a tremendous speed to the civilization making efforts of the early Muslims.

Allah SWT has His own vision vis-à-vis the world and mankind. Such a vision has been repeated several times in the Holy Quran to frame it in Muslims' minds. The Holy Qur'an reveals, "He it is Who has sent forth His Apostle with the task of spreading guidance and the religion of truth to that end that He makes it prevail over all other religions.." -(Sura As-Saf, ayah: 9, Surah Fatah, ayat:28; Sura

Taubah, ayah: 33). As an indispensable part of faith, the prime duty of a Muslim is to align himself with the vision of Allah SWT. Hence, a Muslim's aim of survival and his educational need is altogether different from that of a non-Muslim. A factory man cannot do the job of an army man; he needs special training and education for that. In the Holy Qur'an, the Muslims are proclaimed as the army of Allah. So they need special education and skills to do the job properly. So, the role of education in Muslim's life is crucial. But the secularisation of education has made it almost impossible to generate such skills in the Muslims.

Allah SWT wants the victory of His religion only in the interest of mankind. Such a victory is indeed the most effective way as well as the only way to save people from the hellfire. Only this way the right path towards heavens can be shown to the people. Only then, a civilization can take a heavenly turn. To play such a crucial life-saving civilizational role, Islam can't work in solitude. Its works must not be restricted within the confines of mosques, madrasas, and houses, rather they must go all-encompassing to the highest point. To fulfill such a Divine vision, the whole statecraft, the politics, the culture, the educational institutions, the judiciaries, the army, the police, and other executive agencies must be integrated with the Divine mission -the mission of enjoining the good and eradicating the wrong. During the rule of the prophet of Islam (peace be upon him) and the early rightly guided caliphs, all such state and non-state institutions and faculties rendered their full and deliberate support to promote such Divine vision and mission. Otherwise, the job would have remained un-accomplished. Such a practice indeed stands as the most important legacy of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) that can shape the world as per Divine roadmap at any point in time.

As per prophetic legacy, incorporating every individual and every state-institution in the service of Allah SWT's vision is not only a political need but also an Islamic obligation. Any detachment or non-compliance not only forfeits one's Muslimness but also showcases his rebellion. A Muslim -like any other Muslim of any other age and place enjoys no other option but to align with Allah SWT's vision and

fulfill the Islamic obligation. But the secularist forces in the Muslim World stand against the practice of the prophet (peace be upon him)'s legacy. They keep the statecraft and the powerful state institutions captive in their own hands to undo any attempt of Islam's revival. If they foresee any imminent defeat, they even take the help of the non-Muslim mentors. The secularists in the Muslim World thus work as the enemy inside. They oppose the role of Islam in shaping their fate as well as the fate of mankind. The secularists thus block the Islamisation of state and individuals and put serious obstacles to carry out Allah's prescribed mission. Awfully, all the Muslim countries currently stand occupied by these internal enemies.

The mother of all failures

The most awful failure of Muslims today doesn't owe to the failure in industry or agriculture, but in education. Educational failure is indeed the mother of all other failures. Such failure has caused them to forget even the main purpose of their creation. Hence they failed to carry out even the most fundamental duty as Muslims. Because of that, many people have even retreated back to the old jahiliyyah –the era of ignorance. Due to such a retreat, Allah SWT's sharia law –as revealed in the Holy Qur'an has been replaced by the kufr law in almost all the Muslim countries. To put in practice such manifest falsehood, the enemies of Islam didn't need to launch any war. The new converts to the old jahiliyyah did the job eloquently. Like any physical disease, jahiliyyah –the most lethal illness in the conceptual premise has indeed shown its awful impact. Not only does it damage people's moral fabric, but it also kills the iman (the belief). As a result, instead of pan-Islamic brotherhood, the culture of tribal feuds, wars, disunity, disintegration, and rebellion against Allah SWT's sharia laws thrived in almost all Muslim countries. Islam survives only as lifeless rituals.

For moral and spiritual growth, learning the truth and de-learning falsehood should go hand in hand and must happen all the time. A Muslim needs constant renewal of his relation with Allah, otherwise

death of his belief and spirituality is inevitable. Five times prayers, month-long fasting, zakat, haj, regular study of the Holy Qur'an and giving charity are the parts of the Islamic curriculum to prepare a believer for the assigned job. But the devils have their own institutions and methodology to take them away from Islam. The immoral practices like prostitution, gambling, drinking wine, pornography, vulgarity and obscenity are not the only vehicles to take people out of the Islamic roadmap. In fact, the educational institutions work as the main and the most powerful tools to do such harm. Hence with the increasing number of secular educational institutions, the process of de-Islamization has got a very high momentum all over the Muslim World. So, in most of the Muslim countries, each day the tide of jahiliyah is getting stronger and the Muslims are getting more away from the Divine path. The impact of such de-Islamization is so explicit that the most Muslims have already de-learned the Divine narrative that they are the people who have been appointed by Allah SWT as His viceroy (*khalifa*). What could be worst betrayal than dishonouring such a Divine assignment? It indeed amounts to dishonouring Allah SWT's vision. It is also an ugly betrayal against Muslim's own mission.

The word "Muslim" carries a very meaningful historical connotation. It doesn't mean merely to be a believer, rather a very committed actor to fulfil the Wish of Allah (SWT). His or her role is not to invent any new roads, but to follow the Qur'anic roadmap (*siratum mustaqeem*) - already shown by the prophet of Islam 1400 hundred years ago. Failing to do so leads only towards the most disgraceful failure -both here and in the hereafter. Such failure takes straight only to the hellfire. The most important task of education is indeed to generate a deep awareness of this Divine responsibility and showcase the failure of the evil people and the success of the believers. But, in almost all Muslim countries, education has failed to accomplish such a seminal duty. The current education system -even the religious one in madrasas, has failed to nurture such a sense of Divine responsibility. Awfully, the worst crime is being committed every day in the Muslim World in the name of education. As a result, Islam-as practised today by the most Muslims, looks spectacularly dissimilar to the Islam of

the early Muslims. Therefore, the outcomes of these two sets of the Muslims couldn't be similar, either. Today, the glory of the early Muslims stands terribly replaced by the ongoing decline. 18.11.2019