

Tarbeeyah, The Key to Victory

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"Indeed Allaah will help those who help His (cause). Indeed Allaah is Exalted in Might, all-Powerful."

The Ways in which Creation Operates

Jubayr ibn Nufayr said: Once, when Cyprus was conquered and its people were divided and they used to cry to each other, I saw Abud-Dardaa sitting alone crying. So I said: O Abud- Dardaa! What makes you cry on this day in which Allaah has strengthened Islaam and its people? So he said: "Woe be to you O Jubayr. How insignificant the creation is to Allaah when they abandon His commands. Between us is a nation, who were evidently strong and had dominion, they abandoned the commands of Allaah, so see what has become of them!"[2]

So this is a clear and indisputable evidence that cultivation and education upon the commands of Allaah - with the beneficial knowledge and righteous actions - is the basis for achieving the help of Allaah; whilst abandoning this is the cause for defeat. "Indeed, Allaah - the One free from all defects, the Most High - has established certain Sunan (ways and causes) upon His creation, whosoever fulfills them will achieve success and felicity, but whosoever turns away from them has indeed gone astray. Allaah the Most High - explains this Sunan with regards to those who disbelieve:

"Similar Sunan were faced by people before you, so travel through the earth and see what was the end of those who disbelieved."[3]

And He - the Most Perfect - says:

"Such was the Sunnah (way) of Allaah with those who lived before. Indeed, in the Sunnah of Allaah you will find no change."[5]

This established Sunan, or way in which Allaah's creation operates, is not only for one particular nation to the exclusion of others, nor for any one particular era to the exclusion of others. Rather, this matter was practically taught to even the first of the Muslims, the Sahaabah - may Allaah be pleased with them all - as in the battle of Uhud, when the Messenger of Allaah sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam commanded the archers to remain in their positions, yet they disobeyed his order; which resulted in their defeat:

Lessons from the Battle of Uhud

Al-Baraa' ibn 'Aazib radiiallaahu 'anhu said: We encountered the pagans on that day [of Uhud] and the Prophet

sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam positioned a group of archers and appointed 'Abdullaah ibn Jubair to be in command of them and said: "Do not leave this position, if you should see us conquer them, do not leave this position; and if you should see them conquer us, then do not come to our aid." However, when we met the enemy they fled on their heels, until I saw their women running towards the mountain, lifting their dresses from their legs, thus exposing their ankle-bracelets. Some people started saying: The booty, the booty! So 'Abdullaah ibn Jubair said: The Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam has taken a promise from me not to abandon this position. However, his companions refused to stay. So when they refused, Allaah confused them, such that they did not know where to go; due to which they then suffered seventy deaths...."[6]

Imaam Ibn al-Qayyim (d 751H) - rahimahullaah - said: "This calamity which struck them was caused by their own actions. So our Lord said:

"When a single disaster struck you, whereas you struck them with a disaster twice as great, do you then say: from where did this come? Say: It is from your own selves! Indeed, Allaah has power over everything."[7]

And He mentioned this itself; in that which is more general than this in the Makkan soorahs. He said: "Whatever misfortune befalls you is because of what your own hands have done, yet for many He grants forgiveness."[8]

"Whatever of good comes to you, it is from Allaah; and whatever misfortunes befall you, it is from your own selves."[9]

So the good and the bad here are blessings and misfortunes. So the blessings of Allaah are something which He has favoured you with, whilst the misfortunes have sprung from your own selves and your actions. So the first is from His grace and the second is from His justice. And the servant is always between His grace and His justice; His grace is upon him, His judgment in him and whatever He decrees is just. And Allaah concluded the first Aayah with His saying: "Indeed Allaah has power over all things." After His saying: "Say: It is from your own selves!" Thus indicating to them about the generality of His Power along with His Justice - and He is the Most Just, the All-Powerful."[10]

Disobedience Results in Defeat

And the story of this battle of Uhud must give us the du'aat (callers), an important lesson by which we benefit in our lives, which is that: "When the Muslims suffer defeat in jihaad or in da'wah, then they should blame themselves and straighten their course; and they should weigh their actions with the true scales. Since Allaah - the Mighty and Majestic - has informed the Muslims that the reason for their defeat in the battle of Uhud was themselves, and this was the same reason on the day of Hunayn. And it is from the Sunan of Allaah that He does not remove a blessing from a people which has been given to them, unless they change what He has given them of eemaan (faith), guidance and good. Allaah says: "That is because Allaah will never change the favour which He bestows upon a people, until they change themselves."[11]

And this verse shows us the history of our Islaamic Ummah in the best way. So our Salafus-Saalih (Pious Predecessors) clung to the blessings of Allaah upon them, and the most important of these blessings is the correct 'aqeedah (beliefs) and noble manners; and they kept away from disunity and splitting. They took hold of those prescribed reasons which made them the best of nations ever raised for mankind, and thereby deserved through this, the victory of Allaah, establishment upon the earth and the various tribes and nations being made subservient to them.

After them came a people who changed that which the Messenger of Allaah sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam and his Companions were upon, in 'aqeedah and methodology, with their own customs, ways and manners. They split into groups and parties and raised up the banner of jaahiliyyah (pre-Islaamic ignorance), so Allaah made them despicable, causing the lowly nations to dominate over them. So the best of them were attacked and the minds of the children were brainwashed, and they became scum, like the scum upon the waves.

So if the Muslims desire good, unity and establishment upon the earth, then they should make their manners and behaviour like that of the Salaf of this Ummah and begin by changing themselves. However, he who is unable to change even himself, will not be able to change his family, not to mention changing the Ummah.

And then this aayah comes between two aayaat, which informs us about the people of Fir'awn - and those nations and tribes which preceded them - who disbelieved in Allaah and His Signs. There was much oppression and sin committed amongst them, so Allaah destroyed them. So take heed - O people of understanding and hearts - and beware of the punishment and the power of Allaah! And know that change begins with the soul and is not achieved through having many helpers, nor strength of information, nor the clamour of those who clap and shout, nor by the arenas and streets being filled with huge crowds.

Indeed, the leaders of our Ummah - those through whom Allaah gave honour and might to His Deen - when the conquest of a city was delayed for them, then they gathered the army and asked them two questions, for which there was no third: [i] What are the Sunnahs that you have fallen short in complying with? [ii] What are the sins you have committed? [12]

Therefore, they used to take account of themselves, and they used to fear the spread of sins amongst themselves. The leader used to be a good example for his army, with regards obedience to Allaah and fear of Him. However, as regards us today, then we read the previous aayah and we read other aayaat which are like it, such as the saying of Allaah - the Most High:

"Never does Allaah change the condition of a people, until they change themselves. But when Allaah wills punishment for a people, then there can be no turning it back, nor will they find besides Him any helper." [13]

However, along with this, these sublime aayaat do not deeply enter into our hearts. We accuse the east and the west, but we do not accuse ourselves and we take a very precise account of other people - such that it contains no pity, nor mercy - but we do not take account of our ourselves." [14]

From Where Will the Help Come?

Due to all this, Allaah attached His help and assistance for His servants, to the servants aiding Him, and this does not come about except with true tarbiyah (cultivation and education) and sincerely clinging to the truth. So He - the Most Perfect - says:

"Indeed Allaah will help those who help His (cause). Indeed Allaah is Exalted in Might, all-Powerful." [15]

'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr (d.94H) - rahimahullaah - said: When the people were equipped and ready to proceed to Mu'tah, he said to the Muslims: "May Allaah accompany you and defend you." Then they went on until they reached the land of Shaam (Syria, Jordan and Palestine), where they were informed that Heraclius had arrived at al-Balqaa with one-hundred thousand Romans, and added to them - from the Arab tribes of al-Hazm, Jadh'aam, Balqaen and Bahraa - another one-hundred thousand men. So the Muslims waited for two nights, considering what to do. So they said: We will write to the Messenger of Allaah sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam and inform him about the number of the enemy. He said: But 'Abdullaah ibn Rawaahah encouraged the people to bravery and said: "By Allaah, O people! That which you hate is what you had come out for. You seek martyrdom. We do not fight the enemy merely with what we have prepared, nor with strength, nor with large numbers. We do not fight them except with this Deen that Allaah has blessed us with. So go forth, because it is only one of two good things: either victory, or martyrdom. He said: So the people said: By Allaah! Ibn Rawaahah has spoken the truth. So the people continued." [16]

The Mufassir and Imaam, ash-Shanqeetee (d.1393H) said:

"Allaah - the Mighty and Majestic - explains in the above noble aayah that He has sworn to help and give victory to those who help Him. It is known that the help and victory of Allaah comes by following what He has prescribed, obeying His command, avoiding His prohibitions, by helping His Messengers and their followers, aiding His Deen and fighting against His enemies and overpowering them - until the word of Allaah is made uppermost, whilst the word of His enemies is debased and made low. Then Allaah - the Most High, the Most Magnificent - explains the characteristics of those whom He has promised would receive His help and victory, distinguishing them from others. So He said, whilst explaining those to whom He swore He would aid and give victory to - because He is the one to aid and give victory:

"Those who, if We establish them in the earth, establish the prayer, give the zakaah, enjoin the good and forbid the

evil."[17]

And that which this noble aayah indicates is that whosoever aids Allaah, then Allaah will aid Him. This is clearly explained in other than this place, such as His - the Most High's - sayings:

"O you who Believe. If you help Allaah, Allaah will help you; and establish your feet firmly. But those who disbelieve, for them is destruction and Allaah will make their deeds vain."[18]

"Indeed, Our Word has gone forth of old for our slaves, the Messengers, that they will certainly be victorious; and that Our forces will certainly be triumphant."[19]

"Allaah has Decreed: It is My Messenger and I who will prevail."[20]

"Allaah has promised to those amongst you who believe and do righteous actions that He will grant you the Khilaafah in the land."[21]

And in His - the Most High's - saying:

"Those who, if We establish them in the earth, establish the Prayer, give the Zakaah, enjoin the good and forbid the evil."[22]

In it is a proof that there is no promise from Allaah of His help, except by establishing the Salaah, paying the Zakaah, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil. So it is these whom Allaah will establish upon the earth and will strengthen His Word through them. However, those who do not establish the Salaah, nor pay the Zakaah, nor enjoin the good or forbid the evil, then there is no promise for them from Allaah that He will aid and grant them victory. They are not from His party, nor are they his friends - those who have the promise of His help and victory. Rather, they are the party of Shaytaan and his friends. So if they were to expect the help of Allaah and the fulfillment of His promise upon them, then their example is like that of a hired worker who refuses to do the job that he was hired for, yet he expects to be rewarded. So whosoever is like this, then he has no intellect![23]

The Fruits of Disagreement

There is here, an important point that must be mentioned, which is that disagreement, opposing views and mutual disregard is one of the greatest causes of defeat. This - in reality - is due to a deficiency in tarbiyah (education and cultivation) and therefore it is one of those matters which prevents victory.

Imaam ash-Sha'bee (d.104H) said:

"No nation differed after its Prophet, except that the people of falsehood from it, gained ascendancy over its people of truth."[24]

And this - as has preceded - is precisely what happened to the Sahaabah (Companions), those who were educated and cultivated under the shade of Revelation, with their Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam. So what is the case of those who come after them?!

Indeed: "Allaah - the Mighty and Majestic - explained that one of the greatest causes for the loss suffered by the Muslims at the battle of Uhud was the differing and ikhtilaaf (disagreement) of the archers, and that some of them disobeyed the order of the Messenger of Allaah sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam. About this Allaah - the Most High - said:

"Indeed, Allaah did fulfill His Promise to you when you were killing them by His Permission; until you lost your courage and began disputing about the command, and disobeyed, after He showed you that which you love. Amongst you are some that desire this world and some that desire the Hereafter. Then He made you flee from them, that He may test you.

But He forgave you, and Allaah is Most Gracious to the Believers."[25]

So in all the battles of the Messenger of Allaah sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, the Muslims were a single rank and a single jamaaah ' (united body), taking orders from a single leader. Allaah - the Most High - said: "O you who Believe! When you meet an enemy, be firm against them and remember Allaah a lot so that you may be successful. And obey Allaah and His Messenger, and do not dispute lest you lose courage and your strength departs. And have sabr (patient perseverance), indeed Allaah is with the patient ones."[26]

So obedience to Allaah and His Messenger means being free from defect and blemish in both 'aqeedah (beliefs) and manhaj (methodology), just as it means agreement in direction and where instructions are taken from. However, defeat is the result of disunity and disagreement between the hearts, and in having many leaders and many jamaa'ahs (groups and parties).

There has - in this present age - been no battle in which we have participated, except that in it we were differing and disputing parties, having differing leaderships and having mutual hatred. So how is it possible to achieve victory and establishment?! Indeed, everyone talks about bringing about unity, and writes about it and looks forward to it. However, the results are sorrowful and destroy and frustrate the hopes. After every attempt it becomes clear that every group strove to cause difficulties for the others; and to plot against them; and to make conditions upon them which conflict with the goals of unity and harmony. So the attempt that will be effective and successful must have as its goal, corrections for the ailments of the hearts and souls..... So when the souls are changed and the hearts are filled with taqwaa (piety, fear and obedience to Allaah), then everything in our lives will be changed."[27]

Lessons from the Battle of Hunayn

Thus the cause for the defeat has been very clearly manifested, and it is a deficiency in the tarbiyah (education and cultivation). Another clear manifestation of this also, is what happened in the battle of Hunayn, about which Allaah - the Most High - said:

"And on the day of Hunayn, when you rejoiced at your great number, but it availed you nothing; and the earth vast as it is - was straightened for you, then you turned back in flight."[28]

Imaam Ibn al-Qayyim said:

"So from the wisdom of Allaah, He first gave them a taste of the bitterness of defeat and of being overcome - despite their large number, preparation and strength - in order that heads which had been raised up due to the conquest of Makkah, should be lowered. For they did not enter His land and His Sacred Precinct (i.e. Makkah) in the way the Messenger of Allaah sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam entered it; lowering his head with humility, upon his horse - to the extent that his chin nearly touched the saddle - out of humility before His Lord, humbling himself before His Greatness and submitting to His Might. This was due to the fact that Allaah had made lawful His Sacred Precinct and His Land for him, and He had not made it lawful to anyone before him or after him. All of this occurred so that he should make clear to those who said: "We will not be defeated today because of our numbers!!" Explaining to them that the victory comes only from Him and that whomsoever He aids, then none can overcome him; and whomsoever He forsakes, then there is none to grant victory to him, besides Allaah. And that He - the Most Perfect - took it upon Himself to aid and grant victory to His Messenger and His Deen - not due to their large numbers which they (falsely) delighted in, since that was of no avail to them. Rather, they fled, turning their backs. So when their hearts had become downcast, Allaah sent them the removal of their distress and a prior taste of victory, by sending down His tranquility upon His Messenger and upon the Believers and by sending down the unseen forces (i.e. the Angels). So from His wisdom - the Most Perfect - was that he only granted victory and its gifts to them when their hearts had become downcast and saddened:

"And We desired to favour those who were weak in the land and to make them leaders and make them the inheritors, and to establish them in the land. And We let Fir'awn and Haamaan and their hosts receive from them that which they feared."[29][30]

Impatience: An Obstacle against Tarbiyah

From that which negates tarbiyah and prevents its completion is: being hasty and having lack of sabr (patient perseverance). This produces a negative result, the least of which is a delay in the victory. Our Lord - the Most Perfect - said:

"And what made you hasten from your people, O Moosaa? He replied: They are close on my footsteps, and I hasten to you - O my Lord - that you might be pleased." [31]

A clear goal and a clear intention: I have hastened to you - O my Lord - to please you. So Allaah said:
"Indeed We have put your people to fitnah (trial and tribulation) in your absence. And indeed as-Saamiree has led them astray." [32]

So this is Moosaa 'alayhis-salaam, and he was one of the Oolul-'Azm (foremost in resolve) from the Messengers, yet he sought to hasten the affair. So when he sought to hasten the affair, fitnah (trial and discord) occurred amongst his people which was that they began worshipping others besides Allaah - the Mighty and Majestic. Allaah - the Most High - said:

"So patiently persevere, and let not those who have no yaqeen (certainty of faith) discourage you from conveying Allaah's Message." [33]

Imaam al-Baghawee (d.555H) - rahimahullaah - said:

"Meaning: do not let those who have no certain faith lead you into ignorance and into following them upon misguidance." [34]

Ibn al-Qayyim - rahimahullaah - said:

"Whosoever considers the trials and discords that have come upon Islaam - the small and the great of them - will realise that they were due to abandoning this principle of not being hasty, and of having sabr upon that which is harmful, and seeking to remove the harm in a hasty manner. This in turn produces that which is greater and worse than the initial harm." [35]

So this is a word from a Scholar who has carefully and thoroughly examined the Book and the Sunnah, and has likewise carefully examined the condition of the Muslims, and therefore said what he said - may Allaah have mercy upon him.

Tarbiyah and Sabr: the Key to Victory

The teacher, Muhammad Qutb - may Allaah guide him - said in his book: Waaqi'unal-Ma'aasir, and he was speaking about the Islaamic Movements of Egypt, internally and externally, he said: "So with regards to within the country, then there occurred from them hastiness in showing the strength of the jamaa'ah ' (i.e. the Muslims) - whether in making themselves manifest, or in demonstrations, protest marches, entering into political affairs of the time - such as fighting the communists; and supporting the affairs of the country in the security council, and other than that. It is as if the jamaa'ah - each and every time - wanted to say: we are here, and we are able to do such and such.... Leaving aside the matters of the day, then was this something which was permissible for the Muslim jamaa'ah to enter into? Or was its obligation to call to the correction of the fundamental manhaj (methodology) of living, to the establishment of the firm pillars and to the perfection of the desired tarbiyah. However, seeking to hasten the movement before its time, then produced an effect upon the overall direction." [36]

I say: What will very clearly demonstrate the matter of hastiness and its many negative effects is the saying of Allaah - the Most Perfect, Most High - when He said:

"Have you not seen those who were told to hold back their hand from fighting, and offer Salaah (Prayer) and give the

Zakaah. But when fighting was prescribed for them, behold! a section of them fear men as they fear Allaah, or even more. They say: Our Lord! Why have you prescribed fighting for us. Would that you had granted us respite for a short period."[37]

"So those who were resolved upon Jihaad and loved it, when they were tested with it, they were averse to it and fled from it."[38] And they were from the Companions of the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam - those who received tarbiyah (cultivation and education) beneath the shade of Revelation and who were guided by the Sharee'ah. So how about those after them - the greatest of whom cannot even reach a handful, or even half a handful, of their calibre?!

So finally: due to all that has preceded, it has been said by the Callers to Islaam and the people of culture, and the people of Movements after previously denying it: "Indeed I certainly believe in the strength of Knowledge, and I believe in the strength of culture and learning, but I have a greater belief in the strength of tarbiyah."[39]

And only Allaah guides to the Path that is straight.

References:

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2. Related by Imaam Ahmad in az-Zuhd (2/63) and Abu Nu'aym in Hilyatul-Awliyaa (I/216-217).
3. Soorah Aal-'Imraan 3: 137
4. Soorah al-Ahzaab 33:62
5. Qul Huwa Min 'Indee Anfusakum (p.58) of Muhammad Suroor.
6. Related by al-Bukhaaree (no.4043).
7. Soorah Aal-Imraan 3:165
8. Sooratush-Shooraa 42:30
9. Sooratun-Nisaa 4:79
10. Zaadul-Ma'aad (3/238).
11. Sooratul-Anfaal 8:53
12. Such as the advice given by Umar ibn al-Khattaab to Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas and his army - radiiallaahu 'anhumaa - as occurs in 'Iqdul-Fareed (1/40).
13. Sooratur-Ra'dd 13:11
14. Qul Huwa Min 'Indee Anfusakum (pp.59-62).
15. Soorah Hajj 22:40
16. Related by Abu Nu'aym in Hilyatul-Awliyaa (1/119).
17. Soorah al-Hajj 22:41
18. Soorah Muhammad 47:7
19. Sooratus-Saaffaat 37:171-173
20. Soorah al-Mujaadalah 58:21
21. Sooratun Noor 24:55
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24. Related by Abu Nu'aym in al-Hilyah (4/313) and adh- Dhahabee in Siyar A'laamun - Nubalaa (4/311).
25. Soorah Aal-'Imraan 3:152
26. Sooratul Anfaal 8:45-46
27. Qul Huwa Min 'Indee Anfusakum (pp. 93-94)
28. Qul Huwa Min 'Indee Anfusakum (pp. 93-94)
29. Soorah al Qasas 28:5-6
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31. Soorah TaaHaa 20:83-84
32. Soorah TaaHaa 20:85
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35. A'laamul-Muwaqqi'een (3/4) of Ibn al-Qayyim.
36. Quoted in Mawqifil-Mu'min minal-Fitnah (pp. 28-29) by Shaykh 'Abdullaah al-'Ubaylaan - may Allaah protect him.
37. Soorah an-Nisaa 4:77
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39. The saying of Sayyid Qutb - as quoted in Majallatur- Risaalah (no.595/1952C.E.)