

November 13, 2009

Khutbah



Title: [Victory Comes Through the Help of Allah, Humility, and Sincerity](#)

DVD title: Tafsir on Sūratu-n-Nasr and Allah's Promise of Victory
The Golden Age of Islam was The Spirituality of our Predecessors

Opening duas. There is a very powerful *sūrah* in Qur'an where Allah (swt) says:

**When the help of Allah comes, and the opening, victory, and you see
people entering the religion of Allah in multitudes, then hymn the
praises of your Lord and seek His Forgiveness, for truly He is the Ever-
Accepting of repentance.** (110:1-3)

There is a lot stacked in that small *sūrah*, and I'll be brief today, *inshā'a-Llāh*. We have to remember that the Golden Era of Islam was a time when Muslims were at the head of world civilization. Unfortunately, that age was short-lived in the history of humanity; albeit, it was near to 500 years. But these past moments of "victory" for Islam have escaped us because of our own (humanity in general) greed and carelessness, because of our ego, of our love for ourselves, because of our love for name and fame in the materialistic world we live in, where everything is a brand, including the individual. Branded, in cattle or horse talk, means you show ownership. Indeed, it is an interesting metaphor for the world we live in today.

The early Muslims were acknowledged leaders in the world because of their spirituality, because of their sincere love for Allah (swt), and because of their *adab*

(and *adab* is a very important topic for us as Muslims), because of their spirituality and mysticism, their Tasawwuf, their obedience to the commands of Allah (swt), and their understanding that these words, these commands come from the ‘*ālam al amr*. During these times of very high level spirituality and sincere commitment to Islam, their [had a deep] understanding of the *kalima*, *lā ilāha illa-Llāh*, which was proclaimed from Arabia to Africa to Andalusia, to the Balkans, Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent, through to Malaysia and Indonesia, indeed, the remnants of which were reclaimed here in the Western world of North America. Indeed, by some published accounts, it was the 11th century when Muslims came to this continent. This was still during the period of time known as the Golden Age.

The Turks, the Moghuls, the Persians, or Byzantines, whoever they were, had a high quality of character/*akhlaq*. Many people’s ‘*aqīda* was beyond criticism. These predecessors of ours were tolerant and patient, and made up all strata of society. They were cosmopolitan, and rural. They were people of great knowledge; they were people who were simple, but they all seemed to understand what Islam was. And when they said Allahu Akbar, they knew that whatever greatness they had achieved, Allah was greater than that, and it came from Allah. They had sincerity, and sincere intention to propagate this message of Islam to the world. Not just to convert the world to Islam (like the Salafi today talk about), but to send a message of cooperation and understanding, tolerance, patience, wisdom, and seeking of knowledge—all the wonderful qualities people can have—to the whole world.

That’s the victory: winning over the hearts of people by the message, by the oneness of Allah, and by the character of the individuals who live it. This spirituality/*rūhiya* and this *ikhlas*/sincerity of our predecessors, who were righteous people, is the reason it was called eventually a Golden Age. We owe a

lot of beautiful, historic Islamic heritage to these people: the Sahabah, the *tabā'in*, and the *taba-taba'**in* who were spiritually aware, who were sincere, who made Islam a victory for Islam throughout the world not by the sword, but by their character. Yet we look at the miserable, pitiful situation of the *ummah* today, and it is a sign of our spiritual weaknesses. It's a sign of humanity's spiritual deterioration. Islam came and spread through the world with the purpose of bringing character and dignity to human beings.

It's a message that can reach into everyone's lives, a message of unity and oneness/*tawhid*, to all people. Yet, today, enemies from all corners (unfortunately, largely within Islam itself) attack Islam. So we are on the defensive. The problem is the people of good character are defensive, alongside bad Muslims, who don't understand Islam and destroy Islam. And we are thrown into the same pile as these people. They are passive aggressive in their mentality. And we live in a passive aggressive world.

Yet Allah's command doesn't change; the Qur'an doesn't change. The command by Allah (swt) is to be a model community, showing the path of unity. The model of Islam is to be in harmony and solidarity—not just solidarity with Muslims, but with Muslims in the true sense of the word: all people who believe. Yet we are divided. The ideal of brotherhood and sisterhood has been lost, characterized against the background of the conduct of the Sahabah and the *taba'**in*. The *ummah* that once protected the oppressed and poor, that once helped the helpless, that helped orphans are now making orphans, oppressing the poor, blowing up places, and killing innocent people—among the Muslims, let alone anyone else.

The internal and external enemies have the same faces. The *ummah*, which once placed its trust and hope in Allah, is becoming more dependent on the protection of people who do not consider themselves in the *ummah*, and who have political

ends to their “protection,” to their treaties or entreaties. What happened? The Prophet Mohammed (sal) found a clever, purposeful way to end slavery, and now we are enslaving ourselves, and by our own people. And we are enslaving others. It’s a different type of slavery: financial, mental, psychological as well as actual slavery in some places. We are becoming slaves of the economy and politics, and the powers of people who want to be superpowers.

The cause of this degradation and illness has to have a cure. Just like anything else, with a proper diagnosis, there is a cure to it. Allah always provides a cure for every disease. In our spiritual illness today, we have to look for a cure. *Inshā'a-Llāh*, that cure will come to light, and the *ummah* will recover from a disease and begin again to take a position of leadership in the world which others can look to and say, “Those are good people. They went through a bad time, but they changed themselves.” If we are going to make the diagnosis of the sickness, we have to begin by consulting Prophet Mohammed (sal), and look at his prophetic wisdom:

Once Prophet Mohammed (sal) was asked by the Sahabah regarding the realities of the situations of the Muslims and what it would be like in the future, specifically at the time of the Yawmi Qiyama, the Day of Judgment. The Prophet (sal) said, “The day will surely come when all unbelievers will unite against Muslims, and will launch joint attacks against them.” And the Sahabah asked, “Will the Muslims be less in numbers compared to the enemies?” And Rasulallah replied, “Muslims will be spread throughout the world and will be numerous, but their strength will be like a tiny ball of cotton. They will be powerless and helpless unless they repent and turn to Allah for help.” Another of the Sahabah asked, “O Prophet! What will be the cause of the Muslims’ weakness?” And he said, “Your weakness comes from your love of this world, love of yourself, and love of fame.”

From this *hadith*, we can infer a lot of lessons for our own spiritual benefit. First, the Prophet (sal) recognized the spiritual weakness of Muslims as the Day of Judgment approached. It shows he was given the capacity of knowing the future, and to take a look into the *ghaib*, and see into the unseen events. Those events were concerned with the future situations of the *ummah*. Also this prophecy should make us cognizant that in our time today, the Day of Judgment may be a “day” of judgment, but it may be every day there is judgment being made. We are in a time of being judged, and by our own actions.

If creation was created in seven days – and the calculations by Qur'an is 8 billion years, 4 million years, etc. – then the day of Judgment can certainly extend over a long period of time. Very few things just start and end. If you are in a car, and you start at a dead stop, it takes you time to get to 60 miles per hour. So when people say, “The Day of Judgment is upon us,” it may well be. It may have been upon us for the last 500 or 1000 years, in another way of calculating it. It’s our mentality also.

The Muslim Ummah has become victim to the oppression of many people from the outside, yes we know that. And we see it happening again. But it also tells us that we are oppressed from within. There is hope in this statement also, because it contains a diagnosis and a cure. The Prophet (sal) said the cause of our weakness is love of this world, love of the self, and love of fame. These three wrong types of love, these limited and distorted forms of love have replaced the love of Allah (swt), and the love of the Prophet (sal). It has replaced our attraction to the Divine Presence. It has made us distracted from seeing what is before us, from understanding the process we are a part of.

According to the Prophet (sal), these three loves (self, world and fame) have made our *iman* and *niyyat* powerless, like a ball of cotton. That's the reason why today there are so many unbelievers, and often times they are successful in defeating the Muslims. Unbelievers are not Christians, Jews, Buddhists or Hindus. That's such a limited and silly way of looking at it. Unbelievers are people who don't believe. Who feel that they are in control, that they have the power, that they have the rights, whether they are inside Islam or not, whether they are Al Qaida or Hizbul Tahrir, or Jihadi whatever. Pick a name, make one up, or they have some other name or some other religion. There is an incredible level of ignorance that we see played out, just in the last 10 days. But our situation isn't hopeless, *inshā'a-Llāh*.

The Prophet (sal) also said the cure for this cancer we are attacked with is if we repent and turn to Allah, seek Allah's Aid, and support the ummah. Repenting doesn't mean just saying *astaghfiru-Llāh*, or just asking for forgiveness. It is that, of course, but it is stopping the *gafla*, the heedlessness, and going back to paying attention. It is to reject the exaggerated love we have for things, for the self, for fame and name and this world. "Turning back to Allah" means instead of loving ourselves in the wrong way, or loving things and fame, we strive to have sincerity. We can have love in the world, and be aware of our self (Know yourself and know your Lord), and we can have fame [by doing] the things that put us in a position to give a good message and be appreciative—to have gratitude instead of love of fame.

When we turn to Allah, we make *tawajjuh*. We pay attention and turn to Allah for help. It means we trust and put our confidence in Allah as the Source, as the Creator, as the Architect and Constructor of all success. Those successes are victories, all the success that come into our life. It is clear from this *hadith* that the real source of victory is the genuine spirituality of the individual Muslim. Even though we are an *ummah*, it is the individual Muslim's sincerity that makes the

difference. True spirituality begins with a renewal/*tajdīd* of that sincere self. It begins with the reforming of the *nafs*, and the practice of *ikhlas*.

When Allah's help and victory comes near to you, and you see men entering the religion of Allah in companies, so celebrate the praises of your Lord and ask protection, for surely He is Ever-Returning in His Mercy. (110:1-3)

This Sūratu-n-Nasr is very helpful in understanding how the help comes from Allah, and how He helps people who believe. This *sūrah* contains the key that unlocks our understanding regarding the relationship between the sincere conduct of a truly spiritual Muslim and Allah's promise of assistance, help, and His assurance of personal victory. Historically, we know that the *sūrah* describes the help and victory he gives the early Muslim when they entered Mecca without bloodshed. The victory referred to in the *sūrah* is the conversion of the whole Arabian peninsula to Islam. After the conquest of Mecca, many different tribes came to give their *bai'at* to the Prophet (sal).

The Prophet (sal) saw with his eyes how the promise of Allah became fulfilled in his own lifetime. Yet, despite this overwhelming victory, he was reminded in this *sūrah* that victory only comes with the help and *madad* of Allah (swt). Following this victory, Allah tells the Prophet to praise Him and worship Him for all the wonderful things He did in creating this world, what He did for Muslims and for Islam. On the other hand, the Prophet (sal) was also required to seek the protection of Allah after this overwhelming victory.

There is something else that comes with victory. There is a potential for arrogance and ego in this. We have to stay in the shelter, protected by Allah. Even if we think we have achieved great things in our lives, as individuals or as a group, it's

because we have the tendency to forget, especially when we have great achievements. That's exactly the time when we should remember. Sometimes these achievements lead us to desire more victories. People get attached to their hegemony, even their spiritual or religious hegemony. We see this in the world today. There is more victory under the guise of protection and selfish aims.

Whenever these victories come in our lives, someone else is there, celebrating them. Khannās, the Whisperer, Shaytan is there, celebrating right along side of us. "Good for you! You won a victory. You won a victory for Islam today!" That is Khannās. When one person died, when one person's land was destroyed, when one believer was harmed, when there is one innocent victim, this is a victim for Shaytan. He wants to gain advantage from our victory, and this is why we need to ask protection. Khannās resides inside of us in the form of our pride and power, our desires for fame, for this world. There are beautiful things in this world we are given and we deserve. There are beautiful relationships in this world that we have been given to enjoy, but what is the *nīyyat*? What is the motivation?

There is some advice we can find by reflecting on Sūratu-n-Nasr. We can be victorious only if we sincerely depend on the will of Allah (swt). Without that help, despite any efforts we make, we won't achieve anything worthwhile and lasting. Second, we can invite the Mercy of Allah and the Madad of Allah into our live by living a good life, by striving, by picking ourselves up every time we fail, by striving to live a good life as Muslims, by loving that submission to Allah, and by following the life of the Prophet Mohammed, not only in a literal sense, but in a spiritual sense.

We can be assured of this continuous success, successive successes, if we are humble. Despite whatever achievements come to us, Allah's help is guaranteed to us if we live a life of more simplicity, modeled after the simple people with

humility and kindness. This is victory. The Sunnah of Prophet Mohammed, and the examples found in the lives of the Sahabah and the *tabā'in* are testimonies. The Muslims weren't dependent on military strength. They weren't armed better. They didn't have deterrent weapons. Even the evil plans of their enemies weren't able to overcome them, because their intentions were pure and they were sincere. Maybe they could think more clearly, and act in a more strategic way. They could use the resources they had in a better way. Think of it from a practical point of view, rather than the "God is on my side" point of view.

Victory is promised to those who believe and do good, and who encourage others to do good, who are patient and encourage others to be patient. How can the *ummah* raise itself? I guess we have to say, person by person, community by community, by cultivating our spirituality, by taking the first step, then the second step in reforming ourselves, by believing the Qur'an, by receiving the help and support of Allah, by purifying ourselves and being sincere in our intention, by performing righteous acts and being in the company of good people, by keeping the doors of ethical and moral purification open, and by doing those good deeds without discerning or caring who you are doing them for, because you are doing them for Allah (swt). Because if you separate good deeds from sincerity, there is no spiritual value. Great work is done for Allah by great people because it is done from their heart and spirituality, from their sincere repentance, from their carefulness instead of their carelessness. The miserable situation that characterizes Islam today has to be overcome. We have to overcome them by our sincerity, our continued work, and our continued measurement of our self, *inshā'a-Llāh*.

Duas. SECOND KHUTBAH Duas.