

The state of a nation is not measured by its resources but by its spirit.

When the Sahaba faced the biggest army in the history of Arab warfare until that time at Ghazwatul Ahzab and the Munafiqeen tried to discourage them and blamed Rasoolullah ﷺ for the predicament, their reaction was:

وَلَمَّا رَأَى الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْأَحْزَابَ قَالُوا هَذَا مَا وَعَدَنَا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ
وَصَدَقَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَمَا زَادَهُمْ إِلَّا إِيمَانًا وَتَسْلِيمًا

Ahzab 33:22 *And [so,] when the believers saw the Confederates [advancing against them], they said, 'This is what Allah ﷻ and His Messenger promised us! and, 'Truly spoke Allah ﷻ and His Messenger and all this but increased their faith and their readiness to obey Allah ﷻ.*

Ideology is the lens for us to view the world – for us that is Islam

Allah ﷻ still owns the world and gives authority to whoever He wants and takes it away from whoever He wants.

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكُ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ
وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

A'al Imraan 3: 26. *Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "O Allah! Possessor of the kingdom, You give the kingdom to whom You will, and You take the kingdom from whom You will, and You endue with honor whom You will, and You humiliate whom You will. In Your Hand is the good. Verily, You are Able to do all things.*

Ibn Al Qayyim: Leaders are the symptoms of the condition of people. They are not the cause of the conditions. People confuse the symptoms with

the cause. If you have good leaders, it means that the condition of people is good. That they are pious, just, compassionate. If you have bad leaders who oppress you, it means that the condition of people is that they are unjust, cruel, selfish. Which situation do you think applies to us today? The cure is simple. Change your own condition. It will result in leaders to match. Because leaders come from the people. As the people, so will be the leaders.

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ
بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

Rum 30: 41. *Evil (difficulties, calamities) has appeared on land and sea because of what the hands of men have earned (by oppression and evil deeds, etc.), that Allah may make them taste a part of that which they have done, in order that they may return (by repenting to Allah, and begging His Pardon).*

Why do we confuse the symptoms with the cause? Because that is the easy option. It is always easier to blame someone else for our situation instead of looking at ourselves and what we need to change within us. Denial is comfortable but prevents cure. The problem with that thinking is, that blaming never changes the situation. So, unless we change, nothing will change, no matter who you blame and for however long.

In Makkah the Muslims were under great hardship. They were tortured, murdered, oppressed and powerless. Yet not once in 13 years did Rasoolullah ﷺ tell them to change their leaders. Not once did he tell them to start a revolution. Not once did he tell them that they must fight the

leaders. Was this cowardice? Or did he understand the reason and was not confusing the cause with its symptoms? He told them to keep focused on Allah ﷻ. To continue to build their connection with Him. And to have Sabr.

In short, he told them to focus on themselves and to change themselves.

1. There are two aspects to our future: That which is written and won't change and that which Allah ﷻ gave us to write

a. **First aspect:** Allah ﷻ still decides how long we will live, how we will die, how much we will earn, how healthy we will be and so on.

b. **Second aspect:** Allah ﷻ gave into our hands, how we want to live, how we want to die, how we want to earn, how healthy we want to be and how happy.

It is the second aspect, the aspect of our future that is in our control, which we will be questioned about and which will decide our final success and failure.

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ۗ وَنَبْلُوكُم بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً ۗ وَإِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ

Al-Anbiya 21: 35 *Everyone is going to taste death, and We shall make a trial of you with evil and with good, and to Us you will be returned.*

Shaytaan diverts our attention away from the second aspect of our future which we control and can write as we want and makes us worry about the first over which we have no control. Don't fall into that trap. We should worry about our future, but not about that part which is not in our control.

Worry about what we can control, change it to resemble the example of Rasoolullah ﷺ and our life will be full of goodness, no matter who the leader may be.

What do we need to do now? Four things:

1. **Wake up and smell the coffee.** Accept that we need to change and thank Allah ﷻ that He gave us a template to follow which is the Qur'an, and a Field Book on how to follow it, which is the Seerah of Rasoolullah ﷺ. Let us study both and implement them in our lives.
2. **Turn towards Allah ﷻ.** Make our lives completely obedient to Allah ﷻ. Don't worry about what anyone says, because they are not Allah ﷻ. Get out of all Haraam. All interest-based dealings are Haraam. Membership of clubs with bars and gambling rooms is Haraam. Membership of gambling clubs (Race Club) is Haraam. All tobacco business is Haraam. Businesses which serve alcohol or any Haraam foods is Haraam. Mixing Haraam earnings with Halaal is Haraam. Anyone who permits this, must first show me evidence of any Prophet or any Sahabi or Rasoolullah ﷺ himself, who mixed Haraam with Halaal. If they didn't and they are the examples that we must follow, then how does that become permissible today? Focus on our Akhlaaq and the way we treat others and change that. Focus on the quality of our Salah and pray as if are looking at Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ ordered us to enter Islam fully. Selective obedience is disobedience. Deliberate disobedience is arrogance. And arrogance is Kufr.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ
الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ

Baqara 2: 208. *O you who believe! Enter perfectly in Islam (by obeying all the rules and regulations of the Islamic religion) and follow not the footsteps of Shaitan (Satan). Verily! He is to you a plain enemy.*

3. **Become One Ummah.** The Jews have many sects, but they are one Ummah. The Christians have many sects, but they are one Ummah. We have many sects and we are our sect. Not one Ummah. So, reject anyone who speaks the language of division. Force your leaders to come together. Or change your leaders. Start with this in your homes. Built your bridges with your family which may have been broken. Forget the reasons. Recognize your ego which prevents you from going to them. Kill the ego and go to them.
4. **Become beneficial for society.** All society. Allahﷻ sent us **FOR** the people. So, ask yourself, 'What did I do for others in the last one year?' Let us become those who live for others. Popularity, love, affection, influence and power are all a factor of what you give. Not of what you take. Anyone who thinks that he can buy or get these things by force is only fooling himself. He may get the outward symbols of them. But he can't get the real thing. People love those who give and hate those who take. Nobody likes competitors. Allahﷻ sent us to give. Allahﷻ sent us to take from Him and give to others. Let us ask ourselves, if we do this. And let us start doing this and measure it.

I am not talking about window dressing cosmetic things like Iftaar parties. I am talking about substantial, on-going benefit to society like building hospitals, schools, providing alternate energy, clean water, affordable housing, entrepreneurship development, vocational training and so on. Projects that are visibly beneficial and which people don't need memory to recall, because they are benefiting from them daily. This is what changes perception and inclines hearts towards those who provide that benefit.

Remember that success and failure is decided only at the end of the race. How do I know if I am still in the race? If you are alive, you are still in the race.

And finally, remember that it is Allahﷻ, not anyone else who will decide who won and who lost. And that win and that loss is permanent.