

this period of interaction, the ideological superiority of the Muslims so asserted itself that large numbers of their former enemies began to enter the fold of Islam. In this way, the number of Muslims increased to such an extent, that within two years Islam emerged victorious due to its ideological superiority.

Ninth Principle: gradualism instead of radicalism

This principle is well established by a Hadith in Bukhari Sharif. Aishah (RA) narrates that the first verses of the Quran were related mostly to heaven and hell. And then, after a period of time when the peoples' hearts had softened, the specific commands to desist from adultery and drinking were revealed by Allah. This is clear proof that for social changes, Islam advocates the evolutionary method, rather than the revolutionary method.

Tenth Principle: to be pragmatic in complex matters

During the writing of the Hudaibiya treaty, Nabi ﷺ dictated these words, "This is from Muhammad, the Messenger of God." The Qurayshi delegate raised objections over these words. Nabi ﷺ promptly changed the word and ordered the scribe to simply write, "Muhammad, son of Abdullah."

These were the principles through which Nabi ﷺ attained that supreme success which has been recognized by non-Muslim historians as well.

In conclusion, the principles of success are:

1. To begin from the possible
2. To see advantage in disadvantage
3. To change the place of action
4. To make a friend out of an enemy
5. To turn minus into plus
6. The power of peace is stronger than the power of violence
7. Not to be a dichotomous thinker
8. To bring the battle to one's own field
9. Gradualism instead of radicalism
10. To be pragmatic in complex matters

(Extracts from an article of MI W.D Khan)



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PRINCIPLES OF SUCCESS

in the light of the Seerah



“ He ﷺ faced adversity
with the determination
to wring success out of failure.”



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It is a well-known fact that the Prophet of Islam ﷺ was the most successful person in human history. He ﷺ was ranked number one by Dr. Michael Hart in his book entitled, "The Hundred - A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History." But he ﷺ was not just a "hero", as Thomas Carlyle has referred to him. According to the Noble Quran, He ﷺ was the best exemplar for all mankind. Nabi ﷺ has shown us the way of achieving supreme success in this world and, by studying His ﷺ life, we would be able to understand these important principles of success. Nabi ﷺ was a positive thinker and all his activities were result-oriented. He ﷺ completely refrained from all such steps that proved counter-productive. He ﷺ faced adversity with the determination to wring success out of failure.

First Principle: to begin from the possible This principle is well explained in a saying of Aishah (RA). She said, "Whenever Nabi ﷺ had to choose between two options, he always opted for the easier choice." (Bukhari) To choose the easiest option means to begin from the possible, and one who begins from the possible will surely reach his goal. A poor person would begin with a tuckshop, for example, rather than trying to acquire a listed company, which is clearly beyond his reach.

Second Principle: to see advantage in disadvantage In the early days of Makkah there were many problems and difficulties. At that time, a guiding verse in the Noble Quran was revealed, "With every hardship there is ease, with every hardship there is ease." (94:5-6). This means that if there are some problems, then there are also opportunities at the same time. It was because Nabi ﷺ was inspired by this belief that he was able to define and pursue a course of action which would ensure success. The fact of his success proves that Allah never intended this world to be one of endless difficulties - with never a solution in sight. It was the Will of the Almighty that all difficulties could be overcome, together with apparent disadvantages which were also a part of the

divine scheme. And the way to success is to ignore the problems and take advantage of the opportunities.

Third Principle: to change the place of action This principle is derived from the Hijrah. Hijrah was not just a migration from Makkah to Madinah. It was to find a more suitable place for Islamic activities, as history proved later on.

This principle established that if the believers found their environment so hostile that continuing their activities could lead to martyrdom at the hands of their enemies, it was quite proper for them to avoid direct confrontation and to move to a more suitable place to practise and propagate the Deen.

Fourth Principle: to make a friend out of an enemy Nabi ﷺ was repeatedly subjected to practices of antagonism by the disbelievers. At that time, the Noble Quran enjoined upon him the return of good against evil.

And then, Allah revealed the verse, "You will see your worst enemy has become your closest friend" (41:34). It means, that a good deed in return for a bad deed has a conquering effect over your enemies. And the life of Nabi ﷺ is a historical proof of this principle.

For example, there was an idolater who, on finding Nabi ﷺ alone, drew his sword to kill him. However, he was so overawed by Nabi's ﷺ unflinching courage in the face of his threat that the sword dropped from his hand. Then it was Nabi's ﷺ turn to retaliate. But instead of retaliating, Nabi ﷺ forgave him. His would-be assailant was so highly impressed by his extraordinary character, that he immediately accepted Islam.

Fifth Principle: to turn minus into plus After the Battle of Badr, about 70 disbelievers were taken as prisoners of war. They were educated people. Nabi ﷺ announced that if any one of them would teach ten Muslim children how to read and write he would be freed. This was the first school in the history of Islam in which all of the students were Muslims, and all of the teachers were from the enemy rank.

Sixth Principle: the power of peace is stronger than the power of violence

When Makkah was conquered, all Nabi's ﷺ worst opponents were brought before him. They were war criminals in every sense of the word. But Nabi ﷺ did not order their execution. He simply said: "Go, you are free." The result of this kind behaviour was miraculous, resulting in their immediate acceptance of Islam.

Seventh Principle: not to be a dichotomous thinker

In the famous battle of Muta, Khalid bin Walid ؓ decided to withdraw Muslim forces from the battlefield because he discovered that the Muslims were disproportionately outnumbered. When they reached Madinah, some of the Muslims received them with the word "Ya Farrar" (O deserters!)

Nabi ﷺ said, "No, they are Karrar" (men of advancement)." The Madinan Sahaaba were thinking dichotomously, either fighting or retreating. They were of the opinion that the Muslim army should have stayed with the first option, even if it meant that each and every one of them would have been martyred in the process. On this occasion, Nabi ﷺ pointed to the existence of a third option, viz, to remove themselves from the field of action to a place where, undisturbed by war, they could build up their strength and prepare intensively for a more effective campaign at a later date. History tells us that the Muslims, after three years of preparation, advanced again towards the Roman border and this time they enjoyed a resounding victory.

Eighth Principle: to bring the battle in one's own favourable field

This principle is derived from the incident of Hudaibiya. At that time, the disbelievers were determined to engage Muslims in fighting due to their advantageous position. But Nabi ﷺ, by accepting their conditions unilaterally, entered into a ten-year peace treaty. Until then, the meeting ground between Muslims and non-Muslims had been on the battlefield. Now the area of conflict became that of ideological debate. The one-time enemies now began interacting with each other on a large scale. During