

# Al-Farabi's Concept of Leadership and Shaykh-ul-Islam Dr Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri

Leadership has been defined as "to go before, or to go with, to direct the people to the right way, or induce enthusiasm and spirit in the people for some noble cause". Every nation needs a leader, every movement needs a leader and moreover every organization needs a leader who may direct them to their final destination. Prophet Mohammad (blessings and peace be upon him) and His Companions such as Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali (may Allah be pleased with them) enjoyed sound competencies of leadership and that is why within a short period, they brought about a significant revolution in the uncultured and uncivilized society of Arabia. In the same way, if the movement for independence of Pakistan failed to benefit from Qaid-e-Azam, the results would have been totally different or rather drastic. It is the leader whose work is to instil a sense of purpose and passion for the work or mission their organization undertakes.

Al-Farabi was one of the most famed Islamic thinkers of the Muslim World of his time. He wrote in the tradition of Greek philosopher, Aristotle, about metaphysics, music and politics. He said that a leader brings the people together for some noble cause and he possesses a bounty of knowledge, wisdom, communication skills, hard working attitude, consideration for the receiver, justice, compassion, bravery, peace and a sound belief in negotiation to dissolve any outstanding issues within his organization and movement.

A great leader possesses sound knowledge; Allah Almighty taught the Holy Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) what he did not know to prepare him for promotion of oneness of Allah Almighty. An illiterate cannot lead the nation properly; as Allah Almighty states in the Holy Quran: "Say: can those who have knowledge and those who do not have all be

alike?" (39:9) When we look around in the Muslim world, Shaykh-ul-Islam seems to be the individual who possesses more knowledge than any other religious as well as political leader. He has delivered lectures on politics, science, religion, sociology, culture, anthropology and spiritualism, to mention a few. He has authored books on human rights, Islamic economic system, comparative studies of religion, Islam and science, peace and integration and different Issues such as innovation, reality of striking partner to Allah Almighty, and celebration of birthday of the Holy Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him). Shaykh-ul-Islam has explored more than seventy subjects. As a student and teacher of linguistics, I affirm that I have never heard any person speak better in semantics than Shaykh-ul-Islam.

Shaykh-ul-Islam's vision is very broad; practical and revolutionary. He wants to see Pakistan as an independent, sovereign and democratic Islamic state in accordance with Allama Iqbal and Qaid-e-Azam's dreams. He believes that we need an education system with no division between religious and secular subjects. He believes that the Muslim Ummah needs renaissance and revivalism marked with practicality, a scientific approach and with systematic plans. He believes in a system which offers equal opportunities to all; provides the masses with rights at their doorstep; ensuring the living of an honest and respectable life and rooting out corruption and values based on evil practices through stringent laws.

No-one can be a good leader until he possesses effective communication skills. He is entitled to teach the message or philosophy to the people and illuminate them with enthusiasm and spirit, so that they may visualize the mission and strive hard to reach their goal with minimum time and effort. All the Prophets of Allah Almighty, the Companions of the Holy Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him), and all great scholars and spiritualists were blessed with outstanding communication skills. They attracted people through their powerful message. They were very considerate and courteous towards their receivers; Shaykh-ul-Islam is a very eloquent orator. He knows how to convince his audience that his ideas are more valid than any other leader. He uses all the persuasive devices

such as ethos, logos and pathos. You will find his audience in tears when he is talking about the love of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and enthralled when he talks about the corrupt and undemocratic prevailing system in third world countries.

The sole key to Shaykh-ul-Islam's success and glory is his hard work, consistency and the blessings and favours of Allah Almighty and Rasool-ul-Allah (blessings and peace be upon him). He is Hemingway's code hero who believes "every day is a new day". The people who work with him know that he starts every day with fresh spirit and enthusiasm. He was put through many tests and has had to face many barriers in his political, religious and professional life; but he always remained steadfast and declared a man is not made for defeat. If we look at his work, it seems nothing less than a miracle. People often wonder how a person in such a short time can establish his movement in more than 90 countries of the world; how a person can write more than one thousand books and deliver over 5,000 lectures on a diverse range of topics; and moreover run all the educational and cultural institutions in such a systematic way.

Other attributes which make Shaykh-ul-Islam an outstanding leader of the Muslim world is his tolerance, compassion and love for mankind. He, throughout his entire life, taught the love of Rasool-ul-Allah (SAW), the members of his blessed family, his Companions and friends of Allah Almighty. His book, Human Rights in Islam, makes this fact very clear that he is of the view that all human relations should be based up compassion, love and benevolence. He says we should love all the creations of Allah Almighty. If you cannot love, you must learn how to tolerate each other for a peaceful society. He believes that Muslims should be the practical example of the sayings of the Holy Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him): The real Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hand all other Muslims feel safe (Bukhari,1: 13). The history of Minhaj-ul-Quran shows that it is the only movement in both political and religious arenas that practices tolerance and love. His recent Fatwa (religious edict) that gathered a lot of intellectual attention and applause from round the globe is a vivid example of his

teachings. He has the potential to establish peace around the globe through his teachings.

Shaykh-ul-Islam has a strong belief in negotiation to dissolve the outstanding issues between different sects, religions and nations. He is of the view that a democratic attitude can only help to bridge the gap between people with different beliefs, cultures and political views. He has held many seminars and conferences to find out peaceful means to end hatred among people with different cultural, religious and political backgrounds. He never encouraged or even thought to use force to establish political stability as is the common practice in Pakistan; the more terror you create, the more powerful you become. He is of the view that the only way possible for the nations today, is to hold negotiations and make no-war and friendly pacts and agreements for peaceful existence and prosperity of the common man.

In a nutshell, Allah Almighty has blessed the Muslim Ummah with a leader, who possesses knowledge, wisdom and a vision for the future. He has full understanding of unresolved national and international economic, political and religious issues. It is the need of our time that the Muslims in general, especially the Pakistanis should stand up and join him to bring a positive and peaceful democratic change. How long will we continue to look towards the corrupt and fake degree holders with no vision of national interest? We will have to decide it now if we need renaissance or not. Time is running out...

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