

Chapter 34: Divine Law is Unalterable

Whenever the word Sunnah has been used in the Holy Qur'an it has been used in this very literal meaning i.e. the manner in which Allah has treated the past nations. And whenever Allah says that His Sunnah is unalterable it means that there is a path for attaining to dignity and honor and He does not change it, and there is also a path and ground which leads to adversity and helplessness and that, too, is unalterable. Allah says:

That was the law of Allah in the case of those who lived before and there will never be any change in the law of Allah. (Surah al-Ahzab, 33:63)

It means that it has been the practice of Allah in the case of the sinners and the hypocrites that in order to serve an ultimatum upon them, He in the first instance sends the Prophets to them and makes goodness and badness and truth and falsehood perfectly clear to them.

Thereafter He destroys and makes extinct those who do not believe, but persist in their infidelity. As regards those who try to deceive Allah and His Prophet and behave hypocritically, side with Allah as well as with His enemies, and on the one hand take from the Prophet a share out of the war booty and other benefits due to the Muslims, and on the other hand take remuneration from the enemies for spying for them and creating trouble, He disgraces them, deprives them from gaining from either side and drives them hither and thither. This Sunnah of Allah is unalterable and it should not be expected that deceit and hypocrisy can be the cause of shame and disgrace on one day and the means of honor and good name on another day.

The same thing has been said in the Holy Qur'an in these words:

{Such was Our} system in the case of those whom We sent before you {to mankind}, and you will never find change in Our system. (Surah Bani Israil, 17:77)

In the following verse also the word Sunnah has been used in this very sense: ***Tell the unbelievers, 'If you give up your evil behavior, Allah will forgive whatever you have done in the past. But if you transgress again, your fate will be the same as that of those (unbelievers) who lived before you'***

(Surah al-Anfal, 8: 38) i.e. Allah declares 'We shall employ the same method in their case which We employed in the case of the past people and shall destroy these deviated people in the same way in which We destroyed them'.

The same thing has been said in the Holy Qur'an thus: ***They do not believe in truth and they exactly follow the Sunnah (tradition) of the past people,*** (Surah al-Hijr, 15: 13) i.e. there is no hope that these infidels of Makkah who persist in their enmity and grudge against the Prophet of Allah will believe. They do not believe but their matter is quite clear and Our Sunnah (method) with regard to those who lived before them and persisted in their infidelity is known. We shall deal with them in the same way in which We dealt with those persons.

Allah say:

Had the disbelievers fought against you, they would take to flight and would have found no guardian or helper. This is the Sunnah (law) of Allah which existed before you, and you will never find any change in Allah's system, (Surah al-Fath, 48:23)

If the polytheists of Makkah had fought against you in Hudaibiya they would not have gained anything and would have taken to flight and thereafter they would not have found any refuge or helper.

This is the way in which Allah has dealt with the unbelievers earlier and the law and the Sunnah of Allah do not change. It means that one of the laws of Allah is that faith is the source of victory and domination over the enemy and it is not only you and the polytheists of Makkah but out of every two parties which grapple with each other Allah grants victory to that party which joins the battle with the stimulant of faith.

Allah says:

Evil plots only affect the plotters. Do they expect anything other than (Allah's) law (torment) with those who lived before? You will never find any change in the tradition of Allah nor will you find any alteration in it. (Surah al-Fatir, 35: 43)

That means: These people who do not give up idol-worship and make evil plots so as to hinder the advancement of Islam should know that evil plots eventually recoil on those who make them. And if they expect that We shall treat them in a way other than that in which We treated the people of the past, it is an inopportune expectation because Allah's Sunnah does not change and deceit and fraud can never be the source of honor and advancement.

Allah says: ***Their faith could not avail against Our punishment. Such is Allah's prevailing Sunnah (law) among His servants in the past. Thus the disbelievers are ruined.*** (Surah Mumin, 40:85) i.e. When We subjected to torture those who denied and ridiculed Our Prophets and they experienced the severity of Our punishment they appealed to Us for help and said: "We forsake infidelity and polytheism and believe only in Allah". This faith which was the consequence of pressure of torture did not do them

any good and this is the Divine Sunnah (law) which has ever prevailed over the people. Consequently the disbelievers sustained loss.

When all the verses quoted above are taken together it appears that. the Divine law does not change for the sake of anyone. He does not make one honored or humble without cause. He has not created any nation to dominate and rule others, nor has He created any nation to remain afflicted, indigent and backward. Those who have acquired wealth and authority in the world have acquired it according to a Divine law, and similar is the case of those, who have been subjected to humiliation and disgrace.

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