

Prepared Lecture: Sudan: A Forgotten Crisis That Demands Our Attention

We Praise Allah by His Essence, the greatness of His Attributes, the height of His Status, the vastness of His Glory, the grandeur of His Majesty, the exaltedness of His Mention, the execution of His Command, the clarity of His Proof, the nobility of His Name, the abundance of His Knowledge, the continuity of His Patience, the abundance of His Forgiveness, the beauty of His Praise, the vastness of His Gifts, the answering of His Supplications, the generality of His Benevolence, the swiftness of His Reckoning, the severity of His Punishment, the knowledge of His Torment, and the might of His Authority.

عَنْ عُبَيْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مُحْصِنِ الْخَطَمِيِّ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ أَصْبَحَ مِنْكُمْ أَمِنًا فِي سِرِّهِ مُعَافًى فِي جَسَدِهِ عِنْدَهُ قُوَّةٌ يَوْمَهُ فَكَأَنَّمَا حِيزَتْ لَهُ الدُّنْيَا

“Whoever wakes up safe in his home, healthy in his body, and has food for the day, it is as if he has the entire world.” [Ibn Majah]

In December of 2024, we heard the news that Khaled Nabhan, may Allah ﷻ have mercy upon him, was killed a year after he lost his entire family, consisting of his grandchildren, his son, his daughter-in-law, and several other members of his family. People who spoke with Khaled noted his beautiful character, smile, and graciousness, all of which underlined something important. Khaled mentioned that there was not a single night in which he and other people in Gaza slept, that they would think they would see the morning because of bombs being dropped on them and the atrocities that they had to live through.

This idea is something that is extremely foreign to you and me. There is not a single day that I have gone to sleep that I thought a bomb would be dropped on me. There have been instances in which I have walked outside of my home, hopped in my car, or gone around and have been afraid to be stopped by the police because that is the reality of being a black man in America, but never have I had to think the way Khaled has. It’s heartbreaking to say, but in a few weeks, his (Khaled Nabhan’s) death most likely won’t continue to trend worldwide, and it’s hard to admit. Still, if we’re being honest with ourselves, we’ve become almost numb to the killing of our Muslim brothers and sisters.

An Invisible Genocide

Today’s Khutbah is about another genocide that is made invisible, and how we should strive to do our best so we are never genuinely desensitized to the killing of any of our Muslim brothers and sisters. It is about another genocide going on that is made invisible. This genocide is happening to Muslims, being enacted by people who claim Islam, enforced by countries who wear the thobe and have Islamic slogans. This genocide is in Sudan, my home nation. And it is one that we have been quiet about. Whether intentionally or not.

Before we get to that, let’s dissect the hadith I mentioned earlier. Abdullah ibn Muhsin states that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stated that whoever awakens secure in his property, with a healthy body, and has food for the day, then it is as if he has owned the world.

A “Rich” Country

Sudan is a country that literally, when translated, means “land of the black”; it comes from the Arabic word “Aswad” or “sawdan”. This is the name that the Arabs gave to the land when they entered it and found that the people there were extremely dark-skinned. Historically, Sudan has had the oldest civilization in the world, the Nubian kingdom: a civilization that is alluded to throughout Islamic history. Scholars often argue that Hajir, the wife of Sayyiduna Ibrahim (AS), was Nubian, and that parts of the story of Sayyiduna Musa (AS) could have happened in Sudan.

Historically, the *kiswa* for the Kaba’a used to be shipped from Sudan to Saudi Arabia. Sudan has 12 rivers that run through it, with the most famous being the Nile, a river that is called one of the Rivers of Jannah alongside the Euphrates and Tigris in Iraq. Sudan exports 3.2 billion dollars worth of gold yearly, 662 million dollars worth of petroleum, 654 million dollars worth of oily seeds, 425 million dollars worth of ground nuts, and 379 million dollars worth of raw cotton. Most of these exports are to the UAE, Egypt, Italy, China, and Turkey. In 2022, Sudan was the world’s largest exporter of oily seeds (654 million), insect resin (194 million), and groundnut meal (75.6 million). Sudan has 4-6 cows per human head, which means if we decided to take over the world with just our cattle, we would be unstoppable. It is about 728, 200 squared mile after it split, and prior, it was 1, 861, 484 square kilometers. The US is 3,809, 525 square miles for reference, so 1/3 of the US can fit in Sudan.

I could continue on with the statistics, but what these show is that by all metrics, Sudan is a rich country. A country that should be thriving, but in fact, we see the opposite. We see a military that has parasitically infected the country, metastasizing to every corner, and a paramilitary force that has sucked the life blood of the country. **One thing that is important to mention is that both of these forces, the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces, which are the former Janjaweed, have been propped up by various external entities in the past and during the current struggle. You have Egypt which is afraid of losing regional power due to the Sudanese revolution, the UAE stealing Sudanese gold and propping up the RSF by giving them supplies to continue their reign of terror, Russia and the USA, and even Israel as well.**

Homeless, Hungry, and Persecuted

What does all of this have to do with the hadith that I mentioned earlier?

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“Whoever wakes up safe in his home, healthy in his body, and has food for the day, it is as if he has the entire world.”

In Sudan, people have been forced out of their homes, literally at gunpoint by the RSF, and all of their things looted, stolen, and their homes taken apart to the point that even their roofs are stolen. Families are tied up within their homes and women are raped in front of the men, and if the men try to defend them, they are shot and killed within their very homes. Imagine everything you have worked to earn, someone comes and just robs you of it, and this is happening on the scale of millions.

That is the property aspect of that hadith. What about the rest? The healthy body part.

Currently, every 3 hours, a Sudanese child dies of [starvation](#). The country has a population of about 48 million people, of those 48 million, about 15 million are internally displaced, meaning being refugees in their own country, forced to flee from their homes because of the RSF and the SAF. Of the 48 million, about 26 million people, more than half of Sudan's population, are projected to die of starvation by the end of this year. Women who have had to flee have had to resort to unthinkable things to feed their families, both from SAF and RSF soldiers and even aid workers in places like Chad. Those who study migration patterns have found that birds have altered their migratory patterns because they are flying over Sudan and feasting on the corpses of the dead that litter the streets. Imagine that. Birds have changed their migratory patterns because of this. There are widespread diseases now affecting people due to malnutrition. Or other horrific stories of RSF leadership stating that the goal is demographic change in Sudan, which means that rape is a tactic that is being used. Or the stories that we hear about families having their children tied up, gasoline poured on them, and then the children being lit on fire. Or of children being kidnapped and taken to other parts of Africa. Or mercenaries from Colombia being found in Sudan.

In terms of owning his sustenance for the day, there is absolutely no work in Sudan. There are no jobs currently, so the country is literally being moved by remittance, which is the diaspora working and sending money home. The price of everyday items has increased by 10-fold. People who were supporting their own families here, are now also supporting 7 or 8 other families, those who are their relatives and those who aren't back home.

I recently saw a GoFundMe for a student. It was raising \$3000 for her tuition to continue schooling because her schooling was stopped due to the war like millions of other students. Imagine, there are multiple cohorts out there in Sudan who have not graduated high school, middle school, college, medical school, engineering school, law school, because their education had to be put on pause due to something completely out of their country, not once, not twice, but multiple times over. And in this particular case, she had to relocate to Egypt, where her father suddenly died. And he was the breadwinner for the family, and her tuition was due, or else she'd be kicked out of school for not being able to pay. This particular fundraiser came to me a few days before its deadline. And I did my best to advocate for this, but slowly I watched the donations stop coming in, despite this being a goal I have raised past before several times including for Charityweek just as the MSA here has done, and so many other instances and then the deadline day came and I broke down in tears. This was something that was happening to millions of other students.

The One Body

Rasulullah ﷺ has stated in a hadith that you and I have heard multiple times: that the Ummah is like a body, and if one section of it aches, the rest can't function properly. What happens if a portion of it aches and we ignore it? How can we continue to function?

We are the best of nations to gather on this planet despite being the last because we are the Ummah that enjoins the good, and forbids the evil, and rushes to do good deeds. And of those good deeds is helping others.

On Qiyamah a man will be brought before Allah ﷻ, and Allah ﷻ will say to him, I was hungry and you did not feed me, and the man will ask, ya Allah, How is it that you were hungry? And Allah ﷻ will reply that you saw a servant of mine who needed help and was hungry, and you did not feed him, or else you'd have found me there. [Muslim]

In another hadith, the Prophet ﷺ mentions that whoever sees an evil, he should stop it with his hands, and if he can't, he should stop it with his tongue, and if he can't, he should hate it with his heart, and that is the weakest form of iman. How can we have the weakest form of iman if we don't even know about what is happening?

And there is a reason for this. **Sudanese people are not the perfect victims. We aren't OVERTLY being occupied by another country. We aren't light-skinned enough for the media.** In our culture we try to carry ourselves in a dignified manner, so we just keep mum about what is happening to us, which is why it is so hard to find people to be interviewed, but if you want to see what is happening in Sudan, there are images and whatsapp groupchats that will tell about it and show you what is happening.

The Role of the International Community

While the 'international community' has provided some assistance, it is far from sufficient. The scale of the crisis requires a coordinated and sustained effort from all nations. As Muslims, we have a duty to advocate for increased humanitarian aid and to support organizations that are working on the ground to alleviate the suffering of the Sudanese people.

The Silence of the Ummah

However, dear brothers and sisters, what is even more alarming is the silence of the Ummah in the face of this crisis. We, as Muslims, are bound by our faith to stand up for justice, to help the oppressed, and to support our brothers and sisters in times of need. Yet, our response to the situation in Sudan has been largely muted.

Rasulullah ﷺ said,

“The example of the believers in their affection, mercy, and compassion for each other is that of a body. When any limb aches, the whole body reacts with sleeplessness and fever.”
[Muslim]

Are we truly feeling the pain of our brothers and sisters in Sudan? Are we reacting with the urgency and compassion that our faith demands?

Our Responsibility as Muslims

The teachings of Islam place great emphasis on the concept of Ummah, the global community of Muslims bound together by faith. The Qur'an and Hadith are replete with references to the importance of brotherhood, solidarity, and mutual support. Allah ﷻ says,

“The believers are but brothers, so make settlement between your brothers. And fear Allah that you may receive mercy.” [Surah Al-Hujurat; 49:10]

Our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also reminded us of our collective responsibility. He said, *“None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.”* [Sahih Bukhari]. This Hadith underscores the importance of empathy and solidarity. We are reminded that our faith is incomplete if we are indifferent to the suffering of our fellow Muslims.

The Dangers of Apathy

Apathy and indifference are dangerous. They lead to a weakening of our collective strength and undermine the principles of justice and compassion that are central to our faith. When we turn a blind eye to the suffering of others, we risk becoming complicit in their oppression. Our silence can be interpreted as tacit approval of the injustices being perpetrated.

Allah ﷻ warns us against neglecting our responsibilities in Surah Al-Ma'idah, verse 2:

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

“And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty.”

We must remember that our actions, or lack thereof, have consequences. The silence of the Ummah in the face of injustice not only fails those who are suffering but also tarnishes the image of Islam. We must strive to be true ambassadors of our faith, demonstrating through our actions the principles of justice, mercy, and compassion.

The Call for Unity

It is imperative that we awaken from this state of apathy and rise to the occasion. The Ummah must unite in its efforts to bring relief and support to those suffering in Sudan. We must remember the words of Allah in Surah Al-Imran, verse 103:

وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا

“And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided.”

Unity in Action

Unity is not just a concept; it is an action. It means coming together, setting aside our differences, and working collectively for the greater good. It means raising our voices in solidarity, advocating for peace, and providing tangible support to those in need. It means holding our leaders accountable and urging them to take a stand against the injustices happening in Sudan.

One way to foster unity is through community initiatives. Mosques and Islamic centers can play a pivotal role in raising awareness about the situation in Sudan and organizing relief efforts. Educational programs, fundraisers, and advocacy campaigns can mobilize the community and create a collective impact.

The Power of Dua'

In addition to practical actions, we must also turn to Allah ﷻ in prayer. Dua' is a powerful tool that connects us with our Creator and brings His Mercy and Guidance into our lives. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "Dua' is the weapon of the believer." (Hakim). We should make sincere dua' for the people of Sudan, asking Allah ﷻ to grant them relief, peace, and justice.

Allah reminds us in Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 186:

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۖ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ

"And when My servants ask you concerning Me, indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided."

Let us make dua' with sincerity and conviction, trusting in Allah's ﷻ Wisdom and Mercy.

اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنَا فِيمَنْ هَدَيْتَ وَعَافِنَا فِيمَنْ عَافَيْتَ وَتَوَلَّنَا فِيمَنْ تَوَلَّيْتَ وَبَارِكْ لَنَا فِيمَا أَعْطَيْتَ وَقِنَا شَرَّ مَا قَضَيْتَ إِنَّكَ تَقْضِي وَلَا يُقْضَىٰ عَلَيْكَ وَإِنَّهُ لَا يَذِلُّ مَنْ وَالَيْتَ تَبَارَكْتَ رَبَّنَا وَتَعَالَيْتَ

O Allah, guide us with those whom You have guided, grant us well-being among those You have granted well-being, be an ally to us along with those whom You are an ally to, and bless what You have bestowed upon us, and save us from the evil of what You have decreed. For verily You decree and none can decree over You. He whom You support can never be humiliated. Glory is to You, our Lord, You are Blessed and Exalted.

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

Servants of Allah. Indeed, Allah ﷻ orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded.

(Talk by Mazin Khalil built upon a khutbah delivered by Sheikh Yassir Siddig – originally posted on Muslim Matters)