

A Universal call to Humanity: Exploring the Everlasting Message of Prophet Muhammad’s (PBUH) Farewell sermon.

Muhammed Thahir p

*Degree Final Year Scholar, Department of Hadith & Related Sciences
Sheikh Fareed Auliya Da’wa College, Odamala*

Abstract

The last sermon of prophet Muhammad (PBUH) which delivered at Mount Arafat in 632 CE has profound and lasting impact until the end of world. The sermon’s emphasis on the unity of humanity, equality, and key principles of universal brotherhood emphasizes its significance in addressing modern issues such as social injustice, discrimination, and environmental challenges. As a foundational text in Islamic tradition, the Farewell Sermon offers comprehensive guidance on the ethical, social, and spiritual dimensions of Islam, emphasizing the importance of adhering to the Five Pillars of Islam and condemning unjust practices.

The sermon’s everlasting significance across cultures and civilizations is highlighting its role as a vital source of moral and religious guidance for Muslims worldwide.

This research highlights how the Farewell Sermon’s messages are still important today, helping us understand how they can solve current global problems. It shows how the Prophet’s teachings are still relevant and valuable to people’s lives now.”

Key Words: - *Farwell sermon – Humanity – Universal Brotherhood – environmental challenges.*

Introduction

In the 10 Hijrah, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) performed Hajj (pilgrimage) only once in His life and delivered his historic ‘Farewell Sermon’ for the welfare of the world and humanity of mankind. It was the only pilgrimage he performed in his lifetime, a testament to the immense dedication he had for preaching Islam and guiding his followers with the teachings of the Qur’an and Sunnah. It summarized the core principles of Islam revealed to him by Allah, making it a fundamental guide for people

across the world, not just for his contemporaries but for generations to come. This article aims to highlight the significance of the Farewell Sermon and its timeless relevance. It examines how this sermon was a crucial response to the needs of the time, providing a comprehensive and unified guideline for humanity. Remarkably, the teachings from this sermon were not only theoretical but were also practiced by the Prophet (PBUH) throughout his life. This paper explores the historical importance of the sermon and its impact on modern socio-cultural contexts, demonstrating that it remains a majestic and unmatched message in human civilization. The sermon outlined essential rules for social, economic, and political life, emphasizing its continued relevance for human society. It is argued that the Sermon is the only historic speech in the world that incomparable provisions on liberation and Welfare of humanity till the Final Day. The ultimate implication of the magnificent sermon is Sustained ensuring its time was momentous and eventful; the more appropriate time cannot be estimated. Thus, according to historical analysis, the farewell sermon of the Final Prophet (PBUH) is intimately and significantly that relevant to today's life and Society.

Hajjatul - wada': the farewell pilgrimage

By the year 10 A.H., Islam had spread over the entire Arabian Peninsula. A great number of people capable of carrying the message of Islam world arose in the coming years. It was at this point that Allâh chose to show His Prophet the fruits of his mission by calling him to make a farewell pilgrimage to Makkah. The Prophet announced that he would perform Hajj, and a large number of people flocked to Madinah to accompany him. On Saturday, Dhul Qa'dah 26, the Prophet left Madinah after praying the noon prayer and a few hours later he reached Dhul Hulayfah, where he prayed the afternoon prayer and spent the night. The next morning, the Prophet said, "Last night a messenger from my Lord came to me and said, 'Pray in this blessed valley and tell the people that Umrah can be performed during Hajj.'" This was in reference to the widespread belief that Umrah could not be performed during the days of Hajj.

Then the Prophet bathed before the noon prayer, and applied musk on his head and body. After the prayer, he put on his Ihraam and then raised his voice and began the pilgrim's chant: "I answer your call, O Allâh, I answer your call. I answer your call, You Who have no partner, and I answer your call. Verily, all praise, grace, and dominion belong to You, You Who have no partner." A week later the Prophet reached Makkah. After praying the dawn prayer, he entered the Sacred Mosque. It was Sunday morning, Dhul Hijjah 4.

The Prophet then circumambulated the Ka'bah, and performed seven circuits between Mount Safa and Marwa. When he finished, he remained in Ihraam, which meant he was still in the consecrated state of pilgrimage. He asked all the pilgrims who had brought sacrificial animals along with them to remain in ihraam as well. Others were allowed to shave their heads. Then on Dhul Hijjah 8, the Prophet went to Mina, where those who had shaved their heads assumed Ihraam again. In Mina the Prophet performed the noon, afternoon, sunset, evening, and dawn prayers. He left Mina after sunrise for Arafat. A tent was set up for him in the valley of Namirah. As the sun was setting, he mounted his camel and rode into the valley of Arafat. Pilgrims began gathering around him and waited to hear what was to be one of his most important speeches. In the history he began by glorifying Allâh, testifying that Allâh was the One God, and that he, Muhammad, was His Prophet and Messenger.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اسْمَعُوا قَوْلِي فَإِنِّي لَا أَدْرِي لَعَلِّي لَا أَلْقَاكُمْ بَعْدَ عَامِي هَذَا بِهَذَا الْمَوْقِفِ أَبَدًا، إِنَّ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَأَمْوَالَكُمْ وَأَعْرَاضَكُمْ حَرَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ كَحُرْمَةِ يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا، فِي شَهْرِكُمْ هَذَا، فِي بَلَدِكُمْ هَذَا، أَلَا كُلُّ شَيْءٍ مِنْ أُمُورِ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ مَوْضُوعٌ تَحْتَ قَدَمِي، وَدِمَاءُ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ مَوْضُوعَةٌ، وَإِنَّ أَوَّلَ دَمٍ أَضَعُ مِنْ دِمَائِنَا دَمُ ابْنِ رَبِيعَةَ بْنِ الْحَارِثِ وَكَانَ مُسْتَرْضِعًا فِي بَيْتِي سَعْدِ بْنِ قَتْلَبَةَ هَذِيبِ وَرَبَا الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ مَوْضُوعٌ، وَأَوَّلُ رَبَا أَضَعُ مِنْ رَبَائِنَا رَبَا الْعَبَّاسِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ، فَإِنَّهُ مَوْضُوعٌ كُلُّهُ، وَأَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ فِي النِّسَاءِ، فَإِنَّكُمْ أَخَذْتُمُوهُنَّ بِأَمَانَةِ اللَّهِ، وَاسْتَحْلَلْتُمُ فُرُوجَهُنَّ بِكَلِمَةِ اللَّهِ، وَلَكُمْ عَلَيْهِنَّ أَنْ لَا يُوطِئَنَّ فُرْشَكُمْ أَحَدًا تَكَرَّهْتُمْ، فَإِنَّ عَيْشَ ذَلِكَ فَاضِرٌ بُوهُنَّ ضَرْبًا غَيْرَ مَبْرَحٍ، وَلَهُنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ، وَقَدْ تَرَكْتُ فِيكُمْ مَا لَنْ تَضِلُّوا بَعْدَهُ إِنْ اعْتَصَمْتُمْ بِهِ: كِتَابُ اللَّهِ. وَأَنْتُمْ تَسْأَلُونَ عَنِّي فَمَا أَنْتُمْ قَائِلُونَ؟

“O people listen: I know not whether I shall meet you here again after this year. Your blood, your property and your honor are as sacred as this day, this month and this city. Behold! I declare that all pagan customs and everything from the Days of Ignorance are beneath my feet. Abolished also is the practice of spilling blood for revenge. The first case of blood revenge that I abolish is that of the son of Rabita bin Al-Harith, who was nursed by the Banu Sa’d and killed by Banu Hudhayl. Moreover, the usury of the Days of Ignorance is abolished, and the first practice of usury I abolish is that of Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib. Now all usury is abolished. Fear Allâh regarding women! You have taken them as a trust from Allâh, and intercourse with them has been made permissible by the words of Allâh. You have rights over them one of which is that they must not allow someone you dislike into your home. If they do so, you are within your rights to chastise them, but not severely. It is their right over you that you should feed and clothe them in a fitting manner. I leave behind something. If you hold fast to it, you will never go astray and that is the Book of Allah. Now, if you are asked about me on the Day of Judgment, how will you respond?”

The Prophet's Companions replied, "We will testify that you have conveyed the message and fulfilled your mission." The Prophet raised his index finger towards the sky and then pointed toward the people, "O Allâh, be witness! O Allah, be witness! O Allâh, be witness!"

After the Prophet had finished addressing the people, he received a revelation from Allah:

المائدة: [3] الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ
" (لَكُمْ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا) "

Today I have perfected your religion for you and completed my favor upon you, and I have chosen Islam as your religion." (5:3)

After the Prophet ended his address, Bilal made the prayer call (Adhân) and the final prayer call (Iqamah), and the Prophet led the people in the shortened noon prayer. After that, Bilal called another Iqamah, and the Prophet led the people in the shortened afternoon prayer. Thus, the Prophet demonstrated how travelers should combine and shorten prayers. After sunset, the Prophet left for Muzdalifa and combined the sunset and evening prayers. He did not shorten the sunset prayer, but he did shorten the evening prayer. Furthermore, when the Prophet combined the noon and afternoon prayers as well as the sunset and evening prayers, he did not perform any additional voluntary prayers (Sunnah prayers) between them. Then he rested until dawn. Once he had performed the dawn prayer, he returned to Makkah to the Sacred Mosque. He faced the Qiblah and repeated the Takbeer (Allâhu Akbar / Allâh is Most Great), the Tahleel (La ilaaha illallah/ There is no deity except Allâh) and Tawheed (the testimony of the Oneness of Allâh) until light began to appear in the horizon.

Before sunrise, the Prophet left for Mina again. He threw seven stones at the largest Jamrah, saying Allahu Akbar with every throw. When the Prophet finished stoning the Jamrah, he ceased reciting the Talbiyah (Labbayk Allah humma, labbayk...). He also told his Companions: "Learn the rites of Hajj from me, for perhaps I shall not be able to perform Hajj after this year." The stoning being completed, the Prophet went to his camp in Mina and slaughtered sixty-three camels. Ali slaughtered the remaining thirty-seven camels, and the Prophet instructed that a part of each camel be cooked and served to him and his Companions. After performing the sacrifice, the Prophet had his head shaved, beginning with the right side of his head, and some of the hair was distributed among his Companions. Abu Talha was given the Prophet's hair from the left side of his head. The Prophet put on his ordinary clothes now that he was out of Ihraam, applied musk, and then rode his camel to the Sacred Mosque. There he

circled the Ka'bah seven times. After the noon prayer, he went to the people of Banu Abdul Muttalib, who were serving Zamzam water to the pilgrims. He said, "Banu Abdul Muttalib, continue drawing water from the well. I would join you in this task, but I fear people would try to take over your rightful duty." They gave the Prophet some Zamzam water which he proceeded to drink.

The Prophet returned to Mina and stayed there for the days of Tashreeq (Dhul Hijjah 11, 12 and 13). Each day he stoned all three Jamarahs after sunset, starting with the smallest one, Jamrah Al-Sughrah, and then proceeding to the middle and large ones. The Prophet delivered two more addresses, on the 10th and 12th of Dhul Hijjah, stressing the same points he had made in his sermon on the plain of Arafat. It was during the days of Tashreeq before his last address that he received Surah Al-Nasr. On Tuesday, Dhul Hijjah 13, the Prophet left Mina after stoning all three Jamarahs. He performed the noon, afternoon, sunset, and evening prayers at Abtah. He also sent Aishah along with her brother, Abdul Rahman bin Abi Bakr, to perform Umrah. When Aishah returned, the Prophet went to the Ka'bah and performed the farewell circumambulation. After performing the dawn prayer, he left Makkah to begin the journey back to Madinah. As he approached the city of Madinah, and its landmarks grew visible, the Prophet called out "Allahu Akbar" thrice and said:

“لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ، وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ، أَيُّونَ تَائِبُونَ، عَابِدُونَ، سَاجِدُونَ، لِرَبِّنَا حَامِدُونَ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ، وَنَصَرَ عَبْدَهُ وَهَزَمَ الْأَخْرَابَ وَحْدَهُ”

“Nothing is to be worshipped except Allah. He is the One. He has no associate. Dominion and all praise are His, and He has power over all things. We are returning, repenting, worshipping, praising and bowing before our Lord. Allâh has proved that His promise is true, and He has helped His slaves. Victory is His alone.”

Effects of the “Farewell Pilgrimage”

The “Farewell Pilgrimage” completed, tens of thousands of pilgrims began their return home. Those who came from the desert returned to the desert; those who came from Tihamah returned hence, and those who came from the south, from Yaman, Hadramawt and neighboring territories, did likewise. The Prophet and his immediate companions set out in the direction of Madinah. When they reached it, they settled down confident that peace had covered the entire Peninsula. Henceforth, it was natural that Muhammad became preoccupied with the conditions of those countries under the dominion of Byzantium and Persia, especially

al Sham, Egypt, and Iraq. Now that the people have converted to Islam in such large groups, that their delegations had already declared in Madinah their obedience and committed their peoples to serve under its banner and, finally, now that all the Arabs have united in this “Farewell Pilgrimage,” the Arabian Peninsula became secure in its entirety. Indeed, there was no reason for any of the Arab kings and princes to withdraw or to violate loyalty to the Prophet or to his religion. Under no other regime had they enjoyed more power and internal autonomy than under that which the unlettered Prophet had instituted. ʿAdhan, the Persian governor of Yaman, was reinstated in his governorship as soon as he converted to Islam. In recognition of this, ʿAdhan preserved the unity of Arabia and threw off the yoke of the Zoroastrian Persians. Whatever little rumblings took place in the Peninsula never came close to resembling rebellion, and they did not occupy the Prophet or raise in him any apprehension for the future. The dominion of the new religion had firmly spread over all parts of the Peninsula; all faces were turned to the living and eternal God, and all hearts truly believed in the One, the Almighty.

After the Pilgrimage

When the Prophet had completed his pilgrimage, it was time for him to go back to Madinah. He returned with the Muhajirin and the Anṣār, while people from other tribes went to their respective places. The fact that he had delivered his message did not mean that the Prophet was to lead a comfortable and luxurious life. He returned to Madinah in order to resume his duty as an advocate of Islam who called on people to embrace it. He went back to teach that the duty of striving for God’s cause, i.e. jihad, does not end until the last breath of life. If we imagine an ordinary leader returning to his capital after undertaking a journey which reassured him that the unity which he managed to achieve in his formerly badly divided country was absolutely solid, and the philosophy he has been preaching has taken its hold on the minds and hearts of his people, we are certain to have in mind a happy picture of a happy leader. He would certainly look at his past efforts, crowned with that unity, with satisfaction. His first priority would be to consolidate that achievement before setting himself any further objectives.

When the Prophet returned to Madinah after his journey of pilgrimage, he was in a far better situation than that of our imaginary leader. He had certainly established a very solid base for Islam. Yet he recognized that the new faith needed time to deepen its roots in the life of Arabian society. Hence, a consolidation effort was needed. The Prophet, however, was no ordinary national leader. Indeed, he was not a national leader at all.

He was a Messenger of God and the head of a state which prided itself on having an ideological foundation. Considerations of race, nation, language or colour were not given any value in that state. At the same time, the Prophet realized that his message was not aimed at any particular nation. It was God's message to mankind. Hence, all people were addressed by that message. The Muslim nation, whether Arab or not, is placed in trust of that message, and it is responsible for making it known to all people. While compulsion is totally rejected as a means of converting people to Islam, informing others of the message God wants them to adopt and implement remains a duty of the Muslim nation. This is the fundamental factor which made the Prophet's return to Madinah after his pilgrimage totally different from the return of a highly successful leader from a journey in which he takes stock of his achievements. The Prophet realized that a state founded on faith will always be exposed to a threat from any major power which finds that faith a threat to its supremacy. The danger was certain to be much greater, considering the fact that there were common borders between the Muslim state and the Byzantine Empire. Hence, he wanted to demonstrate to that empire that the old image of a weak tribal society in Arabia had been shattered for ever.

For a few weeks after the Prophet's return to Madinah, the Muslims lived in peace. That was a period of calm the like of which had not been seen in Arabia for many years. Soon, however, that air of peace was shattered. Farwah ibn 'Umar al-Juthamī was governor of Ma'an, in the south of the present-day Jordan, appointed by the Byzantine Emperor. Farwah, however, received the message of Islam and recognized its truthfulness. He sent a message to the Prophet informing him of his acceptance of Islam. His action, however, infuriated the Byzantine Emperor, who ordered an army to subdue Farwah and arrest him. The Byzantine army did just that, and soon Farwah found himself in prison. After a summary trial, he was sentenced to death. Shortly afterwards, he was executed near a spring known as 'Afra' in Palestine. He was crucified and left on the cross for a long time in order to dissuade others from following his example. It is reported that when he was about to be executed, his final words were an appeal to those who were present to convey to the Muslims that he willingly sacrificed his life for the cause of Islam."

Determining historical place in quest of the significances of the sermon

1. Fulfilment of the mission of the Final Messenger Muhammad (PBUH):

Apparently by the conclusion of the farewell sermon, it was also revealed

the completion of Islam as complete religion as well as comprehensive code of life. When Holy Prophet (PBUH) alighted from his camel after addressing to the believers, he received following revelation regarding the completion of Islam as religion: “Today I have perfected your religion for you and completed my blessing on you, and I have approved Islam for your religion.” The last Messenger (PBUH) immediately declared the decision from Allah with reciting the verse to all who were present on the event. Thus, farewell sermon remarked the moment of fulfilling the mission of the Prophet (PBUH). Likewise, the declaration about the perfection of Islam from Allah does mean that evidently after fulfillment of mission the physical presence of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) on the earth would require be no longer. Furthermore, the time is very soon to have his eternal rest in the heavenly through departed from the cares and actions of worldly life (Siddiqi, 1994: 302-303).

Where he had no more time in his hand, hence the Messenger realized in this momentous event where he got the opportunity to illustrate the concise summary of the vivid picture of Islam addressing the assembly. So he (PBUH) announced collective Islamic law and jurisprudence at a glance and made core obligatory of Deen for the ummah what will be their guidance till the Day of Judgment. Likewise, Rasulullah (PBUH) had highlighted basic ordains and prohibits in Islam to all present followers. The sermon is not only the noble sermon before the most extensive public meeting in the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), but also the prospectus of Islam as eternal provisions for all nations, communities, races, sects and regions across the world up to the Last Day. Therefore, the following lines are relevant to the sermon as “No doubt, no better occasion could have been chosen to proclaim the momentous and happy news of perfection of religion. This was the place which had never, in the history of the world, witnessed any temporal fights or bloodshed.” (Ali, 1972: 192).

2. Farewell Sermon is the ‘Sermon of Message’:

No other Islamic occasion can amass a massive gathering of believers except Hajj. Since Rasulullah (PBUH) appositely chose the farewell pilgrimage for approaching his message for all mankind before the assembly on the Day of Arafah. So the last Hajj or pilgrimage of the Prophet (PBUH) is called ‘The Farewell Pilgrimage’, and the pilgrimage is also called ‘The Pilgrimage of Message’ because the Prophet (PBUH) delivered his message to all mankind and charged those were present to convey the message to who were absent so that it might be carried out to all succeeding generations and nations over the world (Naved, 2009: 179).

Undoubtedly, the Prophet's (PBUH) life, teachings and practices have offered such noble thoughtful spiritual messages to all humankind beyond times' frame of any age and also given real complete portraiture of life that is a task of epic scale (Husain, 1992). In consequence of 'Blessing to all humankind' in Quran for him, the message of the farewell sermon did not address any particular community, nation or country; the sermon was preached to all humanity of the whole universe. The message, therefore, is the eternal and the most important guideline for all humanity till the Day of Resurrection.

3. Farewell Sermon is the Sermon of Annunciation:

Haykal remarked the Farewell Hajj as the 'Pilgrimage of Annunciation' because the Holy Apostle (PBUH) had completed the announcement of all his duties and works in the sermon of farewell pilgrimage. His conveyance to the people of what he has been commanded by God to announce and to convey. He conveyed accordingly to the people what Allah has revealed to him; indeed, the Final Messenger Muhammad (PBUH) was only an announcer, a conveyer, and a warner who was sent to a people who see the truth and believe (Haykal, 1976: 488). And the substantial and convincing historic announcement was made as to the sermon of the Farewell Pilgrimage. Thus, the pilgrimage of the Prophet (PBUH) can be entitled as the pilgrimage of proclamation due to the farewell address of the last Apostle (PBUH). Here, the speaker proclaimed in the sermon core principles and codes of Islam for all faithful. And he omitted and trampled all the customs of Jahiliyyah such as usury; compensation of bloodshed; announced firmly the Oneness and the glory of Allah the Exalted with upholding the Holy Quran and Sunnah to be remained firmly face against evils; conveying the annunciation for the absentee of the assembly.

4. Importance of Dawah and emphasize on preaching Islam at everywhere of the World:

At the end of the ninth year of Hijrah, and in the last days of tenth year, not all Arabs embraced Islam from pagan while that time the year of delegation was styled in the life of Rasulullah (PBUH). As the 'mercy to the world' xx Muhammad (PBUH) employed with all his endeavors and capacities to fulfill his task and duties as the last Messenger of the world, so after him, every Muslim is responsible preaching Islam and carrying the light of Islam to regions far away and save humanity from stark ruin. Of course, this responsibility and duty are Dawah, and this Dawah is a regular task of a believer in Islam. The Prophet (PBUH) intended to put emphasis on Dawah of Islam in the address of Farewell sermon so that mandatorily ummah will keep continuing spread of Islam as the mission

of the Prophet (PBUH). In the speech, he (PBUH) ordered the present audience the message of sermon they must be conveyed to those who were absent. He hoped that the sermon shall be told by someone may remember more than he who has heard it.

Moreover, the final religion in the world is Islam as decided by Allah and Allah revealed the Quran on the final Messenger Muhammad (PBUH) to bring out the humanity from darkness to light by their Lord's leave. The advent of the Prophet (PBUH) bestowed all ignorant uncivilized polytheist superstitious humankind by giving a new life, a new faith, a new state, a new society, a new culture and civilisation (Nadwi 1982: 45). But the declaration of the perfection of Islam as religion and the conclusion of the mission of the Final Messenger were notified universally despite it's preceded marked in the Arab region. Because that time, many races and regions all over the world were still left to know Islam and its message as only perfect religion of the earth. Hence the Holy Prophet (PBUH) delivered the sermon by which ummah radically can offer Islam to any non-Muslim on account of the actual understanding reason why he/she should receive Islam. At the same time, ummah gets all the basic principles of Islam from the sermon; they can be purely the best nation amongst all nations if they follow accordingly the sermon of farewell pilgrimage.

5. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) the most successful leader in the world:

Farewell sermon is the most outstanding speech of the greatest leader in the world forever. This address is the live streaming of the most successful leader and vividly eventful career of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). Besides enduring many sufferings severe hardships many difficulties, according to the guidance of revelation the Leader (PBUH) established a society-free from all evils, gender and other existing discriminations, superstitious, ignorance of Arab's life- and established a sovereign state-comprised of all religious communities with ensuring rule of law-and he sustained the equal policy for all subjects of the state. He (PBUH) is only the unparalleled leader in the world what he preached to others firstly he practices these himself; only practices alone are the true index of one's real dignity (Husain, 1992: Preface-viii). Before ending his journey, the charismatic human Leader (PBUH) just presented the summary of his all actions, reforms and duties through the farewell sermon. S. Athar Husain symbolized the life of the Prophet (PBUH) as: "His life was so dynamic, so packed with thrilling and consequential events that it caused an upheaval in the religious, cultural, social, political and economic life." (Husain, 1992: 119). So this sermon does not only comprise the fundamental

principles of the mission of Muhammad (PBUH) but also the successful conclusion of his strenuous life-time.

Significance of the farewell address

The Address enabled the Muslims to be acquainted with the fundamental issues in the religion of Islam, as aptly summarized to them by the Prophet (P.B.U.H) himself. Also, some issues which could have remained shrouded in doubts were also clarified by him. Such issues include whether the heir, as Mentioned in the Qur'an, is entitled to a Will, whether the punishment by rajm (stoning the adulterer to death) stands or not, whether a portion of one's property beyond 1/3 is allowed to be willed out or not, and so on and so forth. Needed to be added to it, is that the farewell address presents Muslims with A standard by which their actions and inactions could be personally and independently assessed (Salawu, 2008).

Emphasis on human rights in the farewell address

In consideration of the nature and scope of the human rights' value in Islamic law as explained earlier, a thoughtful look at the contents of the Prophet's farewell address, as demonstrated above, shows that it contains the following human rights' values:

1. Right to life, its safeguard, security and respect.
2. Right to property, its safeguard, security and respect.
3. Right to reclamation of trust from the trustee by the owner or the beneficiary.
4. Right of Allah to be dedicated to, and which the man is accountable for it.
5. Duty of refrain from usury activities; the right due to Allah through the man's obedience.
6. Right to freedom and enjoyment of the earnings.
7. Right to freedom and safety from inequity; right to Justice.
8. Duty to refrain from un-Islamic legal and justice systems; right of Allah = duty of the Muslims,
Right of the Muslims = duty of the state.
9. Duty of observing the lunar calendar; right of Allah = duty of the Muslims, right of the Muslims duty of the state.
10. Right to safety of religion and freedom from impediments thereto.
11. Rights of the husband = duties of the wife.
12. Rights of the wife = duties of the husband.
13. Rights of the women to the best treatment.
14. Rights of Allah upon the Muslims through the observation of Islamic rites.

15. Right to equal treatment and freedom from discrimination.
16. Duty of preserving the Islamic brotherhood= the right of Allah.
17. Right to freedom from forceful acquisition of one's property and belongings.
18. Right to freedom from Injustice; duty to restrain from inflicting injury and melting out injustice
To others.
19. Duty of adherence to the tenets of the Qur'an and the Sunnah; right of Allah and the prophet.
20. Right to freedom of access to information.

Universality of the message

Another point which marks him out among the great spiritual reformers and prophets of the world relates to the universality of his message. Every prophet had his message confined to a particular people. Every prophet came with light and guidance but for the benefit of a particular nation or country. Purification of the human soul was, no doubt, the mission of each, but the mission was always limited. But the Holy Prophet's message was cosmopolitan, his light universal, and the sphere of his sympathies coextensive with humanity. "And We have not sent thee but as a mercy to the nations" "And we have not sent thee but as a bearer of good news and as a warner to all mankind" "That he might be a warner to the nations" "Say: O mankind, surely I am the Messenger of Allah to you all, " are a few of the numerous verses of the Holy Qur'an which speak of the Holy Prophet being commissioned for the uplift of the entire human race. Again, the Holy Book speaks of itself as "a reminder to all the nations."

There was a time when humanity was partitioned into numerous water-tight compartments, so to speak. Every nation, shut up within the confines of its own particular homeland, lived in entire isolation from the others. Means of communication were limited. Under such conditions of life no great expansion of mental outlook could be expected. The outlook of each was limited to its own immediate environments. Their own part of the race was all-in-all to each people. Thus Divine Wisdom could not but commission separate reformers to each people adapted to their particular needs and conditions. These various prophets played their specified role - the purification of a particular nationality. But like the field of their mission, their spiritual force was also limited in its range. The flame kept on for a period of time but grew gradually dimmer and dimmer, till it was ultimately extinguished altogether. Then would arise the need for another spiritual luminary to illumine the dark age, and hence the succession of reformer after reformer. But whereas Divine Providence thus provided for

the spiritual welfare of man by raising prophets from time to time among various peoples, this led to a baneful impression. Each nation, ignorant of similar Divine favours shown to others, began to think that only they were the chosen ones of God. This fostered the mischievous idea of Divine favouritism, with a host of concomitant evils. To correct this sense of racial distinction, to remove prejudices created by geographical, social and other artificial barriers, and to weld humanity into one compact whole, Divine purpose decreed the commission of the World-Prophet, with a message for the whole of the human race. And just as his spiritual force knew no bounds, it was likewise to be above all limits of time - it was to maintain its efficacy for all time to come. Consequently when the chain of national prophets came to an end with its last link, Jesus, who was sent, to use his own words, "for the lost sheep of the house of Israel," the time was ripe for the Sun of spirituality to dawn on the religious horizon to illuminate the whole world. "The Mercy for the Nations" I made his appearance and emancipated humanity from the shackles of ignorance, superstition and corruption. The previous prophets resembled so many Divine lamps with light just enough for this or that room, and hence the necessity of different lamps corresponding to the numerous geographical and national spheres. They shed their lustre all around and everything within their range became radiant. But when the sun arose from the sands of Arabia, these lamps automatically ceased to be in demand. The light of the sun cannot be supplanted by any other light, and is itself sufficient to illumine the world till its end.

Five Principles of farewell sermon

This memorable speech outlines five basic principles of the Islamic programme of action. Two of these work on the level of the individual and three relate to the structure of Islamic society. Islam moulds the character of the Muslim on the basis of two fundamental principles. First, Islam severs all ties which a Muslim has with Ignorance, or Jahiliyyah, its idols, practices, financial dealings, usury transactions and so on, because the adoption of the religion of Islam means a start of a new life for a Muslim which is completely divorced from the erroneous ways of the past.

The second principle is to guard against all forms of sin. The effects of sin are far more serious than the danger presented by any enemy in battle. All catastrophes in this life are caused by our sins, which also lead us to suffer in the hereafter. The Prophet also made it clear that he did not mean by sin the sinking back into idolatrous worship. Any intelligent person who comes to know of the faith based on God's oneness will never degrade himself to the extent of willingly accepting and claiming that God has

partners. Yet the Evil One does not give up his attempts to seduce people into committing sins in order to lead them further astray. The Prophet has also outlined three basic principles on which Islamic society is founded. The first is the tie of Islamic brotherhood which moulds the proper relationship between all Muslims. It is this brotherhood which makes every Muslim a patron of every other Muslim, giving him whatever help he can. The second principle is supporting the weak so that their weakness does not make the whole society vulnerable. One should note in particular how the Prophet stressed the importance of being kind to women, since they are the weaker element in society.

The third principle is the cooperation between an Islamic government and the members of an Islamic society to achieve the proper implementation of Islamic law which works for the removal of all evil from society and its replacement with what is good. The total sum of these five principles is to translate the Qur'an and the Sunnah into practice. Hence, the Prophet did not forget to enjoin his companions to hold fast to them and implement them in their lives. Short as it was, the Prophet's speech included all the principles which are needed for the moulding of the perfect believer in Islam and the perfect Muslim society. Hence, the Prophet was keen to impress on his followers that he had delivered his message and discharged his mission. He repeatedly prayed to God to be his witness. The Prophet's pilgrimage was his only performance of this religious duty since it was decreed by God. When he completed that pilgrimage, the Muslims were able to follow his practical guidance in all aspects of Islam. There were several indications which suggested that the Prophet's mission was approaching its end. So far, the Muslims were used to the fact that God's Messenger lived among them as one of them, receiving guidance directly from God, explaining to them the right course to follow in any problem they might have. To them, the prospect of continuing an Islamic life without the Prophet was something they could not contemplate. Yet the Prophet realized that that was inevitable. He, therefore, painstakingly tried to prepare them for that eventuality.

Indicating the Inevitable

We have seen how the Prophet bade farewell to his companion, Mu'adh ibn Jabal, whom he appointed as governor of Yemen: when Mu'adh was on the point of departure from Madinah, the Prophet told him that he might not see him again, though he might pass by his mosque and his grave. That piece of warning came only a short while before the Prophet embarked on his journey of pilgrimage. When he delivered his very important speech on the day when all pilgrims must be in attendance at

‘Arafat, he started by saying to his companions: “Listen to me, for I do not know whether I will ever meet you again in this place after this year.” That speech of the Prophet which highlighted the main principles of Islam and the foundation of Islamic society, was a farewell speech stressing the values in violation of which no Islamic society can retain its Islamic character. After every point the Prophet made in his speech, he asked his companions: “Have I delivered my message?” This was the attitude of a man, a Prophet, who understood well the value of his message and was keen to deliver it complete to the people so that they might implement it in practical life. When they declared that he certainly had delivered his message, the Prophet repeatedly asked God to be his witness to that.

If the message was duly delivered, and if that message, or the faith it represented, was complete, then the mission of the Prophet was over. Hence, when the Prophet recited to his companions during his pilgrimage the verse which was revealed to him “This day I have completed your religion for you, and perfected my grace to you and approved Islam as your religion” the significance was absolutely clear. ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab, who was perhaps the companion of the Prophet endowed with the keenest perception, was in tears when he listened to the Prophet reciting this verse. Asked by his colleagues why he was crying, he answered: “Nothing comes after perfection but imperfection.”² One can imagine that he sensed that the Prophet’s life was drawing to a close. Indeed, several statements of the Prophet and relevant incidents suggested to those who had keen insight that a great and noble life was approaching its end. When the Prophet went for stoning at ‘Aqabah, he said to the great crowd of pilgrims surrounding him: “Learn from me your rites, for I may never offer the pilgrimage again after this year.”*

Moreover, the Sūrah entitled ‘Victory’ was revealed to the Prophet on the second day of his stay at Minā. It may be rendered in English as follows: “When God’s help and victory come, and you see people embracing God’s faith in groups, glorify your Lord and praise Him and ask His forgiveness, for He is much-forgiving.” Two of the most learned companions of the Prophet, ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab and ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbās, the Prophet’s cousin, realized that the revelation of the sūrah was an announcement to the Prophet that his time on earth would soon be over. Another indication of the approaching event took place earlier that year. In Ramadan, the Prophet used to stay in his mosque for ten days which he dedicated totally to worship. Every year he received the Angel Gabriel in the month of Ramadan and they recited the Qur’an. This time, the Prophet stayed in his mosque for 20 days in Ramadan and the two of them recited the full text

of the Qur'an twice.”

When we look at the situation in Arabia at the time when the Prophet offered his pilgrimage, we find that he was able to establish a solid base for Islam from which it could spread its message to the rest of mankind. The Prophet was keen to indicate to his companions that Arabia must always remain the base of Islam. It is by the grace of God that it has continued to be so ever since. By the time all these indications were pointing to the approaching end of the Prophet's mission, the whole of Arabia was loyal to Islam. While it was true that many parts of the Arabian Peninsula underwent that great transformation from its old pagan faith to Islam, the most monotheistic of all religions, the Prophet realized that a change in reverse was highly unlikely. Certain factors and circumstances may lead to a renunciation of Islam, as indeed happened after the Prophet's death, but such challenges were bound to end in failure. Once the straightforward faith, based on God's oneness, took its hold in the hearts of people, it could never be easily renounced. The Prophet's mission was approaching its end because the message of Islam embodied in God's revelations was conveyed by him to the Arabs, and through them to the rest of mankind. The establishment of the geographical base of Islam in Arabia ensured that Islam was to remain for ever an active force in man's world. Hence, the task of the Messenger was completely fulfilled.

Conclusion

The Farewell Sermon of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) represents a timeless and universal message, addressing fundamental aspects of human existence and ethical conduct. Its teachings on unity, justice, and adherence to religious principles continue to provide valuable guidance for contemporary issues. As a foundational text in Islamic tradition, the sermon's relevance extends beyond its historical context, offering enduring insights into the pursuit of a just and harmonious society. By reflecting on the sermon's messages, we can gain a deeper understanding of how to address current global challenges and work towards a more equitable and sustainable future.

Bibliography

1. Al-Raheeq Al-Makhtum by safiur Rahman Al-Mubarakpuri
2. Muhammad The Prophet by maulanamul;IAMMAD 'ali THE AH-MADIYY A ANJUMAN ISHA' AT ISLAM LAHORE -U.S.A.
3. Al-Ma'ariful Qur'an. (n.d.). The Farewell Sermon. Retrieved from [source].
4. Brown, J. A. C. (2009). The World of the Prophet Muhammad. Cam-

bridge University Press.

5. Esposito, J. L. (2002). *What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam*. Oxford University Press.

6. Rahman, F. (2009). *Islamic Methodology in History*. Islamic Publications International.

7. Sardar, Z. (2012). *Islamic Futures: A Contested Modernity*. Routledge.

8. Determining the historical significance of the farewell sermon of the Prophet (PBUH) in context of demand of the time by MD. Cholem Ullah.

9. THE FAREWELL ADDRESS OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD: A UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS by *Yusuf Abdul Azeez, “Abdullahi Saliu Ishola.