*The Companions of the Cave – Part II*

*Ramadan – Ashton Central Mosque – 18/07/13*

In the name of Allah, The All-Merciful, The Ever-Merciful. All prayers and peace of Allah be upon Prophet Muhammad.

There were 6 or 7 young men who had a message and a dream to reform their country and inform their people of the Oneness of Allah. However, their king did not approve that, and a call for their arrest was issued. Thus they decided to flee to the cave in order to plan what they will do next.

We discussed why Allah had allowed their message to face such a hardship. In that we talked about Allah's name al-Wakeel (The Ultimate Trustee).

Someone's dream might be to enlighten his village. Another could undertake the role of teaching the illiterate. Yet another could aim at using the media to brighten youngsters. In addition to dreams, the Companions of the Cave had hope. Dreams cannot be realised without hope.

Those young people did not despair as some of our brothers sitting jobless at home, raising an excuse of no hope. You have to reach point B. Then Allah will ease the remaining majority of your path. Not everyone who has reached great expectations had the tangible needs to get there.

***Allah's Name: The Ultimate Trustee (Al-Wakeel):***

***The Events In The Cave And The Trustee's Arrangements For Them:***

When you look at the Cave, you will be amazed at how its 90 meters were created to accommodate such a righteous company. First, the cave was designed as would an air-conditioned apartment be designed. There is a reception ahead of where they slept their 300 years. Then there is an opening in the cave, allowing the entry of air and sunlight. The opening faced the South-East as if designed to be away from the sun during the day, but allow the light flow of sunrays and warmth around dusk. Which trustee could have designed a palace to conserve people for 300 years, to take care of them, as did The Ultimate Trustee?

**وَتَرَى الشَّمْسَ إِذَا طَلَعَتْ تَزَاوَرُ عَنْ كَهْفِهِمْ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَإِذَا غَرَبَتْ تَقْرِضُهُمْ ذَاتَ الشِّمَالِ وَهُمْ فِي فَجْوَةٍ مِنْهُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ وَمَنْ يُضْلِلْ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ وَلِيًّا مُرْشِدًا**

"And you might have seen the sun when it rose, declining from their cave towards the right; and when it set, it went past them towards the left while they were in a broad fissure of (the cave). That was one of the signs of Allah. Whomever Allah guides, then he is right-guided, and whomever He leads away into error, then you will never find for him a right-minded patron. " (18: 17)

***This Was The First Mercy Bestowed On Them.***

Secondly, Allah's creation (the sun and air, and the heat and cold) were ordered not to harm them. When we ask work for Allah The Ultimate Trustee, then the entire creation will work for us. Who can protect you like that?

**فَضَرَبْنَا عَلَى آذَانِهِمْ فِي الْكَهْفِ سِنِينَ عَدَدًا**

Allah allowed them to sleep for 309 years, by muting their hearing! Allah says, "Then We struck upon their ears for a (great) number of years in the cave," (18:11)

**وَنُقَلِّبُهُمْ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَذَاتَ الشِّمَالِ**

"And We turned them about towards the right and towards the left," (18:18)

They were not dead, but only asleep. This is one of the very miraculous signs in this story. Allah changed the characters of sleep to accommodate 7 sixteen year olds because they trusted in Him.

***The Importance Of Al-Waseed:***

**الشِّمَالِ وَكَلْبُهُمْ بَاسِطٌ ذِرَاعَيْهِ بِالْوَصِيدِ**

"And their dog stretching out his two fore-legs on the threshold (Waseed)," (18: 18)

Waseed is the step near the entrance of the Cave. The young men's dog laid there for 309 years, as if a sign was saying, "Beware! Do not trespass!"

We all have to realize the meaning of trusting Allah, dear brothers and sisters. We all have had signs in our lives showing how trust in Allah does not fail. What are you afraid of? Live with a message and work as hard as your capabilities and means can get you, and know that Allah will allow you success.

***The Importance Of Turning Them In Their Sleep:***

A statement which strikes you with the essence of His care to them is, "And We turned them about towards the right and towards the left," (18: 18). When you sleep, you turn in bed more than 30 times every night. Medicine tells us the importance of that is preventing a disease known as bed sores. Sleeping too long on one side of the body can cause continuous pressure on that side, leading to pain and loss of the skin's vitality. The skin dies and ulcers are the result. This normally happens to those unconscious, as those bed-ridden in coma. Thus medical staff in hospitals will go in to coma patients and continuously turn them in bed to prevent ulcers of their backs and legs.

They were only 7 young men and not prophets, and they were granted all that care because of their trust. Whoever lives his life for Allah's sake, Allah will truly ensure for him such mercies. On the other hand, people who live for their own selves and desires will not sense such meaningful signs in their lives.

**لَوِ اطَّلَعْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَوَلَّيْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِرَارًا وَلَمُلِئْتَ مِنْهُمْ رُعْبًا**

"If you look at them, indeed you would have turned away from them in flight and indeed been filled with horror of them" (18: 18)

This verse is showing another defence for them. Those young men went to the Cave afraid from the king's corruption. Here Allah says that those who trust Allah and sense His presence will be lead to peace and serenity while those who transgress will be in fear from this same serenity! If you sleep while trusting Allah in mind, then sleep entirely and never be scared.

***Events Going On Outside The Cave:***

What happened outside the cave? What happened to their people? Their Families had searched for them a lot, the young men had disappeared suddenly, and their families and the town had a doubt that the king was the reason for their disappearance and that he might have hurt them.

As for the King, since that day his image had been shaken, because all the people were thinking that he is the one who killed the young men whom were 15 years of age. Notice that the king is the one who introduced the message and that because the seven young men were presenting good deeds for the people and time was not on their side to spread their monotheistic beliefs among the people. Then the King announced that the young men had faith, and he had spread his guards everywhere. So the people said: “Did those righteous young men want to inform us that there is no god but Allah? Why does the king want to hurt them?" By this way the people were introduced to the new message.

***To Be Remembered:***

If you want to make your name live eternally on the Inscribed Tablet, then do something useful, and do not leave this world without leaving an imprint. There are people who leave this world without leaving any imprints, as if they are only living in it for themselves and their children. While there are others who leave an imprint on the sand, and when the water comes it wipes it away. And there are others who grave their imprints on the rocks. .

***The Weakness Of The King***

The king’s power started to weaken because of the seven young men and his image started to change in front of the people and in front of his army. Then later on he died, and his son came and he felt that oppression is not working, so he started to spread justice between the people, and they began to feel relieved. People advised their children to become like those young men because people always love the one who sacrifices for them.

***Modification Needs Time:***

The young men had started their work then Allah made them sleep, but why did they go to sleep? Because modification needs time. If we want to make our countries become better, we must know that this matter needs time. In the story of the companions of the cave, it took 300 years for change to occur. In our case it might take 100 years or 20 years depending on the effort done.

***The Awakening Of The Companions Of The Cave:***

After 300 years, a new king who believed in Christianity took charge and he made all the people believe in it too. Allah wanted the companions of the cave to wake. But why would they wake after all this time? They woke to teach people that Allah completed their journey and to leave a mark in the Qur’an that Allah does not waste the reward of those who make good deeds.

Allah inspired a farm owner which is located near the cave, to take from the rocks that are in front of the cave to build a fence for his farm, so the cave was found. Then the noise started outside and the dog was awake and so were the companions of the cave.

**وَكَذَلِكَ بَعَثْنَاهُمْ لِيَتَسَاءَلُوا بَيْنَهُمْ قَالَ قَائِلٌ مِنْهُمْ كَمْ لَبِثْتُمْ قَالُوا لَبِثْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالُوا رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِثْتُمْ فَابْعَثُوا أَحَدَكُمْ بِوَرِقِكُمْ هَذِهِ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَيُّهَا أَزْكَى طَعَامًا فَلْيَأْتِكُمْ بِرِزْقٍ مِنْهُ وَلْيَتَلَطَّفْ وَلا يُشْعِرَنَّ بِكُمْ أَحَدًا**

“And thus We made them rise again that they might ask one another. A speaker from among them said, “How long have you lingered?” They said, “We have lingered a day, or part of a day.” (Others) said, “Your Lord knows best how long you have lingered. So send one of you forth with this money to the city, then let him look for whichever of them has the purest food, so let him come up to you with a provision thereof, and let him be courteous, and definitely let no man be aware of your (presence)” (19:18)

They did not know for how long they stayed asleep, they thought it was a day or half a day, and when they woke, they were very hungry since they went to the cave suddenly without taking their food. We notice that they were not very poor and wanted to eat good food, and at same time, they were religious with a mission.

One of the seven young men went down feeling that life had changed all around him and that place was not the same place he came from yesterday, he thought that those houses were not there yesterday and that he got lost because of their sleep yesterday, but he remained silent. He went to town hiding because he thought that for sure the guards of the king were searching all over the town for them. He reached a seller from whom he wanted to buy food, and while he was giving him the paper money, the man looked at the money and knew that it goes back to 300 years ago, to the period of the king.

The seller thought that the young man had found a treasure and he said to the young man: “Either you tell me the place of the treasure, so that we can share it or I will tell the police”. The young man said: "Which treasure?" The seller replied: "This currency goes back to 300 years ago". The young man was surprised because he though he has just run away from the king yesterday. People started to gather around him laughing and they thought he was crazy. He said "Please stop gathering people around me so that the guards do not find me". In the middle of the people’s laughter, the young man said: "Truthfully, we are Christian believers". The gathering said: "We are all like you, and even the king believes in god too". The young man could not believe it. One of the men of wisdom asked the young man about his name and the names of his friends. When the man of wisdom heard the names, he knew then that these were the seven young men who disappeared.

People informed the king about him, and went to the cave to see his friends.

Imagine the whole town going to the cave now telling the seven young men, "We are all believers now, and you are the ones who directed us to the right path". Imagine their invoking to Allah “ O The Generous, O The Ultimate Trustee”. Imagine the moment when they found out the truth saying, "How did the dream come true? O Allah you have fulfilled our dream”.

**وَكَذَلِكَ أَعْثَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ لا رَيْبَ فِيهَا إِذْ يَتَنَازَعُونَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَمْرَهُمْ فَقَالُوا ابْنُوا عَلَيْهِمْ بُنْيَانًا رَبُّهُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِهِمْ قَالَ الَّذِينَ غَلَبُوا عَلَى أَمْرِهِمْ لَنَتَّخِذَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ مَسْجِدًا**

“And thus We made the (people of the city) discover them that they might know that the promise of Allah is true and that the Hour, there is no suspicion about it. As they were contending among themselves their Command, (then) they said, “Build over them a structure; their Lord knows them best.” (But) the ones who prevailed over their Command said, “Indeed we will definitely build over them a mosque” (21:18)

By their awaking we learn that The Ultimate Trustee never leaves his worshippers, like He said whoever lives his life for the sake of Allah, Allah helps him to complete his dream. We also learn that the One who awakened them after 300 years will awaken all of us on the Day of Judgment. Therefore, we need to be prepared for that day.

***End Of The Story:***

After people found and recognized the people of the cave, they died because it will be very difficult for them to live in the four centuries later from their time. Now they have become just a memory. They died and their graves are now in the cave, and we will go there to see it.