

On the Path of the Beloved ﷺ

Hardships Of The Prophet And His Companions

In the Name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Ever-Merciful.

In today's lecture we will discuss the period from the third year after the revelation till the sixth year. We saw in the previous lecture how Muhammad's ﷺ plan for spreading Islam among Quraysh tribe consisted of phases. The first phase was choosing people of distinguished characters; people who excelled in practical life. He delved deep into society and came up with almost 100-150 believers. In the next phase, he managed to secure the protection of Bani-Hashem tribe when his Uncle Abu-Taleb agreed to protect him. In the third phase Muhammad ﷺ proceeded with *da'wa* publicly by announcing it from the top of Mount. Al-Safa before the whole of Quraysh. He moved on smoothly from one phase to another. His companions never questioned his plans. Our Prophet ﷺ always took the initiative and waited for Quraysh's reaction. He was aware that Quraysh would strongly challenge him. He planned everything without waiting for supernatural miracles. Jibril (Gabriel) only provided Muhammad ﷺ with methodology and support. Great miracles were still to come such as *Al-Israa* and *Al-Mi'raj* and many others. Major changes are initiated by people and not by miracles. One must work hard and then one will be supported by great miracles.

Quraysh tried different approaches to stop the Prophet ﷺ. First, they tried to distort the Prophet's *da'wa* in the eyes of people. Next came ridicule and humiliation, to break his spirit, followed by moral and physical harm; They started hurting him, his family and his companions. They were many attempts to kill the companions; some of these attempts were successful. All of these hardships were endured for the sake of Islam.

In an attempt to distort the *da'wa* Quraysh accused Muhammad ﷺ of being a poet, a priest, a liar, a mad man, and a spy so that those listening to him would get confused and leave him. Allah ﷻ says, **"And the ones who have disbelieved have said, "Decidedly this is nothing except a falsehood he has fabricated, and other people have helped him to it." ...' (25:4).**

Quraysh even sent Al-Nader Ibn-Al-Harith to Persia to listen to the stories of the Persian kings. When he came back, they told him to interrupt Muhammad ﷺ and tell people the stories he had learnt, thus Muhammad ﷺ was not able to neither talk to the people nor recite the Qur'an. His uncle Abu-Lahab did the same; he followed Muhammad ﷺ telling people to stay away from him. Such hardships are common in life and we must be patient just like our master ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ did not argue with the disbelievers or fight them but he became more persistent. The Qur'an was giving him the support he needed. **"O you enwrapped (in your raiment). Rise up**

..." (73:1-2). Several Surah(s)¹ in the Qur'an start with "Rise up". Khadijah (RA), the Prophet's ﷺ wife, used to ask him to take some rest as he prayed all night and called people to Islam during the day.

Quraysh moved on from ridiculing the Prophet ﷺ to breaking his spirit and hurting his pride. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was then 43 years old and was known for his extreme honesty and trustworthiness.

Quraysh decided that whenever anyone would spot Muhammad they would say "madman" aloud and run away. **"And they said, "O you upon whom the Remembrance is being sent down, surely you are indeed a madman ..."' (15:6).** Such rumors were spreading fast to the extent that travelers coming from Yemen were warned to beware of the crazy Quraysh "lad". Do you feel like you want to stand up and defend him? You can do that by following his Sunnah and by working hard and avoiding violence.

Om-Jameel, Abu-Lahab's wife used to gather garbage and thorns and put them on the doorstep of the Prophet's ﷺ house. She was relentless; she kept on provoking Quraysh and causing trouble. **"And his wife, the constant bearer of firewood, Upon her (long) neck she will have a rope of palm-fibers." (111:4-5).** She did not actually carry firewood, but the Qur'an uses this metaphor to show that she was the one who was lighting the fire of disruption in Quraysh. When she heard about those verses describing her, she went to the Prophet ﷺ and threw stones at him. Allah ﷻ allowed such suffering by the Prophet ﷺ but only to a limit. Om-Jameel soon became blind. She was not able to see the Prophet ﷺ. She used to ask Abu-Bakr about him though he was just in front of her. She ridiculed his name in a fabricated poem about how they were going to defy his religion and in which she called him "Mudhammam"². Quraysh disbelievers liked Om-Jameel's poem and used to sing it in the streets of Makkah. The companions were angered by the poem but the Prophet ﷺ used to calm them down. At other times the disbelievers waited for Mohammad ﷺ to make *tawaf* and made fun of him. He used to ignore them until the third round of *tawaf*. Then, he would go to them and threaten them harshly. He ﷺ was known for being patient so when he did that they used to be scared and stop what they were doing. Allah ﷻ says, **" Surely the ones who are (guilty of) crimes used to laugh at the ones who believed, And when they passed by them (they used) to wink one to another. And when they turned over (to their families), they turned over jesting, And when they saw them, they said, "Surely these (people) are indeed erring." And in no way were they sent preservers over them. So Today the ones who believed are laughing at the steadfast disbelievers, On couches, looking (down upon them). Have the steadfast disbelievers been requited for what they were performing? "(83:29-36).**

The above ayahs came to support and raise the spirits of the Prophet ﷺ and his companions. **"And indeed We already know that, for you, your breast straitens by what they say. So extol with the praise of your Lord and be of the prostrating. "(15:97-98).** In another ayah, Allah ﷻ says, **"In no way is anything said to you**

¹ Chapter of the Qur'an.

² Dispraised, opposite of the meaning of Muhammad in Arabic

except what already was said to the Messengers before you. Surely your Lord is indeed The Owner of forgiveness and The Owner of painful punishment..."(41: 43). Companions and believers increased in number. **"You have been the most charitable nation brought out to mankind: you command beneficence, and forbid maleficence, and believe in Allah ..."(3: 110).**

Ask yourself what you have done along the path of the beloved ﷺ. Have you betrayed his trust? **" O you who have believed, do not betray Allah and the Messenger..."(8: 27).** We want to prove to the whole world that Islam is not a religion of terror. After the death of Muhammad ﷺ, one of the companions looked happy; he was certain that if he obeyed the Prophet ﷺ when he was dead just like he used to do when he was alive, his reward would be doubled. 'Prophet Muhammad says," **I love to see my brothers. They (the hearers) said: Aren't we your brothers-Messenger of Allah? He said: You are my companions, and our brothers are those who have, so far, not come into the world."**³

Quraysh was continuously trying to hurt the Prophet's family. Al-'Asi Ibn-Wael, the father of Amr Ibnul-Aas, after the death of the Prophet two sons, used to say that he was incapable of having boys (a shameful matter back then) and that the Prophet would not have anyone to carry his legacy after the his death. This used to hurt Khadijah (RA). She was 55 years old and too old to bear more children. To relieve them from their pains Allah ﷻ revealed these ayahs which could be translated as, **"Surely We have given you the Abundance; So pray to your Lord and slaughter (the sacrifice). Surely your antagonist is he who is without offspring (Literally: curtailed). "(108: 1-3).** Also, **"Have We not expanded your breast for you, And laid aside from you your encumbrance. Which weighed down your back, And did We not raise for you your remembrance? So surely with difficulty comes ease, Surely with difficulty comes ease. So when you are at leisure, (i.e., not o) then labor, And to your Lord then be desirous (i.e., of His Grace)."(94: 1-8).** After the companions exceeded 200 in number Quraysh tried to hurt the Prophet's family even more. Abu-Lahab asked his two sons to divorce the Prophet's ﷺ two daughters. One of the two daughters later on married Othman Ibn-Affan, one of the Prophet's companion and the other one, Om-Kulthoum, didn't get married until she went to Madinah, as all the companions were younger than her. Unlike any other woman in her situation, what happened to her daughters did not deter Khadijah (RA) instead she supported her husband even more.

The persistence of Muhammad bothered Abu-Jahl so much that he eventually left the Prophet ﷺ alone and said that he will not listen to him anyway. **" We already know that surely it indeed grieves you (the things) they say. Yet surely they do not cry lies to you, but the unjust (people) repudiate the signs of Allah. "(6:33).** Once a friend of Abu-Jahl accused Muhammad of being a liar in front of him; but as soon as he left he said that he knew that Muhammad was saying the truth but was falsely accusing him because his family used to be a competitor of Abdul-Muttalib's family. His accusation was simply driven by greed and selfishness. Therefore, never choose

³ Narrated by Abu-Huraira. Good Hadith, Sahih Muslim, Book 002, Number 0482.

your interests over the truth. Our sense of right and wrong is always tested by Allah ﷻ, so beware. And to our Muslim women I say: You play a major role; you must always support your husbands in doing what is right regardless of any temptation.

As to physical hurt, Okba Ibn-Abu-Ma'eet took off his gown, twisted it to make a rope out of it then went on tightening it around the neck of our beloved ﷺ, while he was praying in front of the *Ka'ba*, until he fell from suffocation. At another occasion, Okba went and slaughtered a camel, took out its guts and put it on the Prophet's back while he was prostrating in prayer. The Prophet remained still until his daughter came and took it off of him. She was crying from the humiliation her father was subjected to; Prophet ﷺ then told her not to cry, and that Allah ﷻ will support her father. In heaven, the Prophet shall hold his hand for all to drink from, but the angels will come and take the weak believers away; they will not be allowed to drink from the Prophet's ﷺ hand.

Another disbeliever hid in the desert of Makkah and took a handful of sand and threw it in our beloved's face. The Prophet ﷺ went home with his clothes full of sand and dust and his little girl Fatima (RA) saw this and tried to rub the dust off of her father while she was crying. He comforted her by asserting that Allah ﷻ will support him. Listen to this ayah and wake up. Allah ﷻ says , **"And in no way is Muhammad (anything) except a Messenger; the Messengers have already passed away before him. Then, will it be that, in case he dies or is killed, will you turn (Literally: turn (s) over on) on your heels? ..."(3:144).**

Do you know why Okba Ibn-Abu-Ma'eet defied Prophet Muhammad ﷺ? He was a close friend of Abu-Jahl. He had started to listen to Muhammad ﷺ and to believe in what he was saying. He was about to embrace Islam. At that time, Abu-Jahl was away on a trip and when he returned, he threatened Okba and told him that he would neither see him nor talk to him again until he went and spitted on the Prophet's ﷺ face.

Stay away from bad company and listen to your parents in this regard. Okba chose his friend over the truth and spitted on the face of our beloved ﷺ. **" And the Day that the unjust (person) will bite at both his hands, (and) say, "Oh, would that I had taken to myself a way along with the Messenger. Oh, woe to me! Would that I had not taken so-and-so to myself for a (close) fellow. Indeed he readily made me err away from the Remembrance after it had come to me." (25:27-29).**

The Prophet ﷺ was not only supportive of Islam, but of all forms of justice. Once a man came to Makkah claiming that Abu-Jahl owed him money. To make fun of both him and Mohammad , some disbelievers advised him to go to Muhammad and ask him for help. Despite his conflict with Abu-Jahl, the Prophet ﷺ took the man to Abu-Jahl and told Abu-Jahl to pay the man his money. In effect, Abu-Jahl paid the due money.

Examples of Hardships Undergone by Companions:

Abdullah Ibn-Masood, a companion who was frail, decided to confront Quraysh and force them to listen to the Qur'an. He would go to the K'aba and to recite ayahs from Surat Ar-Rahman as loud as he could. The disbelievers used to gather and beat him up, yet he did not stop, until the Messenger of Allah ﷺ advised him to do so. The lesson we learn here is that one should never shy away from the truth.

One day ten men from Quraysh gathered around the Prophet ﷺ and assaulted him. Abu-Bakr, who was described as "the bravest of all men", by Ali (RA), defended the Prophet ﷺ. Consequently, the disbelievers let go of the Prophet ﷺ and started beating Abu-Bakr and hitting him on the face until he fainted. They only left him when they thought he was dead. After he was carried to his house, he woke up at night asking about the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Exhausted as he was, he asked his mother and Fatima bintul-Khattab to take him to the Prophet ﷺ, so that he could see for himself that the Prophet was safe. Such was his love for the Prophet ﷺ.

Many companions underwent severe torture. For instance, Belal was left by the disbelievers in the heat of Makkah's desert wearing iron shields, and with heavy stones on his body. The youth, Al-Zobeir Ibnul-Awam (16 years old) was tortured by his uncle who used to wrap him up with a piece of cloth and hang him and light a fire underneath him, so that the hot smoke would suffocate him. This caused Al-Zobeir a serious lung disease.

Another example is given by Saad Ibn-Abu-Waqas, who used to be quite dutiful to his mother. Nonetheless, when he embraced Islam, his mother threatened him to stop eating and drinking if he did not abandon his belief. In effect, she starved herself and became very ill after three days. However, he firmly told her that he would never leave his belief. Ayahs were revealed to the Prophet ﷺ, telling Saad to be more merciful, **"And We have enjoined upon man the fair (companionship) to his parents; and in case they strive with you to make you associate with Me that whereof you have no knowledge, then do not obey them" (29:8)**. After listening to these sacrifices, the question is, "what did we do?"

Whole families also suffered. This is illustrated in the story of the family of Yasser. The wife, Somaya Bintul-Khayat, a slim, weak, 60 years-old woman, was tortured by Abu-Jahl, until she died. She became the first Muslim martyr. Let us note that the first person to support the messenger of Allah was a woman and the first martyr was also a woman. Reflecting on this issue, I think the message is about asking men to work as hard and strive for the cause of Islam like women did in the times of the Prophet ﷺ. Two days later, Somaya's husband, Yasser died, leaving behind the young, Ammar Ibn-Yasser, who suffered greatly as well. Ten years later, when Abu-Jahl was killed in the Battle of Badr, the Prophet ﷺ summoned Ammar to tell him that Allah avenged his mother.

The lesson to be learnt here is not about undergoing hardships but rather that we are responsible for carrying the message as relentlessly as the companions of the

Prophet ﷺ did. Let us learn from pigeons who value the message they are trained to carry. Despite rain or heat, they fly very high to avoid hunters and they do not stop for food, in order to deliver their message safely. Why don't we follow the example of pigeons!

Hamza and Omar embrace Islam:

1. Hamza:

Hamza was a man who sought his own pleasures and never cared about the issues of Makkah. One day after a hunting trip, a Muslim woman (again, a woman) met him and asked how he could go hunting while his nephew was assaulted by Abu-Jahl. Hamza was enraged. He headed to the Ka'ba with his bow. He asked Abu-Jahl, "How dare you abuse him while I embraced his religion?" and he hit him on the head. Now, Hamza was unintentionally involved. This indeed is a manifestation of one of Allah's names, "The Guide". The next day Hamza went to his nephew after a sleepless night. The Prophet ﷺ proposed Islam and Hamza accepted. He encouraged the Prophet to proceed with his message because Hamza promised to defend him and be by his side. This is indeed the type of Muslims we are in need of.

2. Omar:

Unlike Hamza, Omar's Islam was gradual. He used to be an extremely tough person. He used to follow the Prophet ﷺ wherever he went and prevent him from talking to people and spreading the message of Islam. Omar tells the story of his Islam. He says that the first time Islam found a way to his heart was after hitting his female slave. Strong as he was, he would beat her up until he got tired, yet she remained resilient. Once again, a Muslim woman demonstrated her strength and capability of standing up for her faith.

On another occasion, Omar went to meet his drinking friends but did not find the wine seller, so he decided to go to the Ka'ba. When he arrived there, he found the Prophet ﷺ praying. He decided to listen quietly and see what he was saying. The Prophet ﷺ was reading Surat Al-Haqqah. After listening for a while, he thought that Mohammad was surely a magician, then he heard the Prophet ﷺ reciting what can be translate as, **"And in no way is it the saying of a poet- little do you believe" (69:41)**; Then, he thought the Prophet was a soothsayer; at that point, the Prophet ﷺ recited , **"Nor the saying of a soothsayer- little are you mindful of!" (69:42)**. He reflected on what this was all about, only to hear the Prophet ﷺ reciting , **"A successive sending down from The Lord of the worlds" (69:43)**. He said, "I felt a tremor in my body and Islam found further way to my heart".

The final stage in the Omar's Islam, was when he decided to kill the Prophet ﷺ because he was feeling so confused. On his way, he met a Muslim man who asked him where he was heading. Omar told him about his intention. The companion was worried about the Prophet ﷺ, so he told him to check on his own sister, Fatima, first since she embraced islam too. Omar, burning with anger, went to his sister's house,

where he found her reciting Surat Ta-Ha, together with her husband and Khabath. After hitting his sister and her husband, Omar looked at his bleeding sister's face and asked to read the Qur'an. He recited some ayahs and then, asked for Muhammad. Khabath told Omar that he was at Al-Arqam's house. Omar immediately went to Al-Arqam's house and declared that he embraced Islam, in a new victory for the Muslims.

On his first day as a Muslim, Omar had a number of great achievements. One minute after declaring himself a Muslim, Omar asked the Prophet ﷺ to go out and declare openly that there is not God but Allah. The Muslims went to the Ka'ba in two queues, one led by Hamza and the other by Omar, in a scene that was totally unprecedented to the inhabitants of Makkah. I ask businessmen, politicians and media people; "what did you do for Islam and for your country?"

Moreover, Omar wanted all Quraysh to know that he became a Muslim. He went to Abu-Jahl and to Abu-Sufyan and declared his islam. However, this was not enough for him, he wanted everyone to know. He went to a man called Jamil Ibnul-Moamar, who was well known to spread rumors in Makkah. As soon as Omar told him about his islam, he started running in the streets and announcing the news.

On the same day, Omar knew that Quraysh decided to gather at Ka'ba to discuss this issue. Omar went to them and was engaged in a brutal fight. When Omar eventually, arrived home, he summoned his children and ordered them, to embrace Islam, only to find that his youngest son Abdullah Ibn-Omar had embraced Islam a year ago. Omar said to his son, 'you were going to let your father go to Hell!'. For years later, Omar would jokingly repeat this sentence to his son Abdullah.

Here is a summary of the lessons we learn in this lecture:

- ◆ Do not live only to fulfill your personal needs.
- ◆ You have to sacrifice for the sake of your message.
- ◆ Women play a pivotal role in supporting society.
- ◆ Islam and our nations are in dire need for all men of power, businessmen
- ◆ Youth must have a firm intention to succeed in life.

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Seerah: Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Hisam, Ibn Kathir and Diya al-Nabi were used in the compilation of these lecture notes as well as various books of Hadith.

The selective topics and format is from Amr Khaled's Arabic lecture on Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ with renditions from the "dar al tarjma" convoy.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3oDLD8B-has>

I have included modifications for the sake of readability and clarity.