

On the Path of the Beloved ﷺ

The first week after the Revelation

Before we proceed to the Prophet's Seerah, I would like to ask how you are doing in Ramadan? Are you happy? Do you feel closer to Allah ﷻ? What about the night prayers and your supplication? How about recitation of the Qur'an? How many times did you intend to complete of the entire Quran? It's the 6th of Ramadan, which means that one quarter of Ramadan has already elapsed.

I can imagine Ramadan talking to us saying, "I will come and go, whether you like it or not, whether you worshiped Allah or disobeyed Him. But when I leave, I will take a part of your life with me. I will come every year and take a part of your life until you die. Then I will be one of the reasons of either for your success or your remorse."

In today's talk we will look at the first week after the revelation. I would like to ask you today to use your imagination, and visualize what the Prophet ﷺ did in that first week. I want you to see him rushing back from the mountain in fear, shivering and cold. He reached home tired and sweating and told his wife, **"Cover me, cover me!"** Can you imagine what the Prophet was feeling? I want you to keep visualizing the state he was in. He was both cold and afraid. This only proves that he had not yet known that he was a Prophet or that the being he met was Jibril ﷺ. He did not even know whether what happened to him was good or bad. He was scared because our master Jibril came to him in his angelic form. He did not come in his human form. It must have been truly scary for the Prophet ﷺ especially when we reflect on the ayah in which Allah says what can be translated as **"If We had sent down this Qur'an upon a mountain, indeed you would have seen it submissive, sundered apart out of apprehension of Allah;" (59:21).**

When his wife asked him what had happened, he told her, **"I was afraid for myself"** and he started relating to her what he went through. How did Lady Khadijah respond? Her response was quick and firm. She said, **"By Allah, No! Allah will never disgrace you! You foster family relations; you bear the burden of the weak; you help the poor and the needy; you are generous towards your guests and you endure hardships in the path of truthfulness"**¹.

It was reported that the Prophet ﷺ upon hearing her words relaxed and calmed down.

There is a beautiful meaning embedded in these words. I want to give the ladies a recipe to help them keep their husbands in this age of temptations; this recipe consists of three attributes. If a woman wants to keep her husband, and make him never want to leave her, let her do what her mother Khadijah did.

¹ Sahih Bukhari, Book 1: Volume 1, Book 1, Number 3.

Lady Khadijah did not fully comprehend his problem to help him, so what do you think she did? Well!

She stood firm and reassured him and boosted his morale. Even a strong man, when he faces some problems, always turn to his wife for comfort even though she may be weak herself. If she gives her husband the comfort, the wife then, would be the arms he always turn to for shelter. When a man feels that his wife is supporting him, you can not imagine the surge of energy he gets. Glory be to Allah who created such harmony and balance. Allah says" **O you mankind, be pious to your Lord, Who created you of one self, and created from it its spouse," (4:1).**

The second thing lady Khadijah did after encouraging him and pointing out his great attributes was to listen to him. A lot of women, if faced with a similar situation, would cry and lament their husbands' misfortune, which would add to the husband's worries. Instead a woman should first restore her husband's confidence like Lady Khadijah did, and then she should listen to him.

Lady Khadijah listened to her husband. Ladies! After a hard work day, a man looks for someone close to talk to. Who is closer than one's wife? Hence, a woman should listen and not criticize; If a man is constantly criticized by his wife, he will stop sharing his problems and feelings with her; He will seek this solace somewhere else, and you know what that can lead to.

Lady Khadijah listened and did not criticize. This is why the Prophet ﷺ came to her when he could have gone to his uncle or his best friend as many men do these days. Of course these men are wrong in doing so, they should draw their wives closer to them by sharing with them their feelings and problems.

The third thing she did was to show great interest in what he was doing and saying. A married couple can not get closer together if they do not have anything in common? When the Prophet ﷺ was in the Cave of Mount. Hira', Instead of sending him food with the slaves, she chose to shared with him this experience. Every ten days, she would go and stay with him for two or three days. She did not want the gap between them to get bigger.

She used to stay only for a day or two at a time and did not stay the whole period; she wanted to share his experience and get closer to him but without intruding. Some women don't realize that their husbands can change over time; they keep approaching their husbands in the same manner they did during their early days of marriage. Thus, the gap widens until they can no longer communicate.

These are the three ingredients of the recipe. I firmly believe that every woman should imitate our mother Khadija; by encouraging her husband, listening to him and by taking interest in what he does.

To find out where you stand, compare Lady Khadijah's approach towards her husband and your approach. You might say "but Lady Khadijah's husband was the flawless Prophet ﷺ." Well! By being to your husband what she was to the Prophet ﷺ, your husband in turn, will be to you what the Prophet was to Lady Khadija. After all, a husband is always in need for his wife; he needs to talk someone that will listen to him.

The Prophet's love for Khadijah remained the same long after her death because of her traits. She was also wise, note how when comforting him she praised the Prophet's manners and did not mention religion. Good manners are very important.

Most today in the Arab world fall into two categories. They are either religious but bad mannered, or good mannered but not religious. Both are not good. The religious one will put people off religion with their bad manners. The second will give people a wrong impression; that religion is insignificant as long as good manners are maintained. Muslim should maintain both religion and good manners.

There are many hadiths on good manners. The Prophet ﷺ said, **"The heaviest deed in the believer's scale on the Day of Judgment is his good manners."**² In another he said, **"The most perfect in faith among you are those who have the best manners."**³ In another he said, **"The most common thing which leads people to Paradise is piety and good conduct"** (Tirmidhi) and yet in another he said, **"The most beloved to me and the closest to me on the Day of Judgment will be those of you who have the best attitudes."**⁴

Now, look at the confidence Lady Khadijah had in Allah. **"No, Allah would never disgrace you,"** she said. Where did she get that confidence from? She knew that good deeds never go without reward. If ever you go through hardships in your life, remember the words of your mother Khadijah, for Allah will never disgrace those who do good deeds. The Prophet ﷺ told her, **"I was afraid for myself"** and she replied **"By Allah, Allah will never disgrace you"**. Why? Because he was a man of good attributes.

This is the sort of woman Lady Khadijah was. What did she do next? She did not stop at calming him down, but went further; a narration tells us that 'she took him by the hand, and said, 'we are going to consult someone". Do you see how positive she was?

But to whom did she take him? "I have a cousin; his name is Waraqa Ibn Nawfal, an old man of almost ninety years of age. He is a learned man who has studied the Torah and the Gospel very well", she said. She wanted to consult Waraqa Ibn Nawfal, an old man, who had lost his sight from excessive reading of the Torah and the Gospel. He was the only Christian in Makkah. He was not interested in the idols of

² Reported by Al-Bukhari in Al-Adab Al-Mufrad. also by Al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Hibban and Al-Baihaqi on the authority of Abi Al-Darda', Sahih Al-jami' Al-Saghir, No.135.

³ Reported by Al-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Huraira and he said: it is a good sound Hadith.

⁴ Reported by Tirmidhi, 4/249, in Abwab al-birr, 70. He said it is a good Hadith.

Quraysh. He believed in true Christianity. May be Allah made him reach that old age just so that he can say the words he was about to say to the Prophet . Glory is to Allah who has made Waraqa learn so much to know the truth about the anticipated Prophet and say it. Glory is to Allah Who made a Christian the first man to give the Prophet the glad tidings of the prophecy.

Let us stop for a moment and contemplate on Lady Khadija's choice. She went to an expert who was trustworthy. Young people today seek advice from people who are not trustworthy; people who can lead them to the path of failure and violence. I would like to ask the youth who take such a path; did you consult any trustworthy person?

Learn to consult, learn from your mother Khadijah.

Lady Khadijah went with the Prophet to her cousin Waraqa Ibn Nawfal and said, "O cousin, listen to your nephew." The Prophet started to relate what had happened. He told him about the strange being he saw; he did not say he was an angel because he did not know what an angel was at that time. As the Prophet was relating what had happened, Waraqa was listening with expressions of amazement at times and with a smile at others. What he heard was in the holy books he had read about the last anticipated Prophet. When the Prophet ﷺ finished, Waraqa responded with four sentences only! The meeting lasted about 20 minutes, that's all. It was a short meeting so that no Orientalist can claim that the Prophet learned about religion from Waraqa.

Let us now contemplate on what Waraqa said and one can only imagine how the Prophet felt when he heard his response. **"You are the Prophet of the final age. You are this nation's Prophet"** was the first thing Waraqa said.

The second sentence was, **"You have been visited by the same one who keeps the secrets (angel Gabriel) whom Allah had sent to Musa 'Moses". I wish I were young and could live up to the time when your people would banish you."** The third sentence, **"your people will belie you, hurt you, beat you, fight you and expel you"**. The fourth sentence, **"I wish I were young and could live up to the time when your people would expel you."** The Prophet then interrupted him for the first time and asked, **"Will they expel me?"** Waraqa said, **"Yes, anyone (man) who came with something similar to what you have brought was treated with hostility, and if I live to see your day I shall help you wholeheartedly."**

Let's analyze what Waraqa Ibn Nawfal said. His words were very serious, and deserve to be written in gold as the saying goes.

'You are the Prophet of the final age. You are this nation's Prophet'. I want you to imagine the Prophet and how he felt upon hearing those words. One can only imagine what went through his head: !!! I am the one whom Allah chose to be a Prophet? I am the last Prophet, and therefore the best one? !! I am the one who will be responsible for reforming the earth?

Why? He must have asked himself this question, 'why me? And the answer was soon to come in the ayah where Allah ﷻ says what can be translated as **"Allah knows best where He makes His Message." (6:124).** . If you ever find someone getting ahead of you at work or in anything, don't feel angry or frustrated, just remember this ayah.

The second sentence was, 'The one you saw was Jibril'. The one I saw and who held me so tight was an angel?! Yes, that was an angel, and this angel was to communicate with the Prophet ﷺ for 23 years.

The third sentence: 'Your people will belie you, hurt you, beat you, fight you and banish you '. In fact, they will harm him and try to assassinate him several times. Do you know how many times they attempted to kill the Prophet ﷺ? 9 times! But how can Waraqa say what he said with such certainty? He knew that the path of truth is bound to cross the interests of the oppressors. They will not allow truth and good to prevail, The Prophet ﷺ was delivering the truth, and therefore they would fight him.

The fourth sentence "I wish I were young and could live up to the time when your people banish you " and the Prophet asked 'would they banish me?' Why would they banish me from my homeland? What did I do? What wrong did I do? Waraqa answered, "Anyone (man) who came with something similar to what you have brought was treated with hostility'. To the youth who are saying they wish to have a revival, I say the road to reform is full of sacrifice, patience and giving. This is the rule, and this is exactly what Waraqa Ibn Nawfal said to the Prophet. He knew the Prophets' history and understood how politics worked. He knew that Quraysh placed 360 idols around the Ka'ba, not for religious reasons but to serve its own interests with the various tribes. Quraysh had economic interests with the tribes of Yemen and Shaam, therefore they displayed their idols around the Ka'aba; .in order that its caravans were protected by those tribes on the way to Shaam (Levant) and Yemen. If those idols were to be removed, Quraysh would lose its religious leadership and, therefore, lose its alliances and the trade routes would no longer be safe. For these reasons, Quraysh did not accept that there was no god except Allah. When the Prophet left Waraqa his mind must have been occupied with what he heard. I will be harmed! I will be fought! I will be banished!

Just before they left, Waraqa told Lady Khadijah in private something strange, **'Tell him to stay firm!'** He told this to her and not to him because he knew she is capable of helping him stay firm. In addition, he knew that the road ahead needed patience and sacrifice. Today, I have a message for you similar to that of Waraqa.

When Waraqa Ibn Nawfal gave his explanation of the situation to the Prophet, the world was living in total darkness. Today, we are living in similar darkness. You must have heard about the 1st and 2nd World Wars. Do you think that the people who lived then knew they were living the 1st and 2nd World Wars? No, they knew there were wars and battles here and there, but they were not aware their times will be called that. The historians later on named them the 1st and 2nd World Wars. Don't you think we are witnessing now the 3rd World War without us realizing it? Do you think

historians after 20 years or so might call this period 3rd World War; from 11 September to Iraq, etc? We surely are going through a difficult time. We have to work hard for our revival. We need to wake up; it is time to wake up. We should understand that reform efforts need sacrifice and patience. These are the same words Waraqa said. You too should know that Allah has chosen you to make the revival happen. I want you to feel that you are going through a time like that of the Prophet ﷺ. We have so many issues that can only be addressed through taking the responsibility and initiative of reforming earth. Learn how to add to the development of your societies. No matter how little your efforts are, they will add up. In doing this you can at least stand before Allah on the Day of Judgment and tell Him that you have done what was in your capability.

The message Waraqa was conveying to the Prophet was to be strong. "Tell him to stay firm!" he said. I urge you too to stay firm. Do everything you can for your religion and your country. We are in great need of the words of Waraqa,

- ☐ 'Tell him to stay firm'
- ☐ 'Your people will harm you and fight you'
- ☐ 'I wish I were young and strong'

It was as if Waraqa was telling the Prophet that his message needed young people to support it. Waraqa said, "I wish I were young and strong." The amazing thing is that, Waraqa died a few days later, as if Allah made him live long enough (90 years) only to explain to Muhammad what was waiting for him. He fulfilled the purpose assigned to him by Allah and his death was necessary so that no one would claim that he was the one who taught Muhammad anything; they only met for few minutes.

However, we should not forget that Waraqa had sincere intention to support Muhammad's message had he lived. He asserted, "If I see your day I shall help you wholeheartedly." This sincere intention raised Waraqa to the level of the Prophet's companions and Muslim martyrs. One sincere word was all he needed to reach that level. Thus, if you undertake this sincere intention now to help the Ummah, your country, and Islam in the same way the companions helped the Prophet, you too will reach this level. If you say "I will stand firm on the right path and live for it." and then die tomorrow, you will reach this level. However, if you live, you have to prove it to Allah Who is the only witness to what goes on in the hearts.

Notice another thing. Waraqa lived all his life learning and looking for the truth, and the first word revealed to Muhammad was "Recite!" This clearly states that knowledge is highly valued in Islam.

After Waraqa died, Muhammad was waiting for Jibril to descend upon him again to confirm what Waraqa had told him. He was still not certain that Waraqa gave him the right explanation. However, Jibril did not descend upon him for few days. Allah wanted Muhammad to think about what had happened and decide whether or not he was willing to take on this difficult mission. The Prophet ﷺ was longing to see

Jibril. One week later he saw him sitting on a throne between the earth and heavens filling the entire horizon and telling him, **“Muhammad, you are Allah’s messenger and I am Jibril from the heavens.”**

Notice how Allah prepared him gradually to receive the message! Subhan Allah (Glory be to Allah). Jibril then came down to earth and took Muhammad outside Makkah to give him the first lesson. He hit the earth with his wing and a spring of water came forth. Then, he started performing ablution and then went on to pray while Muhammad was watching and imitating him. Afterwards, Jibril told him to pray two Raka’as (units of the prayer) in the morning and two Raka’as in the evening. This is how prayers started based on the simulation (imitation) method before any modern theories in this regard were made. Following the incident of Al-Israa and Al-Mi’raj (the night journey of Prophet Muhammad from Makkah to Jerusalem and his ascension to the seventh heaven), Allah ordained that Muslims should pray five times a day but still in the form of two Raka’as at a time. It was only following the Hijrah (the immigration from Makkah to Madinah) that the number of Raka’as was changed. (two, four, four, three, and four).

Do you realize now the importance of prayers? It is a very significant pillar in Islam as the Prophet ﷺ said in the following ahadeeth:

“Islam is the head of the matter and Prayer is the pillar.”⁵

“Narrated Ibn 'Umar, Allah's Apostle said, “Islam is based on (the following) five (principles):

1. To testify that none is to be worshipped but Allah and Muhammad is Allah's Apostle.
2. To offer the (compulsory) prayers dutifully and perfectly.
3. To pay Zakat (mandatory alms-giving)⁶
4. To perform Hajj. (Pilgrimage to Mecca)
5. Fasting during the month of Ramadan.”⁷

I am saying this because whoever does not pray has to realize that he is knocking down the pillar of the house that connects him to Allah. Imagine this: if someone enters your house and breaks a couple of things or the windows, you might forgive him that. However, if he goes on to the foundation wall and starts knocking it down, will you forgive him? Hence, even though Allah is All-Merciful, there is still a line which no one should cross. Otherwise, he will incur on himself Allah’s wrath. This line includes:

- ☐ Not performing prayers
- ☐ Failing to maintain one’s duty to one’s parents

5 Authentic Hadith, Ibn-Al-Qayem. *Al-Salah and Hukm Tarikha* (The prayer and how to judge who leaves it), page or number 34.

⁶ A proportion of the wealth (2.5%) of every Muslim to be paid annually for the benefit of the needy in the Muslim community.

⁷ Authentic Hadith, Sahih Al-Bukhari. Volume 1, book 2, Number 7.

Thus, even if you commit other great sins, please do not ever cross this line. Not offering the prayers simply means that worshipping Allah for few minutes everyday is a burden to you; even though you still find the time to watch TV, go out with friends, or talk on the phone. If you don't perform the prayers, or if you are unkind to your parents, and you die before you sincerely repent, you will be in a very difficult situation before Allah. Therefore, perform the prayers as soon as you hear the call to prayer.

The Prophetic hadith, "Narrated 'Abdullah: I asked the Prophet "Which deed is the dearest to Allah?" He replied, "To offer the prayers at their early stated fixed times." I asked, "What is the next (in goodness)?" He replied, "To be good and dutiful to your parents." I asked again, "What is the next (in goodness)?" He replied, "To participate in Jihad (religious fighting) in Allah's cause." 'Abdullah added, "I asked only that much and if I had asked more, the Prophet would have told me more."⁸

Furthermore, the first three verses which were revealed to the Prophet after "Recite," indicate the significance of prayer:

- Surat Al-Muzzammil (Enwrapped): **"O you enwrapped (in your raiment). Rise up (to pray during) the night, except a little, A half of it, or diminish a little thereof, Or increase thereto; and recite the Qur'an (in a distinct) recitation." "...but no one knows its true meanings except Allah" (73:1-4).**
- Surat Al-Muddaththir (shrouded): **"O you shrouded (in your mantle), O you shrouded (in your mantle), And so your Lord magnify, And so your clothes purify, And so defilement forsake! And be not bountiful, (hoping) to gain more, And to your Lord (endure) patiently!" "...but no one knows its true meanings except Allah" (74:1-7).**
- Surat Al-Fatihah (The Opening): **"In The Name of Allah, The All-Merciful, The Ever-Merciful. Praise be to Allah, The Lord of the worlds. The All-Merciful, The Ever-Merciful. The Possessor of the Day of Doom. You only do we worship, and You only do we beseech for help. Guide us in the straight Path. The Path of the ones whom You have favored, other than that of the ones against whom You are angered, and not (that of) the erring. (It is customary to say "amin" "amen" at the end of this Surah)." "...but no one knows its true meanings except Allah" (1:1-7).**

These verses state the requirements for the great reform Muhammad was embarking on: knowledge (Recite), spiritual power (Al-Muzzammil), work (Al-Muddaththir). It also indicate the path to which he should adhere, in order that he may gain salvation in the two worlds (Al-Fatihah).

8 Authentic Hadith, Sahih Al-Bukhari, volume 1, book 10, number 505.

Having informed Muhammad of these requirements, the revelation seized for two months in order for Muhammad to craft a plan for his mission; this task was his not Jibril's. During these two months, the Prophet got really worried thinking that he had done something wrong and that Allah had abandoned him. Hence, Allah's kind words were revealed to comfort him in Surat Ad-Duha, in which Allah says what can be translated as: **"And (by) the forenoon, And (by) the night when it (comes) with its dark stillness! In no way has your Lord disregarded you, and in no way has He disfavored you. And indeed the Hereafter will be more charitable (i.e., better) for you than the First (i.e., the present life). And indeed your Lord will eventually give you so that you will be satisfied. Did He not find you an orphan, so He gave (you) an abode, And He found you erring, so He guided (you), And He found you in want, so He enriched (you)? Then, as for the orphan, then do not subdue (him), And as for the beggar, then do not scold (him); And as for your Lord's favor, then discourse about it! (i.e., proclaim it)." "...but no one knows its true meanings except Allah" (93:1-11).**

The Prophet used to pray all night until his feet became swollen. I want to take this opportunity to ask you to try and read the whole Qur'an at least once during the Taraweeh prayers this Ramadan. Try to follow in the footsteps of the Prophet ﷺ and fulfill the same four requirements we mentioned earlier: seeking knowledge, praying, working and following the path of the true believers. Without these requirements, there will never be a revival for the Ummah. These are the essential pillars Muhammad ﷺ based his plan on. Similarly, if you have no knowledge, go and learn; plan well and work hard to fulfill your plans.

Do you know how the Prophet started his mission? He did not start by knocking down the idols around the Ka'ba; he knew that the idols were going to be knocked down eventually. Neither did he stand on top of a mountain and shout out his message. No one would have listened. His plan was to choose from every family in Quraysh successful individuals (committed people but not necessarily rich or descendants of great families) known for their moral conduct, to support his cause. Here, I would like everyone to ask himself/herself this question: if you were there at that time, would he have chosen you? If you fail in your studies, he never would have. In short, his plan was to form a nucleus of distinguished people who would be committed to the message and who would support him.

One of these people was Abu-Bakr, a 38 years-old successful trader, who was cherished by Quraysh and was an expert in the genealogies of the Arabs and the Arabian Peninsula. Another person was Khadijah, not because she was his wife, but because she was distinguished. The third person was Ali Ibn Abu-Taleb (RA), a 10 years-old thoughtful boy, who was living in Muhammad's house at that time. Ali had asked the Prophet ﷺ about this religion when he saw him praying and when the Prophet explained, Ali then asked for a chance to think it over before committing himself to Islam. Moreover, the following day, when the Prophet asked him what his decision was, Ali answered, "Repeat what you said yesterday." After reflecting on the Prophet's ﷺ explanation, Ali embraced Islam and uttered Al-Shahada

(declaration of faith). Note the difference between this distinguished 10 year-old boy and many 20 year-old men nowadays, who still do not know what goal they have in life! Two days later, Abu-Taleb saw Ali praying and asked him about it. Ali answered, **“I followed Muhammad and committed myself to the true way. This is the true way.”** Abu-Taleb said, **“Stay as you are. Muhammad would never command you except with what is right.”**

Islam started with Muhammad, another man, one woman, and a child. Four people were the nucleus of all this success. Tomorrow, we will talk about all the suffering and the difficulties Quraysh made them go through.

Now, I would like to repeat the two questions I asked you in this talk and I want you to post your truthful answers on the website:

- 1) Are you able to undertake the same commitment Waraqa promised the Prophet ﷺ if was to live?
- 2) If you were there, at the time when Muhammad ﷺ formed the nucleus, would he have chosen you? Would you have been distinguished enough to be chosen in those first three years of his prophecy? In other words, are you successful and ethical in your practical life? This question is not only addressed to the youth, but also to the mature and elderly.

Lecture Notes Provided By: Imam Ghulam Moyhuddin

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.