

On the Path of the Beloved

The Prophet ﷺ And The tribes

In the name of Allah the Merciful, the Ever Merciful

By the 10th year after revelation, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ realised that Makkah was no more a suitable place for da'wa. By then, very few people embraced Islam, and the idea of assassinating the Prophet was becoming more and more imminent. The solution lied in finding another land which would be more fertile for the message. The planning of immigration took three years, it was not an unmethodical decision. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ decided to make the best use of the pilgrimage season of that year. Within 10 days Prophet Muhammad ﷺ met all tribes that came for pilgrimage to seek support and refuge in one of them. He made 26 unsuccessful attempts except for one. However, he never lost hope. He exerted relentless efforts, even though he failed many times, to give a perfect example of strong determination to all people. We can learn from the Prophet today to say no in the face of despair. Even the Prophet can fail, but he never stopped trying or fighting for his message.

The trials were as follows:

Banu -Hanifa: their answer was the worst ever in the history of da'wa. The Hadith narrators did not state their words, for it seems that their answer to the Prophet were very insulting.

Banu-Kalb: This tribe had a sub-branch called Banu- Abdullah. The Prophet targeted this branch of the tribe. On calling them to Islam, the Prophet ﷺ told them that Allah has blessed them with a good name, as they used to be ashamed of their tribe's name, and accordingly they should worship Allah. However, the attempt was to no avail.

Banu-Amer Ibn-Sa'sa'a: the way Prophet Muhammad read the Qur'an and informed them about Islam made one of them, Bahira Ibn-Feras, who could foresee that the Prophet would surely triumph, pledged that by supporting this man they would indisputably rule the Arabs. Consequently, they offered him protection in return for assuming power after him. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ refused such a bargain, saying that Allah only gives sovereignty to whomsoever He wants. Thus they declined his request. The Prophet refused their offer because Islam needs to be built on sincerity, not on greed and lust for gain and power. However, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was still determined to proceed.

The tribe of Bogra Ibn-Qais: He was not present when Prophet Muhammad ﷺ met a group of the tribe's youth. The youth, on hearing about Islam, believed Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and welcomed him. When Bogra returned he asked, "Who is that

man?" they answered, "Muhammad son of Abdullah from Quraysh who he claims to be the Messenger of Allah." When Bogra knew that they welcomed Prophet Muhammad ﷺ he blamed them for making such a grave mistake, warning them against Quraysh's reaction. Bogra was so cruel to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and asked him to leave. When Prophet Muhammad ﷺ rode his she camel, Bogra hit it on the knee to make it jump and Prophet Muhammad ﷺ fall down. Bogra kept laughing at him. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ went through such severe affliction for the sake of future generations. On citing such treatment of the Prophet, a Muslim woman from the tribe cried out to seek help for the Prophet. On her call, three young men from the tribe hurried to help him, and guards Bogra and two of his guards tried to prevent them by force. On seeing the fight, the Prophet ﷺ prayed that Allah would bless the three young men, and desecrate their attackers. The Prophet's supplication was accepted, as the three defenders embraced Islam and died as martyrs, while the attackers suffered a horrible death.

In the mean time, his uncle Abu-Lahab kept warning people against believing Muhammad ﷺ calling him a liar. It is noteworthy that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was never reluctant to meet the tribes although they were disbelievers. On the contrary, he used their visit to Makkah to serve the ends of da'wa.

Banu Shayban: Prophet Muhammad ﷺ met three of them: Maghrouq Ibn-Amer, Hani Ibn-Qubaisa, and Al-Muthana Ibn-Hareth. He learnt from Abu-Bakr (RA) that they were a tribe of deep rooted origins and that they were strong and competent. He spoke to them about Islam reciting the ayahs, **"Say, "Come (so that) I may recite what your Lord has prohibited you: that you do not associate anything with Him, and to show fairest (companionship) to (your) parents; and do not kill your children (out) of want. We provide for you and for them too. And do not draw near obscenities (i.e., irregular sexual intercourse; shameful) whatever (of these) is outward and whatever inward; and do not kill the self that Allah has prohibited, except with the truth (i.e., by right, in the course of justice). That He has enjoined you with, that possibly you would consider." (6:151-152)**

"Surely Allah commands to justice and fairness and bringing (charity) to a near kinsman, and He forbids obscenity and malfeasance and iniquity. He admonishes you that possibly you would be mindful."(16-90).

They were touched by the ayahs, yet they were wise enough to ask for time to think it over. Al- Muthana Ibn Al-Hareth told Prophet Muhammad ﷺ that their tribe is situated between the Arabs and Persia, and that they could protect him from Arabs but not from the Persians. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ answered that this issue had to be taken comprehensively. It is a message to everyone. The issue, Islam, has to be taken comprehensively. Islam is not merely some acts of worship but it also comprises all walks of life; science, wisdom, planning, etc. The Prophet thanked them for their cordiality and hailed their truthfulness. Before leaving, he asked them to promise that when Allah grants him victory over Persia, they would embrace Islam. They pledged

loyalty. The Prophet left them while he was narrating these ayahs, **"O you Prophet, surely We have sent you as a witness, and a bearer of good tidings, and a constant warner, And a Caller to Allah by His permission, and as an enlightening luminary."** (33: 45, 46)

It is noteworthy that later on, after the death of the Prophet ﷺ, Al-Muthana embraced Islam and led an army to conquer Persia. However, he regretted that he was so late that he did not win the honor of being the Prophet's companion.

The Prophet ﷺ realized that his meetings with the tribes had been futile. Thus, he decided to invite individuals to Islam, so that they may convince their tribes to embrace Islam.

The Prophet ﷺ met a person called Rokanah, from the tribe of Bany-Mohareb. He was the strongest wrestler in the Arabian Peninsula. When the Prophet invited him to Islam, Rokanah asked the Prophet to wrestle him first. The Prophet ﷺ agreed, and Rokanah gathered the people of his tribe to watch this competition. The Prophet ﷺ defeated Rokanah, not only in the first round, but on three successive times! However, Rokanah refused to embrace Islam despite his defeat.

Afterwards, the Prophet ﷺ repeated the attempt with Thowayb Ibn-Al-Samet. He was a poet, who read many books and collected many aphorisms from them. When the Prophet ﷺ invited him to Islam, Thowayb said that Luqman's aphorisms were better than the Qur'an, and so he read them to him. The Prophet ﷺ listened to Thowayb and did not interrupt him. The Prophet ﷺ even showed interest in what he was saying, then when he had finished, the Prophet read him some ayahs from the Qur'an. Thowayb was deeply moved, and he embraced Islam. We learn from this situation that we have to listen to the other and to understand his point of view.

Next, there was a man, who came to Makkah from one of the Yemeni tribes. His name was Dumad Al-Asdy, and his occupation was to cure those who were thought to be touched by the jinn. Some people told him that there was a man who had been touched by the jinn, and they asked him to cure this man. Dumad went to the Prophet, and asked him if something was troubling him. The Prophet ﷺ said, "I praise Allah, thank Him, seek His help, guidance and forgiveness. I seek refuge in Allah from the evil in my soul and the sinfulness of my deeds. **"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). Dumad asked the Prophet to repeat what he had said; for he was deeply affected by these words. The Prophet ﷺ repeated this speech twice, after which Dumad Al-Asdy accepted Islam.

Another man came to Makkah from the tribe of Daws in Yemen. He was a wise poet, and his name was Al-Toufaiel Ibn-Amr. Quraysh had told him that there was a sorcerer near al-Ka'ba, who used the power of his words to separate between a husband and his

wife. They advised him not to listen to this man, so Al-Toufaïel decided to place pieces of cotton in his ears before going to al-Ka'ba, in order not to hear the Prophet's words. He saw a man praying, so he knew that this was the Prophet ﷺ. When he approached him, the Prophet ﷺ raised his voice while reading the Qur'an. Then, Al-Toufaïel decided to remove the cotton from his ears; he knew that he would not be influenced by the words of this sorcerer. On the contrary, he was truly influenced by the words of the Qur'an, and he followed the Prophet ﷺ to his house to embrace Islam.

The Prophet ﷺ asked Al-Toufaïel to go to his people to invite them to Islam, and to come with them again when Allah ﷻ granted the Prophet ﷺ victory. When Al-Toufaïel returned to his people, only his father, his mother, and one member of his tribe (Abu-Huraira) joined Islam during a whole year. He returned to the Prophet ﷺ to complain this matter to him, so the Prophet asked Allah ﷻ to guide these people to Islam, and he advised Al-Toufaïel to be patient with his people. Afterwards, Al-Toufaïel returned to invite his people once again to embrace Islam, and the entire tribe joined Islam. They all came with him to pledge the Prophet ﷺ after the Conquest of Makkah. Afterwards, Al-Toufaïel died as a martyr for the sake of Allah ﷻ. However, the Prophet ﷺ did not ask the tribe of Daws to protect him, because it was a weak tribe.

After 10 days of Hajj, the Prophet ﷺ passed through 26 fruitless trials, yet he did not despair. He waited until the last days possible for success.

He met six young men from al-Ansar, from the tribe of al-Khazraj, who came to perform Hajj. The oldest one of them was 21 years old, and his name was Assa'd Ibn-Zorarah. The Prophet ﷺ found the young men at the barber, cutting their hair, and he decided to speak to them. Can you see the persistence of the Prophet ! He would not waste a single chance, and he never lost hope; try to learn this lesson from your Prophet, and try to love his defying and determined spirit.

The Prophet ﷺ asked them to introduce themselves, then he started to invite them to Islam, and he read them some ayahs from the Qur'an. They were astonished when they listened to him, because they realized that he was truly the last Prophet, whom they had heard of from the Jews.

Actually, the people of al-Madinah were more geared towards embracing Islam than all the other tribes, and there were many reasons for this. Firstly, they had heard about the last Prophet from the Jews, who knew all his characteristics from al-Tawrah (the Torah). Nevertheless, the Jews expected that the last Prophet would come from them, not from the Arabs. Secondly, there was a destructive war that lasted for many years between the tribes of al-Auws and al-Khazraj, which was called the war of al-Boua'th. Many of the chiefs of the two tribes were killed in this war, so the younger generations wanted to end it. Thirdly, al-Madinah was an agricultural city, so it could be self-sufficient during times of siege (which was what happened later on in Battle of the Trench). Accordingly, the reasons which made the Prophet ﷺ not think of asking for

protection in al-Madinah were the same reasons that made it easy for its people to embrace Islam. Although the Prophet ﷺ planned to get protection from Al-Taif, he was supported by the people of al-Madinah. Allah ﷻ organizes the whole universe. However, we have to plan for our lives and to exert the utmost effort in order to attain Allah's victory.

The six young men embraced Islam. They asked the Prophet ﷺ to let them go back to their people to try to settle the disagreements between al-Auws and al-Khazraj. The Prophet ﷺ agreed, and they promised to meet him the following year at the same place. After one year, they came, but they were twelve: eight from al-Khazraj and four from al-Auws.

The Prophet ﷺ agreed on an oath of allegiance with them. It was known as the First Pledge of al-'Aqaba. It included six terms: to worship no one but Allah, to never commit adultery, to never steal anyone's property, to never kill their children, to never falsely accuse anyone, and to always obey the Prophet ﷺ in good deeds. Notice that the Prophet ﷺ chose these terms particularly in order to reform the society in al-Madinah. He realized that the society suffered from serious problems because of the war. Therefore, he pledged the youths in order to increase good manners, thus making them a good example for other people to follow, so that more people would admire these manners and embrace Islam.

Afterwards, he asked them to return again to their tribes and to meet again after one year to settle the agreement of al-Hijrah (the migration from Makkah to Madinah). The Prophet ﷺ sent Mus'ab Ibn-Umayr with them to be the first ambassador in Islam. He was noble, rational, young (28 years old), distinguished, and handsome. Mus'ab Ibn-Umayr stayed at the house of Assa'd Ibn-Zorarah, and he started to teach people their religion, and to spread the good manners of Islam in al-Madinah. Consequently, the people loved the teachings and the manners of Islam, and the result was that the number of Muslims increased.

Mus'ab Ibn-Umayr invited Ausayed Ibn-Khubair -one of the chiefs of al-Auws- to Islam. At the beginning, he refused to listen to Mus'ab Ibn-Umayr, and he wanted to force him out of al-Madinah. Later on, Mus'ab Ibn-Umayr convinced him to listen to some ayahs from the Qur'an. On hearing them, Ausayed Ibn-Khubair was very touched, and he declared his Islam.

Sa'd Ibn-Moa'th was also one of the chiefs of al-Auws tribe who refused to embrace Islam. Nevertheless, he joined it when he listened to the Qur'an from Mus'ab Ibn-Umayr. Once he entered Islam, Sa'd Ibn-Moa'th invited all the people of his tribe to join Islam. They entered Islam, because he was successful and wise. Although he lived only seven years after declaring his Islam, yet he was a great person. The Throne of Allah was shaken for his death, and 70000 angels witnessed his funeral!

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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.