

On The Path Of The Beloved ﷺ

Dar Al-Arqam And The Negotiations With The Disbelievers

In the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Ever-Merciful. All prayers and blessings of Allah be upon our master, the most noble Prophet .

Someone asked a question regarding yesterday's lecture asking: Who won, the Muslims being tortured, or the non-believers of Quraysh, who were torturing the companions? In other words, did Sumayya or Abu-Jahl win?

Sumayya was killed by Abu-Jahl in a horrifying way that he rejoiced. Similarly, Abu-Jahl was killed in the battle of Badr. Who won then, good or evil? Without a doubt, Sumayya did. Think about it, ultimately Sumayya's belief was the strongest. Abu-Jahl was not able to sway her therefore he had to get rid of her. The same applies to Bilal, and Ammar, who witnessed his parents get killed on the hands of Abu-Jahl.

Many people these days believe that everything is going wrong; evil is taking over, a fact we have to accept it in order to survive. It is disheartening to observe that many people not only steal and cheat, but also claim that anyone who chooses to do the right thing is in essence weak. This is not true. We must educate our children that truth and goodness always win at the end.

Please keep in mind that evil is very limited. Good and evil are like a real and a fake currency. No matter how widespread a fake currency is, its life-span will always be short because it is after all 'fake'. This is such an important concept which we must instil in our next generation.

Tell your child: "If you cheat on a test, son, you become a fake currency"

Tell those working in the media that by showing what will ultimately benefit them and boost their profit, yet harm entire generations; that they are choosing to be a fake currency. Mothers must help get this concept to be recognized and implemented by our children.

Fraud, cheating, falseness, and deceit will never last.

Back to our question, who won really; Abu-Jahl or Sumayya? Sumayya died, yes. Abu-Jahl also died a shameful death at the hands of two young Muslims. Yet, his evil could not last while Sumayya's strong belief in Islam outlived all evil.

Let us examine Surat Ar-Raad where Allah ﷻ says , **"He sends down from the heaven water so that valleys flow, each to its determined (course), so that the flood carries away (on its surface) a swelling scum. And from that on which they kindle fire (i.e., or) seeking (to make) ornaments or belongings, out of that there is**

a scum like it. Thus Allah strikes the Truth and the untruth. So, as for the scum, then it goes away as jetsam (i.e., vanishes as useless) and as for whatever profits mankind, then it stays in the earth. Thus Allah strikes the similitudes". (13:17)

Those beautiful ayahs teach us that goodness that benefits mankind stays while the scum goes away. What a beautiful Qur'anic image. Pay close attention to this important concept; all that is good and benefits people always lasts on earth. Observe history, it teaches us that no matter how much you win, selfish intentions and personal interests bring about your end, while goodness survives to rule.

There was one more detail in yesterday's lecture that no one seemed to note. Let us remember what the companions, and the Prophet ﷺ himself, have been going through. They were tortured, and humiliated in every shape and form. Remember Sumayya's horrifying death that could alone enrage an Arab's sense of pride and honour? Nevertheless, we never heard of a companion resorting to violence or revenge. Why is that? It is because this approach is not on the path of the Prophet ﷺ. Muslims are advised not to cause destruction or bloodshed in their lands and communities. For example, the Prophet ﷺ was very angry when he heard that the companion Saad Ibn-Abi-Waqas got so furious that he whipped a man once marking the first incident of blood-shed in Islam.

It is imperative to note that although the companions were the ones being tortured, they were calm and composed. Meanwhile, the non-believers were livid, perverse, and vicious. Compare this to the common stereotype many have of religious people being constantly angry and irrational.

Moreover, the three men who were primarily handling the torture of Muslims were; Al-Aas Ibn-Wa'el, Al-Walid Ibn-Al-Mugheera, and Abu-Jahl. However, their sons Amr Ibn-Al-Aas, Khalid Ibn-Al-Walid, and Ikrimah Ibn-Abu-Jahl turned out to be among the best Muslims. This proves that the tortured companions never opted for counter humiliation or violence, though they had the right to, that the sons of their very torturers became strong believers themselves.

Now we are in year 6 of the message with great torture inflicted on the Prophet ﷺ and his companions. What did the Prophet ﷺ do to lift his companions' spirits? Many of the companions were humiliated, tortured, or witnessed murder of their beloved. The Prophet ﷺ introduced a ground-breaking and incredibly innovative concept; he conducted a training course for the companions to strengthen their faith, lift their spirit, encourage unity, provide a safe haven to turn to, and to give them much needed moral support.

Dar Al-Arqam Ibn-Abi-Al-Arqam was the training centre for Muslims in Makkah for three years. Over 1400 years ago, Muslims integrated this innovative approach of training sessions to handle their situation; an approach which is only discovered recently worldwide. An interesting question pops up, why conduct the training sessions in the 17-year-old Al-Arqam's house? Why not at Abu-Bakr's house? It was very astute of the Prophet ﷺ to select Al-Arqam's house for Quraysh would have

never suspected it, due to the Al-Arqam's young age. Al-Arqam's house also had a great advantage; it was constructed in the middle of Al-Arqam's own tribe, which offered the Muslims great protection.

One of the main products of these training sessions is that the companions who attended them turned out to be the ones who ultimately excelled, especially during the battle of Hunayn. They remained steadfast with the Prophet ﷺ when many others ran away.

The Prophet ﷺ offered a comprehensive training course which taught sublime values that included team spirit, brotherhood, loving one another for the sake of Allah, purifying one's heart, striving to be close to Allah, loving one's land and community, and gaining a better understanding of world affairs.

These lessons were derived from Qur'anic revelations such as:

- Team spirit was encouraged in Surat Al-Asr (The Afternoon) where Allah ﷻ says , **"And (by) the afternoon! (Or: time). Surely man is indeed in (sheer) loss, except the ones who have believed, and done deeds of righteousness, and enjoin each other to the Truth, and enjoin each other to patience" (103: 1-3).**
- Importance of awareness of world affairs was promoted in Surat Ar-Rum (The Romans) where Allah ﷻ says , **"Alif, Lam, Mîm (These are the names of letters of the Arabic alphabet, and only Allah knows their meaning here). The Romans have been overcome (by the Persians). In the more adjacent (i.e., more easy to reach; the Levant) (part) of the earth. And even after their being overcome, they will overcome (the others). Within several years. To Allah belongs the Command ever before and ever after, and upon that day the believers will exult" (30: 1-4).**
- Establishing a solid connection to Allah and purifying one's heart were promoted in Surat Al-Anaam (The Cattle) where Allah ﷻ says , **"And in His Providence are the keys of the Unseen; none knows them except He. And He knows whatever is in the land and the sea. And in no way does a leaf fall down, except that He knows it, and not a grain in the darkness (es) of the earth, not a thing wet or dry, except that it is in an evident Book" (6: 59).**
- Companions learnt to love their land, to exercise patience, and to avoid calls of revenge in Surat Hud that illustrates the stories of the Prophets and what they had to go through stressing the importance of patience and endurance. Moreover, Surat Yusuf that describes how Prophet Yusuf ﷺ was wrongfully imprisoned, yet how he agreed to help those who imprisoned him for the sake of his land and people. We should try to learn from Prophet Yusuf ﷺ who did not seek revenge or retribution when he had a chance to.

Try to read the Qur'an in this light from now on, learn from the lessons embedded in the ayahs. It is crucial to remember that the Qur'an is timeless as its message never expires with time.

Back to Dar Al-Arqam, what do we know about Al-Arqam but his house? Was there anything else mentioned about him? What else did he do? What was he good at? At the time of the training course Ibn-Al-Arqam was only 17 and he lived until the time of Uthman Ibn-Affan. Nevertheless, what else do we know of him? Was he a military leader? Was he a scholar? We know that the Prophet ﷺ only selected people who were unique, but what was unique about Al-Arqam? It is the house he offered and donated for Islam that made him unique. That is why it is interesting to note that many charity organisations in the Arab world choose 'Dar Al-Arqam' as their name. Moreover, out of gratitude, when the Prophet ﷺ immigrated from Makkah to Madinah he bought a house for Al-Arqam there.

What have you offered to your community, to Islam, and to your people?

Al-Arqam had nothing else to offer but his house, and he did. What about you? Being actively involved in your community should not be limited to charity work. It can also extend to participating in the revival of your country through excelling in science, technology, media, science, and education. This is when the pleasure of giving surpasses anything else. It is when the giving is taking; extending your life to that of every life that benefits from your benevolence.

Dar Al-Arqam is indeed an example that should be followed in our nation to guide the young to new horizons.

It is interesting to note that right when the companions were being harassed by Quraysh, Allah ﷻ reveals Surat Al-Mutaffifin. This is an interesting timing, and one cannot help but wonder what this Surah has to do with the current situation of Muslims. This Surah speaks of fair trade and cheating in commerce where Allah ﷻ says , **“Woe to the stinters. Who, when they measure against mankind, (i.e., when they take from others) take full (measure), And when they measure for them or weigh for them, (i.e., when they give to others) they cause them loss” (83: 1-3).** Allah ﷻ is sending a message that development and revival are not only through worship and prayer. Islam's message is to fix everything in the society through a comprehensive viewpoint that offers wide-ranging remedies for ailments plaguing nations and communities.

Despite Quraysh's desperate attempts to stop the spread of Islam, the number of Muslims kept increasing that it went up to 300, now that Omar and Hamza have embraced Islam. Furthermore, the fact that Muslims were gaining strength filled Quraysh with awe that they had to contrive a new plan. This new manoeuvre consisted of negotiations, temptations, and bargaining

Some people can withstand torture when struggling for their beliefs, but cannot stand strong against temptations. Likewise, others can get easily confused and jaded

in negotiations and lose track of what they should hang on to. It is as if Allah tested the companions with all sorts of trials; torture, bargaining, and temptations, to see how dedicated they can be. They actually remained steadfast to pave the way for their personal success and for that of their great nation.

Before getting into this battle of wills let us consider the situation carefully. Quraysh their bargaining partner is supposedly strong, yet broke in essence for they have no ideology to enrich them. Muslims, on the other hand, are supposedly the weak party, though they are actually rich with their belief.

Quraysh learnt the lesson that physical and psychological harassment does not deter Muslims, and this is how strong the truth is? Truth, when combined with patience, comprise the ultimate successful combination. Now, since harassment failed, what did Quraysh do?

Quraysh tried bargaining first with Abu-Taleb; the Prophet's uncle and strongest ally. The leaders of Quraysh wanted Abu-Taleb to:

- 1) Make Muhammad retract his message
- 2) Turn him in; their plan was to strongly pressure Abu-Taleb to give Muhammad up.

The key leaders of Quraysh made several impractical requests then actually threatened Abu-Taleb, who got very upset by their words and threats to the point that he sent his son Aukeil to call the Prophet ﷺ. It is important to note that Abu-Taleb was probably intending to harshly warn the Prophet, maybe even give him an ultimatum.

When the Prophet ﷺ entered, Abu-Taleb told him of what the leaders of Quraysh threatened him to do then he said, **"Save yourself and I, and do not ask of me what I cannot handle".**

The Prophet ﷺ firmly told him, **"By Allah, if they put the sun on my right and the moon on my left to leave this matter, I would not, until Allah shows me otherwise or I die trying for its sake"**

Can any of us say anything similar with such dignity, strength, or conviction? This is the best lesson in today's lecture. I know many of you have memorised these words in the past, but can we say them in such passion and fervour? Can you imagine the Prophet ﷺ turning down the dominion with all that the sun rises and sets on?

Can you announce **"I will not leave my message, Islam is precious and nothing in this world even comes close to it"?**

After the Prophet ﷺ said that, he cried. This is how the Prophet ﷺ combines both strength and sensitivity all the while without offending his uncle. The Prophet ﷺ enjoyed true balance which allows him to experience both feelings. This is one of the most amazing things about the Prophet ﷺ, his ability to combine both in his heart. It

is felt for instance when a loved one passes away, when both feelings of grief over him/her and acceptance of Allah's decree merge in the heart.

Al-Fudayl Ibn-'Eyad had a son who died when he was only 10 years old. When his son died, people saw him smiling, and he was a man who rarely smiles. Al-Fudayl was unable to balance both his sadness and mercy for his son, with his acceptance of Allah's decree. So he decided to overcome the first and opted for acceptance. The Prophet ﷺ, on the other hand, cried when his son died because he was able to handle and to balance both.

Aren't you proud to be a part of his nation? Aren't you proud to be on his path? Do you know now why we are calling this show on the path of the beloved?

Back to Abu-Taleb and the Prophet ﷺ who was walking away when his uncle told him, **"Go back, and do as you please, for I will never abandon you"**

To the youth, please learn from the above situation and restore faith and hope to your families and parents. Many families worry over their children attending religious lessons. The youth, then, should be able to put their families at ease while staying firm to their beliefs.

To the heads of families all over the nation, although Abu-Taleb never became a Muslim himself, he was very supportive and committed. Thus, if you have a family member defending the truth, would you do what Abu-Taleb did and be there for him? This message also goes to those in charge of ministries, and the media. Would any of you risk your social standards, money, trade, or prestige for such a sublime intent?

With negotiations failing with Abu-Taleb, Quraysh decided to negotiate with the Prophet ﷺ himself. The leaders of Quraysh chose to send 'Utbah Ibn-Rabee'ah to the Prophet where he usually was, by al-K'aba. Note here how the Prophet ﷺ was actively present and involved in society, and not hiding from or avoiding public life. Not only was the Prophet ﷺ interacting with his society, but he was also so with his surroundings; the Prophet ﷺ used to look at the moon, for example, and say, "Your lord and my lord is Allah". Therefore, as Muslims, we are open to feeling, relating to, and communicating with the entire universe and its inhabitants.

'Utbah Ibn-Rabee'ah approached the Prophet ﷺ and started praising his lineage. He then confessed that Islam has caused division in their community. Following that, 'Utbah offered money, prestige, power, or marriage to the prettiest girl in Makkah, if that was what the Prophet could be aiming at by his message. He even offered to provide medical treatment for whatever was ailing the Prophet ﷺ and making him propagate for this new belief.

Money, dominion, power, health insurance, and beautiful women were all offered to the Prophet ﷺ. If you were in his place, would you stand the test?

Throughout the negotiations, the Prophet ﷺ was extremely polite and civilized. He offered to listen to what 'Utbah had to say, and he patiently listened to all that he said without getting offended by his offers. An important lesson we learn from this is to listen to others and respect what they have to say, since they will, in turn, listen to you.

After 'Utbah was finished, the Prophet ﷺ started reciting ayahs from Surat Fussilat (Expounded) where Allah ﷻ says , **"Ha, Mîm. (These are the names of letters of the Arabic alphabet, and only Allah knows their meaning). A successive sending down from The All-Merciful, The Ever-Merciful. A Book whose ayat (Ayahs, signs) have been expounded, an Arabic Qur'an for a people who know, Bearing (good tidings and a warning; yet most of them veered away, so they do not hear. And they have said, "Our hearts are under lids (literally: into lids) from what you call us to, and in our ears is an obstruction, and between us and you (The Prophet) is a curtain; so do (according to your belief); surely we are doing (according to ours)." Say, "Surely I am only a mortal like you. To me it is revealed that your God is only One God; so go straight to Him, and ask for His forgiveness; and woe to the associators, Who do not bring the Zakat, (i.e., pay the poor-dues) and they are the ones (who are) disbelievers in the Hereafter. Surely the ones who have believed and done deeds of righteousness will have a reward bountifully unfailing." Say, "Is it true that indeed you surely disbelieve in (The One) Who created the earth in two days, and do you set up compeers to Him?" That is The Lord of the worlds. And He made therein anchorages (i.e., mountains) from above it, and He blessed it, and determined therein its nourishments in four days, equal to the questioners. Thereafter He levelled Himself (How He did so is beyond human understanding) to the heaven (while) it was smoke, then said to it and to the earth, "Come up (you two) willingly (Or: in obedience) or unwillingly!" They (both) said, "We come up willingly." So He decreed them as seven heavens in two days, and He revealed in every heaven its Command. And We have adorned the lowest heaven with lamps, and (set Angels) preserving them. That is the determining of The Ever-Mighty, The Ever-Knowing. Yet in case they veer away, then say, "I warn you of a (stunning) thunderbolt like to the (stunning) thunderbolt of Aad and Thamûd" (41:1-13).**

As the Prophet ﷺ was finishing the last of the ayahs 'Utbah put his hand to the Prophet's mouth out of true fear that what the ayahs were promising will take place as he was profoundly moved by the ayahs.

Abu-Sufyan could tell when he saw 'Utbah coming back that something has changed about him. 'Utbah repeated what Al-Walid Ibn-Al-Mugheerah once said regarding the beauty and grandeur of the words of the Qur'an. 'Utbah said that they were words unlike any he had ever heard before, words that were neither poetry nor magic. He then advised the leaders of Quraysh to leave Muhammad alone for he predicted that Muhammad will be a great figure in the future. 'Utbah tried to reason with them saying that they should let him deliver his message to all other tribes. In case he is killed, then Quraysh will get rid of him, and in case he wins then Quraysh, being his tribe, will share the victory with him. However, the leaders of Quraysh

suspected that 'Utbah fell under what they claimed to be "Muhammad's spell" and thus refused to follow his advice.

Let us ponder on why the Prophet ﷺ did not accept 'Utbah's offer of ruling Makkah. He could have accepted and being the king of Makkah, the companions would rule the land and make Islam the ruling religion. Nevertheless, the Prophet ﷺ did not accept because the goal of having an extending Islamic nation does not justify such means. How would that have affected our view of the way Islam spread? Aren't we proud of how Islam freely and justifiably spread without force? The Prophet ﷺ did indeed plan his response with wisdom.

The seven leaders of Quraysh who formed Dar Al-Nadwa, what we may consider today a parliament, decided to pay the Prophet ﷺ a visit and to negotiate with him one more time. The Prophet ﷺ said to them, "I did not come to take your money, nor did I come to be your leader, nor do I want dominion among you, I only came to deliver a message to you from the Lord of the worlds. If you accept, then you are blessed in this life and the hereafter. And if you refuse, then I will be patient until Allah decrees between you and I".

May the peace and blessings of Allah be on you Muhammad.

Today we learnt many valuable lessons, among them:

- The importance of the truth, faith, challenge, persistence, and kindness.
- How to acquire manners of speech and negotiations.
- Strategic planning of actions and responses.
- The importance of training courses.

We can plan several sessions on each of those.

Now that temptations failed, they tried another approach asking him who is the better of the three Muhammad, his father, or Abdul-Mutalib. Their point was that if the father and the grandfather are better, then why abandoning the Gods they worshipped. On the other hands, if he claims that he is better than his father and grandfather, then he should state that clearly so that they let every one know.

The Prophet ﷺ left without saying a word. The lesson here is to know when to speak and when not to. Sometimes it is best not to be provoked and speak. The Prophet ﷺ walked away from them reading Surat Fussilat.

All the approaches of the leaders of Quraysh failed. Nothing is left but negotiations. They actually offered to worship Muhammad's God for one day while he worships their Gods for another. Surat Al-Kafirun (The Disbelievers) was revealed where Allah ﷻ says, **"Say, "O you disbelievers, I do not worship what you worship, Nor are you worshipping what I worship, Nor am I worshipping what you have worshiped. Nor are you worshipping what I worship. To you is your religion, and to me is my religion!"**" (109: 1-6).

Remember, the truth can not be put down, or compromised.

The leaders then negotiated entering Islam as long as the poor Muslims leave the religion as it is not befitting of them to be members of the same religion as Bilal and Ammar Ibn-Yasser who used to be slaves. Allah ﷻ then revealed verses refusing the offer and stressing the need to accept Islam for what it is and with no conditions. This is a religion of fairness and freedom; no one is to be kicked out of it.

Their next strategy was to ask for miracles in order for them to believe. They asked Muhammad ﷺ to ask his Lord to grant them rivers, or to send them one of their grandfathers from the dead, or an angel to vouch for the authenticity of the message of Islam. Allah says in Surat Al-Israa', **“And they have said, “We will never believe you till you make a fountain to gush forth from the earth for us; Or (till) you have a garden of palms and vine (s); then you make rivers to erupt forth amidst it abundantly (Literally: with “all manner of” eruption). Or you make the heaven to fall down, as you have asserted, on us in lumps, or you come up with Allah, and the Angels and their (dependent) tribes. Or you have a home of wonderful decoration, or you ascend into the heaven, and we will never believe your ascent till you keep sending down on us a book that we (can) read.” Say, All Extolment be to my Lord! Have I been anything except a mortal, as Messenger?” (17:90-93).**

The Prophet ﷺ refused by saying "I am not one to ask my Lord that ". Miracles were present in Islam to strengthen the belief of the believers and the Prophet ﷺ, and not to convince people to enter Islam.

It may seem that the Prophet ﷺ has refused all that was offered to him, but that is not the case. The Prophet ﷺ made an offer to Quraysh, an initiative to join "Fudul Alliance" where the alliance members support individuals or groups treated unjustly. Thus, the Prophet ﷺ is teaching us to be proactive in our community.

Let us end this lecture with the following important points:

1. Be a real and an authentic currency, not a fake one.
2. To the elders and influential figures of the Arab world, side with the truth like Abu-Taleb did.
3. To the youth, work for the revival in all fields (economic, charity, technological, etc.)
4. Training is an important value that we urgently need.

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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.