

Volume 1

**THE
SEERAH
IN A
CONTEMPORARY
CONTEXT**

**Pre-Prophethood
The First 40
Years**

**Karim
Abu Zaid**



The Seerah in a Contemporary Context

**Volume I: Pre-Prophethood
The First 40 Years**



Karim Abu Zaid

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Preface



The Definition of Seerah

Seerah is a well-known Arabic term, which is also familiar to many non-Arabs. Seerah is simply defined as a biography or an account of someone's life written by someone else. In the context of Islam, Seerah is a term specifically related to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Ten Reasons Why Muslims Must Study the Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ

There are numerous reasons why every Muslim must study the Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions (*Sahabah*). We will limit the number of reasons to just ten, and we'll state them as follows:

1. Allah ﷻ made it mandatory upon every Muslim to love their Messenger ﷺ more than their love for anything and anyone. Anas رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "None of you will have faith till he loves me more than his father, his children, and all mankind."⁽¹⁾

The imperative love here is the type that scholars named "the obtainable love." It is the type that a Muslim must work on obtaining, not the innate (inherited) kind of love. And for a Muslim to gain the acquired love, he must study the Seerah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

Amazingly, his wives and Companions (*Sahabah*) passed on the smallest details of the Prophet's ﷺ life that Scholars (*Ulama*) authenticated and compiled to serve as a guide for many generations to come. It's a unique feature that Allah ﷻ did not grant any messenger before him – we know of his day-to-day affairs.

2. The full understanding of the Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ will provide us with the necessary factual evidence that will enable us to uphold our Prophet's ﷺ honor. Often, bigots of Islam direct their hateful slanders and allegations against our Messenger ﷺ. These false allegations are usually based on groundless and unrealistic conclusions. They often judge the practices and the norms of the community in which the Prophet ﷺ lived based on their modern-day standards.

3. Understanding the Seerah is essential to understand and explain the Quran. The Quran is a unique contextual script that Allah ﷻ revealed over twenty-three years. Thus, no one can fully and correctly interpret the Quran in the absence of a well-defined context that can be supported with events from the Seerah. Knowledge of the Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ also determines the limits we cannot cross when we explain the Quran.

4. The life of the Prophet ﷺ is irrefutable proof of his Prophethood. The experience of our beloved Messenger ﷺ is unprecedented – his birth, the environment of his upbringing, his character, his eloquence. Above all, his everlasting impact can only be attributed to that of a Messenger of Allah ﷻ.

Allah ﷻ said while addressing the Disbelievers (*Kafirun*) who lived with him, and were fully aware of the Prophet's ﷺ Seerah,

﴿ قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَعْطُكُمْ بِوَاحِدَةٍ أَنْ تَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ مِثْلَىٰ شِئْنِي وَفِرَادَىٰ تُمَّرَ نَفْسَكُم مَّا بِصَاحِبِكُمْ مِّنْ جَنَّةٍ إِنَّهُ هُوَ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ لَّكُمْ بَيْنَ يَدَيْ عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ ﴾ [سبأ:46]

"Say (to them O Muhammad): "I exhort you on one (thing) only: that you stand up for Allah's sake in pairs and singly, and reflect (within yourselves the life history of the Prophet): there is no madness in your companion (Muhammad), he is only a warner to you in the face of a severe torment."⁽¹⁾

One of our early Scholars (*Ulama*) said, "If there were no other miracle given to the Prophet ﷺ, as evidence to confirm his prophethood, but his life's account (Seerah), it would have been sufficient. It is the apparent evidence that he is the Prophet of Allah ﷺ."

5. The knowledge of the Seerah offers us full access to the best of humanity. The Prophet ﷺ said, "The best people are those of my generation."⁽²⁾ They are the people Allah ﷻ spoke about when He said,

{ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ } [المجادلة:22]

"Allah is pleased with them and they with Him."⁽³⁾

By learning the Seerah, we will learn about some of the most transformational stories by the will of Allah ﷻ. These stories will include Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه, Umar رضي الله عنه, Uthman رضي الله عنه, Ali رضي الله عنه, and others. They were the people who

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- (1) Quran 34:46
 - (2) Sahih Al-Bukhari
 - (3) Quran 58:22

dedicated themselves to Allah's ﷺ cause and struggled bravely to spread Islam as far as they could reach.

6. The stories of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions (Sahabah) are currently the only living manual that can lead our Muslim Community (Ummah) out of darkness and into the light. This accessible manual can quickly restore the strength of the Muslim Community (Ummah) once again. Umar's رضي الله عنه statement is reverberating: "We were the most humiliated people on earth, and Allah ﷻ gave us honor through Islam. If we ever seek honor through anything else, Allah ﷻ will humiliate us again."⁽¹⁾

7. We will be asked about The Prophet ﷺ, once we die. As soon as we die and transferred to the grave, two Angels will come to wake us up. They will ask three questions. One of these questions is: "What do you know about the man who was sent to you?" In that case, should we not prepare something to say about our Messenger ﷺ?

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When a dead body is buried, two jet-black Angels with blue eyes come. One of them is called *Munkar* and the other *Nakir*. They ask the deceased person what you say about this man (the Messenger of Allah ﷺ)?"⁽²⁾

8. The knowledge of the Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions (Sahabah) will provide us with various methods to call people to Islam (Dawah). Understanding the teachings employed by the Prophet ﷺ to convert people to Islam during the twenty-three years of his prophethood will provide us with a wealth of techniques for inviting others to accept Islam. This knowledge will also

(1) Al-Mustadrak 214. Sahih (Authentic) according to Al-Albani

(2) Sunan At-Tirmidhi

inform us of incentives and considerations that work in favor of the one who is calling others to Islam (*Dawah*), and which can influence the hearts of non-Muslims to accept Islam, such as good manners, wealth, and status.

9. The science of the Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ is a reliable source to learn more about the miracles with which Allah ﷻ aided his Messenger ﷺ. We know the Prophet's ﷺ most exceptional and outstanding miracle is the glorious Quran. However, we should not ignore repeating the material signs that exceeded a thousand miracles, according to many Scholars (*Ulama*) such as Ibn Taymiyyah رحمته الله and Al-Nawawi رحمته الله. For example, the splitting of the moon and another event where the Prophet ﷺ invited an army of fifteen-hundred during the Battle of the Trench (*Ghazwa Khandaq*) to eat in Jabir's رضي الله عنه house from a small meal made for just three people. ⁽¹⁾

10. The stories of the lives of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions (*Sahabah*) will motivate us and help us to have patience and steadfastness. The Prophet ﷺ needed to hear the stories of the Messengers before him as knowing what they went through inspired him. On more than one occasion, when the Prophet ﷺ faced difficulties, he would say, "May Allah have mercy upon Musa! He was hurt more than this, but he remained patient." ⁽²⁾

It is why one-third of the Quran focused on the stories of the Messengers before him. Allah ﷻ stated the Divine Wisdom behind dedicating a third of the Quran to the previous Messengers' stories. Allah ﷻ said,

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

{ وَكُلًّا نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الرُّسُلِ مَا نُثَبِّتُ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ وَجَاءَكَ فِي هَذِهِ الْحَقُّ وَمَوْعِظَةٌ

{ وَذِكْرَى لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ } [هود:120]

“And all that We relate to you (O Muhammad) of the news of the Messengers is in order that We may make strong and firm your heart thereby. And in this (chapter of the Qur'an) has come to you the truth, as well as an admonition and a reminder for the Believers (Mumineen).”⁽¹⁾

Likewise, the Prophet's ﷺ Companions (*Sahabah*) needed to hear about the condition of the followers and companions of the previous Messengers to learn about their sacrifices to be inspired.

Allah ﷻ spoke about the previous followers of the Messengers,

{ وَكَانَ مِنْ نَجِيِّ قَتَلَ مَعَهُرِيْمُونَ كَثِيْرٌ فَمَا وَهَنُوا لِمَا أَصَابَهُمْ فِي سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَمَا ضَعُفُوا وَمَا

أَسْتَكَانُوا وَاللّٰهُ يُحِبُّ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ } [آل عمران:146]

“Many were the Prophets on whose side a large number of God-devoted men fought: they neither lost heart for all they had to suffer in the way of Allah, nor did they weaken, nor did they abase themselves. Allah loves such steadfast ones.”⁽²⁾

As for today's Muslims who love Islam wholeheartedly, they need to learn the Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ because it will educate them about the Companions' (*Sahabah*) sacrifices. Their stories can be a source of motivation for Muslims all over the world. The

(1) Quran 11:120

(2) Quran 3:146

stories of these remarkable characters who supported the cause of Allah ﷻ will inspire patience and steadfastness.

The Idea Behind This Book

Many Muslim writers authored numerous books, papers, analyses, and articles depicting the life of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the greatest man ever walked on the face of this earth. Each of them addressed the subject of the Prophet's ﷺ life and those who lived and interacted with him, whether they became his followers or opponents from entirely different perspectives. Even a large number of non-Muslim authored many books and other pieces of literature on the life of the Prophet ﷺ.

Some of these authors focused on the Prophet's ﷺ unique character towards his enemies and supporters. Others contemplated his leadership abilities and how his call and guidance shaped the entire world. Similarly, some authors focused on the historical impact he had, and he still potentially holds as displayed in his followers, until the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*).

In particular, one book authored by a non-Muslim is worth noting: “The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History.” It was published in 1978 by Michael H. Hart, an astrophysicist, and alien life researcher. It was the first book of Hart and was reprinted in 1992 with revisions. Do you know who was number one on his list? It was our beloved Prophet ﷺ.

As for the books on the Seerah by Muslim authors, there are two exceptional pieces. The first is “Fiqh-us-Seerah: Understanding the life of Prophet Muhammad” by Muhammad Al-Ghazali, while the second is “Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum (The Sealed Nectar): Biography of the Prophet” by Safiur Rahman Mubarakpuri. His book

intrigues various readers, encouraging a quick turn to the next page.

One thing that restructured my approach to write on the Seerah of the Prophet was a memorable experience I had when I was memorizing the Book of Allah ﷻ at the age of twenty-eight.

One of the Quran's memorization professionals directed me to understand the portions I was going to memorize, and then I would work on memorizing them. "Because you do not have a fresh memory anymore," he said. He meant understanding the circumstances surrounding the Revelation of the Verses (*Ayat*), which I was planning to memorize, as well as their meanings, will help me retain Allah's ﷻ exact words, which I have found to be so true.

This directed me to the books of Interpretation (*Tafsir*), the one book I relied on to understand the Verses (*Ayat*) before actually memorizing them was the popular Interpretation (*Tafsir*) of Ibn Kathir ؒ. But then again, the one powerful attraction, when it comes to understanding the Quran, was the science of "*Asbab Al-Nuzul*." This is simply the study of the reasons behind the Revelation of a particular Verse (*Ayah*), or a group of them, and sometimes an entire chapter of the Quran.

Imam Al-Wahidi ؒ said, "One of the sciences of the Quran is the "*Asbab Al-Nuzul*," which refers to the occasions, reasons, or causes of Revelation (*Wahi*). Muslim Scholars (*Ulama*) agree that the Revelations of the Quran can be divided into two broad types. One type includes passages from the Quran, which were revealed in response to specific events, incidents, or questions put forward to the Prophet ﷺ.

The second type contains passages that were not directly related to any historical or social development in the Muslim community's life. Therefore, a thorough understanding and full appreciation of the scope of the first type of passages depends on knowing the circumstances, facts, and details of the events that occasioned them. Such knowledge is an invaluable tool for grasping the meaning of this type of Quranic Verse (*Ayah*)."⁽¹⁾

Now, do you realize the sequence of events?

The Quran led me to Interpretation (*Tafsir*), which led me to write this Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions (*Sahabah*). It helped me memorize the Quran with the understanding of the events of the Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions (*Sahabah*). Eventually, the remaining challenge is to produce the missing pearl, i.e., the contemporary contexts of the events of the Seerah, which is the missing bead in the string.

A thorough understanding of the Quran, Interpretation (*Tafsir*), and Seerah in contemporary context will serve as a means to transform the events of the Seerah to guide Muslims of the modern-day world.

How can we produce a connection between them and us, their time and ours, their circumstances and ours, their challenges and ours? This is the idea behind that birthed the writing of this book, "*Seerah in a Contemporary Context*."

How can we convert the lessons of the lives of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions (*Sahabah*) into instructions for the Muslims of today?

(1) Imam Al-Wahidi's *Asbab Al-Nuzul*

The Meaning of Contemporary Context

To understand the meaning of the term "Contemporary Context," one must firmly grasp the following analysis of the link between the Quran and the Seerah.

The Quran is a unique scripture concerning the method of its Revelation. Allah ﷻ revealed the previous Holy Books (before the Quran) all at once. They were handed over as completed works to the Messengers of that time for their followers.

Each Messenger received a Book relevant only to a specific group of people at one particular period in time. Books, Prophets, and Messengers were brought to individual communities throughout history to address their unique challenges. By contrast, the Quran was brought by the final Messenger to all humanity for the rest of the days, until the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*). Allah ﷻ delivered the Revelation of the Quran over twenty-three years and two months.

Over the twenty-three years of Revelation, the condition of the Muslims evolved. It began with the calling of individuals in secret for almost three years. Then the effort moved to a public call to revert from idolatry to Islam, lasting nearly seven years. After that, it came a period of seeking protection for the Community (*Ummah*) outside Makkah for three years. Finally, the new Muslims undertook the effort to establish a home for the first Muslim society in the troubled city of Yathrib, later called Madinah, where the Prophet ﷺ, lived for the remainder of his life.

The fabric of society in the new city of Yathrib was unique. Unlike Makkah, Yathrib was home to both Jews and some Christians living side-by-side with the pagan

Arabs. The Prophet ﷺ knew that in order to lead the diverse group of Yathrib that now included Muslims, peace among them must first prevail. They signed the Charter of Madinah (*Mithaq Al-Madinah* or *Dustur Al-Madinah*) to clarify the rules of pluralism, defense of their city, communal living, and legal dealings to bond them together and allow the community to grow, despite their differences. For almost six years, Madinah suffered repeated attacks from the pagan Arabs of Makkah. First came the Battle of Badr in the second year after migration, then the Battle of Uhud in the third year after migration, and finally the Battle of the Trench (*Ghazwa Khandaq*) in the fifth year after migration. Ultimately, the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah (*Sulah Al-Hudaibiyyah*) established peace between the Muslims, the city of Madinah, and the pagan Arabs of Makkah.

After many battles and a unifying truce, reverts to Islam increased tremendously. Towards the end of the tenth year in Madinah, the Arabian Peninsula was more or less under the fold of Islam. However, soon after, forces outside of the peninsula, feeling threatened by the unified Muslim community's growth, began to mobilize to fight them. Towards the end of the Prophet's ﷺ mission, to defend the Muslim Community (*Ummah*), the Prophet ﷺ prepared for a battle known as the Battle of Tabuk. However, the conflict ended without any fight. Soon after, the Prophet ﷺ passed away after he completed the mission of establishing the Muslim Community (*Ummah*), which evolved from few individuals to a prominent superpower.

Now, for every stage of the evolution of the Muslim Community (*Ummah*), chapters in the Quran detailed the time, place, and lessons to be learned until the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*). Now, let us fast-forward to our time. Regardless of our current condition and state, we must remember that the first Muslim Community (*Ummah*)

advanced through difficulties, and there were Revelations (Quran and Prophetic Tradition or *Sunnah*) that guided them through it. The same material is still accessible, and it can oversee us through it as well.

For example, the Muslims of China's Xinjiang province, if they disclose their religion, the Chinese government imprisons and tortures them. They should conduct themselves using the first three years (the secret stage) of Islam as a guide. There were Revelations (Quran and Prophetic Tradition or *Sunnah*) that guided them throughout this stage. Likewise, the Rohingya Muslims can implement the same direction throughout this painful stage.

Another example can be found in various Muslim communities. There is a growing trend of hatred against those who practice Islam with strict adherence. Indeed, they are not stopped from exercising their religion, but they are mistreated, and they pay a heavy price for being devout Muslims.

The most appropriate stage where these communities may find guidance throughout this stage is the seven years of the public call in Makkah. The Muslims of this period were enduring harm without retaliation, and they exercised the highest level of self-control and restraint. The Revelation (Quran and Prophetic Tradition or *Sunnah*) that Allah ﷻ revealed to the Muslim Community (*Ummah*) was to guide them through difficulties and hardships during this stage.

The Three-Volume Book Plan

As previously mentioned, numerous authors wrote about many aspects of the Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ. It is necessary to confirm that the Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ is not a fairy tale that is only meant for entertainment purposes.

Instead, it is an accurate and truthful account of the life of real men. We must analyze it thoughtfully and sift through its various events to benefit from them.

It is an important process to read through the life of the Prophet ﷺ and the lives of his Companions (*Sahabah*), to gather beneficial lessons that apply to our time. It is a source where we can explore resolutions for our current struggles.

What distinguishes this work "*Seerah in a Contemporary Context*" from other Seerah books is the current illustration of almost a century and a half of several events. The selected events are components of significant stages in our Messenger's ﷺ life, his Companions (*Sahabah*), and his mission of establishing Islam. We chose each event carefully for its specific course of action. These events must meet three significant criteria.

First, the selected event has to be a turning point in the life of the Prophet ﷺ, and a part of a critical phase that significantly impacted his mission. Even though it may not meet the rest of the criteria, skipping it will interrupt the flow of events.

Second, the selected event has to be relevant to our time. It should address one of the major areas in society, such as the Islamic Belief System (*Aqeedah*), checking immorality, fostering good character, or securing fair and just dealings. Muslims of today should be able to find fitting solutions to these significant catastrophic failures.

Third, the selected event has to present a clarification to the Quran and Prophetic Tradition's (*Sunnah*) common misinterpretations or refute allegations against Islam, the Prophet ﷺ, and his Companions (*Sahabah*).

To conclude, every generation of the Muslim Community (*Ummah*) until the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), must always read the Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions (*Sahabah*) in light of their individual anxieties, and their community's difficulties to mainly take out what will be relevant to their guidance.

This work "*Seerah in a Contemporary Context*" will be presented in three volumes, which will include the sixty-three years of the lifetime of our beloved Messenger ﷺ. We divided his life into three major stages. Each stage acted as one of the three turning points in his life. We presented each one of these three stages in one volume as follows:

1. Volume I: Pre-Prophethood (40 years)
2. Volume II: Makkah Period (13 Years)
3. Volume III: Madinah Period (10 Years)

The following are the contents of the first volume of *Seerah in a Contemporary Context*:

First Stage: Birth – Childhood (First 12 years)

- **Introducing the Stage**
- **Chapter One:** The Dire Need for a Messenger
- **Chapter Two:** The Year of the Elephant
- **Chapter Three:** Allah ﷻ is Preparing You

Second Stage: The Prophet's ﷺ Youth (13-36 years old)

- **Introducing the Stage**
- **Chapter One:** Like They Recognize Their Own Children

- **Chapter Two:** “Allah ﷻ placed her love in my heart”
- **Chapter Three:** The Best of People

Third Stage: The Revelation (37-40 years old)

- **Introducing the Stage**
- **Chapter One:** In the Cave of Hira
- **Chapter Two:** “Read!” Thrice!
- **Chapter Three:** The Intervals of Revelations

Conclusion



First Stage

**Birth – Childhood
(First 12 years)**

Introducing the First Stage

Introduction



When we study the biographies of public figures, those who impacted their communities and had a place in history, authors frequently begin presenting the memoirs of their lives from the time of their impact or when their leadership arose.

When it comes to writing about the lives of the Messengers and Prophets, writers typically begin their records long before birth. It is because the Messengers and the Prophets are sent by Allah ﷻ to rectify and reform the decline in their communities, which ordinarily is deep-rooted in the practice of Polytheism (*Shirk*) that runs in the community. Also, it is necessary to trace their lineages as well. Hence it is essential to go thousands of years back in time before they were even born.

When we compare the available information on Prophet Muhammad ﷺ with what we have on previous Messengers, we will find out that we have a wealth of details on his life, which leaves us with many options regarding the point at which we should begin our narratives.

When we presented the three-volume plan, we established the idea behind this work (*Seerah in a Contemporary Context*). Also, we mentioned that for an event to be admitted into this work, it must satisfy the following three conditions. For the sake of recalling and reiterating them, let's mention them again as follows:

1. It has to be a turning point in the life of the Prophet ﷺ, and the message of Islam.

2. It has to be relevant to our time of today.
3. It has to present clarification to misinterpretations or refute allegations against the Prophet ﷺ, his message of Islam, and his Companions (*Sahabah*).

We selected three crucial topics that meet the above three standards: Two of them are before the birth of the Prophet ﷺ, and the third was after he was born.

Chapter One: The Dire Need for a Messenger

In this chapter, we will review the deteriorating condition of people on earth before the birth of Prophet ﷺ. It was corrupt to the extent of deserving the resentment of Allah ﷻ except for a few. Communities embraced corruption, depravity, evil, prejudice, and injustice. Not surprisingly, the leading major sin that was always causing such a decline is the violation of Allah's ﷻ right through perpetrating the act of Polytheism (*Shirk*), which was idolatry or the worship of anyone or anything besides Allah ﷻ.

This unpleasant condition typically demanded the appointment of a messenger to correct and improve such a worsening state. It was the people's condition before the Prophet's ﷺ birth, which kept on growing for an added forty years after his ﷺ birth.

Currently, the condition of people all across the world is very similar to the time which preceded the birth of the Prophet ﷺ. Therefore, Muslims, being the final Messenger's ﷺ followers, have to fulfill their trust and accountability to call (*Dawah*) people to embrace Monotheism (*Tawheed*). The definition of Monotheism (*Tawheed*) is to confirm Allah's ﷻ Oneness and Uniqueness once it comes to the following: His Divine Essence, Actions of Lordship, Names, Attributes, and Worship.

Chapter Two: The Year of the Elephant

In this chapter, we will address a significant event in history that transpired during the year the Prophet ﷺ was born — The Year of the Elephant — a reference term of this well-known event.

A greedy, envious Yemeni Christian leader unsuccessfully tried to turn pilgrims away from Makkah towards a beautifully decorated church. When pilgrims refused to change their destination, he became bitter and resentful. Out of disappointment, he prepared an army led by war elephants to destroy Allah’s ﷻ House (*Kaabah*) in Makkah.

Divine Intervention protected Allah’s ﷻ House (*Kaabah*) and showed the Arabs that the real power is with the Divine One, and not in the idols they associate in worship with Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ predetermined the birth of the Messenger ﷺ in the “Year of the Elephant.” In forty years, the Messenger ﷺ would call them back to worship the One True God, The Lord of the House – Allah ﷻ – The One who fed them out of hunger and granted them shelter from fear and anxiety. Will they heed His call?

Chapter Three: Allah ﷻ is Preparing You

The conditions surrounding the birth of the Prophet ﷺ and his first years of childhood send a strong message to the destitute, and the people non-Muslims call the unfortunate ones. The narrative is, Allah ﷻ brought you into this world, and He ﷻ will take care of you.

The Prophet’s ﷺ father Abdullah passed away when he was still in the womb of his mother Aminah. Then his mother passed away when he was six years of age. Then he moved to his grandfather’s care, then later his uncle. He

had to work to help his uncle and earn his living. The Prophet ﷺ had a tough start to his life. Despite that, he became the greatest man to ever walk on earth. He led his broken community to guide all of humanity until the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), provided they hold fast to his teachings.





Chapter One

The Dire Need for a Messenger

Introduction



One of the highest rewards the people of Paradise (*Jannah*) will receive is the announcement that Allah ﷻ is pleased with them, and this will never change.

Abu Saeed Al-Khudri رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Verily, Allah will say to the people of Paradise (*Jannah*): O people of Paradise (*Jannah*)! They will say: We are at your service, our Lord, all goodness is in your hand! Allah will say: Are you satisfied? They will say: Why would we not be satisfied when you have given us what you have not given to any other creation? Allah will say: Shall I not give you something better than all of that? They will say: O Lord, what could be better than that? Allah will say: I will grant you my pleasure, such that I will never be displeased with you ever again.” (1)

Right before Allah ﷻ sent the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, can you imagine that Allah ﷻ hated all people on the earth, except for a few?

The following authentic account illustrates the condition of the people, who earned Allah’s ﷻ displeasure, and resentment.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Verily, Allah ﷻ looked towards the people on earth, and He ﷻ showed hatred to them, whether they are Arabs or non-Arabs. Except for some remnants from the People of the Book (*Ahl Al-Kitab*). And

(1) Sahih Muslim

He (further) said: I have sent the Prophet to put you to test and put the people to test through you.”⁽¹⁾

One may wonder what the people on earth did to earn Allah’s ﷻ resentment. Injustice engulfed every corner on earth. Oppression, abuse, and prejudice were amongst the most rejected by Allah ﷻ.

Allah ﷻ made injustice unlawful upon himself, and has forbidden it amongst us as well. Allah ﷻ said,

{ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظِلُّهُ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ ط وَإِن تَكُ حَسَنَةً يُضْعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِنْ لَدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٤٠﴾ }

[النساء:40]

“Surely! Allah wrongs not even of the weight of an atom (or a small ant), but if there is any good (done), He doubles it and gives from Him a great reward.”⁽²⁾

Abu Dhar رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Allah said: O my servants, I have made injustice unlawful for Myself and I have forbidden it among you, so do not oppress one another.”⁽³⁾

Ibn Taymiyyah رحمته الله said on the significance of justice: "Allah ﷻ allows the just nations to remain and last even if they are Disbelievers (*Kafirun*) but will not allow the oppressive nations to remain even if they are Muslims. And it is said that the world will endure with justice and disbelief, but it will not endure oppression and Islam.”⁽⁴⁾

We need to understand the above statement with context. It refers to a particular stage in the lives of the

(1) Sahih Muslim

(2) Quran 4:40

(3) Sahih Muslim

(4) Al-Amr bil Ma'ruf 1/29

disbelieving and polytheistic nations because we know that sooner or later, justice will disappear from our communities. Polytheism (*Shirk*) is the most brutal kind of all injustices, and it is the leading source of oppression.

The following Verse (*Ayah*) proves that the spread of Polytheism (*Shirk*) is the primary source of injustice and oppression on earth. Allah ﷻ said,

{ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ رَزَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ هَلْ مِنْ شُرَكَائِكُمْ مَنْ يَفْعَلُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ مِثْلَ شَيْءٍ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ } [الرّوم: 40]

“Allah is He Who created you, then provided food for you, then will cause you to die, then (again) He will give life (on the Day of Resurrection). Can any of your (so-called) partners that you associate with Allah do anything of that? Glory be to Him! And Exalted be He above all that (evil) they associate (with Him).”⁽¹⁾

So, Allah ﷻ is asking the Polytheists (*Mushrikun*) a simple question, after establishing the undeniable fact that, "He is the one who creates, provides, gives life, and causes death." Can any of the partners you worship in association with Allah ﷻ do any of the four actions of Lordship? The undisputed answer is "No." If the creation, provision, causing death, and giving life are exclusive to Allah ﷻ, then how dare does anyone associate partners with Allah ﷻ?

Despite the clarity of the argument, people still indulged in Polytheism (*Shirk*). The following Verse (*Ayah*) shows us the devastating consequences of compromising this basic principle. Allah ﷻ said,

(1) Quran 30:40

{ ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ

{ رَجِعُونَ } [الروم: 41]

"Corruption has appeared on land and sea because of what the hands of men have earned (by oppression and evil deeds, etc.). That Allah may make them taste a part of that which they have done, so that they may return (by repenting to Allah and begging His Pardon)."⁽¹⁾

Polytheism (*Shirk*) in all of its forms will result in devastating consequences, which is the spread of injustice and corruption.

Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله supported the understanding that "the bottom line is Monotheism (*Tawheed*) is the foundation of justice" through the following statements:

Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله said: "Justice is associated with Monotheism (*Tawheed*); because Monotheism (*Tawheed*) is the origin of justice, and desiring elevated status is associated with corruption because it is the origin of oppression."⁽²⁾

Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله also mentioned: "The basis of good is Monotheism (*Tawheed*) and Faith (*Iman*), and corruption is Polytheism (*Shirk*) and Disbelief (*Kufr*)."⁽³⁾

Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله also said: " Polytheism (*Shirk*) is the greatest corruption just as Monotheism (*Tawheed*) is the greatest good."⁽⁴⁾

(1) Quran 30:41

(2) Majmu' Fatawa 18/165

(3) Majmu' Fatawa 18/163

(4) Majmu' Fatawa 18/162

Let us examine the three groups of people whom Allah ﷻ resented according to the Narration (*Hadith*) as mentioned earlier except for a few, and they are the Arabs, the non-Arabs, and the People of the Book (*Ahl Al-Kitab*). So, we can also learn why they deserved Allah's ﷻ displeasure.

The Arabs

The Arabs worshiped Allah ﷻ according to the religion of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) ﷺ and his son Prophet Ismail (Ishmael) ﷺ. Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) ﷺ is the father of both Prophet Ismail (Ishmael) ﷺ and Prophet Ishaq (Isaac) ﷺ, and the grandfather of Prophet Yaqub (Israel or Jacob) ﷺ. He is also one of the ancestors of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Allah ﷻ identified the religion of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) ﷺ in the Quran as the pure Monotheism (*Tawheed*) that Allah ﷻ sent all Messengers to invite people to adhere to, ending with the final Messenger, our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Allah ﷻ said,

{ مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُّسْلِمًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ } [آل عمران: 67]

"Ibrahim (Abraham) was not Jewish nor yet a Christian, but he was true in Faith (*Iman*) and bowed his will to Allah (which is Islam), and he joined not gods with Allah."⁽¹⁾

Allah ﷻ also said,

(1) Quran 3:67

{ قُلْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ فَاتَّبِعُوا مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ } [آل عمران: 95]

"Follow the religion of Ibrahim (Abraham), the sane in faith; he was not of the pagans."⁽¹⁾

Allah ﷻ also said,

{ قُلْ إِنِّي هَدَيْتَنِي رَبِّيَ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ دِينًا قِيمًا مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ }
[الأنعام: 161]

"Verily, my Lord has guided me to a way that is straight - a religion of right - the path of Ibrahim (Abraham), the true in Faith (*Iman*), and he (certainly) joined not gods with Allah."⁽²⁾

Allah ﷻ also said,

{ إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً قَانِتًا لِلَّهِ حَنِيفًا وَلَمْ يَكُ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ } [النحل: 120]

{ شَاكِرًا لِأَنْعَمِهِ أَحَبُّنَهُ وَهُدًى إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ } [النحل: 121]

{ وَءَاتَيْنَاهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ } [النحل: 122]

{ ثُمَّ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ أَنْ اتَّبِعْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ } [النحل: 123]

"Ibrahim (Abraham) was indeed a model, devoutly obedient to Allah, (and) true in Faith (*Iman*), and he joined not gods with Allah. He showed his gratitude for Allah's favors, who chose him and guided him to a Straight Way. And We gave him good in this world. And he will be in the Hereafter (*Akhirah*) in the ranks of the Righteous. So, we have taught thee the inspired

(1) Quran 3:95

(2) Quran 6:161

(Message), "Follow the ways of Ibrahim (Abraham) the True in Faith (*Iman*), and he joined not gods with Allah."⁽¹⁾

Who changed the religion of the Arabs?

Amr Ibn Luhy Al-Khuzi, the chief of a tribe called Khuza'a, was reputable for his kindness and pity. His tribe obeyed him without reservations. He also was known for his reverence and love for religions. He took a trip to Syria since Syria was the focus of messengers and scriptures. He admired their advanced lifestyle compared with his people in the Arabian Peninsula.

Unfortunately, throughout history, the inferiority complex led many nations to follow other nations' distorted beliefs and immoral practices blindly.

In the past, Amr Ibn Luhy Al-Khuzi, and many Muslims nowadays make the same mistake to equate the true religion with material strength and progress. So, because a nation is advanced, then whatever religion they follow must be sound, which is wrong.

In chapter twenty-seven of the Quran, "The Ant" (An-Naml), Allah ﷻ mentioned the story of a bird by the name of Hudhud (Hoopoe), as part of the story of Prophet Sulaiman (Solomon) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and the Queen of the Kingdom of Sheba. Hudhud (Hoopoe) was one of Prophet Sulaiman's (Solomon) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام bird soldiers that was reported absent due to wandering away from the rest of the army. The bird ended up flying over a kingdom's land, and their civilization left quite an impact on the bird. The

(1) Quran 16:120-123

outstanding impression the bird had did not deter him from rebuking their Polytheism (*Shirk*). Allah ﷻ said,

لَوْ تَقَفَدَ الطَّيْرَ فَقَالَ مَا لِيَ لَا أَرَى الْهُدْهُدَ أَمْ كَانَ مِنَ الْغَائِبِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ لِأَعَدَّيْنَاهُ
عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا أَوْ لَأَذْبَحْنَاهُ أَوْ لِيَأْتِيَنِي بِسُلْطَنٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢١﴾ فَمَكَثَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ فَقَالَ أَحَطْتُ
بِمَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِ، وَجِئْتُكَ مِنْ سَبَإٍ بِنَبَأٍ يَقِينٍ ﴿٢٢﴾ إِنِّي وَجَدْتُ امْرَأَةً تَمْلِكُهُمْ وَأُوتِيَتْ مِنْ
كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَلَهَا عَرْشٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَجَدْتَهَا وَقَوْمَهَا يَسْجُدُونَ لِلشَّمْسِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَزَيْنُ لَهُمْ
الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَلَهُمْ فصدَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ فَهُمْ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾ أَلَا يَسْجُدُونَ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي يُخْرِجُ الْخَبْءَ
فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُحْفُونَ وَمَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢٦﴾

{ ٢٦ } [النمل: 20-26]

“He (Sulaiman) inspected the birds, and said: "What is the matter that I see not the Hudhud (Hoopoe)? Or is he among the absentees? "I will surely punish him with a severe torment or slaughter him, unless he brings me a clear reason. But the Hudhud (Hoopoe) stayed not long, he (came up and) said: "I have grasped (the knowledge of a thing) which you have not grasped, and I have come to you from Saba' (Sheba) with true news.” I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given all things that could be possessed by any ruler of the earth, and she has a great throne. “I found her and her people worshipping the sun instead of Allah, and Shaytan (Satan) has made their deeds fair-seeming to them, and has barred them from (Allah's) Way, so they have no guidance, “Al-La (this word has two interpretations) (A) [As Shaytan (Satan) has barred them from Allah's Way] so that they do not worship (prostrate before) Allah, or (B) So that they may worship (prostrate before) Allah, who brings to light what is hidden in the heavens and the earth and knows

what you conceal and what you reveal. Allah, La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshiped but He), the Lord of the Supreme Throne!”⁽¹⁾

Amr Ibn Luhy Al-Khuzi failed to balance his reaction to what he saw in Syria, so he brought with him an idol, and he placed it in the middle of Kaabah and gathered people to worship it. Since then, he became the one who propagates the worship of idols in Makkah. Quickly enough, paganism spread all over Makkah and thereafter, to Hijaz, with people of Makkah being custodians of the Sacred House (Kaabah). A great many idols, bearing different names were introduced into the region.⁽²⁾

Makkah was the center of theological Arabia, and its people were the custodians of the Kaabah. Quickly enough, paganism spread all over the Arabian Peninsula. Polytheism (*Shirk*) became the trademark, and the number of idols increased overwhelmingly in Hijaz.

In addition to that, the Jinn helped Amr Ibn Luhy Al-Khuzi dig out the five idols the people worshiped during Prophet Nuh’s (Noah) ﷺ era (Wadd, Suwa, Yaguth, Ya’uk, and Nasra). During their so-called pilgrimage, he distributed these statues to the tribes, and every tribe had its idol to take back home.⁽³⁾

Al-Masjid Al-Haram (Kaabah) became overcrowded with the idols to the extent that when the Prophet ﷺ conquered Makkah, the number of idols he had to break, destroy, and burn was close to three-hundred & sixty.⁽⁴⁾

(1) Quran 27:20-26

(2) Mukhtasar As-Sirat-Ar-Rasool p.12

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(4) Mukhtasar As-Sirat-Ar-Rasool p.13-54

The idolatry culture of Polytheism (*Shirk*) became widespread as the most prominent feature of the pre-Islamic religion of Arabs.

The worship of idols had practically replaced the true religion of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and Prophet Ismail (Ishmael) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. Different polytheistic rituals involved invoking the idol gods, prostrating to them, seeking refuge with them, calling for their help in hardship, and supplicating to them. They believed that these idols were the intermediaries (*Al-Wasilah*) between Allah ﷻ and them.

The idol worshipers also had other rituals, such as Circumambulating (*Tawaf*) around their idols, and performed all kinds of sacrificial (*Qurbani*) offerings. They even deemed certain animals as unlawful to consume or benefit from their milk and meat because they were declared exclusive to the idols. Allah ﷻ said,

{ مَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ بُحَيْرَةٍ وَلَا سَائِبَةٍ وَلَا وَصِيلَةٍ وَلَا حَامٍ وَلَكِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ

وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾ [المائدة: 103]

"Allah has not instituted things like, Bahira (A she-camel whose milk was spared for the idols and nobody was allowed to milk it). Or a Sa'iba (a she-camel let loose for free pasture for their false gods, e.g., idols, etc., and nothing was allowed to be carried on it). Or a Wasila (A she-camel set free for idols because it has given birth to a she-camel at its first delivery and then again gives birth to a she-camel at its second delivery). Or a Ham (a stallion-camel freed from work for their idols, after it had finished many copulations assigned for it, all these animals were liberated in honor of idols as practiced by pagan Arabs in the pre-Islamic period).

**But those who disbelieve, invent lies against Allah ﷻ,
and most of them have no understanding."**⁽¹⁾

Allah ﷻ also said,

{ وَقَالُوا مَا فِي بُطُونِ هَذِهِ الْأَنْعَامِ خَالِصَةٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمُحَرَّمٌ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَإِنْ
يَكُنْ مَيْتَةً فَهُمْ فِيهِ شُرَكَاءُ سَيَجْزِيهِمْ وَصْفَهُمْ إِنَّهُ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٣٩﴾ }
[الأنعام:139]

**"And they say: What is in the bellies of such and such
cattle (milk or fetus) is for our males alone and
forbidden to our females (girls and women), but if it is
born dead, then all have shares therein."**⁽²⁾

It has been authentically reported that such
superstitions were first invented by Amr Ibn Luhy Al-
Khuzi.⁽³⁾

What is his punishment in Hellfire (*Jahannam*)?

The Prophet ﷺ said: "I saw Amr Ibn Luhy Al-Khuzi
wandering around in the fire of Hell (*Jahannam*) with his
entrails cut open behind him." He was being punished in a
humiliating manner. Why? "He was the first to change the
religion of Ismail (Ishmael). And he was the first to
introduce superstitions."⁽⁴⁾

The Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever, introduced a good deed
in Islam he will get rewarded along with the reward granted
to anyone who does it after him without reducing the
reward of the doer himself. And anyone who introduces a
bad deed in Islam, he bears its burden and the burden of

(1) Quran 5:103

(2) Quran 6:139

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(4) Sahih Muslim

anyone who does it after him, without reducing anything from the doer's sin."⁽¹⁾

Qabil (Cain), Prophet Adam's عليه السلام son, was the first to introduce killing in the face of this earth when he killed his brother Habil (Abel). Consequently, people of that time learned to murder others from Qabil (Cain). His recompense is the burden of all executions that will happen till the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*). He earned a stiff penalty for teaching humanity to kill. He bears that burden because he was the first person to kill, hence introducing the obnoxious sin of killing in humanity. This is why the Prophet ﷺ said in Narration (*Hadith*) reported by Abdullah Ibn Masud رضي الله عنه who said that the Prophet ﷺ said, “No soul is wrongfully killed but that some responsibility for its blood is upon the first son of Adam, for he was the first to set the precedent of murder..”⁽²⁾

The same is the case with Shaytan (Satan). He will be punished for all the sins of those he taught Allah’s ﷻ disobedience. Although the people committed the crimes, and Shaytan (Satan) never forced them, he is still as guilty as the sinners for leading them to it.

It is the great justice of Allah ﷻ to promote good deeds on earth. Imagine, when we show people a good deed and lead them to do it, Allah ﷻ rewards us exceedingly; imagine everyone we teach, and those who are guided by them until the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*) will come on our scale.

As with the Prophet ﷺ, every good deed we do, he receives the same reward precisely like us because he was

(1) Sahih Muslim

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari

the one who launched the chain reaction. He taught his Companions (*Sahabah*), who showed their students, and so on until his teachings reached us. The sad part is that the same system applies to evil deeds and innovations. Hence, one must be extra careful not to introduce any evil or innovations to others.

The Exceptions Among the Arabs

Waraqah Ibn Nawfal, Ubaydullah Ibn Jahsh, Uthman Al-Huwayrith Ibn Asad, and Zaid Ibn Amr Ibn Nufail were amongst the few who did not fall into the traps of idolatry and Polytheism (*Shirk*). Historians shared with us some of their tales. Despite the absence of clear guidance at the time, they did not approve of their people's diversion from the religion of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and Prophet Ismail (Ismael) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام.

Waraqah Ibn Nawfal became interested in the New Testament. He read the Holy Books of the People of the Book (*Ahl Al-Kitab*), gained a lot of knowledge, and became a Christian. Later on, he met the Prophet ﷺ right after the initial Revelation (*Wahi*), and he confirmed his Prophethood.

Uthman Ibn Al-Huwayrith traveled to the Roman Emperor, Caesar, who promised him a position, status, and honor if he were to become a Christian, and so he did.

Ubaydullah Ibn Jahsh was very hesitant and confused. He never chose any of the religions of his time; Prophet Ibrahim's (Abraham) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام religion, Christianity, or Judaism. When Allah سُبْحَانَهُ sent the Prophet ﷺ, he accepted Islam, migrated to Abyssinia (Ethiopia) with his wife Umm Habibah, Ramla, the daughter of Abu Sufyan; and there he became an alcoholic who left Islam for Christianity and died a Christian.

Allah ﷻ guided Zaid Ibn Amr to the straight path amid this period of darkness. Allah ﷻ guided him to follow the religion of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) عليه السلام. Of course, he disapproved of his people's diversion to idol worship, wholly abandoned their idolatry culture, and shunned them. He avoided dead meat, blood, and the meat of animals that had been sacrificed for idols.

He used to say, "Allah created the sheep; He sent down water from the heavens and caused food to grow for it from the earth, then you slaughter it in a name other than that of Allah!"⁽¹⁾

He spoke out against the practice of burying infant girls alive. He used to (rescue and) protect girls who were buried alive. He would say to a man who wanted to bury his daughter alive, "Don't kill her, I will take care of her." He would take the child, and when she would grow up, he would say to her father, "If you want, I will give her to you, or if you wish to, I'll take care of her."⁽²⁾

Another unique character who died just five years before the Prophet ﷺ received the initial Revelation (*Wahi*) is Zaid Ibn Amr Ibn Nufail, the father of one of the Companions (*Sahabah*) who was given glad tiding of Paradise (*Jannah*); Saeed Ibn Zaid Ibn Umar Ibn Nufail رضى الله عنه, the cousin of Umar Ibn Al Khattab رضى الله عنه. Zaid's title was "A nation on his own."⁽³⁾

The Messenger ﷺ said, "I entered Paradise (*Jannah*), and I saw two gardens for Zaid Ibn Amr." And when asked about Zaid, he said, "He will be gathered as *a nation on is*

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(3) Sunan Al-Nasai

own, between me and Isa Ibn Maryam (Jesus son of Mary)."⁽¹⁾

Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه narrated that Zaid ibn Amr went out to Syria, asking about a religion he could follow. He met a Jewish scholar and asked him about their faith, saying, "Perhaps I will follow your faith, tell me more about it." "He said, "You cannot follow our faith unless you take your share of Allah's wrath."

Zaid said, "The anger of Allah is from which I am running away! I can never bear anything of the wrath of Allah. How could I take it? Can you tell me about any other religion?"

The Jewish scholar said, "I do not know for any other religion except being a Hanif." Zaid said, "What is a Hanif?" He said, "The religion of Ibrahim (Abraham). He was neither a Jew nor a Christian, and he worshiped nothing but Allah." Then Zaid went and met a Christian scholar and asked him about his religion, saying, "Perhaps I will follow your faith, tell me about it."

He said, "You cannot follow our religion unless you take your share of Allah's curse."

Zaid said, "The curse of Allah is what I am running away from. I can never bear anything of the curse and anger of Allah. How could I take it? Can you tell me about any other religion?"

The Christian said, "I do not know of any other religion except being a Hanif." Zaid asked, "What is a Hanif?" He said, "The religion of Ibrahim (Abraham). He was neither a Jew nor a Christian."

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

When Zaid heard what they said about Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, he raised his hands and said, "O Allah, bear witness that I am following the religion of Ibrahim (Abraham)."

Asma bint Abi Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا said, "I saw Zaid Ibn Amr standing, leaning back against the Kaabah, saying, "O Quraish! Allah, no one among you is following the religion of Ibrahim (Abraham); except me."⁽¹⁾

Zaid Ibn Amr will be raised on the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*) as a nation by himself⁽²⁾ because he sought the truth when there was no clear guidance, and the moment he found it, nothing distracted him from adhering to it.

Contemporary Lessons from the story of Zaid Ibn Amar

- Do as much as you can amidst darkness (he used to save the baby girls from burial).
- Be proud of the truth you are holding amid a community gone astray.
- There was no excuse to go astray for the people between Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.
- Putting the effort in to find the truth.
- The righteousness of the parents leads to the righteousness of the children.

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(2) Sunan An-Nasai

The Non-Arabs

Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه once asked Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه about his story, and Salman رضي الله عنه narrated his story to him. He was a Persian man from the village that has transformed into present-day Iran. He said he was taking pain in the religion of fire worshiping.

He became high in status and became the “Guardian of the Fire.” Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه said that one day he was walking and he saw a church and went in to investigate. He said he was impressed by their method of prayer. Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه told his father that he thinks Christianity was a better religion than fire worshiping, so his father chained Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه immediately after he made that statement.

Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه ran away to Sham (The greater area surrounding Damascus, including Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and Jordan). He arrived in Syria.

Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه said he lived with the best bishop, and the bishop used to collect money for charity but would then keep it for himself.

Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه eventually hated this man and told everyone he was evil. The next person who took leadership in place of the bishop after he died was a very pious man who was loved by Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه.

Then, Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه traveled to Iraq to study. He then moved to Nusabeen to learn.

He then went to Amaria (modern-day Turkey) to study. The scholar he studied under had told him that a new Prophet would come sooner from the Arabs. His signs will be undeniable. He will take refuge in a place with date palms located between rocky tracks, and he will eat food

given to him as gifts but not from the charity. He will have a Seal of Prophethood between his shoulders. Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه offered everything he owned if people could take him to Arabia.

A group of people agreed, but they betrayed him by selling him as a slave to a Jewish man. That Jewish man sold him to another Jewish man. His owner took him to Yathrib (Madinah), and when he saw that city, Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه immediately realized this is where the Prophet ﷺ shall take refuge, and realized this is the city about which his teacher was speaking.

Madinah is a place of date palms and is between two rocky tracks. Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه said one day, his master had him climb to pick dates. While he was up there, his master's cousin came to his master angrily and said someone is coming from Makkah, claiming to be a Prophet, to take refuge here.

Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه said when he heard this, a chill went down his spine, and almost fell out of the tree and onto his master. Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه said he left that night to visit Muhammad ﷺ and brought food for him and said it was from the charity. The Prophet ﷺ told his Companions (*Sahabah*) to eat but did not eat from the food of charity. That confirmed one of the signs he was told. He went back home.

Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه then brought food again and told about the food that he gave last time was for charity; it is now a gift. This time the Prophet ate the food with the Companions (*Sahabah*). Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه went to Muhammad ﷺ and went around him, and the Prophet noticed that Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه was looking for something, so the Prophet ﷺ took off the cloth to show him

what is between his shoulder blades. When Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه saw the mark between his shoulders, he knew it was the Seal of Prophethood.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ immediately told him to stand up. He asked Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه his story and told him to relate it to his Companions (*Sahabah*). Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه did not participate in the battles of Uhud or Badr because he was still a slave. The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions (*Sahabah*) helped free Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه.⁽¹⁾

Contemporary Lessons from the Story of Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه

- We have to put effort into searching for the truth. If we take one step towards Allah ﷻ, then Allah ﷻ will take ten steps towards us. But you have to take the first step.
- We should not be turned off by seeing some Muslims doing the wrong things. Followers of a religion do not always represent the truth, as in the case of Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه and the first bishop he met.
- The Muslim Community (*Ummah*) must be helpful to its new members. Call to the religion (*Dawah*) is not just speaking. It is helping in all ways possible. It could be financial help or attending a social gathering. Sometimes, new converts don't just need an adviser; they also need a friend.
- When we compare complete falsehood with a distorted religion, it does not make the distorted belief the

(1) Musnad Ahmed

absolute truth. One still has to search for the truth. If you have material evidence to verify the truth, you must do so, do not just rely on what people say, as in Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه case when he confirmed the Seal of Prophethood on the back between the shoulders of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

The People of the Book (*Ahl Al-Kitab*)

The children of Israel (Jews and Christian) were all following the Torah's teachings, revealed to Prophets Musa (Moses) عليه السلام and Harun (Aaron) عليه السلام. Like all the other nations before them, they diverted away from the truth, and they desperately needed a rejuvenator.

Allah ﷻ described their condition, and said,

﴿ أَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْ تَخْشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا يَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا
الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَمَدُ فَقَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَكَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ﴾ [الحديد: 16]

“Has not the time come for the hearts of those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) to be affected by Allah’s Reminder (this Quran), and that which has been revealed of the truth, lest they become as those who received the Scripture (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel) before (i.e., Jews and Christians), and the term was prolonged for them, and so their hearts were hardened? And many of them were Fasiqun (rebellious, disobedient to Allah).⁽¹⁾

Allah ﷻ sent them Prophet Isa (Jesus) عليه السلام. At the time, they were occupied by the Romans, and to their expectations, they were waiting for more of a warrior-type

(1) Quran 57:16

figure like Prophet Musa (Moses) ﷺ to liberate them. Prophet Isa (Jesus) ﷺ presented many miracles to them to confirm his message of truth. Allah ﷻ said on the tongue of Prophet Isa (Jesus) ﷺ,

{ وَمُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَلَا أُجِلُّ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَجِئْتُكُمْ بِبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ فَأَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا } [آل عمران:50]

“I (Isa) have come to you, to attest the Law which was before me. And to make lawful to you part of what was (Before) forbidden to you; I have come to you with a Sign from your Lord. So, fear Allah ﷻ, and obey me.”⁽¹⁾

They were disappointed that Prophet Isa (Jesus) ﷺ was focusing more on reminding them of the Hereafter (*Akhirah*) and commanding them to be conscious of Allah ﷻ. Consequently, they plotted to kill him. But Allah ﷻ saved him from them, even though they were under the impression they had killed him.

When Prophet Isa (Jesus) ﷺ found out the plots of the Disbelievers (*Kafirun*), he informed his disciples. Allah ﷻ mentioned this in the Quran,

{ فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَىٰ مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ قَالَ الْخَوَارِجُونَ نَحْنُ
أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَأَشْهَدُ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ } [آل عمران:52]

“When Isa (Jesus) found unbelief on their part. He said: Who will be My helpers to (the work of) Allah?”⁽²⁾

(1) Quran 3:50

(2) Quran 3:52

When the Disbelievers (*Kafirun*) were about to execute Prophet Isa (Jesus) ﷺ, Allah ﷻ came for his help and raised him to Himself. Allah ﷻ said,

﴿ إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ خُذْ هَذَا الصَّلَافَ الَّذِي كَفَرُوا بِكَ وَرَأَيْكَ إِلَىٰ وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ مَرْجِعِكُمْ فَأَحْكُم بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾ [آل عمران: 55]

“Behold! Allah said: “O Isa (Jesus)! I will take thee and raise thee to Myself and clear thee (of the falsehoods) of those who blaspheme; I will make those who follow thee superior to those who reject faith, to the Day of Resurrection (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*): Then shall ye all return unto me, and I will judge between you of the matters wherein ye dispute.”⁽¹⁾

Now those who believed in the message of Prophet Isa (Jesus) ﷺ are called the Christians. They were on the true faith of his religion initially, affirming that he was the Messenger of Allah ﷻ and no more than that. Until a self-claimed disciple who never even met Prophet Isa (Jesus) ﷺ during his lifetime, went entirely against the pure monotheistic message of his, and he started preaching the Trinity, the doctrine of atonement, the son of God, the original sin, and the like.

Of course, the real disciples of Prophet Isa (Jesus) ﷺ strictly preached the Oneness of Allah ﷻ which is: “There is no one worthy of worship except Allah and Isa (Jesus) is the Messenger of Allah.” Paul came at one time to Jerusalem to share his Gospel with the real apostles of

(1) Quran 3:55

Prophet Isa (Jesus) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. The apostles were quite shocked at his heretical and unfounded teachings. Thus, they chased him out of Jerusalem. ⁽¹⁾

Hence, the Roman Empire had two evolving Christian theologies, the Pauline, which started at the hands of Paul, and his followers. They taught all types of heretical and unfounded concepts, which surprisingly can be found in today's Christianity. Concepts like, the original sin, the doctrine of atonement, the son of God, the crucifixion, and the Trinity are critical to modern Christian doctrine. On the other hand, the real disciples of Prophet Isa (Jesus) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and their followers taught the pure monotheistic religion he had brought.

Emperor Constantine was deeply upset by this division because it threatened the Roman Empire's stability. He called a conference of all the bishops of the church to the first ecumenical ("worldwide") council in Nicaea (modern-day Turkey). The council agreed that Prophet Isa (Jesus) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام is truly a "God" and so it published a creed explaining the Christian faith in a way that thoroughly condemned Monotheism (*Tawheed*). They started exterminating everything that may reference Monotheism (*Tawheed*) and crucifying anyone who may speak of Monotheism (*Tawheed*) (referred to in the Quran as in the story of the people of the cave). ⁽²⁾ The story of the people of the trench is also evidence of this event. ⁽³⁾

In the story of Salman Al-Farsi رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, we have references to three Christians who followed the

(1) Galatians 3:23-25

(2) Quran 18:9-26

(3) Quran 85

monotheistic religion of Prophet Isa (Jesus) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. But Allah ﷻ told them of the forthcoming of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The last scholar Salman Al-Farsi رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ studied under was from Amaria (modern-day Turkey). He told him that a new Prophet would come soon from the Arabs. His signs will be undeniable. He will take refuge in a place with date palms located between rocky tracks. He will eat food given to him as gifts but not from the charity. He will have a Seal of Prophethood between his shoulders. Salman Al-Farsi رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ offered everything he owned if people would take him to Arabia.





Chapter Two

The Year of the Elephant

Introduction



The place is the Arabian Peninsula, the city of Makkah, an important trading center. The time is almost a century and a half ago, 570 AD. Before the advent of Islam's final mandate; this time is generally referred to as "The Era of Ignorance (*Jahiliyyah*)."

Pre-Islamic Arabia had a unique tribal system that placed a strong emphasis on kinship-based clans. The immediate family and their affiliated blood ties formed a clan that came under a tribe. However, a single-family and their extended blood ties may form a clan. A tribe may take in a non-blood member and give them familial status. Tribes protected their members; death to one clan member meant unmerciful revenge by the rest of their clan.

One of the most influential tribes in the Arabian Peninsula was the Quraysh. They were the custodians of the Kaabah, the sacred house built by Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and his son Prophet Ismail (Ishmael) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, which was turned into a pagan shrine and destination for idol worshipping pilgrims all across the Arabian Peninsula.

The custody of the Kaabah and the financial benefits generated from the pilgrims turned Quraysh into the city's and the adjoin areas' chief tribe. The Quraysh established alliances with tribes all over the Arabian Peninsula. These alliances strengthened their position. Consequently, they were able to travel far and wide in peace and security. Wherever they went, they were received with generosity and were treated in high esteem. Allah ﷻ said,

وَقَالُوا إِن نَّبَعِ الْهُدَىٰ مَعَكَ نُنَحِّطُفَ مِنْ أَرْضِنَا أَوْلَمْ نُنَمِكَنَّ لَهُمْ حَرَمًا ءَامِنًا يُجِئُ إِلَيْهِ
 ثَمَرَتْ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ رَزَقًا مِن لَدُنَّا وَلَكِن أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾ {القصص: 57}

"Do they not then see that We have made a secure sanctuary and that other tribesmen are being snatched away from all around them?"⁽¹⁾

Despite that, they were ungrateful towards Allah ﷻ. They diverted away from the worship of the Lord of the House, according to Prophet Ibrahim's (Abraham) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام religion, and they took idols as intermediaries (*Al-Wasilah*) between Allah ﷻ and them. Allah ﷻ said,

لَا يَلْفِ قُرَيْشٍ ۙ (١) إِيَّاهُمْ رِحْلَةَ الشِّتَاءِ وَالصَّيْفِ (٢) فَلْيَعْبُدُوا رَبَّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ
 (٢) الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُم مِّن جُوعٍ وَءَامَنَهُم مِّنْ خَوْفٍ {قریش: 1-4}

“It is a great grace and protection from Allah, for the taming of the Quraysh, (and with all those Allah’s grace and protection for their taming, We cause) the (Quraysh) caravans to set forth safe in winter (to the south), and in summer (to the north without any fear). So, let them worship (Allah) the Lord of this House (the Kaabah in Makkah). (He) Who has fed them against hunger and has made them safe from fear.”⁽²⁾

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was born to the respectable clan of Quraysh, called Bani Hashim (the children of Hashim). He ﷺ was born in the year that witnessed the “Event of the Elephant.”

The search for religious power prompted the campaign of the war of elephants. Pre-Islamic religions in the Arabian

(1) Quran 29:67

(2) Quran 106:1-4

Peninsula included:

- Mainly idolatry, the pagan Arabs abandoned the religion of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) عليه السلام and Prophet Ismail (Ishmael) عليه السلام and became idol worshipers.
- Ancient Arabian Christianity centered in a city called Najran.
- Judaism centered in Madinah.
- Some scattered followers of Zoroastrianism.

War Elephants

Some were envious of the superior position of the tribes of Quraysh and wanted to take it away from them. Abraha, the Abyssinian Christian ruler of Yemen, marched upon the Kaabah in Makkah with a large army, including one or more war elephants, planning to demolish it. Abraha built an alternative place of worship and invited people to come to his fancy church instead of performing pilgrimage to Makkah. To his disappointment, the number of visitors was almost zero. Consequently, he decided to destroy the Kaabah.

Again, Allah ﷻ showed Quraysh His miracles and favors by protecting His House from Abraha's vicious attack. Surprisingly, the Quraysh themselves held the decisive and firm belief that Allah ﷻ will protect His House. Despite that, they worshiped idols in association with Allah ﷻ. This confident belief was the highlight of the statement Abdul Muttalib made to Abraha.

Before reaching Makkah, Abraha wanted to meet Abdul Muttalib (the leader of Quraysh at the time). He captured Abdul Muttalib's two hundred camels. When he met him, he (Abdul Muttalib) didn't show any concern

regarding the Kaabah at all. Instead, he was more concerned with the demands for the return of his camels. Abraha was overwhelmingly surprised. He said, “I came to destroy your Kaabah, the source of your wealth and security, your leadership of the Arabian Peninsula, and why all the Arabs enter to visit and spend money in your town, and you are talking to me about returning your camels to you.”

Abdul Muttalib answered him with a very confident and calm statement which displayed his absolute belief, “I am the lord (owner) of these camels, but the House has its own Lord Who is sure to protect it.”⁽¹⁾

Again, Allah ﷻ was sending a Divine reminder to Quraysh to reconsider and rectify their misguidance and diversion. They saw with their own eyes how Allah’s ﷻ Power spoiled the plots of the most influential military campaign to eradicate them. A mighty elephant led this army of the elephants. It refused to head to the Kaabah, and whenever it was directed to it, it sat on the ground or stopped. When it was directed back to Yemen, the elephant ran.

The Prophet ﷺ referred to this event in the Narration (*Hadith*) by Al-Miswar Ibn Makhrama رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ who narrated that Allah’s Messenger ﷺ set out during the sixth year after the migration (*Hijrah*), the year of Al-Hudaibiya. The Prophet ﷺ went on advancing until he reached a place called the Thaniyya (an unpaved way). Al-Qaswa, (the she-camel’s name) of the Prophet ﷺ sat down. The people tried their best to cause the she-camel to get up, but in vain, so, they said, “Al-Qaswa has become stubborn! Al-Qaswa has

(1) Seerah by Ibn Hisham

become stubborn!”

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Al-Qaswa has not become stubborn, for stubbornness is not her habit, but He (Allah ﷻ) stopped her. Allah ﷻ is the one who stopped the elephant.”⁽¹⁾

Allah ﷻ sent birds in flocks, weak birds, who threw them (the army) with stones and killed everyone. Allah ﷻ revealed a whole chapter, after this event, named Surat Al-Fil (The Elephant). Allah ﷻ said,

{الَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ (١) أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِي تَضَلُّبٍ (٢) وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ (٣) تَرْمِيهِمْ بِحِجَارَةٍ مِّن سِجِّيلٍ (٤) فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ مَّأْكُولٍ (٥)}

[الفيل: 1-5]

"Have you (O Muhammad) not seen how your Lord dealt with the owners of the elephant? Did He not make their plot go astray? Allah sent against them birds, in flocks, Striking them with stones of Sijil. And made them like an empty field of stalks (of which cattle have eaten up the corn)."⁽²⁾

This miracle did not wake up and bring the Quraysh back to their senses. They went on with their Polytheism (*Shirk*). This military campaign took place in a year known in history by the elephant's year, in which the Prophet ﷺ was born, and then forty years later, Allah ﷻ delivered him as a final reminder to Quraysh and the rest of the world till the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*). Despite this, we will learn that the Quraysh fought against him and his message which was calling them to return to Prophet

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(2) Quran 105:1-5

Ibrahim's (Abraham) ﷺ religion.

They were ungrateful towards Allah ﷻ. They strayed away from the worship of the Lord of the House, according to Prophet Ibrahim's (Abraham) ﷺ religion, and took idols as intermediaries (*Al-Wasilah*) between them and Allah ﷻ.

A Gem of Divine Wisdom

There was a gem of Divine Wisdom behind the Prophet's ﷺ birth in the same year Abraha's military campaign took place to destroy Kaabah. The Arabs went astray from the pure Monotheism (*Tawheed*) of the religion of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) ﷺ to the worship of idols. Allah ﷻ wanted Quraysh to see with their eyes His Might and Power which saved them. Allah ﷻ is the One True God and not those idols they created with their own hands and then worshiped them, yet they cannot avail them abuse.

The elimination of Abraha's campaign through the heavenly attack served as a visible reminder, which Quraysh saw unfold before their eyes. They could not face the war elephant's army on their own; they even affirmed their inability on the tongue of their leader, Abdul Muttalib, the Prophet's grandfather, who said to Abraha, "The Lord of the House will defend it."⁽¹⁾

This notable event warned Quraysh, the religious leaders of the Arabian Peninsula, due to their being in charge of the Kaabah, to reconsider their diversion from the pure Monotheistic (*of Tawheed*) religion of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) ﷺ and his son Prophet Ismail

(1) The Seerah by Ibn Hisham

(Ishmael) عليه السلام to the worship of idols. All of the Arabian Peninsula learned about this extraordinary and unique event. It would have made Quraysh's mission easy in convincing them to turn to the True God who protected them and His House (Kaabah) from Abraha's attack. As if the Quraysh should have been saying to the rest of the Arabian Peninsula, "So as we led you astray from pure Monotheism (*Tawheed*), to the worship of idols, let us fix the situation. Let us all worship Allah ﷻ again."

In conclusion, this event should have corrected the practices of the people of Makkah and the rest of the Arabian Peninsula. Unfortunately, they went about their ways, ignoring this extraordinary, visible miracle. Hence, there was a need for another reminder at the hand of the Prophet ﷺ, who will be born in the same year they ignored Allah's ﷻ great reminder.

The Prophet's ﷺ birth had marked the rise of a new era and the revival of a new nation. A nation distinguished for its knowledge, scientific and cultural advancement, mercy, and dignity.

Contemporary Lessons

- Many Muslim countries, including the custodians of the House (Kaabah) of Allah ﷻ, are similar to Quraysh. They believe that protection comes only from Allah ﷻ, yet they enslave themselves and their people to the non-Muslims and thus seeking their protection. And in return for this so-called protection, they starve their people to afford to pay the *Jizyah* (tax), and they jeopardize the sovereignty of their land.

But more importantly, what pleases the non-Muslims more are the trade-offs in their religion of Islam. They compromise their faith to satisfy these non-Muslim

superpowers by restricting the religious education in their countries, whether in mosques, educational institutions, or academic curriculums. They also demand them to spread wickedness and indecencies such as immoral musical concerts, public drinking, homosexuality, and nudity in their societies to appear as liberal societies in the eyes of their fallible protectors.

Allah ﷻ, the Exalted and Glorious, will protect us from similar invasions, like Abraha's invasion of Kaabah. Truthfulness to the message of Islam is all we need to receive Allah's ﷻ help. Allah ﷻ will protect us as He ﷻ protected His House (Kaabah) in the past. Likewise, in the future, our Messenger ﷺ told us that at one time, the Antichrist (Al-Dajjal) would try to attack the two holy sites of Muslims. So guess who will defend them? Without any doubt, Allah ﷻ will.

- Another contemporary lesson is that a lot of people are mistakenly under the impression that non-Muslims are combating Islam using all types of wicked schemes and plots because of the teachings of the religion. They know in the depth of their hearts that Islam offers the alternative to their failing system, which has proven it does not have sustainability and that instead, their system produces self-destructive defenses.

For a civilization to sustain itself, history has shown it must uphold its fronts, morals, and material. Non-Muslims may excel in the material side, but they fail the moral act under impartial, overwhelmingly, and manipulated cries for liberty and freedom, besides the Divine Guidance's absence. We have two profound models which crumbled and collapsed due to moral decay; they are the Roman and the Greek empires.

Islam is the only alternative that has proven successful

because it promotes both moral and material principles. The sources are authentic: The Quran and the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*), based on the understanding of the first three-praised generations (*Al-Salaf Al-Salih*). The first model of the Muslim society maintained both, which means the moral and the material impressed the world by its outstanding achievements, right now preserved in history.

- Another profound lesson that we may ponder over as we read these events in light of the condition of today's Muslim Community (*Ummah*), is that if Quraysh had fought Abraha's military campaign and defeated them, then that war would *not* have conveyed the same message. Instead, it would have been a typical conventional war where one army triumphed over another.

Allah ﷻ wanted to show humanity the manifestation of His Names and Attributes, by destroying this mighty army, through the most vulnerable of His creations (birds). This was because they attempted to destroy His House (Kaabah) as if Allah ﷻ is saying to Muslims of today not to be alarmed, that we are His slaves and supporters of His Messengers. Allah ﷻ is telling us that He is with us and that He will support us if we only further His cause and spread His message like we were meant to be, then He will assist us.

- Also, those who oppose Islam and Muslims are working hard to halt the progress of Allah's ﷻ religion. Those who plot against Muslims to drive them out from their homes, sometimes killing them, or detaining them, should ponder upon Abraha's destruction.

Wealth, trading, and position are the leading causes of war on earth. Abraha's aggressive operations against the House (Kaabah) of Allah ﷻ, was prompted by his jealousy of Quraysh's unique position, and his longing to replace

them. Look at any conflict where human lives were not spared in the face of this earth, and you will find it triggered by the same reasons throughout history; greed for power, wealth, and status. Allah ﷻ said to His Messenger,

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴾ [المائدة: 67]

"O Messenger! Proclaim (The Message), which has been sent down to you from your Lord. And if you do not, then you have not conveyed His Message. Allah will protect you from humankind. Verily, Allah guides not the people who disbelieve."⁽¹⁾

Allah ﷻ also said,

﴿ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّكَ عَلَى الْحَقِّ الْمُبِينِ ﴾ [النمل: 79]

"So put your trust in Allah; surely, you (O Muhammad) are on manifest truth."⁽²⁾

The above two commands are for Muslims until the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*). If we want to be the strongest, we must put our trust in Allah ﷻ. If we're going to be the most honorable of humankind, we must be conscious of Allah ﷻ, and we must trust things which Allah ﷻ can bestow upon us more than what we have in our own hands. Reflecting upon the story of the elephant will only enrich our trust in Allah ﷻ.

(1) Quran 5:67

(2) Quran 27:79

Celebrating the Prophet's ﷺ Birthday

When Muslims receive the third month of the lunar calendar, the month of Rabi Al-Awal, a renewed and repeated cycle of vicious attacks on print media, and most importantly, social media and the blogosphere, on those who refuse to celebrate the birthday of the Prophet ﷺ. These attacks are typically carried out by other Muslims.

The latter claim that they love the Messenger ﷺ so much that they want to do something he never asked for or did for himself; something not even his Companions (*Sahabah*) did, which sounds odd. So they usually accuse those who do not observe the Prophet's ﷺ birthday of lacking love for the Prophet ﷺ.

Of course, there is always the middle group that does not entirely condemn it nor fully condone this practice of celebration. They stay in the middle, similar to the group in the story of the people of the Sabbath; the undecided, and the claimants of wisdom. They want to get the best of the two, but of course, when the scale tips in favor of those who propagate the celebration, they will not have mercy on those who rebuke the practitioners, and they will accuse them of being extremists.

Four Inquiries

A series of questions that demand honest answers would clarify this subject once and for those seeking the truth.

1. Do we know the date of birth of the Prophet ﷺ?

The answer is 'No.' All we know is that the Prophet ﷺ was born on a Monday in the Year of the Elephant. Now, if we cannot trace his birthday, how can we then observe any celebration? We did exactly like the Christians. They are

confident that Prophet Isa (Jesus) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام was not born on Christmas day (25th December), but they still celebrate his birth on this day, which originated from heresy. To the average Muslim's surprise, based on authentic evidence, the Prophet ﷺ died on the twelfth of Rabi Al-Awal, the day on which masses observe the celebration of his birth. Meanwhile, in reality, they are unintentionally celebrating his death.

2. Did the Prophet ﷺ or his Companions (*Sahabah*) observe it?

The answer is also “No.” The Prophet ﷺ never paid attention to such a practice, nor was he reminded of it by any of his Companions (*Sahabah*) who loved him dearly to the extent of sacrificing their wealth, children, and lives for him. If there was any good in the practice, the Companions (*Sahabah*) would have done it in the first place.

3. Who was the first to start this practice?

The Ubaydeen (297-362 A.H) falsely, by way of deception, call themselves the Fatimite, attaching themselves by lineage to the Prophet's ﷺ daughter Fatimah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, which is a false claim, according to historians and genealogy experts. Imam Al-Dhahabi رحمته الله said of Ubayd-Allah Al-Mahdi, who was the first ruler of that state, “There are several opinions concerning the lineage of Al-Mahdi, which may be summed up by noting that he was neither Hashimi nor Fatimi. He was never a descendant from Banu Hashim or Fatimah.”⁽¹⁾

Imam Al-Dhahabi رحمته الله further said: “The genealogists

(1) Siyar A'lam al-Nubala' (15/151)

and scholars denied his claims concerning his lineage.”⁽¹⁾

The Ubaydeen Dynasty started in Tunisia in the year 297 A.H and later moved to Egypt, where they were established and empowered. From Egypt, their control expanded to the rest of the Muslim world.⁽²⁾

Engaging in the sectarianism dispute with Sunni and Shia appeals for unity campaigns is not the proper time to discuss this subject. Let us share some of the fundamental beliefs of the Ubaydeen, to confirm that the whole tradition originated from a deviant sect, which is a branch of Shia Islam:

- **They claimed prophethood and divinity**

Among those who claimed divinity was an Ubaydi ruler regarding whom Imam Al-Dhahabi رحمہ اللہ said: “The heretic Ismaili who claims to be divine.”^{(3) (4)}

- **They claimed to know the unseen**

Ibn Khallikan رحمہ اللہ said: “They claimed to know the unseen, and there are well-known reports concerning that.”⁽⁵⁾

- **They ordered people to prostrate before them**

Imam Al-Dhahabi رحمہ اللہ said: “In 396 (A.H), Speeches (*Khutbah*) were given in the two holy sanctuaries under the authority of the ruler of Egypt Al-Hakim, and the people were ordered to stand up and prostrate when he was

(1) Tareekh al-Islam, events of 321-330 AH, p. 23

(2) History of the Rightly Guided by As-Suyuti

(3) Al-Dhahabi Siyar A'laam al-Nubala' (15/155)

(4) Al-Siyar (15/173)

(5) Wafiyat al-A'yaan (5/373, 374)

mentioned.”⁽¹⁾

- **They killed the opposing scholars**

Abul-Hasan Al-Qabisi ؒ, the author of Al-Mulakhas, said: “The number of those killed by Ubayd-Allah and his descendants in his torture chamber was four thousand scholars and worshipers, to stop them saying "Radiya Allah Anhum” which is making the Dua (may Allah be pleased with them)" about the Sahabah.”⁽²⁾

- **Slandering the Companions (*Sahabah*)**

It is written, “The rulers ordered cursing words of the Companions (*Sahabah*) to be written on the mosques' doors and in the streets, and he ordered his state workers to scold them.”⁽³⁾⁽⁴⁾

4. Is the Prophet’s ؐ birthday a religious practice?

Celebrating the Prophet’s ؐ birthday (*Milad Al-Nabi*) is a baseless religious practice. People who engage in such celebrations seek to display their love and reverence for Allah’s Messenger ؐ. They hold this unconfirmed day in special significance. Meanwhile, they are aware that neither the Prophet ؐ nor his Companions (*Sahabah*) or early Muslim communities celebrated Prophet’s ؐ birthdays. They know that it is a practice with no evidence to validate it, yet they still do it.

They view the practice as an opportunity to grow their admiration for the man whose high ethics and compassion, alongside so many other attributes, that they would love to

(1) Duwal al-Islam (1/350)

(2) Al-Siyar (15/145)

(3) Al-Siyar (15/170)

(4) Tarikh al-Islam, events of 395 AH, p. 283

emulate throughout their lives. Then what about following his way Tradition (*Sunnah*)? Isn't that a sign of love?

The biggest testimonial sign of love based on the Quran is when Allah ﷻ said,

{ قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٣١﴾ }
[آل عمران:31]

“If you love Allah, then follow Allah. He will love you, and He will forgive you your sins. And Allah (is) Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”⁽¹⁾

What about fasting every Monday of each week? Isn't it a sign of love? The Prophet ﷺ mentioned that Mondays are very special because he was born on it so he used to engage in voluntary fasting on Mondays.

Narrated from Abu Qatadah Al-Ansari رضي الله عنه that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was asked about fasting on Mondays, and he ﷺ said, "On (that day) I was born, and on it, the first-ever meeting with Jibraeel (Gabriel) took place on a Monday."⁽²⁾

What about studying his Seerah? Isn't it a sign of love? It is a requirement to love the Prophet ﷺ and to do so, you must learn about his life, his character, high ethics, and compassion, alongside so many other attributes we would like to emulate throughout our lives.



(1) Quran 3:31

(2) Sahih Muslim

Chapter Three

**Allah ﷻ is
Preparing You**

Introduction



Nowadays, many Muslims wrongly use non-Muslim expressions. How many times have we come across Muslims who consider themselves unfortunate? Because they were orphaned or experienced a lousy and abusive piece of memory during the early stages of their lives.

Muslims who believe in Allah's ﷻ Lordship should never speak like that, as it reveals their discontent with what Allah ﷻ ordained upon them. An element of Allah's ﷻ Lordship (*Rububiyah*) is the belief in the four levels of Predestination (*Al-Qadar*). These four levels are what Allah ﷻ knew people would go through. Allah ﷻ wrote it in the Preserved Tablet fifty-thousand years before the creation of the heavens and earth, willed for it to happen, and finally, Allah ﷻ created us, to do exactly as He willed.

A Muslim believes that Allah ﷻ will not permit absolute or pure evil to exist in anything he creates. Surprisingly, according to our limited assessment, these unfortunate experiences turn out to be the causes of our strength throughout the remaining part of our lives.

According to the logic of many Muslims of today, Allah's Messenger ﷺ would be the most unfortunate human who ever walked the face of the earth. His father died while he was still inside the womb of his mother. He spent his early childhood in a remote desert in a Bedouin primitive community, far away from his mother. And when he joined his mother a couple of years later, she died. He was left with no immediate family, no father, mother, or siblings.

He then moved around to the homes of his extended relatives, beginning with his grandfather, then his uncle.

What a tough childhood! A typical person of today would spend the remaining part of his life whining and blaming everyone for his early childhood. We never heard Allah's Messenger ﷺ grieving over his childhood. Think about it, if we do that, who are we accusing? We are accusing none other than Allah ﷻ.

Instead, the Prophet's ﷺ difficult childhood became the source of his strength. And Allah ﷻ revealed a whole chapter of the Quran (Surat Ad-Duha), to remind the Prophet ﷺ of his poverty, orphanage, homelessness, and lack of guidance, and how Allah ﷻ removed these weaknesses from his life and replaced them with multiple bounties.

In this chapter, Allah ﷻ commanded the Prophet ﷺ to act gratefully through serving the orphans and those who are not self-sufficient as they beg to survive. And above all, Allah ﷻ is telling His Messenger ﷺ, that instead of crying over these weaknesses, he should proclaim Allah's ﷻ bounties upon him; of course, not in a boastful manner, but alternately in a way that directs people to the source i.e., Allah ﷻ, The Bestower of bounties, and blessings. Allah ﷻ said,

{ أَلَمْ نَجِدْكَ يَتِيمًا فَآوَىٰ ۖ وَوَجَدَكَ ضَالًّا فَهَدَىٰ ۖ وَوَجَدَكَ عَائِلًا فَأَغْنَىٰ ۗ ﴿٦﴾ فَأَمَّا الْيَتِيمَ فَلَا تَقْهَرْ ﴿٧﴾ وَأَمَّا السَّائِلَ فَلَا تَنْهَرْ ﴿٨﴾ وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ ﴿٩﴾ } [الضحى: 6-11]

“Did He not find you (O Muhammad) an orphan and gave you a refuge? And He found you unaware (of the Quran, its legal laws, and Prophethood, etc.) and guided you? And He found you needy and made you rich (self-sufficient with self-contentment, etc.)? Therefore, treat not the orphan with oppression, and repulse not the beggar; And proclaim the Grace of your Lord (i.e., the

Prophethood and all other Graces).⁽¹⁾

Your Weakness Remains Your Strength

A message to the destitute: Whether orphaned, widowed, or single child, Allah ﷻ can make the best out of you. Just reflect upon Allah's Messenger's ﷺ life. Allah ﷻ created in him an enormous change that took place. Allah ﷻ is the one who brought us into this world, ordained our condition upon us. We know that Allah ﷻ will never burden someone with more than what they can bear.

So, trust Allah ﷻ and his plan for you. He will take care of you. Let these words of Allah ﷻ mentioned in the above Verses (*Ayat*) echo in your ears whenever despair may reach you: "Did not Allah find you an orphan and gave you shelter, found you unaware and guided you, and found you inadequate and made you rich." These Verses (*Ayat*) were directed to the Messenger ﷺ as a reminder of Allah's ﷻ help.

Cultivating Mental and Physical Strength

Ever wonder about the wisdom of the Prophet ﷺ? In those times, parents were keen on sending their children to Bedouin nurses, a remote faraway, and a harsh Bedouin environment.

The Arabs, the capable of them, used to pay very much attention to their children's upbringing. One advantage that the Prophet ﷺ did not miss despite the many disadvantages he endured was to be treated like the children of wealthy Arabs and was sent to the desert for nursing.

The first element of this environment is the purity and

(1) Quran 93:6-11

integrity of the Arabic language. Unfortunately, many parents these days do not pay attention to the significance of the Arabic language to connect with Allah's ﷻ Revelations in pure Arabic.

Children who live in crowded, crossroad towns like Makkah typically miss the Arabic language's purity because many dialects and words from across the earth mix up with the Arabic language. The Bedouin communities are usually closed. They hardly receive any linguistic threats to the purity of their language and vocabulary.

In addition to that, the severe and harsh environment is necessary to instill and nourish toughness and solidarity in the children, which are crucial elements of a strong character. Also, the Bedouin environment does not usually have the vices children of the city encounter and adopt because these vices commonly accompany the thirst for wealth mentalities.

The paramount benefit we should gain from this period from the life of Allah's Messenger ﷺ is the significance of the Arabic language because it is the gateway to understanding the Revelations of Allah ﷻ. One of the successes of Islam's enemies is the wall they placed between Muslims and their books of guidance. It is simply a public display of being disinterested in the Muslim's Arabic language. Muslim children are now more interested in learning and speaking foreign languages; meanwhile, their parents are of Arab origins.

Muslim parents must show interest in teaching their children the Arabic language, enrolling them in Arabic classes, always speaking to them in Arabic if they are Arabic-speaking parents, and pointing to children the importance of Arabic, which is the language of the Revelation.

Prophets were Good Shepherds

Halimah رضي الله عنها, the foster mother of the Prophet ﷺ, loved him dearly. She begged his mother Aminah to keep him longer than the standard time that other foster children spent. She had seen with her eyes the blessings and increase in their provision since he arrived. At the age of five, Halimah رضي الله عنها brought him back to his mother. The Prophet ﷺ lived with his birth mother for only one year. Aminah wanted him to know her side of the family. They both took a trip to Madinah to visit her family Bani Al-Najjar. Sadly, she died on their way back to Makkah. She was buried at a place called Abwa.

After the death of Prophet's ﷺ mother, he moved into the care of his grandfather, Abdul Muttalib, who was the leader of Quraysh, who gave a lot of attention to his grandson. After Abdul Muttalib's death, the Prophet ﷺ later came under the care of his uncle Abu Talib, who wasn't as well off financially; he had many children to take care off. Books of Seerah mention that the effect of Prophet's ﷺ presence in the house of his uncle was extraordinary. Since the Prophet ﷺ joined the house of Abu Talib, Allah ﷻ bestowed upon them an abundance of blessings and increase in provision.

The Prophet ﷺ knew quite well that Abu Talib had many obligations, so he refused to be an additional burden and decided to help his uncle. He chose to be a shepherd.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Every Prophet that Allah sent herded sheep." The Companions (*Sahabah*) said, "And even you?" He ﷺ said, "Yes, I herded them upon Qararit."⁽¹⁾

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

Ibn Hajar رحمته, the author of Fath Al-Bari, mentioned two possible meanings of the word Qirat. One is the name of a place, and the second is the wage the Prophet ﷺ collected for doing this type of work.

Every Prophet herded sheep. What is the wisdom behind that? And why was it always sheep in particular and not any other animal?

Of course, the primary purpose of shepherding was always to secure his sustenance through legal work and not to become an additional burden on his uncle. Herding is a job that teaches numerous exceptional characteristics Prophets need to attain to manage their communities. Some of these include tolerance, grace, patience, calmness, tranquility, self-control, forbearance, humbleness, bravery, pity, sympathy, and compassion. The shepherd experiences a wealth of silence, solitude, and seclusion during his long stays in the pastures with his herd.

Also, the nature of the sheep and goats, in particular, are remarkably humble. Their facial features are of a helpless and sad quality. When one worries about them, it is strictly out of sympathy, pity, mercy, and compassion. They are not also the quickest of all animals. When they stray away from the congregation (the flock), one has to persuade them back in a progressive, lenient, and gentle manner, without aggression.

The Prophet ﷺ summed all of this up in the following Narration (*Hadith*). Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Tranquility is found among people who tend to sheep. Pride and showing off are found among the uncivil owners of horses and camels.”⁽¹⁾

(1) Sahih Muslim

What was Allah ﷻ preparing the Prophet ﷺ for?

"I have prepared you for me," Allah ﷻ said it to Prophet Musa (Moses) عليه السلام at Mount Sinai when He ﷻ spoke to him for the first time.

Allah ﷻ told Prophet Musa (Moses) عليه السلام that all the hardships, afflictions, and difficulties he went through are in a way to prepare him for the mission He was about to command him to carry out by His lead. In a similar fashion, the upbringing of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was also unique. Allah ﷻ was preparing him throughout for the mission he was about to receive. Due to his upright, virtuous, and noble cultivation, he acquired the nickname The Truthful (*Al-Sadiq*), The Trustworthy (*Al-Amin*).

You, too, should look thoughtfully into your own life and reflect upon what happened to you in terms of your encounters, events, and afflictions, and perceive what is good or bad. Rest assured that through all the happenings, Allah ﷻ is preparing and equipping you for a mission, whether immense or moderate. People and society where you live may indeed belittle your mission, look down upon or downplay it. This task you are occupied with or about to do is of considerable significance in the sight of Allah ﷻ.

Please stop wasting your time and energy in whining and grieving over an unalterable past. It happened for a reason for which Allah ﷻ is fully aware. Remember that you are notable in the sight of Allah ﷻ and He knew who you are before your birth and knows everything about you till your eternal life in the Hereafter (*Akhirah*). Allah ﷻ wrote everything you are to go through in the preserved tablet fifty-thousand years before He created the heavens and the earth. Then, He willed for you to be born. Then, He created you and fixed that which you will do. Don't you

feel special in the sight of Allah ﷻ? Try to make a difference by having faith in Him and He will bring success and prosperity to your life.



The Second Stage

**The Prophet's ﷺ
Youth (13 to 36
Years Old)**



Introducing the Second Stage

Introduction



Allah ﷻ said,

﴿ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ ضَعْفٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ضَعْفٍ قُوَّةً ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ ضَعْفًا

وَشَيْبَةً يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْقَدِيرُ ﴿٥٤﴾ [الرّوم: 54]

"Allah is He Who created you in (a state of) weakness, then gave you strength after weakness, then after strength gave (you) weakness and grey hair. He creates what He wills. And it is He Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Powerful (i.e., Able to do all things)."⁽¹⁾

In the above Verse (*Ayat*), Allah ﷻ divided the process through which a human being evolves into three stages. About birth and childhood, the commencement of weakness, then strength about youth and adulthood, then finally vulnerability again about the elderly stage.

The stage of birth and childhood typically extends from birth to the age of puberty, which usually comes between twelve and fifteen years—the youth stage from twelve until forty—and adulthood from forty to fifty. Then finally, the elderly stage from fifty till death.

One can see that the longest stage in the life of a human being is typically youth and adulthood. It is the most useful age group to nations because they are strong-hearted and have not stuck into this world as much as the elders.

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that he heard Allah's

(1) Quran 30:54

Messenger ﷺ saying, "The heart of an old man remains young in two respects, his love for the world (its wealth, amusements and luxuries), and his incessant hope."⁽¹⁾

Youth is the time of our life for which Allah ﷻ will ask us on the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*) what did we did with it.

Abdullah Ibn Masud رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The son of Adam will not be dismissed from his Lord on the Day of Resurrection (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*) until His Lord questions him about five issues: his life and how he lived it, his youth and how he used it, his wealth and how he earned it and he spent it, and how he acted on his knowledge."⁽²⁾

It is the time of our lives which Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ commanded us to exploit it to the best degree.

Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Take advantage of five before five: your youth before your old age, your health before your illness, your riches before your poverty, your free time before your work, and your life before your death."⁽³⁾

And if we exploit our youth in a way that pleases Allah ﷻ, we will be shaded under Allah's ﷻ Throne on the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*) when there will be no shade but His shade.

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet said ﷺ, "There are seven people whom Allah will shade with His shade on the day when there will be no shade except His:

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(2) Sunan Al-Tirmidhi - Graded Sahih by Al-Albani

(3) Shu'ab Al-Iman Imam Bayhaqi - Graded Sahih by Al-Albani

One of the seven is a young man who grows up worshipping his Lord."⁽¹⁾

It is the stage when we make fateful decisions. We decide which school we go to, which job we will do, which person we will marry, and many other choices that will shape our lives. Now, let us look at this particular time of our Messenger's ﷺ life, and learn and gather beneficial lessons that can benefit our youth.

As we mentioned earlier, non-Muslim nations build their revival and growth on youth because they are the most productive human resources. Islam pays exceptional attention to cultivating beliefs and characters in Muslim youths, aiming to make them successful in this world world and helping them strive hard to secure the Hereafter (*Akhirah*).

Overview

We will present three chapters as usual, which meet the events' three conditions criteria. We will discuss three subjects.

In the first chapter, we will present the subject of the People of the Book (*Ahl Al-Kitab*), and the wealth of knowledge Allah ﷻ revealed to them regarding physical descriptions of the Prophet ﷺ. Their knowledge of his physical qualities led Bahira, a Christian monk, to recognize him before the Prophet's ﷺ actual coming.

In the second chapter, we will present the subject of marriage in contemporary contexts in light of the Prophet's ﷺ marriage to Khadijah رضي الله عنها.

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

Finally, in the third chapter, we will detail a balanced approach in how Muslims can work with the non-Muslim communities without compromising their Belief System (*Aqeedah*) for the welfare of humanity.





Chapter One

Like They Recognize Their Own Children

Introduction



In the spirit of helping out his uncle, when the Prophet ﷺ was around twelve years old, he served in a trading caravan heading for Syria. The moment the caravan entered Busra, in the neighborhood of Horan under the Roman dominion, a Christian priest (monk) named Bahira displayed exceptional generosity. He immediately recognized the Prophet ﷺ and said while holding his hand, "This is the leader of all humans. Allah will send him with a message of mercy to all of His creations."

The Prophet's ﷺ uncle Abu Talib questioned, "How did you conclude such a thing?" He answered, "When he arrived from the area of Aqabah, all rocks and trees remarkably acknowledged him. A style which they would only display to someone Allah ﷻ will send as a Prophet. Furthermore, he has on his right shoulder an apple-looking sign, which according to our Revealed Books, is called the Seal of Prophethood, which I can see, and acknowledge."

Bahira demanded from Abu Talib to discontinue his aid in this trading caravan and take him back home, and he advised that if he insists on continuing with him to Syria, this might place him in harm's way. Abu Talib accepted his advice, and he sent the Prophet ﷺ back to Makkah with a company.⁽¹⁾

The authenticity of the story of Bahira is the one barrier that obstructs the Faith (Iman) boost when pondering upon the story's precious parts. The fact that religious figures from ancient religions were taught about our Prophet's ﷺ

(1) Ibn Hisham 1/180-183; Za'd al-Ma'ad 1/17

many signs, including physical marks, to the extent that Bahira recognized him even before his Prophethood. Furthermore, Bahira concerned himself with his safety and security, so much so that he demanded his uncle not to let him continue his stay in Syria, where he may be harmed by those who will also recognize him. Shaytan (Satan) may whisper to them to inflict harm upon the Prophet ﷺ.

Not all the experts of Narrations (*Ahadith*) and the Prophet's ﷺ Seerah ruled out the authenticity of the story. Instead, the majority of them regarded the event as authentically confirmed, amongst them: Imam Al-Hakim رحمه الله and Imam Al-Albani رحمه الله. Other Scholars (*Ulama*) considered the Narration (*Hadith*) as agreeable (*Hasan*), including Imam Al-Tirmidhi رحمه الله and Imam Al-Bagawi رحمه الله.

Regardless of the few experts of Narrations (*Ahadith*) and Seerah, who undermined the story, let's examine the contents of this narrative. It does not violate any tenants of Islam, nor does it add anything unlawful. There are other authentic pieces of evidence from the Quran and the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*), which validate the meanings that the contents of this story communicate.

Let's begin with the Quran, Allah ﷻ mentioned in the Quran the story of the children of Israel and the way they acknowledged the Prophet ﷺ that they will recognize him exactly like their recognition of their own children. Allah ﷻ said,

{الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ، كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِّنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَهُمْ

يَعْلَمُونَ} {البقرة: 146}

"Those to whom We gave the Scripture (Jews and Christians) recognize him (Muhammad) as they recognize their sons. But verily, a party of them conceal

the truth while they know it - [i.e., the qualities of Muhammad which are written in the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel)]."⁽¹⁾

The Prophet's ﷺ Mention in the Bible

In the following Verse (*Ayah*), there is a reference in the Quran. Allah ﷻ is qualifying the People of the Book (*Ahl Al-Kitab*) who believed and obeyed the Messenger of Allah ﷺ for his unlimited and comprehensive mercy as they were given his descriptions and signs in both the Torah and the Gospel (Injeel). Allah ﷻ said,

{ الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْنُوبًا عِنْدَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ
وَالْإِنْجِيلِ يَا أُولَئِكَ إِنَّهُمْ يُنَادُونَكَ الْمَسْكُورَ وَيُنَادِيهِمُ الْغَافِلُونَ
وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ مَعَهُ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

[الأعراف:157]

"Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, whom they find him written with them in the Taurat and the Injeel. He commands them to the right and forbids them from the wrong, and he makes lawful for them the pure things and makes unlawful for them the impure things, and he relieves from them their burden and the fetters which were upon them. So those who believe in him and honor him and help him and follow the light which has been sent down with him.

Those (are) [they] the successful ones."⁽²⁾

Many Scholars (*Ulama*) cited as evidence two

(1) Quran 2:146

(2) Quran 7:157

accounts; one in the Old Testament and the other in the New Testament, and they are as follows:

According to the Old Testament

Allah ﷻ said to Prophet Musa (Moses) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ ,

"I will raise for them a Prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him."⁽¹⁾

According to the New Testament

"And I will pray to the Father (Allah), and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever."⁽²⁾

References in the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*)

There is also a Narration (*Hadith*) reported by Ata Bin Yasar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ who met Abdullah Bin Amr Bin Al-As رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and asked him, "Tell me about the description of Allah's Messenger which is mentioned in Torah (Old Testament)." He replied, "Yes. By Allah, he is described in the Torah with some of the qualities attributed to him in the Quran as follows, "O Prophet! We have sent you as a witness (for Allah's true religion) And a giver of glad tidings (to the faithful believers), And a warner (to the unbelievers) And guardian of the illiterates. You are My slave and My Messenger (i.e., Apostle). I have named you "Al-Mutawakkil" (who depends upon Allah). You are neither discourteous, harsh, nor a noisemaker in the markets, and you do not do evil to those who do evil to you, but you deal with them with forgiveness and kindness. Allah will not let

(1) The Book, Deuteronomy chapter 18, verse 18

(2) John 14:16

him (the Prophet) die till he makes straight the crooked people by making them say: "None has the right to be worshiped but Allah," With which will be opened blind eyes and deaf ears and enveloped hearts.”⁽¹⁾

Jewish Rabbis Return to Islam

There is no doubt that the faith of born Muslims increases and climbs when someone from the People of the Book (*Ahl Al-Kitab*) accepts Islam, particularly their educated scholars, those who are experts and authorities in their field of theology, and followed by many. We need to recognize the sacrifice they make once they decide to accept Islam. They lose their status as leaders of their previous communities. They turn into members at a beginner’s level in the Muslim community. It is the reason why they are amongst the three who will receive a double reward from Allah ﷻ Who said,

{ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِن قَبْلِهِ هُمْ بِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ وَإِذَا يُنزلُ عَلَيْهِمْ قَالُوا ءَأَمَنَّا بِهِ إِنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا مِن قَبْلِهِ مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾ أُولَئِكَ يُؤْتَوْنَ أَجْرَهُم مَّرْتَيْنِ بِمَا صَبَرُوا وَيَدْرَءُونَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ
 السَّيِّئَةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ } [القصص: 52-54]

"Those to whom We gave the Scripture [i.e., the Tourat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel), etc.] before it, - they believe in it (the Quran)." And when it is recited to them, they say: "We believe in it. Verily, it is the truth from our Lord. Indeed, even before it, we have been from those who submit themselves to Allah in Islam as Muslims (like Abdullah bin Salam and Salman Al-Farsi, etc.). These will be given double rewards because they were patient, and they repel evil with good, and

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

they spent (in charity) out of what Allah has provided them.”⁽¹⁾

To explain these Verses (*Ayat*), Abu Musa Al-Ash’ari رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger ﷺ said, “Three types of people will be given their reward twice over; one of the three is a person from the People of the Book (*Ahl Al-Kitab*), one who believed in his Prophet and then believed in me.”⁽²⁾

Abdullah Ibn Salam رضي الله عنه

Abdullah Ibn Salam رضي الله عنه was the first Jewish Rabbi to accept Islam. All learned Jews and Christians recognized Allah’s Messenger ﷺ. As stated in the Quran,

{ الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ، كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِّنْهُمْ لَيَكْفُرُونَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ

يَعْلَمُونَ } [البقرة: 146]

“They know him as they know their sons.”⁽³⁾

After the first Jewish Rabbi accepted Islam, Umar رضي الله عنه asked him if he had recognized Allah’s Messenger ﷺ. “I recognized him,” Abdullah Ibn Salam رضي الله عنه answered and added, “I may doubt my children, my wife might have deceived me, but I have no doubt about Allah’s Messenger ﷺ being the last Prophet.”⁽⁴⁾

Abdullah Ibn Salam رضي الله عنه was a highly respected Jewish scholar in Madinah. He was known for his devotion, integrity, frankness, and mindfulness of Allah ﷻ. Abdullah

(1) Quran 28:52-54

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(3) Quran 2:146

(4) Sahih Al-Bukhari

Ibn Salam رضي الله عنه read the Torah, and he would be attracted to the different quotes, which described the awaited seal of all the Prophets.

Abdullah Ibn Salam رضي الله عنه learned so many details about the Prophet ﷺ. One unique part that always brought delight and joy into his heart was the fact that the Prophet ﷺ was to relocate to Yathrib (old name for Madinah), the well-known palm tree town. Every time he came across this information about the Prophet ﷺ, he would ask Allah ﷻ to prolong his life to meet the Prophet ﷺ and declare his belief in him.

Allah ﷻ always answers the Supplications (*Dua*) of the sincere and truthful. Abdullah Ibn Salam رضي الله عنه lived to meet the Prophet ﷺ and declared his firm faith in him being the last awaited Messenger ﷺ. Let us listen to the revert, who changed his name from Al-Hussain Ibn Salam to Abdullah Ibn Salam, and reveal his story of accepting the Prophet ﷺ to be his Messenger.

Abdullah Ibn Salam رضي الله عنه narrated, "When I first learned some information on his name, lineage, appearance, and qualities, I always would compare them with what we have written in the scripture. I would always find what I heard and what I read in agreement with each other. I did not reveal my findings with other Jewish scholarly individuals.

When he ﷺ arrived in Madinah, he settled in Quba, and a caller went through the entire city announcing his arrival and his temporary stay in there. When I heard this announcement, I was on the top of a palm tree, and my aunt Khalidah bint Al-Harith was sitting beneath me when she listened to my echoing Allah-Akbar (Allah is the Greatest) thrice. She immediately said, "What is wrong with you? You would not do that if this announcement was

concerning Musa?” I told her, “He ﷺ is precisely like Musa, and he is here to fulfill Musa’s prophecy and to complete the mission of all the previous Messengers sent before him.”

Without any delay, I found myself approaching a vast gathering, and in the middle, where he was. I forced my way until I came face to face with him. I examined him until I was convinced, and I established that his ﷺ face was not the face of a dishonest or untruthful man. And I heard him saying, "O humanity! Spread peace amongst you, feed hungry people, observe Salah at night while people are in a heavy sleep, and uphold your kinship ties and you will surely be granted admittance to Jannah peacefully. The first sermon I heard from him ﷺ, I drew closer to him ﷺ and uttered the Shahadah. He asked me about my name and I said “Al-Hussein Ibn Salam.” He replied, “Your name will be Abdullah Ibn Salam.” I agreed, and I left him at this stage. I rushed back to my house to share my faith in the final Messenger with my wife and children, and relatives, and they all accepted Islam as well. ⁽¹⁾

I came back to the Prophet ﷺ, and I shared with him about how the educated scholars in the community in Madinah would know the truth, and be convinced of it being the truth, yet out of pride, and fear to lose their worldly status, they are willing to make give-and-take. He said that once they find out about my reversion to Islam according to your final mandate, they will slander and defame me. Please arrange a get-together with them, hide me from their eyes, and ask them about their opinion of me.

The Prophet ﷺ executed his scheme, and Abdullah Ibn Salam’s ﷺ evaluation was accurate. They initially

(1) Al-Hakim in his Musdarak

endorsed Al-Hussain Ibn Salam, his character, and his lineage. When the revert Abdullah Ibn Salam رضي الله عنه came out of his hideout declaring his Shahadah again in front of his community, the masses he led for years and those who trusted his teachings, they altered their testimony which they gave just a few moments earlier to the total opposite.

Zaid Ibn Su'nah رضي الله عنه

The story of the second Jewish Rabi Zaid Ibn Su'nah رضي الله عنه is different from the story of Abdullah Ibn Salam رضي الله عنه. Zaid رضي الله عنه narrated his story to Abdullah Ibn Salam رضي الله عنه, who later related it to us. He said, “Zaid Ibn Su'nah رضي الله عنه had to verify two more signs of Prophethood as per the quotes in the Old Testament, as he already checked and confirmed the first sign. The second sign of Prophethood, his forbearance, should outweigh his anger; for the third sign, his balance will dominate any madness appearance.”

Zaid Ibn Su'nah رضي الله عنه observed a situation which he employed to confirm the last two related signs of Prophethood. A Bedouin arrived at Madinah grieving about a drought that hit his tribesmen who had recently accepted Islam and were desperately in need of some sustenance to survive the drought. The Prophet ﷺ asked whether they had anything in the storehouse. It was a tough time all over. Ali Ibn Abi Talib رضي الله عنه responded, “Nothing is in storage.”

At this stage, Zaid Ibn Su'nah رضي الله عنه approached privately. He offered to lend the Muslim community some funds to relieve the difficulty. Right away, the Prophet ﷺ agreed to deal with him to save the population of the Bedouin tribesmen.

Zaid Ibn Su'nah رضي الله عنه said that that he intentionally came three days before the set day to pay him back and wanted to humiliate the Prophet ﷺ in a funeral in front of

many of his Companions (*Sahabah*). He held him ﷺ by the collar and started yelling at him with all types of insults to him personally and his family. Umar رضي الله عنه was amongst those who were present. He immediately wanted to attack Zaid Ibn Su'nah رضي الله عنه in retaliation for the way he spoke to the Prophet ﷺ and the physical and psychological waves of slanders and advances against the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet's ﷺ reaction to Umar's رضي الله عنه behavior surprised Zaid رضي الله عنه but confirmed his prophetic signs. Afterward, he accepted Islam as a result of it.

The Prophet ﷺ advised Umar رضي الله عنه in the calmest and in the most exceptional show of tolerance, understanding, kindness, courtesy, self-control, patience, and confidence, to be fair to both of them.

Umar رضي الله عنه should have been more lenient towards the Jewish Rabbi and should have suggested to the Prophet ﷺ to pay Zaid Ibn Su'nah رضي الله عنه (not Muslim at this time) back his money even though the due date had not arrived yet, and also advise Zaid رضي الله عنه to order the payment of his trust more thoughtfully.

The story has been transmitted by Tabarani رحمه الله (*Al-Mu'jam Al-Kabir*), to which Al-Haithami رحمه الله says that all of the Tradition's (*Sunnah*) narrators are sound. It was also narrated by Ibn Majah رحمه الله, Ibn Hibban رحمه الله, and Al-Hakim رحمه الله, among others. The version of this story has been taken from Muhammad Yusuf Kandhlawi's رحمه الله "The Lives of the Companions."⁽¹⁾

(1) The Lives of the Companions

The Story of Huyayy Ibn Akhtab and Abu Yasir Ibn Akhtab

The believers' mother Safiyyah bint Huyayy Ibn Akhtab رضي الله عنها narrated her father and uncle's story as evidence of how some people may recognize the truth but intentionally refuse it. She said, "I was my father and uncle's unique child. Any time they would see me, they would not spare a minute to pick me up and show me exceptional treatment. When the Prophet ﷺ arrived at Madinah and initially stopped at Quba, like the rest of the dwellers of Madinah, they both decided to go to verify his claim of Prophethood. They left the house before dawn, and they returned after sunset. They spent a whole day confirming whether he is the Prophet ﷺ as stated in the Torah or not."

Safiyyah رضي الله عنها said, "When my father and uncle returned, I could see that they looked afflicted and affected. I approached them carefully, expecting their particular attention and treatment they regularly show me. They did not even regard me as they entered the sitting room inside the house.

They started having the following exchange while I was attending to their conversation tentatively. I heard my uncle, Abu Yasir Ibn Akhtab, say to my father, Huyayy, "Is it him (i.e., the expected Prophet)?" He said, "By Allah, yes (it is him)!" He further asked, "Do you recognize him?" He answered, "Yes." He asked, "What feelings do you have for him?" He said, "(Nothing but) enmity, as long as I live."⁽¹⁾

(1) Seerah by Ibn Hisham

Christians Confirm his Prophethood

Many Christians confirmed the Prophethood of the Prophet ﷺ before his actual appointment. The story of Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه illustrates this in a heartfelt style. We have cited it in full in chapter one from the first stage. But let us just show the part of the narrative, which confirms that committed and devoted Christians had full awareness of the Prophet's ﷺ signs precisely as the Quran states in the following Verse (*Ayah*),

{ الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْتُوبًا عِنْدَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ
وَالْإِنْجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَاهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ
عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبَائِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ فَاَلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِهِ
وَعَزَّزُوا وَنَصَرُوهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ مَعَهُ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾ }

[الأعراف:157]

"Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, whom they find him written with them in the Taurat and the Injeel. He commands them to the right and forbids them from the wrong, and he makes lawful for them the pure things and makes unlawful for them the impure things, and he relieves from them their burden and the fetters which were upon them. So those who believe in him, honor him, help him, and follow the light which has been sent down with him. Those (are) [they] the successful ones."⁽¹⁾

Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه said, "My father became upset and afraid that I would leave our religion. So, he kept me locked up in the house and put a chain on my feet.

(1) Quran 7:157

However, I managed to send a message to the Christians, asking them to inform me of any caravan going to Syria. Not quite long, they got in touch with me and told me that a caravan was headed for Syria. I managed to unfetter myself and, in disguise, accompanied the caravan to Syria.

There, I asked who the leading person in the Christian religion was and directed to the church's bishop. I went up to him and said, "I want to become a Christian and would like to attach myself to your service, learn from you and pray with you." The bishop agreed, and I entered the church in his service. I soon found out, however, that the man was corrupt. He would order his followers to give money in charity while holding out the promise of blessings. However, when they gave anything to spend in the way of Allah, he would hoard it for himself and not give anything to the poor or needy. In this way, he amassed a vast quantity of gold. When the bishop died, and the Christians gathered to bury him, I told them of his corrupt practices and, at their request, showed them where he kept their donations. When they saw the large jars filled with gold and silver, they said. "By God, we shall not bury him." They nailed him on a cross and threw stones at him.

I continued in the service of the person who replaced him. The new bishop was an ascetic who longed for the Hereafter (*Akhirah*) and engaged in worship day and night. I was greatly devoted to him and spent a long time in his company."

After the bishop's death, Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه attached himself to various Christian religious figures in Mosul, Nisibis, and elsewhere. The last one had told him about the appearance of a Prophet in the land of the Arabs who would have a reputation for strict honesty, one who would accept a gift but would never consume charity (*Sadaqah*)

for himself.

“(Salman Al-Farsi رضي الله عنه) continued his story) A group of Arab leaders from the Kalb tribe passed through Ammuriyah, and I asked them to take me with them to the land of the Arabs in return for whatever money I had. They agreed, and I paid them. When we reached Wadi al-Qura (a place between Madinah and Syria), they broke their agreement and sold me to a Jewish man. I worked as a servant for him, but eventually, he sold me to a nephew of his belonging to the tribe of Banu Qurayzah. This nephew took me to Yathrib, the palm groves city, which was how the Christian at Ammuriyah described it.”



Chapter Two

**“Allah ﷻ placed her
love in my heart.”**

Introduction



"Allah placed her love in my heart."

The Prophet ﷺ unveiled to his beloved wife, Aishah رضي الله عنها, why he still recollected all the good memories he had with his first wife Khadijah رضي الله عنها, who died years back. Aishah رضي الله عنها herself said, "I have never felt so jealous about any woman the way I was jealous of Khadijah, because of the way he speaks about her." By the way, Khadijah رضي الله عنها had died three years before Aishah رضي الله عنها married the Prophet ﷺ. ⁽¹⁾

To comprehend the value and the exceptional importance of marriage and the scope of the relationship between the genders, before and after marriage, one should understand the subject of Islamic Law's (*Shariah*) five holistic Objectives (*Maqasid*) that demands the preservation of five Essentials or Necessities (*Dharuriyyat*).

The five Necessities (*Dharuriyyat*) in the order of their importance are protection and preservation of:

1. Religion (*Deen*),
2. Life (*Nafs*),
3. Mind or Intellect (*Aql*),
4. Lineage (*Nasl*),
5. Property (*Mal*).

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

Islam intends to ensure that the five Necessities (*Dharuriyyat*) exist, and continue to exist by passing on to the next generation. For example, Islam considers same-gender marriages illegal (*Haram*) because it is a significant threat to the reproduction of the human race.

Islam intends to eliminate the possible threats that may compromise the well-being of the five Necessities (*Dharuriyyat*). For example, adultery is a significant threat to the Muslim family.

Furthermore, Islam ensures to provide all possible resources to enhance the quality of the five Necessities (*Dharuriyyat*); for example, providing pre-marriage education for the youth to teach them how to choose a spouse, and the rights and the responsibilities of both husband and wife.

The fourth Necessity is relevant to our discussion on marriage in light of the Prophet's ﷺ marriage to Khadijah رضي الله عنها. The Scholars (*Ulama*) expand this particular Necessity of Lineage (*Nasl*) under three titles:

1. Progeny
2. Lineage
3. Honor

Each of these titles represents one particular dimension. All together, they are the means to protect and strengthen the Muslim family, which is the first stone in the Muslim Community (*Ummah*).

1. Protection of Progeny

Islam ensures that a Muslim child is born into a Muslim house founded on belief where both the parents practice and promote the teachings of Islam. Islamic

Jurisprudence (*Usul Al-Fiqh*) intends to eliminate threats such as divorce, which is the destroyer of families. Islam supplies various resources to strengthen the well-being of the Muslim family, such as emphasizing the choice of righteous spouses and the guidelines for a healthy relationship between the family members.

2. Protection of Lineage

Islam ensures the children's lineage is identified, and there is accurate tracking of their descent.

The Islamic Law (*Shariah*) eliminates all threats, such that it intends to defeat children's birth out of wedlock. Islam outlawed a child's naming after any other than his biological father and organized the process of adoption in light of Islamic Law (*Shariah*).

Islam developed an accurate and unique newborn naming system that encourages parents to choose unique Muslim names and ensuring accurate tracking of the children's descent. Hence, there will not be any nameless children in the Muslim community, and every newborn has an ancestor, a family, a lineage, and siblings.

3. Protection of Honor

Islam ensures the honor and the reputation of family members. Islam prohibits adultery, slandering, and defamation of chaste men and women. Islam eliminates potential threats such as holding a marriage without the father's (or an immediate guardian; a brother or paternal grandfather) consent as the guardian (*Wali*) is invalid. Islam also provides a set of means to enhance honor's protection, such as encouraging marriage from chaste spouses.

The Concept of True Love in Islam

The Prophet's ﷺ statement to Aishah رضي الله عنها, "Allah placed her love in my heart," corrects so many misconceptions people may have concerning the real meaning of love, marriage, and the purpose behind marriage in Islam.

Real love in Islam is that Allah ﷻ places in the hearts of spouses towards one another, and the only way this happens is if both husband and wife harbor firm beliefs in the Controller of their hearts, who is only Allah ﷻ. Moreover, they should have common and mutual objectives, such as establishing their homes in conformity with Islam. They pray together, promote Islamic values and goodness, and paving the way for their children's upbringing as pious Muslims.

Perhaps a lot of Muslims are under the spell of what they watch day in and day out in the media, cinemas, and soap operas. These corrupt Western outlets give the message that boys and girls will never succeed without having an unlawful relationship before their weddings. They tell the youth of today that the only way for their future relationship as husband and wife to find harmony is to actualize lustful love, passion, and desire in their relationship before wedlock.

Hence, our Muslim homes are full of evil, free mixing, and many other immoral practices, which are always the cause for the spread of immorality and sinfulness in our Muslim Community (*Ummah*). Even though marriage is the means to guard the honor of people, as we mentioned earlier, sadly, marriages under the delusions of the media became a means to transgressing that which it was originally intended to defend.

A study executed by Syracuse University, based in New York, established without any shadow of a doubt that lewd love and passion are never the sole guarantees to a prosperous bond in marriage. Instead, it often leads to breakdown and divorce.

Frederick Koenig, a social psychology professor at Tulane University, said, "Romantic love is powerful and emotional, but does not last, while real love is linked to the land and life and can withstand trials." He adds, "...adapting the powerful emotions in romantic love. This love seems like a cake, and a person enjoys eating it [while it lasts], then it is followed by the period of downfall. At the same time, real love means sharing the concerns of daily life and cooperation for it to continue. Within the framework of this cooperation, one can achieve his human need."⁽¹⁾

Kindness and mercy are the basis of the connection between spouses, not just lust, desire, and craving. It is a bond based on peaceful love (passion), not illusions of love, which fail to confront reality or romantic fantasies that fail to create a successful marriage.

Allah ﷻ validated the human research results on the subject of developing a strong bond between a husband and wife in one single Verse (*Ayah*). Allah ﷻ said,

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً
وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾ [الرُّوم: 21]

"And of His signs is that He has created mates for you from your kind that you may find peace in them, and

(1) Al-Qabas Newspaper: Quoted from Risaalah Ila Hawwaa

He has set between you love and mercy. Surely there are Signs in this for those who reflect."⁽¹⁾

Allah ﷻ mentioned two supporting bases to keep the bond between the husband and the wife. The first is the love Allah ﷻ places in both spouses' hearts towards one another. In case if this early base is not found, then mercy should replace it.

Umar Ibn Al-Khattab رضي الله عنه on one particular occasion lectured women and said to them, "If you do not have a lustful desire towards your husband, do not say that to him, because only a few marriages succeed based on lust and desire. Rather, people live together because of kindness, mercy, compassion, and above all, they have common objectives such as raising the children."⁽²⁾

Striking a Balance

I hope we are not calling on the youth to disregard the temptation and attraction side in their future marriages because this is totally against the nature of humans and the actual teachings of the Prophet ﷺ. We should never neglect the mutual feelings between spouses or ignore the passion and desire between them.

Notice that when the Prophet ﷺ listed the four attractions, we should look for beauty in the prospects. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "A man is normally looking for the following in a wife: her wealth, beauty, nobility, or religiousness (adherence to Islam). But choose a religious woman, and you will prosper."⁽³⁾

(1) Quran 30:21

(2) Ibn Al-Jawzy

(3) Sahih Muslim

Jabir Ibn Abdullah رضي الله عنه narrates that when he got married, Allah's Messenger ﷺ said to him, "What type of lady have you married?" I replied, "I have married a matron," He said, "Why don't you have a liking for the virgins and fondling them?" Jabir رضي الله عنه also said that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, "Why didn't you marry a young girl so that you might play with her and she with you?"⁽¹⁾

Narrated on the authority of Mughirah Bin Shubah رضي الله عنه who said, "I came to the Prophet ﷺ and told him of a woman I had to propose marriage. He ﷺ said, 'Go and look at her, for that is more likely to create love between you.' So, I went to a woman among the *Ansar* and proposed marriage through her parents. I told them what the Prophet ﷺ had said and it was as if they did not like that. Then I heard that woman, behind her curtain, say, 'If the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has told you to do that, then do it. Otherwise, I adjure you by Allah (not to do so).' And it was as if she regarded that as a serious matter. So, I looked at her and married her." Mughirah Bin Shubah رضي الله عنه mentioned how well he got along with her.⁽²⁾

Why do we Marry?

A straightforward question, but with an answer that displays a lot depending on the reply. Of course, all responses may be considered right. But when someone submits such a question, he usually is not seeking partial responses. Instead, he is looking for a deep and thoughtful answer. For example, the answer Umar رضي الله عنه returned to the same question. He said, "By Allah, sometimes I push myself to have intimacy with my wife so that my wife may

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(2) Sunnan Ibn Majah

bear a child, who will come into this world to believe and stand for Monotheism (*Tawheed*)."

We are all familiar with Umar's رضي الله عنه story when he was checking on Madinah's people at night. The milk saleswoman urged her daughter to cheat by adding water to their milk, but the daughter to the amazement of her mother, and Umar رضي الله عنه, who was unexpectedly listening, said, "Allah is watching us if Umar رضي الله عنه is not around." Umar رضي الله عنه rushed back home to wake up his three sons, commanding one of them to marry this girl. Remember that at the time, Umar رضي الله عنه hadn't seen her or knew how she looked. Umar رضي الله عنه only confirmed that she would be a good mother for his grandchildren. By the way, this girl happened to be the grandmother of Umar Ibn Abdul Aziz رضي الله عنه.

Abu Al-Aswad Al-Du'ali رضي الله عنه was delegated by Ali Ibn Abi Talib رضي الله عنه to compose the rules and grammar for the Arabic language. One day, he called upon his grown-up children to teach them a lesson. He asserted to them, "Was I useful to you before and after your birth?" His children shouted, "Father, we know how valuable you were to us after we were born, but what did you indicate before our delivery?" Abu Al-Aswad's رضي الله عنه answer is quite valuable. He said, "I chose a mother you can be proud of."

Abu Al-Aswad رضي الله عنه told his children that he thought of them when he chose his wife. It is so true that when a man requires a wife for himself, he is technically considering a mother for his future children as well. Hence, when the guardian of a woman accepts his daughter's future-husband's marriage proposal, he is realistically determining her children's father as well.

In addition to this, the institution of marriage faces a lot

of foes. Imagine the head of disbelief, Shaytan (Satan), in the face of this earth every day crowns one of his helpers from his race (Jinn) because he manages to separate a husband and a wife.

Jabir رضي الله عنه reported that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said,

- Shaytan (Satan) places his throne upon the water.
- He then sends detachments (for creating dissension).
- The nearer to him in rank are those who are most notorious in creating dissension.

One of them comes and says, "I did so and so." And Shaytan (Satan) says, "You have done nothing." Then one amongst them comes and says, "I did not spare so and so until I sowed the seed of discord between a husband and a wife." Shaytan (Satan) goes near him and says, "You have done well." He then embraces him.⁽¹⁾

One may question Shaytan's (Satan) over-excitement when he hears the news of the husband and wife's separation and not any other Major Sin (*Al-Kaba'ir*) when divorce is considered a lawful and reasonable resolution to dysfunctional marriages. Again, we go back to the children's point because they are the ones who typically pay the unpleasant and painful price of their parents' separation. The bottom line is, only faithful and righteous spouses will be able to defeat the tricks, plots, and scheming of Shaytan (Satan) and his human and Jinn partners. This is why the subject of marriage is the grain, which, if placed in the right soil and fed the vital and primary nourishment, will unquestionably lead to a flourishing Muslim Community

(1) Sahih Muslim

(*Ummah*).

Marriage is more of a shared bodily and spiritual venture between a husband and wife, which always aims at remaining together not only in this world (*Dunya*), preferably in the next life, in Paradise (*Jannah*).

To achieve this aim, both must resolve to strive to build a spiritual and virtuous practice based on the Quran and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*). Their houses should be more of heaven on earth. They must steer their decisions and choices towards actualizing this goal, such as the option of where they live, community, which mosque they attend, their friends, work, and their recreational outlets.

To accomplish these goals, they must both employ their best investment in this world, which is their children. They must create a religious and harmless environment to protect their born nature of Islam, improve it, and work tirelessly to help them understand that Allah ﷻ sees them all the time. They must settle on the type of a wider community they accept to live in. It must be of the standard which promotes their aspirations, and not in a secular society where their goal is the exclusive success in this world while entirely ignoring the struggle for the Hereafter (*Akhirah*).

Role of Parents in Choosing their Children's Spouses

Parents can play an essential role in encouraging their children to pick the right spouse. Parents should not clash with their children over their choices of spouses. The anticipated famous dispute between parents and children is that the children are asking to marry someone their parents disapprove of, and the children decline altogether to accept their parents' intervention in their choices of spouses,

including their parents' recommendation of spouses.

Parents and children's disputes over the decision of spouses typically come up because one of them, or both, are basing their choices on details other than the religion, and good characters, such as ethnicity, race, color, language, education, wealth, and living standards.

Parents and children need to pay attention to the careful selection of spouses, as we see the drastic increase in the divorce rate in our Muslim Community (*Ummah*). The main reason behind the increased divorce rate is the wrong choices of spouses and the parents' negative contribution to this tragedy.

Islam disapproves of our spouse's choices when it comes to marrying atheists, apostates, and polytheists except for the People of the Book (*Ahl Al-Kitab*). Muslim women are to marry Muslims because marriage is more of a religious contract, not just a union.

Islam does not stop, but it does not support our preferences of spouses who are not devout or of good character. The Prophet ﷺ mentioned the four grounds on which men typically prefer their future: wives, beauty, lineage, wealth, and religion. The Prophet ﷺ right away rebuked those who overlook the faith. The Prophet ﷺ also rebuked parents who choose their daughter's future husband on grounds other than good character and religion.

Obviously, and based on the above points, we can decree with confidence that the primary ground in Islam for our choice of spouses is both religion and good character. All other elements, like race, color, living standards, languages, ethnic background, are more of a judgment call that can be shared between parents and children.

The one unique and substantial role that parents can

play in this critical decision-making process is judging the religion and the good character of the prospects provided that parents do qualify to be in this position, as a start.

Parents must execute the verification and confirmation process. If they do not qualify, then they must pursue the help of experts such as Imams and religious scholars. Suppose children are left entirely to make the verification and confirmation of the two parts. In that case, they will likely compromise the two substantial qualities if they are already involved emotionally with one another. Parents can become instrumental in verifying and confirming the two most important aspects of the preference of spouses. Other than that, they should allow children to have their backing concerning the rest.

The Prophet's ﷺ Marriage with Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا

We go back to the vocal point, the inspiring story of the Prophet's ﷺ marriage to Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا. Choosing spouses carefully will help one another a great deal at the relationship's challenging stages. The perfect example is the condition of the Prophet ﷺ when rushed back home very concerned from the cave of Hira. He went back to his home to his wife, where he acquired peace and comfort. Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا did not only offer him assurance and support but also pursued the scholarly and expert assistance of her relative, Waraqah Ibn Nawfal.

When Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا asked the Prophet ﷺ what had happened. He ﷺ told her, "I was afraid for myself." He ﷺ started relating to her what he went through. How did Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا 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⁾

The different reports affirm that the Prophet ﷺ found encouragement and support in his wife's words, which was a sign of love and sincere bond between them. If Allah's Messenger ﷺ did not have this affection towards his wife, he would have turned to his uncle or a friend.

Khadijah رضي الله عنها did what a faithful and supportive wife would do. First of all, she attended to her husband and did not complain. She also became his refuge, reassurance, and assistance. Second, she pointed out his great attributes and re-established his confidence in himself. Many wives in similar situations would admonish their husbands and blame them for generating their misfortune. Third, she consulted her relative Waraqah Ibn Nawfal, who convinced him that what he experienced was a Revelation (*Wahi*). He expressed his belief in him and unconditional support when he would confront his people, given that he remains alive till the moment arrives.

Khadijah رضي الله عنها was a successful and esteemed businesswoman. She was hugely successful and used to be recognized for her integrity and uprightness in trading. She would only select the most trustworthy men to work for her. Notice that Khadijah's رضي الله عنها success in her trade was in a male-controlled field. Nowadays, some businesswomen employ their bed, dirty parties, nudity, vulgarity, and immoral behavior to close a business deal. On the contrary, her purity, shyness, and honor were her brands.

Khadijah رضي الله عنها was one of the most notable characters

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

in the history of all women. The Prophet ﷺ said, "There are only four women who attained the level of perfection: Maryam, Khadijah, Fatimah, and Asiyah."⁽¹⁾

Khadijah رضي الله عنها had previous marriages, before her marriage to the Prophet ﷺ. Of course, after the death of her last husband, she received many marriage proposals. She was the type men would like to marry because of her wealth and attainment of a good character. Khadijah رضي الله عنها learned about the Prophet's ﷺ exceptional personality when she hired him. She immediately recognized that he ﷺ is the ty man she would want to be with; they matched one another in many characters, even though she was much older than him. To achieve that, she did something in line with the societal norm to hint to the Prophet ﷺ to propose to her in marriage.

The Chastity of our Youth

The Prophet ﷺ lived in a severely poisoned society; all kinds of moral deterioration and unchaste sinful acts were public. Not only the youth but the aged had entertained sexual deviations and lewd acts. The Prophet ﷺ grew up in such a corrupt society, and he remained unmarried until the age of twenty-five. Despite that, the Prophet ﷺ and some of his famous Companions (*Sahabah*) like Uthman Ibn Affan رضي الله عنه, Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه, and others never engaged in such shameless and sinful practices. They guarded their chastity in such a wicked environment. Nobody ever observed any immoral action originating from the Prophet ﷺ. Both his friends and his enemies viewed him as the best example of morality, honor, uprightness, and purity.

Our youth nowadays, the moment they attain maturity

(1) Al-Tirmidhi

or the age of puberty, suddenly find themselves in this sexually demanding period of their lives in a similar environment of the Makkah community during the Prophet's ﷺ time. All types of appeals to free sensuality, unchastity, risk of potential addiction to pornographic substances that can be easily accessed, total moral declines, and practices of heedlessness threaten them and their future lives. Unless they are rightly guided, they will so fall into terrifying errors. Engaging in such wicked and lustful, and immoral practices, which is the norm for people of their age, will potentially ruin their harmony and prosperity for the remaining part of their lives.

As parents, we must facilitate the means of marriage, as long as our children qualify for marriage's responsibilities, with moderate financial means, and physical and mental abilities. We should help form their sacred union because this is the first option to protect them from indulging in the seas of lusts, passions, and desires in these contaminated surroundings.

Moreover, here is a piece of a Narration (*Hadith*), reported by Abdullah Ibn Masud رضي الله عنه who said, “We were with the Prophet ﷺ while we were young and had no wealth whatever. So, Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said, "O young people! Whoever among you can marry, he should marry, as it will help him lower his gaze and guard his modesty (i.e., his private parts from committing illegal sexual intercourse, etc.), and whoever is not able to marry, should fast, as fasting diminishes his sexual power.”⁽¹⁾

Based on the above Narration (*Hadith*), we must preserve our children through various acts of worship. First of all, they must keep up with their Prayers (*Salah*) and

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

adhere to the advice mentioned in the above Narration (*Hadith*), which is fasting. Instructing them to lower their gaze and caution them against free mixing with the opposite gender and the devastating consequences will also lead to keeping them involved with positive perspectives of life like school, university, civil activism, and social justice, serving the mosques, and participating in conferences, lectures, etc.





Chapter Three

The Best of People

Introduction



Jabir رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "The best of people are those who are most beneficial to other people."⁽¹⁾

A Muslim must strive to be of those who benefit humanity, hoping that he will belong to the rank of the best of people in the sight of Allah ﷻ. Being the best of people is also a handy tool to show Muslims and non-Muslims the mercy and goodness of Islam by calling people to Islam (*Dawah*).

We live in a world where Disbelief (*Kufr*) and Polytheism (*Shirk*) are personal preferences. Shameless, sinful, and immoral practices are also personal preferences and protected by state laws. This environment is not the best option for Muslims who strive to fall into this rank of the best people in the sight of their Creator. In some cases, if Muslims attempt within the boundaries of the law to correct people's beliefs and invite them to moral practices, it can be characterized as a violation of their liberties.

We should fast-forward for a moment to look at the life of the Companions (*Sahabah*) with the Prophet ﷺ in Makkah for the first thirteen years of Prophethood. It was the same situation as many of today's communities. They were outnumbered and oppressed, but still strived hard to benefit the people, and we should do the same as them.

The Quran and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*) teach us that communicating Monotheism (*Tawheed*) and moral

(1) A-Mu'jam al-Awsat - Hasan (fair) according to Al-Albani.

practices to people do not have to be limited to education and preaching. Instead, Monotheism (*Tawheed*) and ethical practices can be displayed more efficiently through our actions, such as feeding the hungry people, housing the homeless, and medicating the sick. The first Jewish Rabbi who accepted Islam called Abdullah Ibn Salam said the first words that he heard coming out of the mouth of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ were: "Oh people! Spread peace and feed the hungry, uphold your kinship ties, and pray at night while people are asleep. You will be admitted into Paradise (*Jannah*) by the will of Allah."⁽¹⁾

Suppose that one cannot attain the highest level of the best of the people through the direct teaching of Monotheism (*Tawheed*), the open denouncing of immorality, and reducing people's struggles. In that case, the least a Muslim can do is secure people from harming others through his hand and tongue, which is the foundation of a good character.

The Prophet ﷺ said, "The Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hand the people are safe, and the Believer (*Mumin*) is the one who is trusted with the lives and wealth of the people."⁽²⁾

We can make Islam more appealing through our good character. Allah ﷻ said,

{ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ }^(۳۳)

[فُصِّلَتْ: 33]

“And who is better in speech than one who invites to Allah and does righteousness and says, "Indeed, I am of

(1) Mustadarak Al-Hakim

(2) Sunan al-Nasā'ī

the Muslims."”(1)

The Alliance of the Virtuous (*Hilf Al-Fudul*)

The Prophet ﷺ also found himself in a situation like many of us experience today. When the Messenger ﷺ was around the age of twenty-five, the War of the Wicked (*Al-Fujar*), where the fighting factions infringed on the sanctity of the sacred months, had just ended. This war costed the tribes of Quraysh numerous lives and considerable wealth. For years in Makkah and its surrounding towns, tension and instability were like a gloomy cloud shading their skies. Everyone was anxiously awaiting the next series of fights among the various tribes.

There was no sense of security and immunity, particularly for those who came from out of town to conduct business in Makkah. Their goods were subject to be taken violently and without payment. Meanwhile, the abused business people were not allowed any display of defiance.

The injustice continued until a Yemeni dealer from the Zubidi tribe came to Makkah to conduct business. One of the prominent leaders in Makkah, Al-A's Ibn Wael, cheated him out of his goods. The Yemeni sold him his commodities, and he resisted paying him the agreed-upon amount.

Unlike the abused in the past, the Yemeni merchant refused to be passive about his case of injustice. He knocked on every door in Makkah, repeating his claim and crying for help. He finally decided to turn his misfortune into a public cry. He went up to the mountain of Abu Qubais and shouted his tragedy loudly, demanding the

(1) Quran 41:33

community's collective help.

The prominent elderly figures in Makkah gathered in the house of their famous, wealthiest, and most influential leader, Abdullah Ibn Judan, to further examine the oppressed Yemeni merchant's case. He also wanted to generate a process to ensure fairness for similar incidents in the future. In the house of Abdullah Ibn Judan, they all agreed to establish The Alliance of the Virtuous (*Hilf Al-Fudul*).

After lengthy deliberations, they decided to include the followings points in the agreement:

1. Everyone is entitled to fairness and justice regardless of being a local or from out of town.
2. The arbitration committee will examine all cases of injustice carefully and restore the rights to the oppressed immediately after their decision.
3. The oppressors will sustain the consequences of their actions.
4. The first action taken was of the Yemeni merchant's case. Al-A's Ibn Wael will either pay him the price of his goods or return the goods to him.
5. The Alliance's resolutions apply to all future cases.

All the leaders of Makkah agreed to join The Alliance of the Virtuous (*Hilf Al-Fudul*). Overall, this agreement obliged all the leaders of Makkah to collectively secure justice for those whose rights had been violated.

Although Allah's Messenger ﷺ was too young to be an active member of this agreement, which mainly comprised the elderly, he joined it. The Prophet ﷺ and his uncles enthusiastically voted in support of the treaty. This showed the Prophet ﷺ was a civil rights activist who was disturbed

by the oppression and wickedness in the community and wished to advance ambitious and thoughtful strategies that secured social justice for all before he became a Prophet.

The Prophet ﷺ participated and witnessed this remarkable agreement. Decades later, after he was appointed as a Prophet, he ﷺ stated his pleasure and gratification for being amongst those who stood up for justice in a society where prejudice and inequality were the trademarks.

Prophet ﷺ said the oath of The Alliance of the Virtuous (*Hilf Al-Fudul*) was more pleasant than owning the most expensive and valuable things of this world such as the red-haired camels of his time. According to the Prophet ﷺ, even if he were summoned to it during his Prophethood, he would have accepted it.⁽¹⁾

In Prophet's ﷺ own words, "I was also there in Abdullah Bin Judan's house when the chiefs of Makkah endorsed the agreement. This declaration, in my opinion, is more valuable to me than owning red-colored camels. And if I am called for something similar to it again, even though Islam is now established, I will support it."⁽²⁾

These few words of the Prophet ﷺ are a testimony for Muslims today, to restore their social activism campaigns, to protect civil rights, and to advance social justice for all. We must encourage our institutions to defend the rights of the weak and oppressed and help people be proactive in their struggle against oppression and all kinds of immoralities, no matter the cause.

(1) Mustadark Al-Hakim

(2) Al-Bayhaqi

The Need for Today's Alliance

The world has become more of a global community, and regardless of our place on the map, people are undergoing the same difficulties. Hence, it was Allah's ﷺ Divine Wisdom to declare His final message and the conveyor of it as a universal Messenger. Allah ﷻ said,

{ قُلْ يَأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا } [الأعراف:158]

“Say Oh Muhammad "Oh mankind! I am Allah's Messenger to all of you."”⁽¹⁾

The many difficulties of today in our world demand mutual aid and joint work by people of different beliefs and ideologies. Examples of these challenges and struggles are hunger, racial and religious prejudice, nuclear warfare, environment destruction, immorality, the family crisis, corruption, terrorism, and more. This list of challenges is not exclusive to one community or a nation; instead, it is a global phenomenon. To effectively resolve these problems, joint efforts across communities and faith groups have to see the light.

For Muslims who are a minority in a non-Muslim community, The Alliance of the Virtuous (*Hilf Al-Fudul*) from the Prophet's ﷺ pre-prophethood time, serves as a green light to form joint efforts by people irrespective of faith to work together for the conservation, protection, and promotion of human values. This sort of unity can be achieved at different levels—from the local to the regional to the national and even international levels.

(1) Quran 22:158

The Situation of Muslims in the West

Muslims live in an environment of growing tolerance and respect in the West. Muslims can preserve their faith and their Islamic culture, and at the same time, work together with people of different faiths and ideas towards common goals.

When it comes to the subject of working with non-Muslims towards common causes, we have two extreme views. Nevertheless, the right path is in between the two extremes, which is always the perception of subjects of great significance.

The first extreme is of those who cannot even tolerate and accept the idea of Muslims joining hands with non-Muslims. They usually confuse it with Loyalty and Opposition (*Al-Wala' Wal-Bara'*). Furthermore, they equate working with non-Muslims as a testimonial of acceptance to their faith.

The other extreme is those who are entirely liberal when it comes to working with non-Muslims. They simply do it with zero exceptions. You will often find them associating themselves more with non-Muslims than Muslims. Furthermore, they are normally amongst the category of the self-claimed leaders in the Muslim community, or seekers of it. So, when the average Muslim views them in a publicized, working-together campaign, standing next to non-Muslims even when the non-Muslims are known to openly promote principles that totally contradict the basic tenants of Islam, or they openly practice immoral and sinful patterns of behavior which are displeasing to Allah ﷻ, the average Muslim will assume these unethical practices as acceptable. They confuse the teachings of Islam with the actions of the self-claimed leaders.

The Middle Ground

The middle path between the previously mentioned two extremes is challenging and quite hard to identify for layman Muslims. Only a few learned Muslims can identify this middle path. The majority of Muslims will be unable to recognize the middle ground, which leads to another controversy, i.e., who can help them identify the middle path?

Before we explain the signs of the middle path, a Muslim must come to terms with the following conclusions, which are not subject to any compromises:

1. The primary purpose of a Muslim and his foremost priority in this world is to save himself and his family from the Hellfire (*Jahannam*), which will only come as the result of seeking Allah's ﷻ pleasure.
2. One cannot jeopardize the above higher aim in any way to relieve other people's distress. For example, should a Muslim ally himself with a distressed individual or community to promote immorality, evil, sin, and more? The answer is “No,” because he will compromise his higher aim in life. In particular, the self-claimed Muslim leaders who are followed by the masses must refrain from doing that because they are not only compromising their higher purposes but lead their followers astray as well.
3. One cannot cooperate with certain groups whose primary goal is to promote their distorted or heretical beliefs or generate tolerance and acceptance towards their lifestyle, which is considered sinful by Islamic standards.
4. Before working with non-Muslim groups who are indulged in immoral and wicked practices such as

same-sex marriages, we as Muslims are responsible towards them to encourage them to come out of their sins and to educate them on the Divine Wisdom on why the All-Mighty banned such practices and how to reform their lifestyle.

5. Working with non-Muslims to advance common interests is the type that falls in a grey area. It is not the crystal-clear Lawful (*Halal*) and Unlawful (*Haram*) type of action. Hence, one must be cautious when addressing this subject. Furthermore, there is no comprehensive religious ruling that may apply to all cases. Instead, every case has to be examined and judged individually (*Ijtihad*).
6. We cannot jeopardize our Islamic guidelines in return for recognition in the broader community or gain certain groups' support.

The Proper Legal Maxim

We do have a relevant legal maxim that can address collective ventures with non-Muslims to promote mutual benefits. It can also become a generic guide for identifying the middle pathway.

The legal maxim states, "The prevention of harm precedes the accomplishment of benefits." It means if we have an initiative that will bring us benefits, but at the same time, bring more harm than good, then we should refrain from taking that initiative.

The evidence is the following Verse (*Ayah*) when Allah ﷻ said,

{ وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ كَذَلِكَ زَيَّلَ الْكُلَّ أُمَّةٍ }
 { [الأنعام: 108] } عملهم ثم إلى ربهم مرجعهم فينتههم بما كانوا يعملون ﴿١٠٨﴾

"O Believers (*Mumineen*)! Do not revile those whom they invoke other than Allah because they will revile Allah in ignorance out of spite. For We have indeed made the deeds of every people seem fair to them."⁽¹⁾

Some Muslims may assume that cursing the idols is of great benefit, which is true, but obtaining these benefits will come at the expense of the harm, i.e., Disbelievers (*Kafirun*) cursing Allah ﷻ and the Prophet ﷺ. Therefore, we must refrain from doing it altogether. So, suppose a joint venture of working with non-Muslims will generate any amount of harm, whether small or significant, we must avoid it entirely because we are required to abandon the action based on the legal maxim.

For example, appearing in a public joint venture being a self-claimed Muslim leader or a Muslim community's public figure with non-Muslims who are propagators of sinful and immoral practices will bring a tremendous amount of benefit. Still, it will cause the ordinary layman Muslim to believe that these unethical, corrupt practices are accepted in Islam because the Imam or the public figure is mixing with them. The verdict is then not allowing to do so because the prevention of harm precedes the invitation of benefit.

The Method of Determining Joint Ventures

Whether eliminating harm or achieving a benefit, our primary intent should always be seeking Allah's ﷻ pleasure. Today, in the West, we live with non-Muslims while fulfilling all the rights due to them as neighbors. We work and engage in business with them while refraining from impermissible jobs and transactions as dictated by our

(1) Quran 6:108

religion.

We share infrastructure, drinking water, and permissible foods – Islam allows all of them. The Prophet ﷺ praised The Alliance of The Virtuous (*Hilf Al-Fudul*), so much so that the Prophet ﷺ announced that had the same agreement enjoining a common benefit shared with non-Muslims had come up during his Prophethood, he would have readily joined it.

Below are four steps to follow whether to proceed or not, with a joint venture with non-Muslims to advance mutual interests:

1. Whenever we receive an invitation to a joint effort with a non-Muslim group, it must be to promote a common benefit or lift oppression.
2. We must assess the potential harm and benefit through principles found in the Quran, Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*), and scholarly opinions, and in light of the legal maxim (The prevention of harm is a priority over the achievement of benefit).
3. One should decide based on the assessment of those who may have more knowledge and experience in case he is unable to decide on his own.
4. In case he decides to move on with the joint venture and later finds out this decision was incorrect, he must make a public statement to correct the public harm that may be incurred.

The Heavenly Stone

It is said in the Quran,

{ إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٥٧﴾ [آل عمران: 96]

"Indeed, the first House (of worship) for mankind

placed in earth is, the one in (Makkah), full of blessing, and guidance for Al-Alamin (mankind and Jinn)."⁽¹⁾

Ibn Kathir رحمه الله said, “Allah tells us that the first house of worship appointed for humanity, where Muslims can perform various rituals around it, is a sanctuary where people find spiritual and physical security. It is the House of Allah, the Kaabah.”⁽²⁾

We have a Narration (*Hadith*) reported by Abu Dhar رضي الله عنه, who said: Once I asked the Prophet ﷺ “Which house of worship was placed on earth first?” The Prophet answered, “Al-Masjid Al-Haram in Makkah.” Then I asked him again, “Then which?” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa.” Then I asked, “How many years were between them?” He said, “40 years.” I asked, “Then which?” He said, “Wherever you are when the time for Prayer (*Salah*) comes then pray... they are all mosques of Allah.”⁽³⁾

Allah ﷻ caused the earth to drown because of flooding when they rejected the 950-year long message of Prophet Nuh (Noah) عليه السلام. Later on, Allah ﷻ showed Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) عليه السلام and his son Prophet Ismail (Ishmael) عليه السلام, the location of the house, and commanded them to renovate and erect its pillars again. Allah ﷻ said,

{ وَإِذْ بَوَّأْنَا لِإِبْرَاهِيمَ مَكَانَ الْبَيْتِ أَنْ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِي شَيْئًا وَطَهَّرَ بَيْتِي لِلطَّائِفِينَ
وَالْقَائِمِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ } [الحج:26]

“And (remember) when We showed Ibrahim

(1) Quran 3:96

(2) Tafsir Ibn Kathir - Chapter Al-Imran

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

(Abraham) the site of the (Sacred) House (the Kaabah at Makkah) (saying): "Associate not anything (in worship) with Me, [*La ilaha illa Allah* (none has the right to be worshiped but Allah; Islamic Monotheism), and sanctify My House for those who circumambulate it, and those who stand up for Prayer (*Salah*), and those who bow (submit themselves with humility and obedience to Allah) and make prostration (in prayer, etc.)."”(1)

When Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام was about to complete the task of erecting the walls of the house of Allah جِبْرَائِيلَ, he was left with a hole in one of the corners, he asked his son Prophet Ismail (Ishmael) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام to look for the fitting stone to fit in the hole to complete the wall of Kaabah.

When Prophet Ismail (Ishmael) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام came back being dismayed that he couldn't find any suitable stone after a long search, he noticed that the bright white color rock is already placed correctly in the place. Prophet Ismail (Ishmael) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام asked his father, “How did you get it?” Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام told him that this unique rock is a heavenly stone and that Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام brought down this unusual rock from Paradise (*Jannah*). Abdullah Ibn Abbas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The Blackstone came down from Paradise (*Jannah*).”⁽²⁾

Allah جِبْرَائِيلَ commanded Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام to call people to come and perform the Pilgrimage (*Hajj*)

(1) Quran 22:26

(2) Al-Tirmidhi

and *Umrah*). Allah ﷻ said,

{ وَأَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجِّ يَأْتُوكَ رِجَالًا وَعَلَى كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَكَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ ﴿٢٧﴾ }

[الحج:27]

**"And proclaim to humanity the Pilgrimage (*Hajj*).
They will come to you on foot and every lean camel.
They will come from every deep and distant (wide)
mountain highway (to perform *Hajj*)."**⁽¹⁾

The Quraysh were the custodians of the House (Kaabah), which gave them a lot of privileges. Unfortunately, they innovated a lot in the rituals, but above all, they placed their idols around the House of Allah ﷻ.

The Blackstone, the heavenly stone, throughout the years, a considerable number of Muslims worldwide make Pilgrimage (*Hajj* and *Umrah*) while performing Circumambulation (*Tawaf*) around the Kaabah; pilgrims find it very special to notice, star, kiss, or even touch it. The heavenly stone is a black color stone that has many significances in Islam.

The first reason Muslims are keen on reaching the Blackstone is that it is the only object on earth that came from Paradise (*Jannah*). Concerning the heavenly origin of Blackstone, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Jibreel (Gabriel) sent down the Blackstone from Paradise (*Jannah*), and it was white in color more than milk, then the sins of the humankind turned into black in color."⁽²⁾

It is also an established Tradition (*Sunnah*) of the Prophet ﷺ due to which the Umar Ibn Al-Khattab رضي الله عنه once kissed the Blackstone. He said, "No reservation. I realize

(1) Quran 22:27

(2) Al-Tirmidhi

that you are a stone that could neither benefit nor harm anyone. Had I not observed Allah's Messenger ﷺ kissing you, I wouldn't have kissed you."⁽¹⁾

One more reason – the Blackstone on the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*) will bear witness in approval of those who did their best in trying to reach it. The Prophet ﷺ said, "By Allah, On the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), Allah will allow the Blackstone to present in such a manner that it will have eyes and tongue to affirm the faith of all those who did reach it (*Istilam*)."⁽²⁾

Reconstruction of the Kaabah

The constant flooding made the base of the Kaabah unsettled and unstable. Quraysh resolved to reconstruct the Kaabah so that it stands in the face of the flooding.

They established an agreement that no illegal funding, particularly gains from interest-bearing loans (Usury), prostitution, gambling, or all other forbidden earnings, shall be used for the reconstruction of the Kaabah. Another aggression was about to break out regarding who should be privileged by positioning the Blackstone in its place.

Some suggested a solution that the next man to arrive at the site will be the one to place it or act as a mediator to resolve the dispute. The Prophet ﷺ was that person by the will of Allah ﷻ to establish him ﷺ further in his community and to show the leaders of Makkah his conflict resolution abilities besides the characters which they know him by; trustworthiness and truthfulness. When they saw him ﷺ and identified him ﷺ from a distance, they all shouted in an optimistic tone saying the trustworthy and the truthful has

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(2) Al-Tirmidhi

come to help us resolve the contention.

The Prophet ﷺ asked for a large piece of cloth to be brought to him; some say he removed his cloak. He put it on the ground, placed the Blackstone onto it, and called for all the tribal leaders to hold the sheet and lift the stone together to the Kaabah.

At the final stage, the Prophet ﷺ positioned the Blackstone himself. The situation highlighted the trust, honor, and dignity he ﷺ held amongst his people even before the first Revelation (*Wahi*).

Three Contemporary Lessons to Muslim Leaders of Today

1. The first contemporary lesson is for the Muslims living in the West who build and finance houses of worship (mosques) from the usury. The Quraysh pledged to fund the reconstruction of the Kaabah from lawful revenue to prohibit funding that originated from usury, prostitution, robbery, and gambling. However, they ended up short of funds due to which Hijr Ismail, which was part of the original Kaabah, could not be added. Despite that, they refused to fund the reconstruction of the House of Allah ﷻ (Kaabah) from unlawful incomes.
2. The second lesson – our Muslim communities in the West often suffer many power struggles that interrupt the intended services, simply because of the question, who does what? Or who is in charge? Which negatively eats up our resources (negative energy).

Observe the wisdom of the Prophet ﷺ and his leadership talents. He ﷺ could have transported the Blackstone himself and located it on the walls of Kaabah. Instead, he ﷺ wished to engage everyone in the process. He ﷺ realized that the controversy initially started because the

leaders of each tribe desired to get the honor of positioning the Blackstone himself. The Prophet ﷺ made everyone happy by engaging them all at once.

3. The third lesson – leaders of the Muslim Community (*Ummah*) should always consider the condition of their people when it comes to developing and managing its evolution. The state of the Muslim Community (*Ummah*) in terms of their social, cultural, and educational standards, as well as their living standards, and how long have they been Muslims, are crucial elements that leaders must take into consideration when determining resolutions.

We base it on a Narration (*Hadith*) reported by Aishah رضي الله عنها, who narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “O Aishah! Had your people not very recently been in the Period of Ignorance (*Jahiliyyah*), I would have had the Kaabah demolished and included the left-out portion within its walls. I would have also brought the inside of the Kaabah to ground level and added two doors, one on the eastern wall and the other on the western wall. In this manner, it would be according to the building and foundation of Ibrahim (Abraham).”⁽¹⁾



(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim



Third Stage

**The Revelation
(37-40 Years Old)**



Introducing the Third Stage

Introduction



The third stage of the forty-year pre-Prophethood period was when the Revelation was about to come. We selected three meaningful topics that you will find contemporary and relevant to our time. The three subjects are also essential and can also be said to be the turning points in the aspect of significant developments in the Prophet's life ﷺ.

Like throughout the previous stages and chapters, the methodology through which we decided to present the various subjects of the Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ is to select topics that are both vital in his life ﷺ, and the lives of his Companions (*Sahabah*). Meanwhile, these topics are relevant to our time, and they clear up certain misconceptions in the lives of the Muslim Community (*Ummah*) of today.

The Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ is not a fairy tale, which we read for entertainment. Instead, it is a process of reading through the life of the Prophet ﷺ and the lives of his Companions (*Sahabah*) and conclude beneficial lessons that are relevant to our time. It is a source where we may seek to find resolutions for our current difficulties. We explained the significance of the Seerah in detail at the very beginning of this volume I when we answered the question of why must we study the Seerah. To maintain this goal, you may notice that we skip some events from the Seerah mainly because they may not be relevant to our time.

To conclude, every generation of the Muslim Community (*Ummah*) until the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*) must always read the Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ.

in light of their challenges and the situation in general, to mainly take out what will be exclusive to their guidance.

Chapter One: In the Cave of Hira

In Cave of Hira, we will discuss two matters which are again relevant to our time, besides being significant in the life of the Prophet ﷺ. The first subject is that of withdrawing from the society or mixing with the people when they are not following the religion, and the rising levels of injustice, wickedness, and corruption. The question is, which is better? To associate or to isolate?

As for the second subject, what is the true meaning of contemplation (*Tafakur*)?

Which one is Better? To Associate or to Isolate?

This particular subject is occupying the minds of many Muslims today. They are seriously considering isolating and secluding themselves from the larger communities – especially at the moment, with the rising number of tests and tribulations in our communities, in an unprecedented way. They have a hard time navigating their aspired lives through these non-stop challenges.

Today's devout Muslims can't say anything about an orchestrated lifestyle imposed upon them by the higher and leading system. The executives of these orders are the ones who command arbitrarily, stylishly, and intelligently how pious Muslims should conduct their lives and raise their children.

A system that does not promote Monotheism (*Tawheed*) or morality; instead, it generates atheism and lewdness. The makers of this system develop and advance the scheme that God has no place in your life. According to them, it is the basis for the separation between the system

they set up for us to follow and God. The propagators of this system teach the next generation every second through the various platforms. Their repeated message is, "There should be no place for God in your lives."

Similarly, the Prophet ﷺ towards the end of his forty years of pre-Prophethood stage found himself "a stranger" as many of us do now. There was nothing Prophet ﷺ could do about it, so he ﷺ decided to withdraw to the Cave of Hira on the top of one of the highest mountains in Makkah.

Now, we will present this relevant subject of association or isolation in light of our Messenger's ﷺ withdrawal to the Cave of Hira. We will answer the question regarding which is better between associating or isolating from our communities in light of the Quran and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*).

Contemplation (*Tafakkur*)

We will also discuss in this chapter the contemporary subject of Contemplation (*Tafakkur*). We know this subject is misinterpreted by the mystic Muslims (extreme Sufis), to the extent that they give it a priority, preference, and interest over fulfilling the required acts of worship mandated upon us by Allah ﷻ, following the way of the Prophet ﷺ. So, we will draw the line between the two extremes because some other Muslims, on the other hand, neglect entirely this act of worship, which can boost our Faith (*Iman*) considerably.

Of course, the occasion which invited this subject into our list of discussions is our Prophet ﷺ. Contemplation (*Tafakkur* or *Tahanus*) was the act he did inside the Cave of Hira.

Chapter Two: “Read!” Thrice!

In the second chapter, we will address the first direct encounter between the heavens and earth in the Arabian Peninsula since the time of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) عليه السلام and Prophet Ismail (Ishmael) عليه السلام, on the top of the highest mountain in Makkah in the cave of Hira, when Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عليه السلام met the Prophet ﷺ. It was an encounter that did not only change the Arabian Peninsula but the whole world.

We will discuss two topics in this chapter, which are all remarkably significant and relevant as well, such as:

- I. Was the Prophet ﷺ illiterate?
- II. The first contact with Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عليه السلام.

Chapter Three: The Intervals of Revelations

In this chapter, we will discuss the subject of “Why did the Revelation discontinue for a while?” And how hard was this on the Prophet ﷺ, and how much he remarkably suffered missing Angel Jibreel’s (Gabriel) عليه السلام return?

After this first encounter, Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عليه السلام did not show up again, even though the Prophet ﷺ was so eager to the extent that he would go over and again to the same place where they both met. Meanwhile, we know that the Prophet's ﷺ experience was tough on him, yet he missed it, and he wanted it back.

Likewise, we now may have a tough time allocating the time to read the Quran and Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*). It is even harder to act upon them but the fruits are priceless. At the same time, not following them is a major loss for us – a hallow life, empty from serenity, tranquility, and peace of mind. Allah ﷻ said,

{ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ ﴿٢٨﴾ }

[الرعد: 28]

"Those who believe in the law and her hearts find rest and peace in his remembrance."⁽¹⁾

In this context, we want to refute those who promote the claim that the Prophet ﷺ attempted suicide by throwing himself from the top of the mountain. Of course, we will do this by showing them that the evidence they use is inauthentic even though it is in Sahih Al-Bukhari, so we claim to have a silent consensus on its authenticity.

Also, in this chapter, we want to address some of the pieces of advice of the Prophet ﷺ to stop reading the Revelation when we are about to argue and differ on it; reconciling the command to read, learn, and follow after taking a break. So, where is the middle ground?



(1) Quran 13:28



Chapter One

In the Cave of Hira

Introduction



We will discuss two vital topics in this chapter. These two topics meet our standards of particular cases of the Seerah, and they are as follows:

- I. Association or Isolation?
- II. The Act of Contemplation (*Tafakkur*).

Association or Isolation?

Allah ﷻ sent His Messengers when there was a dire need to rectify and reform people's grave conditions, which was always the source of degradation, wickedness, injustice, and Polytheism (*Shirk*). When humanity chooses to compromise the right of the Creator, they will jeopardize their mutual rights. Allah ﷻ mentioned this in the Quran in a chapter called Al-Rum (The Romans), look carefully at the context of these Verses (*Ayat*). Allah ﷻ said,

﴿ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ رَزَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ هَلْ مِنْ شُرَكَائِكُمْ مَنْ يَفْعَلُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ شَيْئًا سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾ ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ كَانُوا أَكْثَرُ هُمْ مُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾ ﴾ [الروم: 40-42]

"Allah is He Who created you, then provided food for you, then will cause you to die, then (again) He will give your life (on the Day of Resurrection). Is there any of your (so-called) partners (of Allah) that do anything of that? Glory be to Him! And Exalted be He above all that (evil) they associate (with Him). Evil (sins and disobedience of Allah, etc.) has appeared on land and

sea, because of what the hands of men have earned (by oppression and evil deeds, etc.), that Allah may make them taste a part of that which they have done, so that they may return (by repenting to Allah and begging His Pardon). Say (O Muhammad): "Travel in the land and see what the End of those before (you) was! Most of them were Polythiists (*Mushrikun*)."⁽¹⁾

While wickedness and corruption are widespread in the society, there is a segment that benefits from this situation. Allah ﷻ referred to them in the Quran as *Al-Mutrafoon*, which means those who are self-indulgent and are lost in the pursuit of whims and urges without moral limit or consideration. Allah ﷻ said,

{ وَكَذَلِكَ مَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِنْ نَذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَرِهِمْ مُّقْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ } [الزُّخْرُف: 23]

And similarly, We sent not a warner before you (O Muhammad) to any town (people) but the luxurious ones among them said: "We found our fathers following a certain way and religion, and we will indeed follow their footsteps."⁽²⁾

Usually, they are the people who control every means to maintain their position and keep it the way it is. This group turns out to be the enemies of Messengers when Allah ﷻ sends them to rectify the people's condition.

On the other side were the abused, the weak and oppressed; they right away would become the followers of the Messengers because they were suffering the

(1) Quran 30:40-42

(2) Quran 43:23

consequences of the injustices in their societies. However, they did not have the necessary power to change the condition. Consequently, they would find themselves experiencing further abuse. In fact, they saw oppression at the hands of the self-indulgent increase but they would no longer be interested in being abused. They would slowly reveal some signs of defiance.

So, the Prophet ﷺ found himself living in that society of wicked and corrupt people. Of course, he could not change it right away. As a result of this, he ﷺ decided to withdraw from the community. He ﷺ started spending time on the top of the highest mountain in Makkah, called the Mountain of Al-Nur, in the Cave of Hira, where he ﷺ could have a chance to see Allah's ﷻ House (Kaabah) from a distance. This practice of seclusion in a cave was not customary in Makkah at the time, due to superstitions that led them to believe these places were the dwellings of demons, devils, and Jinn.

What did the Prophet ﷺ use to do in the Cave of Hira?

Our Mother Aishah رضي الله عنها answers this question. Imam Bukhari compiled a Narration (*Hadith*) where she said, "...and then the love of seclusion was endeared to him. He ﷺ would go in seclusion in the Cave of Hira where he worshiped for many nights before returning to his family. He would take supplies with him and then come back to Khadijah to take provision again."⁽¹⁾

Of course, Aishah رضي الله عنها mentioned, "Worshiping Allah" but we know at this stage the Prophet ﷺ did not receive

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

Revelation as yet, nor was he to worship Allah according to the way of Christians, or Jews for example.

Ibn Hajar رحمته الله narrated, “There was nothing explicitly reported about his worship nature in the cave. The meaning of what Aishah mentioned; isolation in itself is a form of worship because a Muslim is obliged to separate himself from the evildoers who are indulging in falsehood and unlawful acts when he is unable to forbid their evil or command the good on them. And this is the meaning of the term ‘*Tahanoth.*’ And maybe this is what our Mother Aishah رضي الله عنها meant.”⁽¹⁾

Association or Isolation?

The Muslim Community (*Ummah*) is undergoing a state which the Prophet ﷺ called as *Al-Wahan*, which means weakness, excessive love for this world, and hating death as its main cause. Such conditions harm the Muslim Community (*Ummah*) and it considerably destroys their Hereafter (*Akhirah*). As for this world (*Dunya*), they turned into a plate, where the rest of the world eats of it.

Thawban رضي الله عنه narrated the Prophet ﷺ said, “The people will soon summon one another to attack you as people when eating invite others to share their dish.” Someone asked, “Will that be because of our small numbers at that time?” He replied, “No, you will be numerous at that time. But you will be scum and rubbish like that carried down by a torrent, and Allah will take the fear of you from the breasts of your enemy and last enervation into your hearts.” Someone asked, “What is *Wahan* (enervation)?” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ replied, “Love of the world (*Dunya*)

(1) Fath Al-Bari

and dislike of death.”⁽¹⁾

Islam now is also witnessing the second strangeness, which the Prophet ﷺ mentioned in the following Narration (*Hadith*). Abdullah Ibn Masud رضي الله عنه stated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Indeed, Islam began as something strange, and it will return to being strange just as it began, so glad tidings of Paradise (*Jannah*) be for the strangers." It was said to the Prophet, "Who are they?" He responded, "They are those who rectify when the people become corrupted."⁽²⁾

There is another Narration (*Hadith*) by Amr Ibn Al-As رضي الله عنه where it is said that the Prophet ﷺ was asked, "Who are they?" He ﷺ responded, "They are righteous people amongst many people who are evil, and those who obey them are few compared to those who disobey them."

In another Narration (*Hadith*), "Those who hate them are numerous." In a report transmitted by Imam Ahmad and At-Tabarani from the Narration (*Hadith*) of Abdullah Ibn Amr رضي الله عنه, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Glad tidings (*Tooba*) are for the strangers." It was said, "And who are the strangers?" He replied, "A righteous people surrounded by an abundance of evil people. Those who disobey them are more numerous than those who obey them."

We do have some Narrations (*Ahadith*), which may encourage running away from our communities and discourage blending with them. For example, Imam Al-Bukhari placed this Narration (*Hadith*) under a chapter called, "Escaping with your religion from *Fitan*." Abu Saeed Al-Khudri رضي الله عنه reported the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Soon the best property of a Muslim will be a flock of

(1) Sahih Abu Daud, Al-Albani

(2) Reported by Ahmad and At-Tabarani

sheep he takes to the top of a mountain, or in the valleys of rainfall, fleeing with his religion from tribulations."⁽¹⁾

In another Narration (*Hadith*) reported by Abu Saeed Al-Khudri رضي الله عنه, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Whoever among you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand. If he is unable to do so, then with his tongue. If he is unable to do so, then with his heart, and that is the weakest level of faith."⁽²⁾

These two records may call for *isolation* over *association* in similar conditions. Once a Muslim is unable to change the evil with his hand or tongue in his circle of associates, whether big or small, then the only means he has is to condemn the evil with the heart based on the Narration (*Hadith*), which also means boycotting and withdrawing from the scene.

The Prophet ﷺ was asked about the matter. Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "The Believer (*Mumin*) who associates with people and endures their dissatisfaction with tolerance will be rewarded greater than the one who does not associate with people and does not put up with their annoyance."⁽³⁾

The Middle Ground

Ibn Taymiyyah رحمته الله said, "The fact of the matter is that blending may sometimes be obligatory or recommended. It is sometimes highly recommended for an individual to join others. Other times, it's better to remain alone in isolation.

It all depends on the purpose. If associating with others

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- (1) Sahih Al-Bukhari
 - (2) Sahih Muslim
 - (3) Al-Tirmidhi

is to cooperate in righteousness and piety, then it is advised; but if it is to encourage wrongdoing and violation, it is forbidden. Associating with Muslims is a kind of worship, as in the five daily prayers, Friday Prayer (*Salat Al-Jumu'ah*), Eid, eclipse prayers, Prayer (*Salah*) for rain, and so on. The same applies to be involved in gatherings that increase a person's Faith (*Iman*), either because he benefits from these gatherings or he can benefit others, and so on."⁽¹⁾

We also need to remember that the Prophet ﷺ warned us against underestimating the importance of becoming a member of the community of faith. He called those who are alone as sheep that are straying from the flock, and inescapably the wolf will soon eat them.

Abu Darda رضي الله عنه reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "If three people in a town or in the desert do not establish prayer among them, then Shaytan (Satan) has overcome them. You must establish the congregation, for the wolf eats the isolated sheep." In another narration, the Prophet ﷺ said, "If they do not announce the call to prayer and establish prayer among them."⁽²⁾

A Muslim must make it his intention and aim always to remind and call others to righteousness and uprightness – to always warn and tell them against evil and immorality. There is no good in withdrawing from such groups and individuals, as long as you invite them to the truth and remind them always that it's better to blend with them.

The Prophet ﷺ recommended for us to associate ourselves with groups where there is a need for people,

(1) Majmoo Al-Fataawa, 10/425

(2) Sahih Abī Dāwūd by Al-Albani

who can change the corrupt, and encourage the good, given that the one who performs this essential task is patient concerning the irritation and inconvenience which he may experience during the performance. Sometimes, isolation can bring more harm to a Muslim than merging with the broader community. The secluded Muslim will lack the necessary support, advice, and guidance when he goes astray while not being in a community. It is one situation where isolation produces harm and hardness on the individual Muslim.

In conclusion, we need to remember that Allah ﷻ ordered us to be the best community. He brought out to humankind because of the pre-requisites; enjoining what is right and forbidding evil based on our firm belief in Allah ﷻ. We are sure and resolute in our faith that Allah ﷻ will not send any more Messengers to rectify the communities' conditions. The duty and responsibility of correcting the wrongdoing shifted to the Muslim Community (*Ummah*). It is now our responsibility, and it is left for us to rectify and reform the condition of humanity and bring them to Monotheism (*Tawheed*). Hence, it is not an option like some people may assume. We must engage with these communities, provided that we are protecting our dedication to Islam while calling them to the truth.

The Act of Contemplation (*Tafakkur*)

Contemplation (*Tafakkur*) is one of the essential acts of worship in Islam. Islam utilizes the human faculty of intellect, but it confines its functions because it has certain limitations where the rationale cannot go beyond.

Five Types of Contemplation (*Tafakkur*)

1. Contemplating upon the signs in the universe is one of the great acts of worship enjoined upon us and is greatly

encouraged in the Quran. Many Verses (*Ayat*) in the Quran invite us to do the act of Contemplation (*Tafakkur*), which we can call in this particular context the terms “Reflecting,” “Pondering” or “Contemplating.” Allah ﷻ said,

{ الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هٰذَا بَطِلًا سُبْحٰنَكَ فَقِنَا عَذٰبَ النَّارِ ﴿١٩١﴾ } [آل عمران: 191]

“Those who remember Allah (always, and in prayers) standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and the earth, (saying): Our Lord! You have not created (all) this without purpose. Glory be to You! (Exalted are You above all that they associate with You as partners). Give us salvation from the torment of the Fire.”⁽¹⁾

Allah ﷻ also said,

{ وَكَآيِنٍ مِّنْ آٰيٰتٍ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ يَمُرُوْنَ عَلَيْهَا وَهُمْ عَنْهَا مُعْرِضُوْنَ ﴿١٠٥﴾ } [يوسف: 105]

“How many signs are there in the heavens and the earth that they pass by while they are disregarding of it.”⁽²⁾

Contemplating on the creations of Allah ﷻ has many benefits. It is the main gate that leads us to recognize our Creator. If we acknowledge Him, we will then submit to Him and obey His Messengers; through submission and obedience, we will achieve success in this world (*Dunya*) and the Hereafter (*Akhirah*).

2. To Contemplate (*Tafakkur*) upon the revealed signs and miracles in the Quran and Prophetic Tradition

(1) Quran 3:191

(2) Quran 12:105

(*Sunnah*), in this context is called Deliberation (*Tadabbur*). Allah ﷻ said,

{ كَتَبْنَا إِلَيْكَ مَبْرُوكًا لِيَدَّبُرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَيَتَذَكَّرُوا وَأُولَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ } [ص:29]

"(This is) a Book (the Quran) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings that they may ponder over its Verses (*Ayat*), and that men of understanding may remember."⁽¹⁾

Allah ﷻ also rebuked the Hypocrites (*Munafiqun*) in two places in the Quran for neglecting the act of Deliberation of Quran (*Tadabbur Al-Quran*), which is reflecting upon the Quran. Allah ﷻ said,

"Do they not then think deeply in the Quran, or are their hearts locked up (from understanding it)?"⁽²⁾

Allah ﷻ also said,

{ أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا } [محمد:24]

"Then, do they not reflect upon the Quran? If it had been from [any] other than Allah, they would have found within it much contradiction."⁽³⁾

Of course, this particular act of Deliberation (*Tadabbur*) will enable us to understand the Quran better, so we can become more adherent to Allah's ﷻ commands.

3. Contemplation (*Tafakkur*) concerning looking at what one has sent on ahead of deeds – Contemplation

(1) Quran 38:29

(2) Quran 47:24

(3) Quran 4:82

(*Tafakkur*) in this particular context is called Introspection (*Muhasabah*), which is to call oneself to account. There is Quranic evidence in Surat Al-Hashr where Allah ﷻ said,

{ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا

تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ [الحشر: 18]

"O you who believe! Fear Allah and keep your duty to Him. And let every person look to what he has sent forth for tomorrow, and fear Allah. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what you do."⁽¹⁾

The famous statement of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab رضي الله عنه also emphasizes the act of calling ourselves to account. Umar رضي الله عنه said, "Take account of yourselves before Allah brings you to account; weigh yourselves before you are Allah weighs your deeds in the scale."⁽²⁾

Calling oneself to account is required before doing any act, while doing it, and after doing it, at all times. Before Contemplation (*Tafakkur*) on the outcome of every action, we must examine and think about the consequences before we say or do anything in this life.

Unfortunately, many Muslims nowadays are adopting non-Muslims' manners once it comes to running their mouths under the freedom of speech justification. They simply say that we are free to say anything and do whatever we feel like doing.

Islam says no to this behavior. Before you say or do anything, think carefully about its consequences on yourself and other people you lead and influence.

(1) Quran 59:18

(2) Musnad Ahmed, labeled Hassan by Al-Albani

Moreover, observe its implications not in this world (*Dunya*) but also the Hereafter (*Akhirah*).

This act of calling oneself to account or Introspection (*Muhasabah*) will make one focus more on refining, adjusting one's course of action to not just better this worldly life but the Hereafter (*Akhirah*) as well. This is in line with the fact that it does not lead to pointing out our major and devastating sins and faults (*Al-Kaba'ir*), and disregarding Allah's ﷺ expansive and limitless mercy, which usually opens the doors to the messages of despair, that are frequently sent to us by Shaytan's (Satan) insinuations.

4. Contemplation (*Tafakkur*) concerning Allah's ﷺ significant elements of the universe is mentioned in the Quran. The following Narration (*Hadith*) provides the foundation of this particular type of Contemplation (*Tafakkur*). Narrated Abdullah Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Reflect deeply upon the magnificent creations of Allah, but do not reflect upon the Essence of Allah."⁽¹⁾

This Narration (*Hadith*) also points out that we are not supposed to use our intellect about the Divine Essence of Allah ﷻ or dictate the reality and nature of His Attributes, because this is one of Shaytan's (Satan) tricks. Instead, we should occupy our minds by reflecting upon the great things which Allah ﷻ created, such as the Throne, The Kursi, and the Angels.

5. Contemplation (*Tafakkur*) of examining the fate of those who wronged themselves – Allah ﷻ said,

(1) Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsat. Graded Hasan (fair) according to Al-Albani

﴿ أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ دَمَّرَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِهَا

[محمد:10] ﴿ ١٠ ﴾

"Have they not traveled through the land and seen how was the end of those before them? Allah destroyed [everything] over them, and for the Disbelievers (*Kafirun*) is something comparable."⁽¹⁾

We should take warning and not to do like them. For example, the fate of the previous cultures, the People of Sodom and Gomora (today's LGBTQ communities), are now gaining unprecedented dominance over our communities.

The Practice of Yoga

Yoga is both a spiritual and physical exercise, which aims at connecting with God, similar to the concept of the Unity of Being (*Wahdat Al-Wujoud*), embraced by the extreme Sufis (The Mystic Muslims).

Muhammad Abdel Fattah Faheem defined Yoga as, "Yoga in the sacred Indian language means union and contact with God. The union between the body, the mind, and God helps man attain knowledge and wisdom and develops his thought by developing his knowledge of life. It protects the human being from sectarianism, religious fanaticism, narrow-mindedness, and shortsightedness when exercising Yoga. It makes him live a life of contentment both physically and spiritually."⁽²⁾

Jamil Sulayba also defined Yoga. He said, "Yoga is a Sanskrit word that means *union*; it refers to a kind of

(1) Quran 47:10

(2) Al-Yoga Wa'l-Tanaffus (Yoga and breathing) (p. 19)

spiritual exercise practiced by the wise men of India for Union with the universal spirit."⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾

Clearly, from the above definitions, we can conclude that the higher purpose and basis of Yoga are joining the single individual spirit, with the universal spirit, which is, in reality, God, according to the founders and the practitioners of Yoga.

The means to obtain this unity are regular activities and Polytheistic rituals (*Shirk*). The founders of the practice introduced them, such as prostrating to the sun. There should be no doubt that the whole concept of Yoga originates from idol-worshipping beliefs.

Devout Muslims who hold the correct Islamic Belief System (*Aqeedah*), according to the first three-praised generations (*Al-Salaf Al-Salih*), can in no way accept the objective of the act of Yoga, as well as the means (Polytheistic rituals) to reach the goal, because of the following reasons:

1. Pious Muslims affirm the Attribute of the Divine Essence for Allah ﷻ, without negating Allah's ﷻ Divine Essence, likening or resembling Him to the human essence or any other created essence, without dictating Allah's ﷻ Divine Essence's nature, or reality. Hence, as you can see, this belief matter cancels out the false claim that Allah ﷻ is the universal spirit they refer to in their Yoga manuscript.

2. Pious Muslims have a firm belief that Allah's ﷻ Divine Essence is above the Throne, which is above the creations, which means that Allah ﷻ is not part of His

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- (1) Mazaahirat al-Tashabbuh bill-Kuffaar Fi'l-'Asr al-Hadeeth Wa Atharuha' ala al-Muslimeen
(2) Al-Mu'jam al-Falsafi by Jameel Sulayba (2/590)

creation in any form or shape. Devout Muslims who hold this position will never authorize the idea of Yoga and will drop it entirely because it is conflicting.

3. Pious Muslims cannot tolerate such practices. After all, they are Polytheistic rituals (*Shirk*) and aimed at helping the Yoga practitioners achieve unity with the universal spirit, which is God. These practices include prostrations and bowing down to universal elements such as the sun and the moon, as well as invoking and imploring them.

4. Pious Muslims cannot accept Yoga's practice because it is identical to the beliefs and practices of the Extreme Sufis (Mystic Islam), which are considered devious and groundless. Extreme Sufi views are contrary to Monotheism (*Tawheed*) because they support the doctrine of the Unity of Being (*Wahdat Al-Wujoud*). Their endless list of innovative observances can now include Yoga to fulfill this purpose, which is “unity with the being.”

5. Pious Muslims will not accept Yoga's practice because its practitioners are imitating non-Muslims, which Islam has outlawed. Abdullah Ibn Umar رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever imitates other people, he is one of them."⁽¹⁾

6. Pious Muslims cannot accept the practice of Yoga, because based on the definition of the concept of the unity of man and the being, the universal spirit, by which they mean God, aims at creating and developing the ideology that states that the truth is not in one religion. Instead, the practitioners of Yoga believe it is in all the religions and philosophies combined. Such beliefs will take a Muslim out

(1) Abu Daud

of the fold of Islam if he does believe it or says it knowingly and willfully.

With all of the above reasons, some jurists, despite confessing to the apparent link between the spiritual and the physical aspects of the Yoga practice, said it is permissible provided that the Yoga practitioner separates the physical exercises from the beliefs attached to them. But this opinion is invalid because of its religious origins and the resemblance to those idol worshipers, and our ability to come up with our physical practices, which are entirely free from resembling and promoting idolatrous practices. Hence, Yoga is forbidden altogether.





Chapter Two

“Read!” Thrice!

Introduction



In this chapter, we will discuss a couple of topics. Again, we want to remind ourselves of the ground on which we decide these topics:

1. It should fall into the flow of the Seerah's events we are discussing.
2. It should be extraordinary, transforming, and a turning-point event.
3. It should be relevant to our time and place so that we can draw lessons from the subject in light of our condition today.
4. Finally, it has to do with an allegation against our Prophet ﷺ so that we can take the time to refute it to defend the honor of our beloved Prophet ﷺ.

This period in the life of the Prophet ﷺ is full of events that meet the above requirements. It is the stage of the Revelation. We will discuss two fundamental subjects which are related to the first-ever encounter in the Arabian Peninsula since the time of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and Prophet Ismail (Ishmael) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, between the heavens and earth on the top of the highest mountain in Makkah in the Cave of Hira, between the Prophet ﷺ and the Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. It was an encounter that changed the Arabian Peninsula, and the world at large till the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*).

The two topics are as follows:

1. Was the Prophet ﷺ illiterate?

2. The first contact with Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

Was the Prophet ﷺ Illiterate?

Regarding the answer to this question, the following two Verses (Ayat) are crystal clear evidence that the Prophet ﷺ was not able to read or write like many others at his time and place.

Allah ﷻ said,

{ وَمَا كُنْتَ تَتْلُو مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَلَا تَخُطُّهُ بِمِيمِنِكَ إِذَا لَا رَتَابَ الْمُبِطْلُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ }
[العنكبوت: 48]

"Neither did you (O Muhammad) read any book before it (this Quran), nor did you write any book (whatsoever) with your right hand. In that case, indeed, the followers of falsehood might have doubted."⁽¹⁾

Allah ﷻ also said,

{ قُلْ لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا تَلَوْتُهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا أَدْرَاكُمْ بِهِ فَقَدْ لَبِثْتُ فِيكُمْ عُمُرًا مِنْ قَبْلِهِ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ } [يونس: 16]

"Say (O Muhammad): If Allah had so willed, I should not have recited it to you nor would He have made it known to you. Verily, I have stayed amongst you a lifetime before this. Have you then no sense?"⁽²⁾

Moreover, the following Verses (Ayat) confirm that the Christians and Jews were well aware of the illiteracy of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. They obtained this knowledge from their scriptures.

(1) Quran 29:48

(2) Quran 10:16

Allah ﷻ said,

{ الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْنُوبًا عِنْدَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ
وَإِلَّا يُجِيلُ يَا مُرْتُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَاهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ
عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبَائِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۗ فَاَلَّذِينَ قَالُوا بِهِ
وَعَزَّزُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ مَعَهُ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾ }

[الأعراف:157]

"Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e., Muhammad) whom they find written with them in the (Torah) (Deut, xviii, 15) and the Injeel (Gospel) (John xiv, 16)."⁽¹⁾

As for the Prophetic Tradition (*Sunnah*), we have a Narration (*Hadith*) where Aishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا reported, "Till suddenly the truth descended upon him while he was in the Cave of Hira, the Angel (Jibreel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) came to him and asked him to read. The Prophet ﷺ replied, "I do not know how to read." The Prophet ﷺ added, "The Angel (Jibreel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) caught me (forcefully) and pressed me so hard that I could not bear it anymore. He then released me and again asked me to read, and I replied, 'I do not know how to read.' Thereupon, he caught me again and pressed me a second time till I could not bear it anymore. He then released me and again asked me to read, but I replied, 'I do not know how to read (or what shall I read?)' Thereupon, he caught me for the third time and pressed me, and then released me and said, 'Read in the name of your Lord.'"⁽²⁾

Regarding the time after he was appointed a

(1) Quran 7:157

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari

Messenger, some Scholars (*Ulama*) believe that he learned how to read and write. But the majority of them still held the position that he remained illiterate except for a few words. As for the pieces of evidence that he was no longer illiterate, they are as follows:

1. The Prophet ﷺ understood the message he received from Uyaynah Ibn Hisn رضي الله عنه and conveyed its meaning.
2. The Prophet ﷺ spelled out the word *Kafir* in Arabic to his Companions (*Sahabah*) when he conveyed to them the physical signs by which they will be able to identify Ad-Dajjal (The Antichrist).
3. The Prophet ﷺ himself changed the sentence in the Treaty of Hudaibiyah, “Muhammed, the son of Abdullah.”⁽¹⁾

Refuting the Above Evidence

We affirmed that the majority of Muslim Scholars (*Ulama*) embraced the opinion that the Prophet ﷺ stayed illiterate, even after he was appointed a Prophet, in order to invalidate the allegations of the orientalists that the Prophet ﷺ mimicked the Bible into the Quran.

So, the orientalists refuted the three pieces of evidence that the other Muslim Scholars (*Ulama*) presented to establish that his illiteracy was erased after Prophethood. The first evidence, which is the story of the letter of Uyaynah Ibn Hisn رضي الله عنه, is not authentic.

The Prophet's ﷺ ability to write few words, such as his name Muhammad Ibn Abdullah, on the day of Hudaibiyah, or spelling out some Arabic letters such as *Kafir*, in the

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

Narration (*Hadith*) mentioning Ad-Dajjal (The Antichrist), do not stand as a ground to establish his literacy. Nowadays, many illiterate individuals can write a few things, like their name, their signature, and other pieces of information about themselves. Despite that, they are still regarded as illiterate.

The Different Dimensions of the Subject

Before we address the different dimensions of this subject, we need to assert that a Believer (*Mumin*) must affirm with certainty his belief in the six Pillars (*Arkan*) of Faith (*Iman*): the belief in Allah ﷻ, His Angels, Messengers, Books, The Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*), and Predestination (*Al-Qadr*). Without any doubt, our firm belief in the first Pillar (*Rukn*), which is the belief in Allah's ﷻ Existence, Actions, Names, and Attributes, is the foundation of our trust in the rest of the Pillars (*Arkan*) of Faith (*Iman*).

Regarding choosing the Messengers, Allah ﷻ said,

{ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ } [الأنعام:124]

"Allah knows best with whom to place His Message."⁽¹⁾

Allah ﷻ also said,

{ اللَّهُ يَصْطَفِي مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا وَمِنَ النَّاسِ إِنَّكَ اللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ } [الحج:75]

[الحج:75]

"Allah chose Messengers from angels and men. Verily, Allah is All-Hearer, All-Seer."⁽²⁾

(1) Quran 6:124

(2) Quran 22:75

We do have situations where people rejected the Messengers that Allah ﷻ chose to send to them because they lacked the wisdom behind Allah's ﷻ choice. The Disbelievers (*Kafirun*) of Makkah did this with our Messenger ﷺ. Allah ﷻ said,

{ وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نَزَّلَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ عَلَىٰ رَجُلٍ مِّنَ الْقَرْيَتَيْنِ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٣١﴾ [الزُّخْرَف: 31]

"And they say: 'Why is not this Quran sent down to some great men of the two towns (Makkah and Ta'if)?'"⁽¹⁾

So, they did not disqualify the Prophet ﷺ due to his moral standard, education, or inability to read or write, but instead because of his financial standing.

Unfortunately, we have Muslims today who judge our Messenger ﷺ based on their today's standards. Hence, they have a hard time accepting the fact that our Prophet ﷺ was illiterate. And if they do forcefully accept that, then consequently, they begin questioning the Quran and how an illiterate person was able to preserve the Quran, despite the evidence which establishes that our Messenger ﷺ was illiterate, like most people at his time.

It should not disturb a Believer (*Mumin*) because he has a firm belief and trust in Allah's ﷻ selections and decisions. He has Certainty (*Yaqeen*) in Allah's ﷻ words when He said,

{ {اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ. [الأنعام: 124]}

"Allah knows best with whom to place His Message."⁽²⁾

(1) Quran 43:31

(2) Quran 6:124

Allah ﷻ said regarding the Quran,

{ إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾ [الحجر: 9]

"Verily, It is We Who have sent down the *Dhikr* (i.e., the Quran) and surely, we will guard it (from corruption)."⁽¹⁾

It's essential to understand why some Muslims have a hard time accepting that the Prophet ﷺ was illiterate. Usually, these Muslims are amongst those who can read and write. They assume that if they accept this reality, it would seem to suggest that education is insignificant, and Islam teaches that we should all forget about seeking knowledge.

We can refute these pretexts and bring to light the Divine Wisdom behind Allah's ﷻ choosing an unlettered Messenger to convey His message. The rejecters of this reality must realize that their position agrees and aids the orientalist's false claim that the Prophet ﷺ copied the Quran from the previous Holy Books.

First, the Prophet ﷺ is not lesser than anybody, and we all believe that Almighty Allah ﷻ chose Muhammad ﷺ, considering he had grown up as an orphan and was illiterate. Despite his shortcomings, the Prophet ﷺ was known amongst the community of Quraysh by greatest attributes, such as being trustworthy and honest.

As for seeking knowledge and promoting education, Islam has no equal in this regard. Islam obligates seeking knowledge upon every Muslim, in terms of certain subjects, and Islam allots huge rewards for people who take the path

(1) Quran 15:9

of seeking knowledge. There was simply no contradiction between the Prophet's ﷺ status regarding his ability to read and write and the imperative for education.

We also have evidence to establish that the Prophet ﷺ encouraged the Muslims to learn and to teach others as well. It was reported that the Prophet ﷺ offered freedom to the prisoners in the Battle of Badr (*Ghazwa Badr*) if they taught some Muslims how to read and write. As for the Divine Wisdom behind the Prophet being illiterate, we have the following explanations:

1. Allah ﷻ protected His Messenger ﷺ from acquiring the corrupt human knowledge and distorted Divine Books, which do not lead to Allah's ﷻ straight path. What does this mean? The Prophet ﷺ did not obtain his expertise from the existing cultures surrounding him. Instead, He ﷺ received his knowledge directly from Allah ﷻ, and so he ﷺ led his Community (*Ummah*), which was mostly illiterate like himself, to success. Allah ﷻ said,

{ هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيَّةِن رَسُوْلًا مِّنْهُمْ } [الجمعة:2]

"Allah sent among the unlettered ones a Messenger (Muhammad) from among themselves."⁽¹⁾

His Community (*Ummah*), later on, defeated the two existing superpowers at the time in recorded history, and this was because of the knowledge they received directly from Allah ﷻ.

2. In addition to that, Allah ﷻ emphasizes that the point of possessing useful learning materials to read from, is equally as essential as being able to read and write. What

(1) Quran 62:2

is the point of being able to read when you do not have useful literature to read and learn from? So during the time of the Prophet ﷺ, there wasn't adequate resources of literature to read from. Similarly, in our time now, imagine the number of available learning materials we have on hand. But how much of it leads to Allah ﷻ? Most of the knowledge distances us from Allah ﷻ. It shows us it does not matter whether we can read or not but what matters is what we are reading. In the Prophet's ﷺ time, all the knowledge was corrupt, and even the previous Divine Books were changed, so Allah ﷻ protected His Messenger from obtaining any of it.

3. Another Divine Wisdom behind his illiteracy can refute the allegation that the Prophet ﷺ copied the Quran from other people's experiences, knowledge, and previous Holy Books. His illiteracy clearly indicates the Divine nature of the Glorious Quran as Allah ﷻ revealed it to an illiterate. Despite that, the Glorious Quran fulfills all the known standards of the revealed scriptures. Furthermore, Allah ﷻ challenged humanity to produce a similar text like it.

Refuting the Claims of Plagiarism

We have a response to the malicious and vicious allegation promoted by the orientalist who state that the Prophet ﷺ spent a wealth of time reading and memorizing the Bible before claiming Prophethood and composing the Quran from what he learned.

The response is a straightforward one that originates from the same people who have these false assertions. We say to them that the first ever and the oldest translation of the Old Testament, which was made available in Arabic, appeared after the arrival of Islam, around the first half of

the ninth century.

There was no Arabic translation of the Bible available during the Prophet's ﷺ time. Ernst Würthwein informs us in his book *The Text of The Old Testament*, "With the victory of Islam, the use of Arabic spread widely, and for Jews and Christians in the conquered lands, it became the language of daily life. It gave rise to the need for Arabic versions of the Bible, which was met by several versions mainly independent and concerned primarily for interpretation."⁽¹⁾

In conclusion, the Prophet's ﷺ illiteracy leaves no ground to the false claim that he ﷺ plagiarized the Bible, even if an Arabic copy had existed in his time.

The First Contact

The Prophet ﷺ was conducting his business as usual. As Aishah رضي الله عنها described it, he was performing the act of *Tahannus*, which she described as an act of worship. *Tahannus* is a word that means seclusion to avoid or escape a wicked environment. We need to remember that the Prophet ﷺ did not receive Revelation at that point, nor did he accept any existing religion, such as Christianity or Judaism. Aishah رضي الله عنها described what the Prophet ﷺ did as *Tahannus*, an act of worship, mainly because he left the evil and wicked environment, which was full of injustice and corruption. This environment is the harvest of the devastating injustice, which is Polytheism (*Shirk*).

To avoid such an environment is an act of worship, especially if one is unable to make any changes with their hand or tongue, then they are left to the objection of the

(1) Ernst Würthwein, *The Text of The Old Testament*: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1988, pp. 104

heart. An essential fulfillment of the heart's resistance to evil is forming a barrier between oneself and the evil environment. Disassociating oneself from such an atmosphere is a powerful illustration of one's opposition.

Like we also mentioned earlier, the direction which the Prophet ﷺ took was not typical and unique. Others who were terrified by the same condition in Makkah pursued other means available to them. They turned to other religions or confined themselves mostly to their houses. However, none of them tried to retreat on top of the mountains in caves, where according to the superstitions of the time, the Jinn, evil spirits, or other creatures resided.

The orientalist and the missionaries focus on this particular part of the Seerah, which is the first encounter between the Prophet ﷺ and Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. They propagate specific doubts about its substance. Sometimes, they go as far as denying it completely, or sometimes confirm it but say it was with an evil spirit, not an angelic being.

If Allah ﷻ wills it (*In Sha Allah*), we will refute these accusations and set the record straight. The fact that no one can deny is that this encounter between our Messenger ﷺ and Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام did occur, and its impact is tangible to all of us today. It changed, and it will keep improving our world until the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*). The first typical complaint, is why the Prophet ﷺ was terrified with his experience, even though he met an Angel at that time?

Why Was the Prophet ﷺ Terrified?

The Prophet ﷺ was a human being, who was in complete seclusion for an extended number of days in a remote place on the top of a mountain hill. All of a sudden,

someone appeared out of nowhere which terrified him. The Angel squeezed him physically, which added to his anxiety and fear.

For any human being, it is natural to be terrified in that situation. Furthermore, people promoted that since the Prophet's ﷺ place of seclusion, the Cave of Hira, was the dwellings of demons and evil spirits, he may have been contacted by such beings.

Hallucination or Divine Revelation?

Unfortunately, we have one more misleading and dishonest allegation regarding the same event; the first encounter the Prophet ﷺ had with Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. The source of this fallacy unbelievably is the People of the Book (*Ahl Al-Kitab*). They are the ones who should be accustomed to the idea of Revelation, and how it is handled, as we explained the process of Revelation which the People of the Book (*Ahl Al-Kitab*) are fully aware of. Hence, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ asked the Prophet ﷺ to check the whole concept of Revelation with them. They claim that what the Prophet ﷺ went through in the Cave of Hira was a mere hallucination. They further allege that the whole event was a vision or a dream, dismissing the Angel Jibreel's (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام appearance at the scene altogether.

Fortunately, the way Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام conducted the first meeting with the Prophet ﷺ refutes their questionable accusation. The scene involved two roles (characters); each of them performed entirely contrary to the other. There was a verbal exchange between the two of them in the form of questions and answers. The Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام asked the Prophet ﷺ to "Read (*Iqra*)."
The Prophet ﷺ answered, "I am not literate (I cannot read)."
The entire scene could have ended with Angel Jibreel

(Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام revealing to the Prophet ﷺ the first five Verses (*Ayat*) of Chapter 96 of the Noble Quran (Surat Al-Alaq). Instead, it evolved into both oral and physical action; the same question was echoed two more times but with physical pressure. All of this confirms the presence of two characters, the Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and the Prophet ﷺ, to perform two different roles at the scene.

Khadijah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا also thoroughly discredited the possibility of their claim, when the Prophet ﷺ hurried back to her, shaking and shivering in panic and fear. He was exhausted and sweating. The way that he spoke to her proves that he had not fully realized whether what happened to him was good or bad. He ﷺ told his wife, "Cover me, cover me!"

When Khadijah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا asked him about what had happened to him? He ﷺ told her, "I was afraid for myself..." and then he started describing what he had encountered. The Prophet ﷺ himself was concerned that the contact he had was not with an Angel but with an evil spirit.

Khadijah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا responded, instantly, and firmly assuring him, "By Allah, No! Allah will never disgrace you! For you speak the truth, you are faithful in trust, bear the afflictions of the people, spend in good works what you gain in trade, you are hospitable, and you assist your fellow men." It was reported that the Prophet ﷺ upon hearing her words became relaxed and calmed down.

Khadijah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا knew her husband quite well. She listed his excellent characteristics to drop the likelihood of him being contacted by a devil because devils and demons are more likely to harm corrupt people, and he was not one of them. As if she said that Allah سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ will forbid any harm to

happen to someone like him who is compassionate and upright. Khadijah رضي الله عنها somehow figured out what happened to her husband, who saw that the experience he had was the commencement of something valuable intended for him, and he ﷺ was designed for it.

Finally, to terminate such an accusation altogether, we have the statement of authority in the field of Jewish and Christian manuscripts – Waraqah Ibn Nawfal, Khadijah's رضي الله عنها relative. Upon listening to the Prophet ﷺ who narrated the entire story, he commented, "The Angel you faced inside the cave was the same Angel who visited Prophet Musa (Moses) before you. He is the Angel Allah usually entrusts with the Divine Revelation."⁽¹⁾



(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari



Chapter Three

The Intervals of Revelations

Introduction



The coming of Revelations was interrupted twice during the Prophethood of the Messenger ﷺ:

1. The first time at the commencement of the Revelation, which is the subject of this chapter.
2. After the first pause, the Revelation resumed with Surat Al-Mudathir, and later after several Surahs, it paused for the second time, but then resumed with the Revelation of Surat Ad-Duha.

The evidence for these findings is in the following accounts:

Jabir Ibn Abdullah narrated that he heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying, “Then, the Revelation ceased for a while. And then, while I was walking, I heard a voice from heaven. I raised my head, and there was the Angel who had come to me in Hira, sitting on a throne between heaven and earth. I was stricken with terror, and I fell to the ground. Then, I came to my family and said, ‘Cover me, cover me!’ Then Allah revealed the Verses (*Ayat*),

{ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ (١) قُمْ فَأَنْذِرْ (٢) وَرَبِّكَ فَكَبِّرْ (٣) وَتِبَابِكَ فَطَهِّرْ (٤) وَالرُّجْزَ فَاهْجُرْ (٥) }

[المدثر: 1-5]

‘O you (Muhammad) enveloped in garments! ...

And keep away from Ar-Rujz (the idols)!⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾

(1) Quran 74:1 + 5

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

Imam An-Nawawi رحمته الله commented on this Narration (*Hadith*) in Sahih Muslim, concerning the statement of the Prophet ﷺ, “Then Revelations came one after another.” What the Prophet ﷺ meant was that the Revelation stopped for an interval the first time after Surat Al-Alaq. Then it resumed with Surat Al-Mudathir and continued for a while, and then, it stopped again, then returned with the Revelation of Surat Ad-Duha. ⁽¹⁾

Aishah رضي الله عنها said regarding the first period during which the Revelation ceased. After the Prophet ﷺ told Waraqah Ibn Nawfal about what he had seen. Waraqah said to him, “If I live to see that day, I will support you wholeheartedly.” Aishah رضي الله عنها said that soon after that, Waraqah died, and the Revelation ceased for a while. ⁽²⁾

As for the second period during which the Revelation ceased, Jundub Ibn Sufyan رضي الله عنه said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ fell sick and did not get up to pray the Nightly Prayer (*Qiyam Al-Lail*) for two or three nights. Then, a woman came and said, “O Muhammad, I hope that your Shaytan (Satan) has left you; I have not seen him approach you for two or three nights.” Then, Allah revealed (Surat Ad-Duha). ⁽³⁾

Al-Tahir Ibn Ashoor رحمته الله said that the interruption of Revelation happened on two occasions:

1. The first time was before Surat Al-Mudathir or Al-Muzammil. During this particular suspension, Allah’s Messenger ﷺ feared that the Revelation had stopped completely. That was the period after which he saw

(1) Imam Nawawi - Sahih Muslim

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari

(3) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام seated on a throne between heaven and earth.

2. As for the second time, it happened approximately after eight Surahs had been revealed (those that were revealed after the first period of the interruption of the Revelation). So, it came after ten Surahs (in total) had been revealed.⁽¹⁾

In this chapter, we would like to address the following topics related to the subject of the interruption of the Revelation. They are as follows:

1. The duration of the intervals
2. The wisdom behind the first interval
3. The wisdom behind the second interval
4. Seven contemporary lessons

The Duration of the First Interval

In the absence of valid evidence to precisely determine the length of the first interval, Scholars (*Ulama*) disagreed regarding how long it lasted. Their opinion on the duration of the first interruption extends from fifteen days to three years.

Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar رحمته said, “The period of the cessation of Revelation lasted for three years. It was stated categorically by Ibn Ishaq.”⁽²⁾

Ibn Kathir رحمته said, “The period of cessation of Revelation lasted for approximately two or two years.”⁽³⁾

(1) At-Tahreer Wa't-Tanweer 30/396

(2) Fath Al-Baari (1/27)

(3) Al-Bidaayah Wa'n-Nihaayah (4/42)

Ar-Razi رحمته الله said, “The Scholars (*Ulama*) differed concerning the length of the period during which the Revelation ceased as follows:

1. Ibn Jurayj رحمته الله said, “It was twelve days.”
2. Al-Kalbi رحمته الله said, “It was fifteen days.”
3. Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه said, “It was twenty-five days.”
4. As-Suddi رحمته الله and Muqatil رحمته الله said, “It was forty days.”⁽¹⁾
5. Ibn Ashour رحمته الله said, “It was noted that the first period during which the Revelation ceased was forty days.”⁽²⁾

Once it comes to the second interruption, we have substantial evidence that confined its length to just three nights, as in Narration (*Hadith*) reported by Jundub Ibn Sufyan رضي الله عنه, which we mentioned earlier. It is compiled in both Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

Al-Hafiz Ibn Kathir رحمته الله said, “The Revelation of Surat Ad-Duha occurred after a very short pause, lasted for a few days, as confirmed in both Al-Bukhari and Muslim, and other books of Narrations (*Ahadith*).”⁽³⁾

The Wisdom Behind the First Interval

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم withdrew from the unbearable situation in the community under the mountain. He resorted to the mountain top to hide inside the Cave of Hira. He was deliberating and searching for spiritual comfort as well as

(1) Tafseer ar-Raazi (31/192)

(2) At-Tahreer Wa`-t-Tanweer (30/396)

(3) Al-Bidaayah Wa`-n-Nihaayah (4/41)

executable solutions for the unacceptable troubled situation. Eventually, and surprisingly, the Prophet ﷺ received a message of hope from his Creator to read (*Iqra*).

Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام conveyed the first piece of Revelation in a very terrifying and intimidating manner. However, the Prophet ﷺ still felt the spiritual impact of the experience. He realized that this was the beginning of his path to correction, which he had been seeking. His wife Khadijah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا validated his unsettled and unpredictable judgment of the entire situation as well.

Even though the first contact with Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام left the Prophet ﷺ bodily drained, psychologically uncertain, having many pending questions, he was desperate to acquire their answers. But he could tell that this was the beginning of a tremendous meaningful stage in his life, and the last thing he ﷺ wanted was for Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام not to appear again.

In reality, Allah ﷻ did not send Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام for an extended period of time after the first contact. We are uncertain about its specific duration. This ‘Pause of Revelation’ known in Arabic as ‘Al-Fatrah,’ which lasted up to three years according to some reports, made the Prophet ﷺ feel lonely and depressed.

Even though the Prophet ﷺ would go to the same specific areas where he met Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام the first time, to the extent that he would repeat precisely the things he did before Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام appeared to him the first time. However, he still did not show up, which left the Prophet ﷺ disheartened.

One more point to make here is that Angels do not descend, except by Allah’s ﷻ command. Abdullah Ibn

Abbas رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said to Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عليه السلام, "What prevents you from visiting us more than you do?" Then, the following Verse (*Ayah*) was revealed,

{ وَمَا نُنزِّلُ إِلَّا بِأَمْرِ رَبِّكَ } [مریم:64]

"And we (The Angels) descend not except by the command of your Lord."⁽¹⁾

Why would the Prophet ﷺ wish that Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عليه السلام visits him more often? Because of the spiritual comfort he found in the experiences. Another evidence that shows the impact of Angel Jibreel's (Gabriel) عليه السلام presence on the present model is in the Narration (*Hadith*) reported by Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه.

Narrated Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه, "The Prophet ﷺ was the most generous of all the people, and he used to become more generous in Ramadan (Holy Fasting Month) when Jibreel (Gabriel) met him. Jibreel (Gabriel) used to meet him every night during Ramadan to revise the Quran with him. Allah's Messenger ﷺ then used to be more generous than the fast wind."⁽²⁾

Did the Prophet ﷺ Attempt Suicide?

Islam's unfriendly campaigns took advantage of this part of Prophet's ﷺ life. The People of the Book (*Ahl Al-Kitab*) claim that he considered committing suicide. But before we mention the wisdom behind the pause of the Revelation at the very beginning of his Prophethood, let us address this false allegation.

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari Tafsir Surat Maryam (19:64)

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari

Undoubtedly, the Prophet ﷺ anticipated the Divine connection with Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to resume finding his spiritual comfort, revealing the necessary guidance to him and his troubled community in how to correct their condition. But Allah ﷻ did not command Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to appear again. The Prophet ﷺ fell into a more critical state than before the first appearance of the Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ.

We can confidently conclude that the following events left the Prophet ﷺ greatly distressed, depressed, and lonely, falling into a state of complete seclusion from himself and everyone around him as well. The Prophet ﷺ concluded that His lord might be displeased with him.

Now, let us mention a few points that caused the Prophet ﷺ distress and despair:

1. The Pause of Revelation (Al-Fatrah), which at this time lasted somewhere from 6 months to three years.
2. The death of the only person who could discuss his concerns with him – Waraqah Ibn Nawfal,
3. The unbroken silence around him because of his complete solitude.
4. The increasing level of corruption and injustice.

Sometimes when the Prophet ﷺ was feeling down during this pause of Revelation, he ﷺ would wish to die because he thought that life was useless without the necessary guidance. But the sentiment that he aspired to commit suicide by throwing himself from the top of the mountain, whether Al-Nur or Abu Qubais, is **undoubtedly groundless**. The evidence they used to validate their false assumption is not authentic. It has a broken chain of narrators, and it is weak (*Da'eef*), even though it appears in

Sahih Al-Bukhari. According to the Narration (*Hadith*) specialists, Al-Bukhari included several reports, although they do not meet Al-Bukhari's standards (requirements) of an authentic Narration (*Sahih Hadith*).

However, if we choose not to consider the authenticity of the Narration (*Hadith*) for a moment, we can examine the whole matter of the Prophet ﷺ contemplating suicide. How does thinking about something, makes one guilty of perpetrating it? Merely considering it doesn't prove anything against the Prophet ﷺ and his Prophethood. We do not have any authentic record of the Prophet ﷺ trying to throw himself dead, saying that there was a failed attempt, or that Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ stopped and saved him.

As we refute such a claim, let us go back to listing some of the pieces of wisdom behind the temporary pause of the Revelation, which is called *Futur Al-Wahi*. They are as follows:

1. So that the fear and anxiety which the Prophet ﷺ experienced as a result of the first contact with Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ may decline and disappear.
2. So that Allah's Messenger ﷺ might long again for the return of Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and the guidance he brought from Allah ﷻ with him.
3. So that the Prophet ﷺ would know that only Divine Revelation and spiritual nourishment Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ brings from Allah ﷻ is the only way to comfort and fill the vacuum and emptiness of which his soul experiences in the absence of the Revelation.
4. Thus, the subsequent visits of Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ would strengthen his faith and maintain his

steadfastness on the straight path.

The first Revelation was indeed conveyed in a very terrifying and intimidating manner. However, the Prophet ﷺ still felt the spiritual impact of it, and he realized that this was the commencement of the path to the solutions, which he had been seeking. His wife Khadijah رضي الله عنها validated his unsettled and unpredictable judgment of the entire situation as well.

The Wisdom Behind the Second Interval

Jundub Ibn Sufyan رضي الله عنه said, “The Messenger of Allah fell sick and did not get up to pray the Nightly Prayer (*Qiyam-Al Lail*), for two or three nights. Then, a woman came and said, ‘O Muhammad, I hope that your Shaytan (Satan) has left you; I have not seen him approach you for two or three nights.’ Then, Allah revealed (Surat Ad-Duha).”⁽¹⁾

The distinguishing features of the second interval alongside the Prophet's ﷺ sadness and suffering are the ridiculing manners and actions of the Disbelievers (*Kafirun*) towards him. They mocked him claiming that “His Lord has forsaken him.”

Al-Aufi رضي الله عنه narrated that Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه said, “When Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) halted his visits to the Prophet ﷺ for some days, following the command of Allah, the Prophet ﷺ became anxious and distressed. And the Disbelievers (*Kafirun*) started circulation the rumors that “His Lord was displeased with him. Hence, He has forsaken him.”⁽²⁾

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

(2) Ibn Jarir At-Tabari

Now, one should be curious and question, how the Disbelievers (*Kafirun*) came to that conclusion?

We have two scenarios, both of which answer this question, collectively or independently:

1. When the Prophet ﷺ received a new Surat, he would recite it to his Companions (*Sahabah*). Now, this type of activity was paused. Hence, the Disbelievers (*Kafirun*) concluded that the storage where the Revelation came from was empty. Jundub Bin Abdullah Al-Bajali رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ related that when Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ stopped coming, the Disbelievers (*Kafirun*) circulated that “the Muhammad's Lord deserted him.”⁽¹⁾
2. The second possible scenario is that during this second interval, the Prophet ﷺ felt anguished, distressed, and became sick so much so that he could not wake up for the Night Prayer (*Salat Al-Tahajud*) as usual. The Prophet's ﷺ next-door neighbor, his aunt Umm Jamil, wife of Abu Lahab, said to him, “It appears your Shaytan (Satan) has forsaken you.”

Again, the Narration (*Hadith*) by Jundub Ibn Sufyan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ can validate this scenario. Jundub Ibn Sufyan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ fell sick and did not get up to pray the Nightly Prayer (*Qiyam-Al Lail*) for two or three nights. Then, a woman came and said: ‘O Muhammad, I hope that your Shaytan (Satan) has left you; I have not seen him approach you for two or three nights.’ Then Allah revealed (Surat Ad-Duha).”⁽²⁾

(1) Ibn Jarir, Tabarani, Abd bin Humaid, Saeed bin Mansur, Ibn Marduyah

(2) Sahih Al-Bukhari and Muslim

The second pause was considerably short, yet it still was a , the source **عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام** loss of contact with Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) of his power, joy, and spiritual comfort. Furthermore, the suspension of the Divine's unequivocal support in his struggle against the growing resistance to his call, and the ridicule of his enemies, caused him great distress and anxiety, to the extent that he started contemplating their groundless rumors. But Allah **ﷻ** did not let His Messenger down. The Revelation came down soon enough with **ﷻ** Surat Ad-Duha to discuss the entire matter and dismiss any possible accusations. Allah **ﷻ** said,

{ وَالضُّحَىٰ ١ وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا سَجَىٰ ٢ مَا وَدَّعَكَ رَبُّكَ وَمَافَىٰ ٣ } وَلَا آخِرَةَ خَيْرٌ لَّكَ مِنَ الْأُولَىٰ ٤
 وَكَسُوفٍ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَىٰ ٥ أَلَمْ يَجِدْكَ يَتِيمًا فَآوَىٰ ٦ وَوَجَدَكَ ضَالًّا فَهَدَىٰ ٧
 وَوَجَدَكَ عَائِلًا فَأَغْنَىٰ ٨ فَأَمَّا الْيَتِيمَ فَلَا تَقْهَرْ ٩ وَأَمَّا السَّائِلَ فَلَا تَنْهَرْ ١٠ وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ ١١ } [الضحى: 1-11]

"By the forenoon (after sunrise), And by the night when it is still (or darkens), Your Lord (O Muhammad) has neither forsaken you nor hated you. And indeed, the Hereafter is better for you than the present (life of this world). And surely, your Lord will give you (all, i.e., good) to be well-pleased. 'Did He not find you (O Muhammad) an orphan and gave you a refuge And He found you unaware (of the Quran, its legal laws, and Prophethood, etc.) and guided you? And He found you poor and made you rich (self-sufficient with self-contentment, etc.)? Therefore, treat not the orphan with oppression and repulse not the beggar; and proclaim the Grace of your Lord (i.e., the Prophethood and all

other Graces)."⁽¹⁾

Seven Contemporary Lessons

Let us examine and understand our Prophet's ﷺ case before we try to apply it to us today. When the Prophet ﷺ separated himself inside a cave on the mountain top for extended periods of solitude, he searched for a missing, but an unnamed spiritual substance that may satisfy the void and hollowness his soul had been suffering and longing for an extensive time. However, he ﷺ did not know what he lacked.

The Prophet ﷺ realized that staying away from the community of those who indulged themselves ultimately into wickedness did not increase his endurance, and to some extent, offered him a partial spiritual comfort.

Suddenly, he ﷺ found this pure and holy spiritual fulfillment; somewhat he tasted the sweetness of for a short time. Even though it caused him so much suffering and fatigue and consumed his physical energy significantly, he still loved it. It was what he always needed, the one missing fulfillment to his soul's emptiness and vacuum.

Now, as this spiritual comfort manifested in the surprising arrival of Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, it was also gone before revealing any further guidance on how to attain it in his absence. The Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام didn't return for a long time. It is why the Prophet ﷺ found himself in that state of hopelessness, agony, and sadness.

Now let's find some relevance to our conditions today in the shape of lessons:

1. We must raise awareness of the spiritual needs.

(1) Quran 93:1-11

Many Muslims and non-Muslims are under the impression that their needs are strictly materialistic. They have no awareness that their souls are also desperately demanding the heavenly nourishing substance by the Creator, which is Islam. This is the **first contemporary lesson** we can deduct from our Messenger's ﷺ experience related to the pause of the Revelation.

We need to remember that the spiritual needs were everything that urged the Prophet ﷺ to seek, think, and ponder while he ﷺ was isolating himself in a narrow cave, on the top of a mountain in Makkah. Allah ﷻ rewarded him, not only through revealing to him the way to fulfill these needs but also appointed him to guide all of humanity to save them from spiritual ruin.

Allah ﷻ created us perfectly, and He created us from both body and soul. We have physical needs that we should fulfill under the frameworks of Allah's ﷻ laws. Otherwise, we will end up with physical breakdowns. Similarly, we also have spiritual wishes. If we fail to attain them, we will end up with spiritual emptiness.

The spiritual needs are a little more critical than the physical ones because we can easily ignore them. They are also harder to fulfill. Allah ﷻ has designed our souls with a particular hollow and emptiness inside, which will continue to generate spiritual breakdowns if we do not attain the necessary and fitting satisfaction. Allah ﷻ created us to worship Him. Submitting to Allah ﷻ and worshiping Him is the only way to fill this hollow. Otherwise, it will keep growing bigger.

2. We must allocate the necessary time and efforts to fulfill our spiritual needs.

Spiritual needs necessitate the allocation of time and

exertion of the physical actions to perform the rituals, execute the commands, and avoid the prohibitions, to attain spiritual comfort. We can see how much the Prophet ﷺ's first contact with Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام drained him physically. Despite that, the long absence of Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام depressed the Prophet ﷺ and caused his spiritual breakdown as he was willing to allocate the time and the physical efforts for him to return. Likewise, we have to give the time and put the physical actions to perform the rituals that Allah ﷻ revealed to attain spiritual comfort. This is the **second contemporary lesson** for us. These days, Muslims are negligent in making time for Prayers (*Salah*) on time, reciting the Quran regularly, and obligatory and voluntary rituals, which have left them with spiritual ruin and decline.

The Prophet ﷺ tasted the sweetness of spiritual wellness when he met Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام for the first time. However, the Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام left the Prophet ﷺ without showing him the necessary direction in achieving spiritual comfort in his absence. Despite the pause of Revelation, the Prophet ﷺ did not resort to Shaytan's (Satan) deceitful and wicked means, such as drug addictions or immorality, to fulfill the spiritual emptiness. He suffered in waiting for the same pure spiritual nourishment, which Allah ﷻ designed for the soul.

Many of us experience the Sweetness of Faith (*Halawat Al-Iman*) only for a while; after which we end up with the worldly distractions and fail to allocate the time and the effort to obtain it again. And once we suffer spiritual withdrawals, we begin to gradually fall for Shaytan's (Satan) products for the soul, such as intoxicants, wickedness, and addictions, instead of turning to the same pure and Divine resources, which nourished us with the

Sweetness of Faith (*Halawat Al-Iman*) in the first place.

3. We must strengthen our efforts for inviting others to Islam (*Dawah*)

It's a hard fact that Muslims of every age have had the responsibility of calling others to Islam (*Dawah*) as they have the access to the right spiritual fulfillment and can share this with the non-believers to save them from spiritual ruin. Other cultures, ideologies, and heretical beliefs do offer some spiritual nourishment, but they are all artificial and mostly Satanic such as addictions to alcohol and gambling. The **third contemporary lesson** that we can take home from the Revelation's intervals is that Muslims must rise to the task, which Allah ﷻ has appointed them, which is to guide humanity to this spiritual substance following their Messenger's ﷺ footsteps. We need to strengthen our *Dawah* forces seriously, to start showing humankind the path to submitting and worshiping Allah ﷻ.

4. We must warn people against Shaytan's (Satan) spiritual substances.

One wonders why so many people resort to alcohol, drugs, gambling, adultery, and other vices. The correct assessment of the situation of the people who are victims of such vices and immoralities is the absence of the Divine spiritual substance, which as a result, causes the souls to suffer emptiness. It also creates a desirable situation for Shaytan (Satan) to advance his deceitful spiritual supplements, which may numb the soul for a while, but have severe and devastating consequences. Allah ﷻ referred to this in the following Verses (*Ayat*) in Surat Al-Maidah,

{ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْحَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْحَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ ۗ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ ﴿٩١﴾ وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأَحْذَرُوا فَيَانَ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا عَلَي رَسُولِنَا ءَأَلْبَغُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٩٢﴾ } [المائدة: 90-92]

"O you who believe! Intoxicants (all kinds of alcoholic drinks), gambling, Al-Ansab, and Al-Azlam (arrows for seeking luck or decision) are an abomination of Shaytan's (Satan) handiwork. So, avoid (strictly all) that (abomination) so that you may be successful. Shaytan (Satan) wants only to excite enmity and hatred between you with intoxicants (alcoholic drinks) and gambling and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah and As-Salat (the prayer). So, will you not then abstain? And obey Allah and the Messenger (Muhammad), and beware (of even coming near to drinking or gambling or Al-Ansab, or Al-Azlam, etc.) and fear Allah. If you turn away, you should know that Our Messenger must convey (the Message) in the most precise way."⁽¹⁾

5. Warning people against the Satanic substance must be accompanied with the alternative.

We must educate our children and youth about the authentic spiritual attainment so that they do not suffer spiritual ruin and hollowness, which may lead them to seek Satanic satisfaction rather than a Divine one. Remember, we drove this significant lesson home from the correct analysis of these addictions' growing craving.

6. Implementing the Quran and Prophetic Tradition

(1) Quran 5:90-92

(Sunnah) is sufficient to supplement our spiritual needs.

Some Muslims may initiate additional unauthorized rituals or perform the authorized actions of worship excessively, assuming that doing such will complement their spiritual wellness. We say to them that we are afraid but that's not right, and is unacceptable. Allah ﷻ is the One Who created our souls, and He knows what our souls need; the exact quantity and quality, which is sufficient to supplement our souls with the necessary spiritual substance. Hence, we should follow the instructions and refrain from innovations (*Al-Bid'ah*).

Reflect on the following Narration (*Hadith*) in light of this above instruction. Narrated Anas Bin Malik رضي الله عنه that a group of three men came to the houses of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ asking how the Prophet ﷺ worshiped, and when they were informed about that, they considered their worship insufficient and said, "Where are we from the Prophet ﷺ as his past and future sins have been forgiven." Then one of them said, "I will offer the prayer throughout the night forever." The other said, "I will fast throughout the year and will not break my fast." The third said, "I will keep away from the women and will not marry forever." Allah's Messenger ﷺ came to them and said, "Are you the same people who said so-and-so? By Allah, I am more submissive to Allah and more afraid of Him than you; yet I fast and break my fast, do sleep, and marry women. So, he who does not follow my religious tradition is not from me (not one of my followers)."⁽¹⁾

7. It is the (nature of the) soul; if you do not preoccupy

(1) Sahih Muslim

it with truth, it will occupy you with falsehood.⁽¹⁾

Imam Ibn Al-Qayyim رحمته الله said that if we don't keep ourselves preoccupied with seeking knowledge and seeking the truth, we will be distracted with foolishness and falsehood. Suppose we do not preoccupy our souls with Monotheism (*Tawheed*). In that case, our souls will occupy us with Polytheism (*Shirk*). Suppose we do not preoccupy ourselves with the Tradition (*Sunnah*) of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. In that case, our souls will entertain us with Innovations (*Bid'ah*). If we do not preoccupy ourselves with Allah's obedience, our souls will occupy us with Allah's رحمته الله disobedience.

Imam Ibn Al-Qayyim رحمته الله mentioned the same facts regarding the heart and the tongue, "It is the nature of the heart. If you do not occupy it with the love of Allah رحمته الله, the love of this world (*Dunya*) will occupy it. Likewise, it is the (nature of the) tongue; if you do not preoccupy it with remembrance, it will most definitely occupy you with foolishness. Thus, choose for yourself one of the two courses."⁽²⁾

To conclude, we are in this world (*Dunya*) open to choose a path to take regarding either achieving our soul's spiritual needs or allowing it to be empty, where the Satanic substance will be easy to grab. The choice we make will undoubtedly determine our success and loss in this world (*Dunya*) and the Hereafter (*Akhirah*). Therefore, Allah رحمته الله took the longest oath in the Quran on this subject, which is significant. Allah رحمته الله said,

(1) Al-Wabil as-Sayyib by Ibn Al-Qayyim (166-167)

(2) Al-Wabil as-Sayyib by Ibn Al-Qayyim (166-167)

وَالشَّمْسِ وَضُحَاهَا ﴿١﴾ وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَّهَا ﴿٢﴾ وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَّهَا ﴿٣﴾ وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَاهَا ﴿٤﴾ وَالسَّمَاءِ وَمَا
 بَنَاهَا ﴿٥﴾ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا طَحَاهَا ﴿٦﴾ وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا ﴿٧﴾ فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا ﴿٨﴾ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ
 رَزَقَهَا ﴿٩﴾ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا ﴿١٠﴾ { [الشمس: 1-10]

"And by the sun and its brightness, and by the moon, as it follows it (the sun), and by the day as it shows up (the sun's) brightness, and by the night as it conceals it (the sun), and by the heaven and Him Who built it, and by the earth and Him Who spread it, and by Nafs (Adam or a person or a soul, etc.), and Him Who perfected him in proportion. Then He showed him what is wrong for him and what is right for him. Indeed, he succeeds who purifies his oneself (i.e., obeys and performs all that Allah ordered, by following the true Faith of Islamic Monotheism and by doing righteous good deeds). And indeed he fails who corrupts his oneself (i.e., disobeys what Allah has ordered by rejecting the true Faith of Islamic Monotheism or by following Polytheism, etc. or by doing every kind of evil and wicked deeds)."⁽¹⁾



(1) Quran 91:1-10

Conclusion



Allah ﷻ looked upon the people on earth. They deserved His resentment, except for a few. Their communities embraced varieties of injustices, bigotry, corruption, and inequality. The major and most wicked form of injustice is Polytheism (*Shirk*) that generates all other forms of unfairness which people commit against one another.

The earth was so eager to receive the final Messenger who will rectify the deteriorating condition of people. This Messenger's prophecies were spreading around the earth, especially amongst the People of the Book (*Ahl Al-Kitab*) who did not hide it. Instead, they shared it with the different Arab tribes. Many famous and wealthy public figures in the Arabian Peninsula, due to these floating prophecies, qualified themselves as a Messenger. But they forgot that Allah ﷻ is the One who prepares and chooses His Messengers because Allah ﷻ knows where he places his message. Allah ﷻ chose Prophet Muhammed ﷺ and prepared him. He made him go through life from the start in a way that would prepare him; to bear the final message from Allah ﷻ to earth till the Day of Judgment (*Yawm Al-Qiyamah*).

The Prophet ﷺ went through a moral upbringing and a heavenly arrangement to make him ready to bear the responsibility as the final Messenger. He earned two famous qualities, which are essential for someone who would soon claim to receive Divine inspiration; The Trustworthy and The Truthful.

When he settled Quraysh's famous dispute over who should place the Blackstone on the re-constructed Kaabah's walls, it was a manifestation of the Prophet's ﷺ early leadership skills and evidence of the heavenly preparedness he went through before he was appointed the final Messenger. Furthermore, his enthusiastic participation in the Alliance of The Virtuous (*Hilf Al-Fudul*) and the way he praised it to help the oppressed is another evidence.

After the Prophet ﷺ tried tirelessly to correct the situation in his contaminated community in Makkah, he ﷺ concluded that there was nothing he could do. He concluded that he could not stop people's idol worship; he could not stop the oppression, corruption, and prejudice that were rampant in his time. He ﷺ decided to withdraw and seclude himself inside the Cave of Hira, on top of one of Makkah's highest mountains, seeking spiritual relief through his disassociation from the wrongdoers and to contemplate answers to the ongoing decline in his community.

By the time he was forty years old, the Prophet ﷺ had spent his life seeking spiritual solitude. In the small Cave of Hira on the mountain top of Al-Nur (*Jabal Al-Nur*), he ﷺ finally received the first Revelation from Allah ﷻ sent through His Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عليه السلام.

The account of the first Revelation that the Prophet ﷺ received in the Cave of Hira was narrated as follows, “The Angel came to him and asked him to read. The Prophet ﷺ replied, ‘I do not know how to read.’” The Prophet ﷺ added, “The Angel caught me (forcibly) and pressed me so hard that I could not bear it anymore. He then released me and again asked me to read, and I replied, ‘I do not know how to read.’ Thereupon he caught me again and pressed me a second time till I could not bear it anymore. He then

released me and also asked me to read, but I replied, ‘I do not know how to read’ (or what shall I read?). Thereupon, he caught me for the third time and pressed me, and then released me and said, ‘Read, in the name of Your Lord, who created, created man from a clot. Read! And Your Lord is the most bountiful.’⁽¹⁾

The Prophet ﷺ never expected his solitude would result in his appointment as the leading figure to rectify the condition of the world. The experience shook him. He ﷺ was concerned about his wellbeing. Hence, the Prophet ﷺ desperately needed an expert evaluation. Who else could comfort and help him obtain this expert conclusion, but the person whose love Allah ﷻ placed in his heart? It was his beloved wife Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا.

Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا took him to her elder cousin Waraqah Ibn Nawfal, one of the four famous public figures in Makkah at the time who rejected the idolatrous practices of the tribes of Makkah and the Arabian Peninsula at large. The Prophet ﷺ told him what happened at the cave. His evaluation was as follows:

1. First, he immediately recognized the Angel as the same Angel who had come to Prophet Musa (Moses) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام.
2. Second, he told him that his message would put him in a confrontation with his people who will drive him out.

Let us leave you with the following Narration (*Hadith*) which establishes the evidence for the last scene of this Volume I of the three-book series – *The Seerah in a*

(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

Contemporary Context.

Aishah رضي الله عنها narrated, “Khadijah then accompanied him to her cousin Waraqah Ibn Nawfal Ibn Asad Ibn Abdul Uzza, who, during the pre-Islamic period became a Christian and used to read the writing with Hebrew letters. He would write from the Gospel in Hebrew as much as Allah wished him to write. He was an old man and had lost his eyesight. Khadijah said to Waraqah, "Listen to the story of your nephew, O my cousin!" Waraqah asked, "O my nephew! What have you seen?" Allah’s Messenger ﷺ described whatever he had seen. Waraqah said, "This is the same one who keeps the secrets (Angel Jibreel) whom Allah had sent to Musa (Moses). I wish I were young and could live up to the time when your people would turn you out." Allah’s Messenger ﷺ asked, "Will they drive me out?" Waraqah replied in the affirmative and said, "Anyone (man) who came with something similar to what you have brought was treated with hostility, and if I should remain alive till the day when you will be turned out, then I would support you strongly." But after a few days, Waraqah died. ⁽¹⁾

Soon after the Prophet ﷺ met Waraqah Ibn Nawfal, two things happened. Waraqah died a few days later, and the first pause of Revelations took place after the first Revelation. The two events caused the Prophet ﷺ much distress. If Allah ﷻ wills it (*In Sha Allah*), we will begin Volume II (The Makkah Period) with the return of the Revelation with Surat Al-Mudathir.



(1) Sahih Al-Bukhari

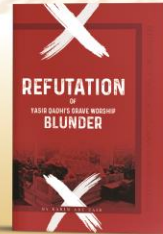
**To be continued with
Volume II: The Makkah
Period**



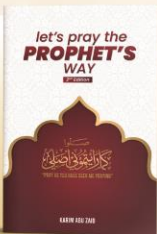
WORSHIP
YOUR LORD



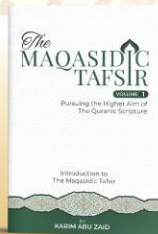
GO BACK AND PRAY
FOR YOU HAVE NOT
PRAYED



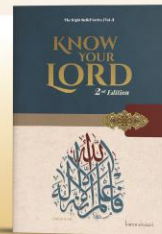
REFUTATION OF
YASIR QADHI'S WORSHIP
BLUNDER



LET'S PRAY THE
PROPHET'S WAY



THE
MAQASIDIC
TAFSEER



KNOW
YOUR LORD

Karim
Abu Zaid