

The Prophetic Biography:

The Meccan Period

Lesson 6



Quraysh's Opposition Tactics

- **1. Appeal To The Chief of Quraysh:**
- When the Prophet started preaching, Quraysh went to Abu Talib, gently, and said, "O Abu Talib, this is your nephew cursing our idols, preaching a new message, surely you cannot let this happen?"
- Abu Talib did not want confrontation, he gave them some gentle words and let them go their way.
- As new people converted to Islam, they increased the pressure on Abu Talib.
- They accused the Prophet of cursing their idols and insulting their forefathers.

Quraysh's Opposition Tactics

- Quraysh even went so far as to offer Muhammad money, women and even kingship over Arabia provided that he discontinue his preaching.
- Abu Talib summons his nephew and conveys the grievances of Quraysh as well as the bribe offers.

Quraysh's Opposition Tactics

يا عمّ، والله لو وضعوا الشمس في يميني والقمر في يساري على أن أترك هذا الأمر حتى يظهره الله، أو أهلك فيه ما تركته.

“O my uncle, I swear by God, if they were to place the sun in my right hand, and the moon in my left hand, I cannot give up this message until I succeed in what I am doing or I die a death in this path preaching what I am preaching.”

- Abu Talib replies:

اذهب يا بن أخي، فقل ما أحببت، فوالله لا أسلمك لشيء أبدًا

“Go forth, O my nephew and speak what you wish. I swear by God will never surrender you to anyone ever.”

Quraysh's Opposition Tactics

- **2. A Treacherous Offer**

يا أبا طالب هذا عمارة بن الوليد أبهى فتى في قريش وأجمله فخذهُ إليكِ فاتخذهُ ولدا فهو لكِ،
وسلم لنا هذا ابن أخيك الذي قد خالف دينك ودين آبائك، وفرق جماعة قومك لنقتله فإنما هو
رجل برجل،

“O Abu Talib, this is Umarah ibn Al-Waleed, the most noble and most handsome youth of Quraysh. Take him and adopt him as a son and surrender to us this nephew of yours who has opposed your religion and the religion of your forefathers...”

Quraysh's Opposition Tactics

قال أبو طالب: والله ما أنصفتُموني، تعطونني ابنكم أغذوه لكم وأعطيتكم ابني تقتلونه؟ هذا والله ما يكون أبدا

“Abu Talib angrily retorted: My God you are unjust to me. You give me your son so I can feed him for you and I give you my son so you can kill him?! By God this will never happen!

Quraysh's Opposition Tactics

فقال له المطعم بن عدي بن نوفل وكان صديقا مصافيا والله يا أبا طالب ما أراك تريد أن تقبل
من قومك شيئا،

“Mut'im ibn Uday, who was a friend of Abu Talib, said: “O Abu Talib, it seems that you are unwilling to accept any offer your people are making to you...”

- Mut'im ibn Adi is the senior most person in all of Mecca. He was the one that prevented the bloodshed in the Ka'bah by suggesting the solution to the Black Stone (i.e. whoever walks in first). This is the least hostile person that has the most sense.

Quraysh's Opposition Tactics

- **3. Censuring the Quran in Public Spaces:**

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَسْمَعُوا لِهَذَا الْقُرْآنِ وَالْغَوْا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَغْلِبُونَ

“And those who disbelieve say, "Do not listen to this Qur'an and speak noisily during [the recitation of] it that perhaps you will overcome.”

Quran 41:26

Quraysh's Opposition Tactics

- **4. Mocking the Prophet and the believers:**
- The Prophet was ridiculed by members of his clan, like Abu Lahab.
- Abu Jahl incessantly ridiculed the Prophet and his companions. If it was s a person of status, he would make fun of him and say to him, "How can you leave the religion of your father? Are you better than your father and grandfather?"
- And if it's a lowly person, he would get physical and abuse them.

Quraysh's Opposition Tactics

- **5. Character Assassination**

- Madman

وَإِنْ يَكَادُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيُزْلِقُونَكَ بِأَبْصَارِهِمْ لَمَّا سَمِعُوا الذِّكْرَ وَيَقُولُونَ إِنَّهُ لَمَجْنُونٌ

“And those who disbelieve would almost smite you with their eyes when they hear the reminder, and they say: Most surely he is mad.” Quran 68:51

- Magician

كَذَلِكَ مَا أَتَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا قَالُوا سَاحِرٌ أَوْ مَجْنُونٌ

“Thus there did not come to those before them a messenger but they said: A magician or a mad man.” Quran 51:52

- Poet

بَلْ قَالُوا أَضْغَاثُ أَحْلَامٍ بَلِ افْتَرَاهُ بَلْ هُوَ شَاعِرٌ

“They have said, "It, (the Quran), is only the result of some confused dreams. He is only a poet..." Quran 21:5

Quraysh's Opposition Tactics

- 6. Demanding a Miracle

وَقَالُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّى تَفْجُرَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ يَنْبُوعًا أَوْ تَكُونَ لَكَ جَنَّةٌ مِّنْ نَّخِيلٍ وَعِنَبٍ فَتُفَجِّرَ
الْأَنْهَارَ خِلَالَهَا تَفْجِيرًا أَوْ تُسْقِطَ السَّمَاءَ كَمَا زَعَمْتَ عَلَيْنَا كِسْفًا أَوْ تَأْتِيَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ قَبِيلًا أَوْ يَكُونَ
لَكَ بَيْتٌ مِّنْ زُخْرَفٍ أَوْ تَرْقَى فِي السَّمَاءِ وَلَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لِرُقِيِّكَ حَتَّى تُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْنَا كِتَابًا نَقْرُوهُ قُلْ سُبْحَانَ
رَبِّي هَلْ كُنْتُ إِلَّا بَشَرًا رَسُولًا

"And they say, 'We will not believe you until you break open for us from the ground a spring. Or [until] you have a garden of palm trees and grapes and make rivers gush forth within them in force [and abundance]. Or you make the heaven fall upon us in fragments as you have claimed or you bring God and the angels before [us]. Or you have a house of gold or you ascend into the sky. And [even then], we will not believe in your ascension until you bring down to us a book we may read.' Say, 'Exalted is my Lord! Was I ever but a human messenger?'" Quran 17:90-93

Quraysh's Opposition Tactics

- **7. A Compromise**
- Negotiations directly with the Prophet. Saying, "Let's reach a compromise. One day we'll all be Muslim, the next day we'll all worship our gods (idols)."
- This is the compromise they wanted. But of course, there is no compromise on monotheism.
- God revealed Surah al-Kafirun:
- **8. Test the Prophet with difficult questions**
- **9. Physical torture**

The Plight of the Early Muslims

- The pagans tormented the early Muslims; they ridiculed those with status, imposed an economic boycott on those with money, and physically assaulted the poor and weak.
- In Arab society, your tribe was your protection. Those who had tribal bonds were somewhat protected. The Prophet, being a Qureshi, had his protection in his lineage. However, the slaves and freed slaves didn't have this protection.

The Plight of the Early Muslims

- . Abu Jahl was the main propagator of this torture.
- When Abu Jahl heard that someone had become Muslim, if the person had status, he would scold him and degrade him and say, “You have abandoned your father’s religion though he was better than you. We believe you have lost your mind, made poor judgement, and we will degrade you.” If he was a trader, he would say, “We will cease trading with you and force you into bankruptcy.” And if he was weak, he would beat him and provoke others to beat him.

The Plight of the Early Muslims

- In the tribal system, each clan was responsible for torturing its own. There was no public prison, so they used to imprison them in their own homes. They imprisoned them, starved them, made them lie on the searing hot sand, whipped them, and sometimes killed them
- Some examples of early companions who were tortured:

The Plight of the Early Muslims

- 1. Bilal b. Rabaah: he was an Abyssinian slave owned by Umayyah ibn Khalaf. Umayyah tied a rope around his neck and told kids to run around in the mountains and drag him. On another occasion, he left him thirsty for a whole day, then laid him on the hot sand and crushed him with a hot boulder

The Plight of the Early Muslims

- 2. Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb tortured a slave girl from ‘Adī. He beat her, and she remained so strong, that he got bored and stopped. He mockingly told her, “I beg your pardon, I only stopped because I am bored.”
- 3. Ammar and his parents, Yasir and Sumayyah, were tortured by the clan of Makhzum. They they tied them down on the hot sand. Sumayyah resisted and became the first Muslim martyr.
- Ammar was tortured so badly that the scars remained with him the rest of his life

The Plight of the Early Muslims

- He ended up recanting his faith under *taqiyyah*. 16:106 was revealed to sanction his action:

مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَكِنْ مَنْ شَرَحَ بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا
فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ

“Whoever rejects God after having believed—except him who was forced while his heart was solidly in faith—but those who let unbelief into their hearts, then the wrath of God is upon them and they will have a terrible punishment.”

The Plight of the Early Muslims

- 4. Suhayb al-Rumi: was among the companions of the Prophet (s) and the first Muslims who accepted Islam at the same time with 'Ammar.
- Even though he was called al-Rumi (the Roman), he was not of Roman lineage. He was an Iraqi, captured as a boy, sent to Rome, and grew up in Rome. He forgot Arabic, spoke fluent Latin. But he knew he was an Arab, so he eventually fled, and was sold to Abdullah ibn Jud'an in Mecca. Ibn Jud'an was known to be more merciful than others to his slaves.

The Plight of the Early Muslims

- Therefore, the torture of Suhayb was not as bad. Suhayb was actually a business manager for Ibn Jud'an because of his knowledge and ability to read and write. He became wealthy. After Ibn Jud'an died, Suhayb was free because Ibn Jud'an wrote in his will that Suhayb would be free when he dies.
- He participated in all battles of the Prophet (s). During the caliphate of Umar he led the prayer on his behalf when Umar was sick. After Umar died, Suhayb b. Sinan performed the prayer upon his body according to his will. After the assassination of 'Uthman, he did not give allegiance to Imam Ali

The Plight of the Early Muslims

- In Rijal al-Kashi, it is reported that Imam al-Sadiq said:

عن أبي عبد الله (عليه السلام) قال: كان بلال عبدا صالحا، وكان صهيب عبدا سوءا وكان يبكي على عمر

“Bilal was a righteous servant [of God] and Suhayb was an evil servant.
He wept over Umar.”

The Plight of the Early Muslims

- 5. Khabbab b. al-Aratt: He was among the first people who believed in the Prophet (s) and embraced Islam. Many historians said that he was the sixth person to accept Islam before the arrival of the Prophet (s) at the house of Arqam b. Abi l-Arqam.
- Others said that he was the 10th, 11th or 20th Muslim. He is the first or among the few first Muslims who manifested their religion publicly for the first time

The Plight of the Early Muslims

- Khabbab was an Arab slave (Arab slaves were treated a little better than slaves of other ethnicity.)
- His master was a female. When she found out that Khabbab converted, she got a gang together to beat him up. She would use the iron that he would use to forge swords, to burn his back.

The Plight of the Early Muslims

- Imam Ali eulogized him saying:

يَرْحَمُ اللَّهُ خَبَّابَ بْنَ الْأَرْتِّ فَلَقَدْ أَسْلَمَ رَاغِباً وَ هَاجَرَ طَائِعاً وَ قَنِعَ بِالْكَفَافِ وَ رَضِيَ عَنِ اللَّهِ وَ
عَاشَ مُجَاهِداً .

“May God have mercy on Khabbab ibn al- Aratt, for he accepted Islam eagerly and emigrated obediently; he was content with mere subsistence, was pleased with God, and lived fighting [for God].

Source: Nahjulblagha, Saying 43