

From the time that our Prophet Muhammad received his first revelation in the cave of Hira in Makkah, he embarked upon his mission as a prophet and messenger of mercy, forgiveness, and compassion.

After spending some time in Makkah, the prophet headed towards At Taif, the next largest town in Hejaz, about 60 miles from Makkah, in which lived a clan by the name of Banu Thaqeef who were strong in number. As the majority of people of Makkah were not accepting the prophet's message and invitation to Islam and he was still suffering from the loss of his beloved wife-khadijah- and his uncle-abu taalib. So the prophet with Zaid ibn Harithah, his servant, ~~and~~ ^{along} left for Taif with hopes of inviting ~~them~~ ^{the people} to Islam and submitting themselves to the worship of Allah alone.

On reaching Taif, He ﷺ visited the 3 tribal chiefs, and invited each one of them to Islam and submitting to Allah. However, these three chiefs not only refused to listen to anything the prophet had to say, but they also withheld any type of hospitality, which was a normal tradition amongst the Arabs, rather they were extremely rude and disrespectful, and told the Prophet that he was not welcome to stay in their town.

The prophet Muhammad had not expected such behavior from the noble chiefs of those tribes, as they would normally treat guests with kindness and hospitality. Even so, the prophet continued with his message, but now directed it towards the common people within the city. For ten days the prophet stayed in Taif, and invited the people to Islam. However, the common people, just like their chiefs, treated the prophet in a disrespectful and uncivilized manner and told him to leave their city, *and never come back again ...*

It was then that the Prophet realized that continuing his mission in Taif would be an extremely difficult, and impossible with such statements of disrespect and ill treatment and disrespect, and so he decided to leave and go back to Makkah. But these residents of Taif were not ready to let him go in peace, they didn't want him to return back home without giving him the proper welcoming and farewell, so they started chasing him out of Taif and yelling at him to leave and never come back again with his message, while they were slandering him, stoning him, harming him and calling him all types of bad names.

While the prophet was leaving, they rained and pelted stones upon him Allah's messenger, throwing stone after stone at the prophet Muhammad.... Hitting his face, his head, his body, his back... until his feet were so covered with blood until his sandals were stuck to his feet, like glue... He would run, stumble and trip, and get up again. Then he would run again, and the stones would rain down upon him once more. This happened repeatedly until the beloved Prophet fell unconscious.

His servant Zaid bin Harithah was also hurt. He had blood flowing from his head trying to shield the messenger of Allah and he lifted the prophet onto his shoulders and took shelter in a garden. He laid under a grapevine until the prophet gained consciousness once again.

Unknown to Zaid was that this garden belonged to Utbah bin Rabiah, who was a staunch enemy of the prophet and who led the army of Quraysh onto the battle field of Badr. He was a fierce enemy of the Prophet, yet when he saw the state of him, his heart melted and he said: "What have the people of Taif done to Muhammad? He who showed mercy to his enemies, we did not have mercy on him. We did not see the value of his tears". He became so emotional that he went

and broke off ^{some} grapes from a bush and began to ^{approach} ~~go towards~~ the prophet Muhammad. But he became shy. So he called his servant, Addas and said: Addas! Take this to that wounded man over there and say to him that I said, I take an oath of our relationship! ~~Do not turn away this~~ ^{That you cannot refuse this plate of grapes ...} ~~plate from yourself~~".

Addas came and presented the grapes to the messenger of Allah who took a grape, put it to his mouth and said "Bismillah". Upon hearing this, Addas exclaimed: "what are these words you're saying? The people here do not use these words". Rasulallah sallallahu alayhi wasallam smiled and asked him: "Where are you from?" He replied: "Nineveh". Rasulallah sallallahu alayhi wasallam said "I see! So you're from the land of my brother Yunus (Jonah)"! Surprised, Addas said: "How do you know about Yunus (Jonah)?" Rasulallah sallallahu alayhi wasallam replied: "I am a prophet of Allah and so was he. So Addas began to kiss his forehead and his hands and his feet until he accepted Islam.

Upon his acceptance Rasulallah sallallahu alayhi wasallam seemed to forget about the pain of his wounds. He lifted his hands towards the heavens and he cried out supplicating to Allah, and upon Hearing this supplication... within seconds the angel Gabraeel came down with the angel in charge of the mountains and said to the Prophet:

"O, Prophet of Allah! I am at your service. If you wish, I can cause the mountains overlooking this town-Taif- on both sides to collide with each other, so that all the people therein would be crushed to death, or you may suggest any other punishment for them."

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said;

“No, do not punish them for they don't realize what they have done, I hope from Allah that there will be people from amongst their progeny, their offspring, who would worship Allah alone and serve His cause, I have not been sent as a punishment, but I have been sent as a mercy.”

This was the conduct of our beloved prophet Muhammad, whom we all love so dearly and should follow. He ﷺ was offered the opportunity to punish those people who had pelted him with stones, broken his teeth, disfigured his face, made him bleed profusely, but instead of that his love, his kindness, and his merciful heart and soul chose to forgive them and pardon what they had done to him.

Revenge was easy for him, especially if the magnificent angels were willing to carry out the task. He could have laid waste to the city of Taif, and wiped out its inhabitants. But revenge was not his object or his goal or objective. Rather his goal and mission was to guide and people and be an example of mercy for all nations...Now Taif, a town that is a Muslim city filled with those who worship Allah alone...the prophet's hopes were fulfilled, and the justification as to why the prophet didn't want them to be punished was manifested....This was the only one example of the prophet's mercy with others...Who knows, it could be that sometimes we are harmed, oppressed, discriminated against by those in our society today, but through us being merciful, patient, pardoning and forgiving with others, that many of the future generations will accept Islam here in our communities.

Brothers and sisters in Islam...That was our beloved prophet and that was just one example of how he was sent as a mercy to all of mankind...We all love the prophet Muhammad, but how is that love

manifested in our daily lives....It is ^{truly} manifested by following the prophet Muhammad and taking him as an example in our behavior, our acts of worship, our dealings with others, and being merciful and kind to others.

We all need to ask ourselves: What is our conduct when we are pelted with stones of verbal harassment, comments, discrimination, ridicule and hatred. What is our conduct when people don't want to accept our invitation to submit to Allah and worship him alone? What is our conduct with those who oppress us or transgress against us. If we truly love Allah and the Prophet Muhammad, then we need to be forgiving, pardoning, and merciful with all people, our relatives, our parents, our children, our neighbors, our colleagues, our classmates...this was the way of the Prophet Muhammad...he would teach the ignorant, be kind and merciful with the elderly, the youth, and even animals. As Allah said about him: 'We didn't send you except as a mercy for all of mankind'

Second khutbah

There are many examples of the mercy of the prophet Muhammad in the Quran, the Sunnah and the prophet's biography...
~~The Prophet Muhammad a mercy for mankind.~~

In the battle of Uhud, when his Makkan enemies attacked the Muslims, Prophet Muhammad suffered head injury and his front teeth got smashed. When the blood started to seep from his head, he swabbed it saying: "If a drop of my blood fell on the earth, those idolators would be destroyed by Allah. A companion told him, O Messenger of Allah, Curse them! The prophet replied: I wasn't sent (by Allah) to curse. I was sent as a mercy. Then he supplicated: O Allah, Guide my people!

Another occasion!

~~Remember~~ when in Makkah the prophet's own people inflicted him with every kind of suffering, eventually forcing him to migrate to Madinah, and then waged war on him for five years. However, when the Muslims came back to Makkah with the Muslims, he asked the Makkan polytheists, who were awaiting his decision about them: "How do you expect me to treat you?" They responded unanimously: "You are a noble one, the son of a noble one." He announced to them his decision: "You may go free! No reproach this day shall be on you; may God forgive you."

The Prophet Muhammad was exceptionally kind and caring towards women. Women were very badly treated in those times. The Noble Prophet gave them honor and dignity at par with men in the community. The Prophet Muhammad was the first to guarantee women their rights, over 14 years ago.

Allah's Messenger was particularly compassionate and merciful towards children. When he saw a child crying, he sat beside him or her and shared his or her feelings. He felt the pain of a mother for her child more than the mother herself. Once he said: "I stand in prayer and wish to prolong it. However, I hear the cry of a child and cut the prayer short for the anxiety which the mother is feeling."

His compassion, mercy and kindness encompassed not only human beings, but also animals.

The Prophet forbade his companions to keep animals and inanimate creatures hungry or thirsty, or to disturb or to overburden them. He commended that kindness and putting them at ease were meritorious acts tending to bring man nearer to Allah. One of the Prophet's companions reports the Prophet as saying: "A traveler who was thirsty

saw a well in the way. He got inside the well and when he came out he saw a dog licking mud due to thirst. The man realized that the dog was as thirsty as him, so he got into the well again, filled his leather sock with water and carried it out holding it with his teeth. Thus, he quenched the thirst of the dog. Allah was pleased with this act of kindness and pardoned his sins." The Companions asked: "O Messenger of Allah is there any reward in regards to beasts and wild animals also?" The Prophet replied: "There is reward in regards to every creature that has a living heart."

The mercy that we show towards others is only a small portion of Allah's mercy within the creation:

Our beloved Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Allah has one hundred parts of mercy, of which He sent down one between the jinn, mankind, the animals and the insects, by means of which they are compassionate and merciful to one another, and by means of which wild animals are kind to their offspring. And Allah has kept back ninety-nine parts of mercy with which to be merciful to His slaves of the Day of Resurrection."

Mercy is one of the greatest blessings we find in the creation and embraces all things as Allah mentions in the Quran. And the living example of that mercy, was the Prophet Muhammad through his actions, his behavior, and his teachings....

Mercy can be manifested in many ways.... Be patient with people who don't know, teach the ignorant, guide the one's who are lost....help anyone around you who is hurting...start with yourself and your soul, your parents, your children, your siblings, your relatives, your friends and neighbors...give people a second chance....do good to those that

harm you or hurt you, pardon them and forgive them and overlook their shortcomings and mistakes....be kind and respectful to everyone....treat people better than they treat you...

The prophet Muhammad didn't live for himself but for others; he was a mercy for all of mankind. So let us, as his followers, live for our lord alone, fulfill his commandments, and be examples of merciful, kind and respectful human beings on the face of this earth, if we truly love Allah and love his final messenger Muhammad.

Peace and blessings be upon the mercy of mankind...the Prophet Muhammad.

So what can we learn from these stories today:

-You have to be patient when preaching the truth.

-The Bigger the assignment, the more you need to be patient and hard working.

-Every difficulty entails opportunity and thus has high chances of bringing success if tolerated with sincerity.

-Pain and Pleasure are experienced by all human beings, and those who are the most righteous and obedient to Allah, will experience the most difficult pains and hardships.

-Greater the pain born, greater the pleasure you become entitled to after bearing that pain with patience and perseverance.

اللهم صل على محمد و آل محمد و صل على النبي
صلى الله عليه و آله و سلم و صل على سيدنا محمد
صلى الله عليه و آله و سلم و صل على سيدنا محمد