

## Battling Corruption From the Inside Out

-- Noha Sherif

Standing before this question, I faced a question of my own: how can I analyze this quarry without looking at it through an Islamic perspective? Then I realized, it was impossible. My concept of corruption has been engrained into my mind. As a byproduct of the Islamic ideals I have been raised on. Therefore in order to properly express my opinion on corruption I must view it through my Islamic perspective.

The story of Musa (Moses) peace be upon him, is a powerful story indeed. A story that has been passed down from generation to generation, it focuses on the of trials in this world and strength of faith. As we grow older, we begin to comprehend the traits and trials of Musa (pbuh). From his experiences we learn the important and qualities of an effective leadership.

The Quran relates Moses (pbuh) by name, 136 times; more than any other Prophet. A very important part of his story is mentioned with detail in Surah Al-Taha, in verses 24-36. If one studies these verses, one can see the leadership skills that Allah (swt) bestowed on Musa to help him stand up to Firawn (the Pharaoh). The skills needed to guide his people towards the belief in one God. The section begins with the command of Allah (swt): **“Go You to Pharaoh, For he had indeed transgressed all bounds.” (Ta Ha, 20:24)**

In response to this call, Musa (pbuh) shows a great proactive initiative by utilizing key principals such as communication, teamwork and delegation. The first thing he did was the most important, asking the help of Allah (swt): Musa said: **“Oh my Lord! Expand my breast; Ease my task for me;” (Ta ha, 20:25-26)**. This act of submission shows Musa (pbuh)’s humility and reliance on his Lord.

In the following ayah, Musa (pbuh) showed another sign of leadership by accepting his weaknesses. By pinpointing where he was flawed, he knew the aspects he needed to improve to make communication with his opponents effective. Musa's speech was impaired due to an accident when he was a kid and said: **“And remove the impediment from my speech \* So that they may understand what I say” (Ta Ha, 20:28)**. It is apparent from these two ayahs that Musa (pbuh) asked for the removal of his speech impediment so that he properly relay his message. Dr. Iqbal Unus explains,

“Communication takes place, not when the sender sends the message but when the receiver ascribes meaning to it. To communicate with desired results, one should not become too absorbed in one's own abilities as speaker or presenter, but should focus on the interpretation and understanding of the message by the intended receiver or receivers. One should direct attention to improvement in one's communicating ability towards a clear understanding of the message one intends to convey.”

Another interesting aspect of Musa's leadership was his ability to function well in a team. He said: **“And give me a Minister from my family, Harun, my brother” (Ta Ha 20:29-30)**. Musa (pbuh) chose his brother to help him in order to strengthen his own abilities and efforts.<sup>1</sup> **He further says, “Add to my strength through him \* And make him share my task (Ta Ha, 20:32)**. Dr. Unus once again explains,

An effective team is characterized by teammates whose skills complement those of the leader as well as of other members of the team... This is the mark of an effective leader. Further, Musa (AS)

---

<sup>1</sup>

asserted that the purpose of forming a team was not merely to reduce one's workload, but to get help and strength from one another. Such a team is directed to a purpose and to meet a challenge, which, in this case, carried the risk of being accused of promoting falsehoods.

The last lesson learned is the importance of the mission, the goal a team must share. Musa (pbuh) stated his in ayas 33-35: "That we may celebrate Your praise without stint, and Remember You without stint: For You are He the ever regards us." (Ta Ha, 20:33-35).

Jesus, son of Mary, is a strong historical and religious figure in all of the Abrahamic faiths. The Christians worship him as God's son; Muslims respect him as a prophet delivering God's message; while Jews simply see him as a man- nothing more. One thing they do all agree on, was Mary the Virgin, his mother. She is known as a pure woman, pious and blessed.

The story as the Muslims believe it, is not very different from the others. The Prophet Zachary's wife's sister had a daughter named Hannah. Hannah was married to Imran; after many years of supplication and worship, she finally had a daughter named Mary. In return for a child, Hannah prayed that she would offer the child in the service of God's house, in the temple of Jerusaem. Imran died before he could see his daughter worship their Lord.

As the story goes, when Mary was in worship in the temple, an angel in the form of a man came to her and said: "... I am only a Messenger from your Lord, (to announce) to you the gift of a righteous son." (The Holy Quran)

Mary knew that it was possible to bear a child without a male, as Adam was created from no male or female. However, the Jews around her believed that Jesus was a threat to for they felt

that the people would turn to his teachings, displacing the existing Jewish Tenants.<sup>2</sup> . Because of this, they kept his infancy a secret and accused Mary of adultery.

As Jesus grew into a man, he began to question the Jews around him and their ways. On the day that Zachary and John died, Jesus was revealed as the Message from God. He began to preach this message to all the people, even though he was harassed many times by people who disagreed for him. This is a lesson for us in our day, that even though people may hurt us for what we believe in, we should never give up and always have faith. That even when corruption is so blatant it is our duty to stand up for our what we believe in.

Muhammad (pbuh), is the final and greatest messenger in Islam. Raised as an orphan in Mecca, Muhammad grew up with his uncle who took care of him. At the age of 40, in the Mountain of Hira, he received his first revelation from the Angel Jibrail. Three years later, he began to preach openly that ‘God is One.’<sup>3</sup> This upset the Quraish, the inhabitants of Mecca who made most of their money off of the pilgrimages to their idols in Mecca. They began to harass and attack the Messenger both physically and verbally. In 622, with a group of followers, Muhammad migrated to Yathrib- now called Madinah. This movement was called the Hijrah, and marks the beginning of the Muslim calendar. The clandestine escape of the prophet raged and antagonized the people of Mecca.

This led to a series of battles, each changing the history of Islam. From these battles we learn of the leadership of the Prophet Mohammed. He proved to be an excellent leader, always reminding his people to have faith in Allah, and never fearing anything but Allah (swt).

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of Ramadan, 624 AD the first battle took its place in time. For the early Muslims, this was the first major test of faith. Nine-hundred and fifty Pagans came ready to

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://anwary-islam.com/prophet-story/isa.html>

<sup>3</sup> Wiki muhammed

defeat the messenger once and for all; along with three hundred and fourteen Muslims ready to give up their lives for the Sake of Allah.<sup>4</sup> The battle began when two members of the pagan army asked the Prophet (pbuh&hf) to send to them their equals in dual.<sup>5</sup> The Prophet chose three members of his family who defeated all three of their opponents.

The night prior to the battle it rained as a mercy from Allah; as described in the following passage from Marium Khan's *The Praised One: The Life of Allah's Last Messenger*:

*"It was Friday night, the 17<sup>th</sup> of Ramadaan two years after the Hijrah (2 A.H). The rain was a blessing for the Muslims and upset for the Kafirs. With the rain, Allah made the Muslims strong, cleansed from any bad ideas Shaytan whispered to them. Rain also made the sand firm and easy to walk on and harder for the Kurfar to prepare."* (Khan)

During the battle, it is recorded that the Messenger (pbuh&hf) threw dust into the eyes and mouths of the pagans. As he flung the dust, a violent sandstorm blew like furnace blast into the eyes of the enemy.<sup>6</sup> About this, Allah says: *"And you (i.e. Muhammad) threw not when you did throw, but Allah threw."* [8:17]<sup>7</sup>

The battle ended with Muhammad's followers' victory. Together, the Muslim's, along with the help of five thousand angels<sup>8</sup> killed 70, and took another 70 as prisoners.<sup>9</sup> For the early Muslims, this was an extremely significant victory because it was the first sign that they might eventually defeat their enemies in Mecca.<sup>10</sup> The end of the battle marked the beginning of the expansion of Islam and the end the power of the Quraish. The battle of Badr, was said to be the

---

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.al-islam.org/history/history/badr.html>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.al-islam.org/history/history/badr.html>

<sup>6</sup> "Battle of Badr." [WikiPedia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Badr). 14 Dec. 2007 <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_Badr](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Badr)>.

<sup>7</sup> The Holy Quran

<sup>8</sup> The Holy Quran- Chapter 3, Verse 134

<sup>9</sup> "Battle of Badr." [Al-Islam.Org](http://www.al-islam.org/history/history/badr.html). 14 Dec. 2007 <<http://www.al-islam.org/history/history/badr.html>>

<sup>10</sup> "Battle of Badr." [Al-Islam.Org](http://www.al-islam.org/history/history/badr.html). 14 Dec. 2007 <<http://www.al-islam.org/history/history/badr.html>>

most important among the Islamic battles of Destiny. If they had lost to the Pagans, Islam would have come crashing down.

The most important lesson is learned from Badr. Here the Prophet (pbuh) is faced with a heart-branching dilemma. He knew what he was preaching was true, and that he must stand up for what he believed in. So, despite being terribly out numbered, he braved the battle field.

In my opinion, corruption has now taken a different path than what it used to be. Today, it is not the lack ignorance of religious beliefs that has negatively affected our people, but rather the neglect towards the implementation of these religious beliefs. To me, corruption comes with the concentration of outward appearance, popularity, and social rank. People have begun to place focus on vices rather than conforming with their internalized values. They ignore what they have been taught to believe is right, and act to achieve what truly matter least. At first glance, my opinion of corruption may strike a person a superficial. But to me, it is this type of corruption that we see affecting our community daily. It is this type of corruption that leads our youth and their families to stray away from what truly matters. It is this alternative path that has changed the clear image of what we believe to be right, into a graying cloud of dishonesty. I define corruption based on my surrounds. Consequently, the aim of my project focuses on teaching people to embrace their principle values and not fear

Battling Corruption From the Inside Out is a project that is separated into two major branches. The pillars of this project evolved from a common lesson taught by all three leaders of the Abrahamic faiths: Stand by your beliefs and never give in. The first division focuses on spreading awareness. This portion mainly addresses the integration of people into society without the need to sacrifice their beliefs. Awareness will be spread through a variety of different ways. One method will be the effect of forums, seminars, and group meetings. Throughout these

meetings discussions revolving around the importance of individuality and identity will be held. Other methods include forms of publicity such as sending letters to editors. Because this is easier said than done, the second branch of the project focuses on the implementation of these ideas.

The second division is demonstration and proactivity. This section encompasses the most important part of this project, for it exhibits how people should stand by their belief system and support only the most worth causes. This portion consists of motivational speakers who will influence listeners to become more moral and capable of making strong, defined, and appropriate decisions. Even more effective programs will be created to directly influence the youth. It will instill a sense of justice and morality in them as well as help them build confidence. Other approached could be the establishment of groups and workshops that encourage people to firmly stand by their belief system.