



﴿حَتَّى إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً﴾

“...till when he attains full strength and reaches forty years”

As the Trump administration ramps up its belligerency against the Islamic Ummah, from Syria to Afghanistan, the Muslims increasingly turn to their men of influence and power to bring the much needed change in the Muslim World. This is to be expected, for we notice that in the era of RasulAllah (saaw), when the first Muslims faced intense persecution for their Islam, he (saaw) sought Nussrah both for himself and for the Deen of Islam. Significantly, these men who responded were at the front line of change and many of them were above forty years, beyond the age of youth. Yes, the one who spends his youth for Islam is praised greatly, but that does not mean that the one who crosses the age of forty is now spent, useless for the Deen and only useful for the Dunya.

Far from it, for it was men who beyond forty years of age came to assist Islam and this was seen throughout the ages. Consider that forty years is by lunar years, by solar years it is thirty eight years of age. It is a blessed era in the life of a servant of Allah (swt) and it is far from an age of retirement, for the faculties have matured. Those who reach forty years of age are mature in their capabilities and are described as being at the "top of their game", well placed within the society to bring change. Within the legal profession they are the senior judges, within journalists they are the editors and established columnists, within the bureaucracy they are the senior administrators, within politicians they are the ones of greatest renown and standing, within the Ulema they are those of Fatwa and strong opinion and within the armed forces they are the senior officers.

Regarding the age of forty, Allah swt said, ﴿حَتَّى إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً﴾ **“...till when he attains full strength and reaches forty years.”** [Surah Al-Ahkaf 46: 15]. Ibn Kathir commented on this **تتأهي عقله وكمل فهمه وحلمه. ويقال: إنه لا يتغير غالبا عما يكون عليه ابن الأربعين** meaning, his complete intellect, understanding, and patience reach the level of maturity. It has also been said that usually one will not change his ways once he reaches the age of forty." Imam Qurtubi commented **ففي الأربعين تتأهي العقل، وما قبل ذلك وما بعده منتقص عنه** "At forty years, the mind is matured to its peak, and before that and after that it is less." And at-Tabari commented, **الأشد جمع شد، وأنه تتأهي قوته واستوائه**, Ashad (full strength) is the plural of Shad (strength) and it is the maturing in his strength and faculties."

Along with matured capabilities, those who reach the age of forty are also at the top of their responsibilities. They must look after their growing children as well as their own elderly and ailing parents. They have matured in their means of livelihood and look forwards to securing their own homes. Thus, even with their capabilities, they can become lost in the pursuit of Dunya, unless they are focused at this critical stage on the real priorities through their Deen. Qurtubi further commented on this Ayah **وَقَالَ مَالِكٌ: أَدْرَكْتُ أَهْلَ الْعِلْمِ بِنَدَانَا وَهُمْ يَطْلُبُونَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْعِلْمَ وَيُخَالِطُونَ النَّاسَ، حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ لِأَحَدِهِمْ أَرْبَعُونَ سَنَةً، فَإِذَا أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ** **مَالِكٌ: أَدْرَكْتُ أَهْلَ الْعِلْمِ بِنَدَانَا وَهُمْ يَطْلُبُونَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْعِلْمَ وَيُخَالِطُونَ النَّاسَ، حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ لِأَحَدِهِمْ أَرْبَعُونَ سَنَةً، فَإِذَا أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ** Malik said, I have seen that the people of knowledge in our land, they seek the world and knowledge and they mix with the people until one of them reaches forty years of age. When that age befalls them, they refrain from the people and busy themselves with the Resurrection until death comes to them."

Moreover, in the continuation of this Ayah, we see that Allah (swt) mentions a Dua made by the one that reaches forty that brings firm focus on priorities. Allah swt said, ﴿قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَلَدِي وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾ **“he says: "My Lord! Grant me the power and ability that I may be grateful for Your favor which You have bestowed upon me and upon my parents, and that I may do righteous good deeds, such as please You, and make my offspring good. Truly, I have turned to You in repentance, and truly, I am one of the Muslims.”**) In this Dua, the forty year old asks his Lord (swt) that his power and ability is used for the righteous deeds, so as to please him and he asks for His Lord to forgive him. Indeed, this Ayah contains a command for anyone who reaches forty years of age to renew his repentance and turn to Allah with strong resolution. Even if he wasted his youth in pursuit of Dunya, he does not despair, but repents and firmly commits to obey his Lord and fulfill the requirements of his Deen from now.

Thus, he or she is the sincere Muslim who rises above the current corrupting atmosphere within the influential circles of the Muslim World. He is the one who rises above the temptation and privileges that are extended to him by the current oppressive rulers in a bid to bribe him for his support for the oppression. He is the judge who will not yield to the pressure to punish the advocate for Khilafah presented to his court. He is the journalist who ignores the threats of the regime's thugs and moves forwards to convey the activities and call of the advocate of the Khilafah to the masses. He is the senior bureaucrat who exerts himself to remove any obstacles that are placed in the way of the advocates of the Khilafah. He is the capable politician who becomes part of the platform of Hizb ut Tahrir, sincerely studying Islam and conveying it as a way of life and the only standard for politics. He is the brave Alim who openly proclaims in the Khutba the obligation to work for the Khilafah and the sin in participating in Democracy. And he is the armed forces' officer who awaits his opportunity to grant the Nussrah for the establishment of the second Khilafah on the Method of the Prophethood.

And indeed, it is those who reach forty years old, whilst repentant for their shortcomings and renewed in their resolve to their Deen, that are granted the glad tidings of the greatest success to be had. For Allah (swt) continues in the very next Ayah to say, ﴿أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ نَتَقَبَّلُ عَنْهُمْ أَحْسَنَ مَا عَمِلُوا وَنَتَجَاوَزُ عَنْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ فِي أَصْحَابِ الْجَنَّةِ وَعَدَّ الصِّدْقَ الَّذِي كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ﴾ **“They are those from whom We shall accept the best of their deeds and overlook their evil deeds. (They shall be) among the dwellers of Paradise. That is a promise of truth that they had been promised.”** [Surah Al-Ahkaf 46: 16]. The stage is set for the men and women of influence to make their mark on the world, bringing it from the darkness of Kufr to the light of Islam. It is only those who break themselves from the shackles of Dunya who will play the role that will become a source of true pride, prestige and success in the Akhirah life that has no end. It is those alone who can be said to have given their capabilities and their position of influence and power its full right. Thus on behalf of your long suffering Ummah, Hizb ut Tahrir calls upon all of you, so respond.

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
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