

## Ramadan is the Perfect Time for Restoration and Revival

Work in a dawah carrier's life is intense and continuous. The dawn of realisation is not the destination, but actually it is the beginning of a long and often rough journey, though for the slaves of Allah every hardship is a milestone on the road to success. Ramadan is the perfect time to revive the sick soul and to carry out a survey of oneself and the world. As all the Muslims of the world are living under some form of kufr and are surrounded by un-Islamic norms and values which are difficult to fight at the individual level, the duty of a dawah carrier is not just to protect his own faith but to speak up and highlight the issues that are a hindrance in living the life of a Muslim.

The problems that we face today are no different from the problems of the earliest Muslims, of being abandoned by their own people, being labelled as insane or fanatics, facing social and economic restrictions, being persecuted and being tortured. What we need to see is that in history the persecution started with our beloved Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) and his people coming out and proclaiming their faith, and such is the situation for the Dawah carrier of today. As soon as we follow the command of "Arise and Warn", challenges start to pour in. If we challenge any action of the state we'll see the same reactions as of the authorities of Makkah. Muslims of today are allowed to get the worldly benefits as long as they keep their faith to themselves, and that too if they remember that mentioning or displaying it in public is considered extremism. We have Muslims living directly under the oppressive non-Muslim regimes like China, where performing of basic worshipping acts like fasting and praying is a crime or we have Muslims living under western liberal system where their faith is enough to pronounce them a terrorist. Then we have Muslims living in so-called Muslim countries and still not being able to live a life that Islam demands and then being persecuted for asking for it. We also have our Muslim brothers and sisters who have been victims of war either because they have oil or they have some strategic importance for the material grabbing vultures. Muslim refugees from around the world trying to flee from their war trodden homes. Their only crime is their faith and for them it's either brutal death or humiliating life in the refugee camps. In all these situations first impact of trying to be a practicing Muslim is of "cutting down of options and opportunities". From the early education to the job opportunities, social adjustments and everyday living, challenges wait everywhere. Even if the truth you speak touches the hearts of the others, fear of authorities and the consequences of challenging them is too strong for the people to join hands. If the legacy of cruelty of Ummayah Bin Khalf continues in so many forms today, we need to keep the strength of Bilal (ra) alive as it wasn't the tyranny that won, but the persistence of Bilal and the help of another Muslim, Abu Bakr Siddiq (ra), that saved Bilal and many others.

For revival along with the patience of Bilal, generosity of Abu Bakr and steadfastness of Sumayya (ra) we also need the Bravery of Umar Farooq, whose real test started after he embraced Islam and carried on with the flag of Muhammad and expanded it around the world as Caliph. The challenge for today's brave man is to recognise his real strength and to know that being a soldier of Islam is very different from fighting someone else's war. Revival also demands the loyalty and trust of Ali bin Abi Talib. Umar bin Abdul Aziz is an example of how, by sticking to the basis of Islam, we can revive it even if all the odds are against us. The example of Sultan Abdul Hamid II is of how, like a true Captain of the ship, he not only delayed the sinking but also sailed smooth for some time and made it difficult for the enemy to destroy.

Headed by the Islamic State, the Muslim Ummah was a huge body, and it took a lot of malice and power to bring it down. It demands equal energy and alertness to rise up again, but once it has risen, it will inshaAllah shake the world and bring justice to it. As Ramadan is the month of extra reward we also must try to put extra effort to bring this change about. That implies that we must carry the Dawah with even more persistence and enthusiasm than in the rest of the year. ﴿وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِيرِ الصَّابِرِينَ﴾ **"Be sure we shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere."** [Surah Al-Baqara: 155]

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