

The Prophetic Biography

صَلَّى اللّٰهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

**What Were
the Disbelievers Doing in
the Darkness of the Night?**

مُحَمَّدٌ
صَلَّى اللّٰهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

The Art of Distraction

What Were the Disbelievers Doing in the Darkness of the Night?



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When the disbelievers saw that they could not stand against the call of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), they decided that their only option was to seek help from the Jewish scholars in Medina.

Imagine!!



The disbelievers sought the help of the Jewish rabbis, with whom they had no prior relationship, simply to find a way to destroy Muhammad—this same man they had once called the Truthful and Trustworthy.

The leaders of Quraysh sent al-Nadr ibn al-Harith and Uqbah ibn Abi Mu'ayt on a journey that covered more than 400 kilometers to meet the rabbis in Medina. When they arrived and sat with them, the rabbis asked, "What brings you here?"

Uqbah and al-Nadr replied, "We came to ask you about a man who claims to be a prophet, named Muhammad ibn Abdullah."



The rabbis knew well that he was the Seal of the Prophets, and they had descriptions of him in their books and Torah. Allah even mentions that they knew him better than they knew their own children.

However, out of jealousy and anger that he did not come from among them, they sought to sow doubts in the hearts of the disbelievers.

So, they said to al-Nadr and Uqbah: "Ask him three questions. If he answers them, then he is a prophet, but if he does not, then he is a liar, and you can do with him as you wish."

They asked, "What are these three questions?"



The rabbis replied: "The first question: Ask him about **the young men who disappeared in history**, their story is amazing. The second question: Ask him about **a man who traveled across the east and west of the earth**. The third question: Ask him about **the soul**."

"If he answers these three questions, then he is a prophet. But if not, he is lying to you. Do with him whatever you want."

So, al-Nadr and Uqbah took the questions and returned to Mecca.

The disbelievers gathered together to ask Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) these three questions.

The Prophet replied to them, "I will answer you tomorrow."



But the revelation did not come the following day, and he did not respond.

The next day, the disbelievers returned to Muhammad, asking, "O Muhammad, where are the answers?"

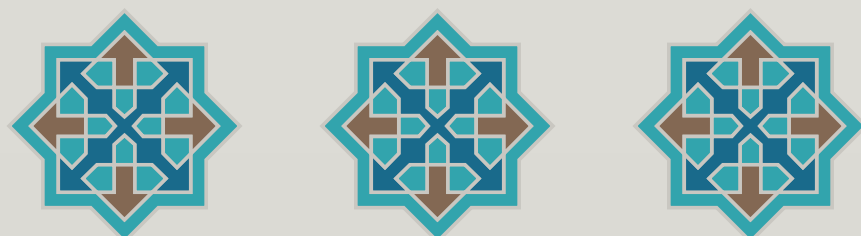
Once again, the Prophet responded, "I will answer you tomorrow," but no revelation came.

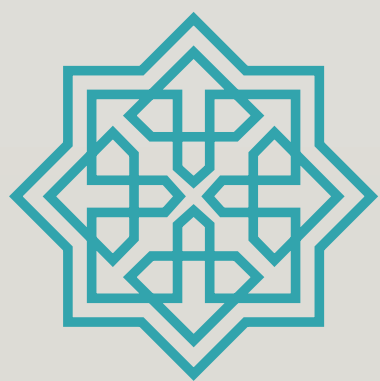
For fifteen days, this continued. The Prophet would say, "I will answer you tomorrow," but the revelation did not come to answer their questions!

During this time, the disbelievers began to question the validity of Muhammad's message and said to his companions, "Look how we have rendered Muhammad speechless"



But Allah wanted to teach His Prophet that when he says "tomorrow," he should always say, "**Insha'Allah**" (if Allah wills). The Prophet (peace be upon him) had forgotten to say this, and he was saddened by the delay of the revelation.





The Destruction of the Disbelievers' Plot

After fifteen days had passed, Gabriel (Jibreel) came to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). When the Prophet asked about the answers to the questions, Gabriel responded with the words of Allah:



✽ **We do not descend except by the command of your Lord. To Him belongs what is before us, what is behind us, and what is in between, and your Lord is never forgetful.** ✽
(Quran, 19:64)

Then, Allah admonished the Prophet for forgetting to mention Allah's will, and Gabriel continued with a reminder:



✽ **And never say of anything, 'Indeed, I will do that tomorrow' – except when Allah wills. And remember your Lord when you forget and say, 'Perhaps my Lord will guide me to what is nearer than this to right conduct.'** ✽ (Quran, 18:23-24)

By the will of Allah, you will act.




Gabriel continued, informing the Prophet that the answers to the three questions were in **Surah Al-Kahf (The Cave)**, and so the Surah was revealed.

The first answer regarding the young men who disappeared is found in the verse:

 **We relate to you their story in truth. Indeed, they were youth who believed in their Lord, and We increased them in guidance.** 
(Quran, 18:13)

The second answer about the man who traveled the world is:

 **And they ask you about Dhul-Qarnayn. Say, 'I will recite to you a mention of him.' Indeed, We**

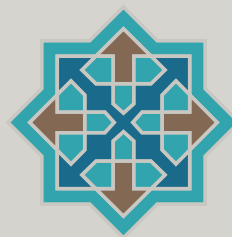
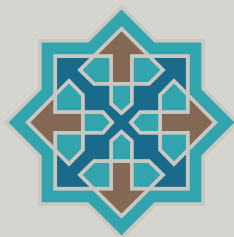
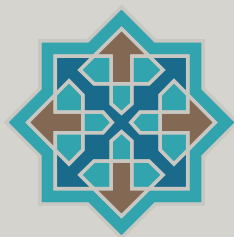


**established him upon the earth, and
We gave him to everything a way.❦**
(Quran, 18:83-84)

The third answer about the soul is:

❦ **And they ask you about the soul.
Say, 'The soul is of the affair of my
Lord, and mankind have not been
given of knowledge except a little.❦**
(Quran, 17:85)

With these three answers, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) silenced the disbelievers' plots and the jealousy of the Jews.



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The Art of Distraction

Al-Nadr ibn al-Harith was a man from Quraysh who was a notorious troublemaker and a master of distraction. He frequently traveled to the Roman and Persian empires and learned their stories, history, and myths.



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When he returned to Mecca, he found the people embracing the message of monotheism and the true stories of the past. So, he began his campaign of **distraction**.

Whenever the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) would sit with the people, preaching about Allah, faith, angels, the afterlife, and the stories of the prophets, al-Nadr would come and sit nearby, telling them the myths and absurd stories he had learned, captivating their attention with tales of deviation and indulgence.

Sometimes he would talk about romanticism or absurdities, and at other times, he would speak about trivial distractions to stir people's desires.



He would mockingly say: "*Isn't my story better than what Muhammad tells about the prophets and their legends? By Allah, Muhammad is not a better storyteller than me*"

Then Allah revealed the verse:

❦ **And of the people is he who buys the amusement of speech to mislead from the way of Allah without knowledge and who takes it in ridicule. Those will have a humiliating punishment. And when Our verses are recited to him, he turns away in pride as though he did not hear them, as if there is deafness in his ears. So give him tidings of a painful punishment.** ❦

(Quran, 31:6-7)



But that was not all. Al-Nadr also bought singers and dancers, so instead of imagining such distractions in his stories, he provided them in reality.

Whenever he saw the Prophet talking to someone and inviting them to Islam, he would send his entertainers to them, to distract and amuse them, pulling their attention away from the Quran.

Al-Nadr was not the only one waging this war of distraction.

Indeed, the other disbelievers also participated in this campaign of distraction. Whenever they heard Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) reciting the Quran, they would start shouting and speaking loudly,

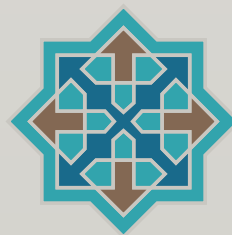
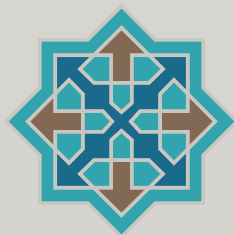


trying to drown out the recitation to prevent others from hearing it.

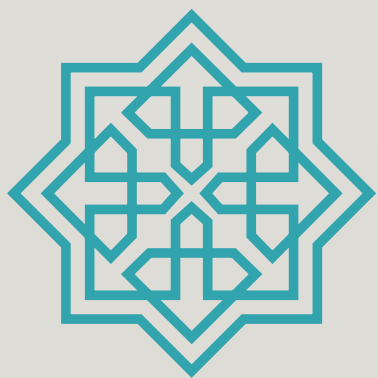
They knew the powerful impact the Quran had on the soul, and they sought to disrupt its message.

In response to their actions, Allah revealed the verse:

❦ **And those who disbelieve say,
'Do not listen to this Qur'an and
speak noisily during its recitation
that perhaps you will overcome** ❦
(Quran, 41:26)



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The Trench of Fire

Abu Jahl stood in the middle of his tribe, with people around him sitting in front of the Kaaba.

He said with a false sense of pride:
"By Allah, if Muhammad comes to pray in front of the Kaaba, I will certainly step on his neck with my



foot, and I will smear his face in the dust."

Then Muhammad came, stood in front of the Kaaba, faced the qibla, and began his prayer.

"Allahu Akbar," Muhammad said loudly, with no fear, and then began his prayer.

Abu Jahl saw the people looking at him, so he stood up in front of everyone to carry out his threat, and he walked toward Muhammad (PBUH).

As he approached him, Abu Jahl was suddenly stopped by something. Then the people saw him raise his hands in front of his face in fear, and then he retreated, backing away and running off.











They asked him: "What happened, Abu Jahl?"

Abu Jahl replied: "I saw a trench of fire between me and Muhammad"

Muhammad (PBUH) then said: "By Allah, if he had come any closer to me, the angels would have torn him apart, limb by limb."

Then the verses were revealed:

 **Have you seen the one who forbids 
A servant when he prays?  Have you
seen if he is upon guidance  Or enjoins
righteousness?  Have you seen if he
denies and turns away?  Does he not
know that Allah sees?  No! If he does
not desist, We will surely drag him by
the forelock  A lying, sinful forelock.**



❁ Then let him call his associates; ❁ We will call the angels of Hell. ❁ No! Do not obey him. But prostrate and draw near (to Allah).❁

(96:9–19)

Abu Jahl mocked Muhammad, saying: "Do I not say I am better than what Muhammad says in the myths of the past prophets? By Allah, Muhammad does not speak better than I do."

Then the verse was revealed:

❁ And of the people is he who buys the amusement of speech to mislead [others] from the way of Allah without knowledge and who takes it in ridicule. Those will have a humiliating punishment. ❁ And



when Our verses are recited to him, he turns away in arrogance, as if he did not hear them, as if there is deafness in his ears. So give him tidings of a painful punishment. ﴿٣١﴾

(31:6-7)

Not only this, but An-Nadr bought singers and dancers. Instead of imagining the dancers and the debauchery in his tales, you could see it in person.

Whenever he saw Muhammad (PBUH) speaking with someone and calling them to Islam, he would send his singer to entertain him, to sing and distract him from the Quran.

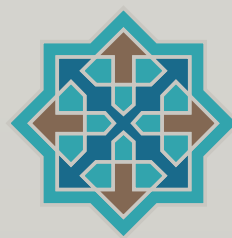


It was not only him who waged the war of distraction; the other disbelievers would also, when they heard Muhammad reciting the Quran, begin shouting and speaking loudly to disrupt the people from hearing the Quran. They knew the effect of the Quran on the soul.

Then Allah revealed:

❦ **And those who disbelieve say, 'Do not listen to this Qur'an and speak nonsense during its recitation that perhaps you will overcome.'** ❦

(41:26)



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What Were the Disbelievers Doing in the Darkness of Night?

Al-Akhnas ibn Shariq, Amr ibn Wahb, Abu Sufyan ibn Harb, and Abu Jahl.

These four men used to sneak out of their homes in the darkness of



the night to go to the Kaaba.

At that time, Mecca's streets were not illuminated as they are today. The darkness was so intense that one couldn't see the road ahead, and even one's own hand could hardly be seen in the darkness of Mecca.

Why did they go to the Kaaba at that time, one might wonder?

Were they going to check on their idols? Or were they plotting against Muhammad (PBUH)?

You might be surprised to learn that each of them went separately, without knowing the others were there, and they sat near the Kaaba to listen to the Quran as Muhammad prayed in front of it!



When dawn began to break, and the sky started to lighten, illuminating the path, they would quickly leave to return to their homes before anyone saw them.

The surprising thing is that these four men ended up meeting each other by chance on their way back, and each saw the other. They were astonished at what each had been doing.

They said to each other: "What are you doing here? If the foolish people of Mecca had seen you, they would have become suspicious of Muhammad"

They then made a pact to never go back to that again.

The next day, when the sky was still



dark and Muhammad was at the Kaaba, praying and reciting the Quran, each one of them went out secretly from his house to the Kaaba once more. They sat close to him to listen.

When the dawn came and they saw each other again, they rebuked one another, and again they made a pact not to return to it. Then they parted ways.

This happened multiple times until they swore never to return to it again.

Then Al-Akhnas ibn Shariq went to Abu Sufyan in his house and asked him: "Have you heard the Quran from Muhammad like I have?"

Abu Sufyan replied: "Yes, I have heard what he says, and it is the truth."



Next, Al-Akhnas went to Abu Jahl and asked him: "Have you heard the Quran from Muhammad like I have?"

Abu Jahl replied: "Yes."

Al-Akhnas then asked: "What do you think of it?"

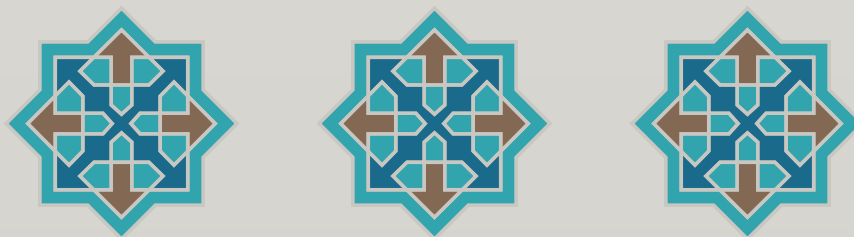
Abu Jahl said: "We, along with the family of Abd Manaf (the family of Muhammad), were like two racing horses—competing for dominance over Mecca. They fed the pilgrims, so we fed them. They watered the pilgrims, so we watered them. Then, one of them (Muhammad) came forward saying he was a prophet. How could we accept that? If we follow Muhammad, we will be followers of one from Abd Manaf, and they will take pride over us and



beat us. By Allah, we will never allow that. We will never let them surpass us."

This shows how arrogant the Quraysh disbelievers were—they knew the truth but rejected it.

But the question remains: Would they stop their war against Muhammad? Would they continue what they had started, fighting Muhammad and everyone who believed in him?



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