

SUMMER IMMERSION

PROPHETIC LEADERSHIP



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SESSION 7

Conflict Management (Cont.)

- Correcting with Wisdom and Mercy:
 - True leadership corrects with both wisdom and mercy. While guidance is necessary, two wrongs do not make things right.
 - Acknowledge a person's good traits before offering correction.
 - The Prophet (ﷺ) inspired others, built shared goals, united his followers with purpose, and led through personal example.
- Minimizing Harm:
 - Leaders must reduce harm or stop it completely. For example, do not react with anger to bad behavior. Choose actions that stop worse outcomes.
 - The hypocrites (munafiqeen) often caused trouble to the Muslims, but the Prophet (ﷺ) showed great tolerance. Even though he knew who they were, he did not harm them to prevent worse harm.
 - This shows great leadership, forgiveness, and diplomacy. It teaches us how to manage difficult people to protect the community.
 - Prophetic example:
 - During the expedition of Banu Mustaliq, young companion Zayd ibn Arqam overheard the chief hypocrite, Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul, tell his men not to support the Prophet's companions and vowed that the "honorable" would expel the "humiliated" from Madinah.

- When Zayd reported this, Ibn Ubayy denied it under oath, leading the Prophet (ﷺ) initially to accept his word.
- Because of the denial and Ibn Ubayy's prominent tribal status, some people doubted Zayd and blamed him, causing Zayd deep grief. Soon after, Surah Al-Munafiqun was revealed, confirming Zayd's absolute truthfulness.
- When Ibn Ubayy eventually died, the Prophet (ﷺ) later led his janaza and used his shirt as a burial shroud.
- Umar ibn al-Khattab strongly objected, reminding the Prophet (ﷺ) of what Ibn Ubayy had done. The Prophet (ﷺ) replied that he chose to seek forgiveness. Allah said:

أَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُمْ أَوْ لَا تَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُمْ إِنْ تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً فَلَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ

Ask forgiveness for them, [O Muhammad], or do not ask forgiveness for them. If you should ask forgiveness for them seventy times – never will Allah forgive them.(9:80)

- Prioritizing Unity of the Ummah:
 - Leaders must overcome racial and tribal divides. They must solve fights and seek justice using Islamic values.
 - We are Muslims first and foremost. Our main identity is Muslim. Muslims cannot unite while internal conflicts persist amongst ourselves.
 - The Prophet (ﷺ) strongly opposed tribalism, racism, and ethnic groups fighting each other.
 - Prophetic example:
 - When a Muhajir and an Ansar quarrelled and called out, "O Muhajirin!" and "O Ansar!" following a dispute over water, the Prophet (ﷺ) was appalled by their behavior because it resembled the calls of Jahiliyyah. He declared: "Is it with the call of Jahiliyyah that you call out, while I am yet among you?"

- Dealing with Difficult People Gently:
 - As a leader, the Prophet (ﷺ) never publicly shamed anyone, called them out by name or harshly rebuked them.
 - Prophetic example:
 - The Prophet (ﷺ) allowed a Bedouin man to finish urinating inside the masjid instead of stopping him mid-way. When Companions rushed forward in anger to stop the man, the Prophet (ﷺ) told them not to interrupt him to prevent physical harm or worsening the mess, later cleaning the area with water and gently educating the man. This teaches us to guide others with kindness. We should respond to honest mistakes with gentle words and learning, not with anger or harshness.
 - A young man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and asked for permission to commit zina (unlawful sexual intercourse). While the surrounding Companions angrily rebuked him, the Prophet (ﷺ) gently called the man closer, sat him down, and used a logical, empathetic dialogue to help him realize why the act is harmful. The Prophet (ﷺ) asked the man if he would like zina committed with those he respected: his mother, his daughter, his sister, and his aunts. To each question, the man answered, "No." After the dialogue, the Prophet (ﷺ) made du'a for him. By shifting the perspective instead of shaming the man, the Prophet (ﷺ) helped him recognize that every victim of zina belongs to a family that feels the same protective disgust.
 - The Incident of the Slander (Al-Ifk):
 - Safwan ibn al-Mu'attal helped Aisha by letting her ride his camel after she was left behind by the caravan, and Abdullah ibn Ubayy used this innocent act to start false rumors.

- The rumor spread quickly through Medina and caused great distress to the Prophet's household. The Prophet (ﷺ) did not know what to think at first, and Aisha felt sad because the Prophet (ﷺ) seemed distant before Allah revealed verses in Surah An-Nur that proved Aisha was completely innocent and cleared her name.
- Key lessons from this incident:
 - 1. Handling Rumors: It teaches the Prophetic way to deal with rumors.
 - 2. Personal Trials: It shows regardless of our closeness to Allah, we could be tested in our personal matters.
 - 3. Clearing Names: It teaches us the systematic way of how to deal with an accusation and clear someone's name.
 - 4. Human Feelings: It shows the humanity of the Prophet (ﷺ) while he was impacted by this accusation.
 - 5. Avoid Gossip: It teaches us to verify facts, guard our tongues, and avoid spreading unverified gossip.
- Even righteous people may fall into this trap. Those who participated in passing on the unverified accusation without four witnesses were disciplined with 80 stripes to protect community honor.
- Three individuals among the community — Mistah ibn Uthathah, Hassan ibn Thabit, and Hamnah bint Jahsh — received this punishment for spreading the slander against Aisha.
- Emotional Management:
 - Managing a community's emotions during hard choices is a core duty for leaders. Instead of criticism, leaders must guide their people with empathy and support.

- When a leader shows fear or grief, others panic. The Prophet (ﷺ) never panicked because he knew Allah was always with the believers.

Leading Through Service

- True strength in leadership is rooted in mercy and service, rather than the pursuit of authority and recognition. While typical leaders chase power, the strongest leaders serve the most.
- Having A Serving Heart:
 - Many leaders just give orders and avoid the work. The Prophet (ﷺ) displayed servant leadership. He led through humble service and compassion, working right alongside his Companions.
 - Prophetic example:
 - The Prophet (ﷺ) personally helped build Masjid Quba upon his arrival in Madinah, and also took part in setting up Masjid an-Nabawi.
 - The Prophet (ﷺ) served his own household (e.g., fixing his shoes, sewing his own clothes, milking the goat etc.), showing that leaders care for both their personal responsibilities and their people.
 - Narrated Al-Aswad: That he asked `Aisha "What did the Prophet (ﷺ) use to do in his house?" She replied,

يَكُونُ فِي مِهْنَةٍ أَهْلِهِ - تَعْنِي خِدْمَةَ أَهْلِهِ - فَإِذَا حَضَرَتِ الصَّلَاةُ خَرَجَ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ.

"He used to keep himself busy serving his family and when it was the time for prayer he would go for it." (Sahih al-Bukhari)
- A true community leader always looks for ways to serve others. Doing basic service tasks helps keep the ego in check.
- Reminder: Do not do something simply for the task itself, but do it because an unchecked ego could potentially ruin your leadership.

- Not Waiting To Be Served:
 - The best way to lead is by example. Do the work yourself. Although many people offered to help the Prophet (ﷺ), he often chose to do his own work.
 - For example, during the Battle of the Trench, the Prophet (ﷺ) dug alongside his Companions for 25 days.
 - While the Prophet (ﷺ) accepted service from others, he never used his authority to mistreat or exploit those who assisted him.
 - True service works both ways for the sake of Allah: when people serve us, we gladly serve them in return.
- Display of Humility:
 - The Prophet (ﷺ) showed great humility as a leader. He never placed himself above his Companions in rank or comfort.
 - Prophetic example:
 - The Battle of Badr:
 - The Muslim army of 313 men had only about 70 camels. Because of this shortage, groups of three men shared a single camel and took turns riding and walking. The Prophet (ﷺ) shared his camel with Ali ibn Abi Talib and Ubayy ibn K'ab.
 - When it was time for the Prophet (ﷺ) to dismount and walk his turn, his two Companions showed immense love and respect. They said, "We will walk on your behalf, so you can ride continuously."
 - The Prophet (ﷺ) refused their offer with profound humility and equality, replying, "You are not stronger than me, and I am not in less need of reward than you both." He insisted on taking his exact share of the physical hardship, walking just as they did when his turn came.

- Umar's Arrival at Jerusalem:
 - When Caliph Umar arrived in Al-Quds, he and his servant shared a single mount by taking turns riding and walking. As they reached the city gates, it was the servant's turn to ride while Umar walked and pulled the reins, stunning the waiting Christian clergy and Byzantine leaders.
 - They expected a powerful conqueror to arrive with grand military pomp, silk garments, and a massive procession. Instead, they saw a barefoot or mud-splattered leader wearing simple, patched robes, walking on foot while his servant sat on the transport.

Legacy Leadership

- A good leader gives clear direction, shares a bright vision, and sets exact rules. Without this guide, the group has no goal and feels lost on what to do.
- The Prophet (ﷺ) served as the ultimate leader by giving his Companions the clear and focused mission to spread Islam.
- Prophetic example:
 - During the Farewell Hajj, the Prophet (ﷺ) gathered 100,000 Companions. In his final sermon, he gave every believer the duty to share his message with the world.
 - Because of the Prophet's clear leadership, after his passing, the Companions traveled to many regions like Syria, Iraq, and Yemen during the early conquests. Islam reached South Asia and Southeast Asia centuries later through later generations of Muslim merchants, Sufi missionaries, and scholars.
- Leaders with a legacy mindset put the mission before self. During the Prophet's time, people focused on their shared purpose first and their personal lives second.

- For example, the Companions cared more about their eternal reward in the akhirah than their temporary worldly life (dunya).
- To measure the true impact of the Prophet's leadership, look at the character of his followers. His leadership was so inspiring that people today still strive to follow his example and copy his traits.
- As followers, we must emulate the Prophet's good actions every day. His exemplary leadership should inspire us to guide others with wisdom and integrity across all spheres of our existence.

