

Treasures From The Cave - Part 5

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Outline of the Course

1. The Meeting of Musa with Al Khadr
2. Three Questions Presented to the Prophet (pbuh)
3. The instructive journey starts
4. The pursuit of knowledge
5. Time for parting
6. Explanation of Al Khadr's mysterious acts
7. The story of Zul Qarnain
8. The journey towards the setting of the sun
9. The journey towards the rising of the sun
10. Isolating Gog and Magog

Course objectives:

1. To be aware of the lessons learnable from the story of Al Khadr
2. To learn the characteristics of a successful leader through the story of Zul Qarnain
3. To see living examples of righteous people and how Allah guides them

QUESTION & ANSWER BUCKET

TRANSCRIPTS

ASSESSMENT

Multiple Choice Questions

Match the Columns

True or False

COURSE DURATION

Video	–	2 hours 5 min
Study Guide	–	30 min
Assessment	–	15 min
Total Duration	–	2 hours 50 mins

Lesson 1: Treasures from the Cave - Part 23

1. The Meeting of Musa and Al Khadr

Allah informed Musa that there is a man who is more knowledgeable than him. So Musa set out with his servant, Yusha' Bin Noon in order to meet this man, whose name was Al Khadr. Al Khadr was identified as the servant of Allah, and this is the best honour ever attainable.

Musa was determined to keep travelling until he would meet him. He and his servant travelled a long distance carrying their food (the fish) with them, and they rested for a little bit. This is when the fish slipped into the sea in the vicinity of a rock mentioned in the Qur'an.

Then the next morning, as they were hungry, and fatigued, Musa commanded his servant to bring their fish to have it. He told him the place the fish slipped into the sea.

Musa Alayhis Salam said to his server Yusha' Bin Noon that is what we have been seeking. So they both went back retracing their footsteps, until they reached to the same place where Yusha' Bin Noon lost the fish.

What is so special about the servant of Allah Al Khidr peace be upon him? Allah described his as:

- i. a servant of Allah
- ii. being gifted with mercy from Us (from Allah).
- iii. And We taught him directly with a knowledge from Allah the Almighty.

Musa requested him to allow him to accompany him in order for him to learn from him. Al Khadr told him that he would not have patience with him. But Musa said he would In Shaa Allah be patient and obedient, and insisted on accompanying Al Khadr. Al Khadr told him then not to ask any questions or make any objections about the actions of Al Khadr until he himself would start telling him about them. Musa agreed.

2. Three Questions Presented to the Prophet (pbuh)

The Jews asked the chieftains of Quraysh to ask the prophet three questions to test whether he was a prophet. Such questions were about:

- i. The story of the sleepers of the cave
- ii. The reality of Ar Rooh
- iii. The story of Zul Qarnain

The prophet told them that he would give them the answers. However, there are facts to be understood:

i. It is not necessarily true that because Mohammed is a Prophet that he has to learn everything, by the end he is a human being who receives revelation by the will of Allah.

ii. If Allah wills to reveal him something it is not at the wish of the prophet (pbuh).

3. The instructive journey starts

Breaking the ship that gave them a free ride

As they were walking along the shore, they saw a ship about to sail. So when they saw Al Khidr, they recognized him and they offered him and his companion Musa to board the ship for free. Soon Al Khidr broke one of the boards of the ship. He plucked it with his axe. Then he tried to repair the damage. Musa was shocked with Al Khadr's "ungrateful" behaviour which he described as "Imr". But Al Khadr reminded him of his promise not to make objections. Musa apologised, and realised it was a lesson.

So Al Khadr accepted the Apology of Musa.

Killing a guiltless boy

Then as they were walking together, Al Khadr came across a bunch of boys. One of them was the most handsome of them and Al Khadr approached him, got a hold of him, and then killed him. Musa could not bear this act which is unjust according to him. He asked Al Khadr for killing a "pure innocent" boy. In the law Musa was given, a life is killed only as a punishment for murder. So Musa objected and descried the act to be "Nukr".

Al Khadr reminds Musa of his promise, and now Musa tells him if he repeats it Al Khadr should not accompany him.

Lesson 2: Treasures from the Cave - Part 24

4. The Pursuit of Knowledge

Musa set on a journey in pursuit of Al Khadr to learn from him. Al Khadr has knowledge that Musa did not have. Allah inspired him with some secrets which Musa wanted to know. Musa has knowledge that Al Khadr did not have. But it was Musa who wanted to know what Al Khadr had. Al Khadr did mysterious things which Musa was supposed to keep patient with and get their explanations later.

After agreeing on the condition of companionship, the two set out together. And Musa is now ready to learn. However, as a prophet he could not see seemingly wrong things and keep silent. Besides, he judged actions according to the law he was given by God, which states that a killer should be killed, and the punishment should be of the same kind as the offence.

They encountered three critical situations:

- i. They were given a free ride by some poor people who had a ship on which they earned their livelihoods. Yet Al Khadr surprised Musa by making a hole into it.
- ii. There were some young boys playing and among them was a very handsome boy and Al Khadr provoked Musa by killing the boy with no sin on this part.

It was due to the lack of the knowledge that Musa had yet to know that he objected and asked questions. Al Khadr was inspired by Allah, who wanted Musa to learn from Al Khadr. Allah affirmed in the Qur'an (12:76) that however knowledgeable a person may be, there should still be people who are more knowledgeable than him. Allah also affirms in the Qur'an (17:85) that people have been given but little knowledge.

iii. The Final Test: the Miser Community

So now Musa Alaihis Salaam made a final promise and sets the condition that if he objected or asked about anything before being told about it, the Khadr should part with him.

Now after a long journey, they felt extremely hungry and came across a village. They asked the people there for food but the people refused to give any.

While in the village, they observed a wall which was about to collapse. Immediately, Al Khadr repaired it.

Musa said if you wish you could have charged them for that. These people do not deserve any free service. Al Khadr reminded him of his promise not to object. Al Khadr from the beginning told him he would not be able to keep patient seeing such mysteriously provoking actions of Al Khadr.

5. Time for Parting

Musa had to part with Al Khadr as he himself put the condition. Al Khadr did not make such provision of parting. Musa himself put it and now having objected to all and even now after realizing they were three tests and lessons which he could not endure, now he should part with the Khadr.

Lesson 3: Treasures from the Cave part 25

6. Explanation of Al Khadr's Mysterious Acts

On parting with Al Khadr, it was incumbent on Al Khadr to explain for Musa those acts he did which Musa could not bear or understand.

i. Making a Hole in the Ship

Al Khadr made a hole in the ship of the poor people who gave him a free ride along with his companions. To Musa it was not befitting a grateful person. Al Khadr explained this mysterious act by saying that he was trying to effect a defect in the ship in order for the ship not to be taken by the king who was looking for good ships to take them for himself. So making a hole was the lesser of the two evils, or Akhaffud dararayn.

The owners of the boat were poor people unable to face the king and they were even unaware of his campaign. In fact, Al Khadr did not harm them. Rather he spared their fishing boat, which would be a great asset for them after the confiscation of the revivals' ships. Thus although that seemed to be evil, it was a favour and a blessing, and such is the characteristic of divine destiny where one may see something as evil but it turns out to be good.

Difference between Faqeer and Miskeen

In Ayah 60 of Surah Tawbah chapter number nine, Allah Almighty listed eight categories of those who are eligible for the Zakaah. He said innmas sadaqaatu lilfuqaraa' wal masaakeen. The first and the second categories the Fuqaraa' (pl. of Faqeer) and the Masaakeen (pl. of Misk een). Al Imam Shafi'e, may Allah have mercy on him says that there is a difference between them. Al Fukuhara are poorer than Al Masaakeen. He explained this by quoting this Ayah, in which Allah Almighty says that the Safeenah belonged to Masaakeen. So Miskeen is a person who have some fund, maybe some business. These people who are characterised by the Qur'an as Masaakeen were partners in a ship. So they are business people, but not enough for them to suffice them for a whole year or for six months for instance. Al Faqeer, on the other hand, is much poorer than a Miskeen.

Killing the Young Boy Guiltlessly

Al Khadr approached the children and killed the most good looking among them without committing any murder. Musa saw that to be an unjust act. However, in reality, like in the case of damaging the ship, he killed the boy to spare his believing and righteous parents.

Allah knew that if this boy were to grow older he would affect negatively the parents' faith, as they loved him excessively. Faith is more valuable than life. It was an inspiration from Allah, not the mere decision and discretion of Al Khadr. If under puberty, the boy will die and go to Paradise being still uncommitted, and Allah will give the parents better and more dutiful offspring, a part from the reward in the hereafter for their patience.

Renovating the collapsing wall

As for the wall it belonged to two orphans. Under that wall was a treasure kept for the orphans. Allah wanted them to grow older and take out their treasure. Such preservation was as Allah explained in the Qur'an due to their being helpless orphans below puberty and due to the fact that their forefather was a righteous person. Al Khadr here gives two justifications:

- i. That it was a mercy from Allah
- ii. That it was an inspiration from Allah not out of his own discretion.

Lesson 4: Treasures from the Cave part 26

7. The Story of Zul Qarnain

He is the king who had the Dominion all over the world during his time. He is not the Macedonian Alexander the Great, because this person was a non-believer. The story of Zul Qarnain is narrated in the Qur'an (18:83-99). And this story is an answer of one of the three questions posed by the chieftains of Makkah as they were instructed by the Jewish rabbis so as to verify the authenticity of the prophethood of Muhammad (pbuh).

That is the reason why the story begins with Yas'aloona (they ask you) regarding Zul Qarnain. The Qur'an highlights the following about Zul Qarnain:

- i. He has been given all sorts of power and authority.
- ii. He travels to the furthest point in the west towards the setting of the sun
- iii. He travels to the furthest point in the east towards the rising of the sun
- iv. He builds a barrier or a dam between some people and God and Magog

8. The Journey towards the Setting of the Sun

When he travelled to the furthest point in the west, he came across certain people.

Those people were non-believers. So, Allah gave him the choice, either to punish them (to kill the men to capture the women and the children and to take them as captives) or deal with them kindly. Allah trusted his judgment because Allah Almighty made him just. The following Ayah says, In fact, he decided to follow the second option.

As for him who chooses to disbelieve in Allah he will be punished with an unheard-of torment. He decided that he would approach them with Da'wah first and for him who would choose to disbelieve will be punished.

And as for him who believes and does good righteous deeds, he will have the finest reward in this life and in the Hereafter, and we will speak to him of our command with ease, for Allah Almighty does not impose on the believers anything beyond their capacity.

The prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said indeed this religion is easy. So, the obligations are not a burden compared to the daily activities we do. Besides, all acts of worship are to the advantage and benefit of man. They do not benefit Allah as He is not in need of our worship.

9. The Journey towards the Rising of the Sun

Zul Qarnain travelled to the farthest point where the sun sets. Then he travelled in the opposite direction, until he reached the rising of the sun. there, he found it rising on a people for whom We (Allah) have provided no shelter from it. This Earth was plain; there was no mountains or caves; those people did not have houses,. The earth that they lived on did not produce any plants or vegetation. They could not even hide or take shelter from the excessive heat of the sun.

Lesson 5: Treasures from the Cave - Part 27

10. Isolating Gog and Magog

In Ayah number 93 it tells us about his finding when he travelled up north. He found people living between two mountains. They could barely understand what he said.

Those people said to him either through an interpreter or Allah enabled him to understand. These poor people are begging Zul Qarnain to help them when they realised that this man is a very powerful king. And those people have been oppressed have been suffering from two nations or two tribes from among the offspring of Adam Alalihis Salaam. These two tribes are known as Gog and Magog, or Ya'goog wa Ma'goog; very dangerous people. They were spreading chaos and mischief in the land. They devoured everything they came across, and drank up water from lakes and rivers.

These people approached Zul Qarnain and asked him to build a barrier between themselves and Gog and Magog, for a certain payment. The Arabic word given for that payment is Kharj and it is variably pronounced as Kharaaj. The difference between the two is that the former is a payment given at one time, and the latter is a fixed regular tribute such as a tax paid on regular basis.

Zul Qarnain refused to take money but asked them to help him physically, so as to solve their problem.

The Quran teaches us the characteristics of a successful leader that he involves everybody in the community in various activities. He does not do everything by himself, nor does he oppress his people and force them to do everything and he is lazy, not doing anything.

He said, what my Lord has empowered me with is better than the tribute. Change starts from within. In order to change our miserable condition, we need to work hard. that is a prerequisite for victory.

When Omar bin Al Khattaab, sent Sa'd Bin Abu Waqqaas as the commander of chief of the Muslim army in the Battle of Al Qadisiyyah, he advised him before setting out saying, do not be deceived by the fact that you are the prophet's uncle, and you are related to the Prophet. By Allah, victory is not granted, but because you are righteous and your enemies are not righteous.

But if you become like your enemies, if you become sinners, like your enemies, then victory will be for the means. They have more power than you. They have more manpower and more weapons than you; so they will defeat you. But you defeat them even though you are lesser than them in number and in preparation, because you are believers and they are not.

Zul Qarnain said to those people to bring blocks of iron, pile them up so that when he had levelled up between the two cliffs of the mountains, he said blow in order to kindle fire of an excessive heat so that the iron blocks were heated up until they turn red. And once the iron blocks were extremely hot, to the point that they turn red, he said, "Bring me tar to pour over it".

And in this condition, he filled up the gaps between the iron blocks. He made what is known as an alloy. And it was very powerful. He filled up the gap between the cliffs of the two mountains and he created a very smooth levelled dam. It was very high and thick. Gog and Magog are never able to come out of it, nor even to climb it until the day of judgment.

Zul Qarnain said that that barrier was a mercy from Allah, thus attributing all blessings to Allah.

Now Gog and Magog are imprisoned behind it and they are neither able to climb it because it is very smooth, nor penetrate a hole in it or make a hole into it. But this is for the time being, until it is the end of time the day of judgment, it will be made a rubble and they will come out.

At that they will march from all places and will be a threat to humanity, to the extent that even Jesus and his followers of the Muslims will hide in the mountains from them. Then Allah will kill them all and Jesus and companions will come out safe.

Question and Answer Bucket

1. Does Islam hold one accountable for forgetfulness?

Ans. In the sound Hadith which was collected by Imam Bukhari and Muslim the Prophet Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam, says: If you oversleep or if you forget about the prayer, make it up once you remember, or wake up. You are not blameworthy and there is no ransom for it other than making it up. The prophet is also reported to have said that his Ummah are forgiven for what they do by mistake, for their forgetfulness and what they are made to do by force.

2. What is the correct pronunciation Zul Qarnain, Zal Qarnain or Zil Qarnain?

Ans. Pronunciation varies based on its position in the sentence. So Zu is used when it is the subject of the sentence), Za is used when it is the object of the sentence) and Zi is used when it is preceded by a preposition.

3. What is the difference between Tasti' and Tastati' used by Al Khadr to say that Musa would not be able to endure patiently?

Ans. As a morphological rule, the more the letters in a word the more the meaning is intensified. Here the former has less meaning than the latter.

Initially when Musa was puzzled, and he perceived the acts Al Khadr was performing as mysterious, he could not endure it. It seemed to him like this is very puzzling, very hard to understand. In this condition he used the word with more letters to express that.

But after Al Khadr explained the entire story to Musa the scenario has become easy and affordable. That is why he removed the letter Taa, and reduced the structure of the word to indicate that now it has become very easy to understand