



# *The Night Rose*

A PROPHETIC STORY  
OF HURT & HOPE

He was bleeding so much that his feet were stuck to his sandals.

Finally, he got far enough away from the town that the children and beggars had stopped chasing him.

He found a safe place to rest, and prayed to God.

God was all he had left. Raised an orphan, recently widowed and also deprived of his uncle who had been like a father, all he had was God to turn to for support.

His story of forgiveness gives all of us who come after him hope, hope that our darkest night can come just before our brightest day.

# The Worst Possible Year

This rejection at the city of Ta'if could not possibly have come at a worse time. For three years, the Mekkans had forced his followers and family out of the city to survive in the wilderness.

Lady Khadeejah, who had from the very beginning been a comfort and a joy for her husband the Messenger, died due to the strain of starvation and living at the mercy of the elements. It was a crushing blow.

The next great loss was the Messenger's uncle, Abu Talib. After a lifelong struggle to defend Muhammad and support him despite his being a polytheist, he also died shortly after the boycott ended. After that, no one saw the Messenger for days.

Although the boycott was lifted, life was no bed of roses for the Muslims. They were still attacked and harmed at every turn. Open preaching was increasingly dangerous.

His little daughter Fatima asked him one day why this was happening to him. With unshakable belief, he answered her, "God will defend your father, don't worry."

The story of his travel to the city of Ta'if demonstrates this beautiful reliance on God. It will give you hope that in your darkest of days, you will find a way through.

# Blinders Off

He was in the depths of despair and heartbreak at the recent losses of his wife and uncle. Anyone else might just stay where they were at, and give in to misery.

Messenger Muhammad had the determination to find a way out. He kept his chin up, and kept looking ahead.

He spoke to visitors to Makkah about Islam. He did not get much hope from places far away from Makkah, but he did have a connection to a nearby town, called Ta'if. He knew some Mekkans that had property there. He decided to investigate.

He didn't allow his situation in Makkah to dictate his entire life. He had the hope that God would help him, so he worked to find the solution that he knew had to be out there.

He hoped that he would be welcome, and that the hearts of the people of Ta'if would be open to Islam.



# Insult and Injury

What's worse than being rejected? Being rejected by people you thought would welcome you.

To add insult to injury, they didn't just tell him to leave. They insulted him to his face. Then they sent out their children and their crippled and homeless to throw stones at him and push him away.

He and his companion ran away from the city. Muhammad's sandals stuck to his feet with blood. He could barely believe what had happened. He consoled himself by reciting one chapter of the Quran (86), over and over while they fled.

He knew that when he got home, his dear wife would no longer be there to comfort him. He could expect no support or help from the rest of his tribe, now that Abu Talib had also passed away.

Afraid for his life, wounded and abused, Messenger Muhammad had to run for three miles until he was safe.

All the while, he remembered God and sought protection from Him.



# Revenge or Mercy

Just when he had reached a safe distance away from Ta'if, none other than the angel Gabriel came and made the Messenger an offer.

The angel told him that God was aware of all that had happened to him, and sent the angel of the mountains surround the town. That angel greeted Muhammad, and told him that his wish was the angel's command.

The angel of the mountains told our Messenger that if he wanted, he could command him to crush the people of Ta'if between the mountains, for their horrible treatment of him.

But our merciful Messenger, who was always turning towards the hopeful path of the future, instead expressed a wish that someone of Ta'if become Muslim one day.

What an incredible example of taking the high road that is! He turned a miserable day, a day he admitted was his worst, into hope for the future.



# Refuge in a Garden

Some people that owned a garden nearby saw his condition and allowed him to come in and take some shade. They sent their servant to offer him some grapes to eat.

Before he ate, Messenger Muhammad said, 'In the name of God'.

The servant stared at Muhammad, his mouth open. He had never heard anyone except his people say that. He asked the Messenger about it.

Delighted that someone was interested in the mention of the name of God, Messenger Muhammad asked the man where he was from. The servant answered 'Niniveh'.

Muhammad told him that was the town of the great, pious man Jonah. The servant got very excited and asked, "You know Jonah?" Messenger Muhammad replied, "He was a prophet, and so am I."

The slave was so happy, and he accepted Islam right then and there. He talked with him, and embraced him and cleaned his wounds. When his bosses asked him what he was doing, the servant explained, "There is nothing on God's green earth better than that man right there."

So after such a miserable day, God blessed Messenger Muhammad with an opportunity to turn the day around. If he had never gone to Ta'if, he never would have met the servant who may never have heard about Islam! God's help and support didn't stop there.



# Conversion of Jinn

When he was very close to Mekkah, Messenger Muhammad stopped at an area outside the city to spend the night.

As was his habit, he offered an extra ritual prayer in the late night, reciting the Quran out loud. A group of Jinn (unseen creatures made from smokeless fire) passed by the area while he prayed.

A couple of them stopped to listen. Their other companions asked them why they were stopping, and they were told, "Be quiet, and listen!"

These jinn wondered at the beauty of the message of the Quran, and accepted Islam. They returned to their tribe, warning them about not accepting this message of truth.

This story was revealed in Quran afterwards (46: 1-21), so Muhammad knew about it. He continued to make regular visits to the area to teach them. Instructions were given to him about how to do that in the whole chapter called Al Jinn (72).

What we can take from this is that in the first instance, the Messenger was active in telling the servant about his prophethood, and God guided the man to Islam through him.

In the instance of the Jinn, Muhammad was merely offering his devotion to God, and God brought the group to Islam without any direct call from the Messenger himself.

It is an example that God's plan is constantly taking place around us. God will bring you out of hardship, sometimes without any work from yourself. Do your best, and God will take care of the rest.



# Consistent Optimism

The Messenger Muhammad is the best example of having hope while bearing the harms of this life.

When he saw that calling people to God in Makkah wasn't going anywhere, he explored elsewhere.

Rather than decide that God was displeased with him for doing so, Muhammad saw the tests as a way of getting closer to God. Instead of exacting revenge, he chose mercy and hope.

He was rewarded in this life for his consistent submission to God by putting in his path those who were seeking guidance. With little, and in the second case, no effort from him, his message spread.

And God blessed the people of Ta'if with guidance. People visiting Arabia will tell you that the people in Ta'if are now very religious Muslims, having great character.

The blessings of that place are seen today. It is one of the world's largest rose exporters, shipping rose water and the fragrance of roses everywhere. It is also a cool refuge for Makkans during the hot summer months, due to its high altitude.

God blessed the city of Ta'if with the sweetness of faith, and the sweet smell of roses, due to the beautiful mercy and hope of the Messenger Muhammad.



May God bless us all with consistent hope in our hearts, no matter how dark our days.

Remember God in the exact way our Messenger prayed to God in his darkest hour outside Ta'if:

*"O God! I complain to You of my weakness, my scarcity of resources and the humiliation I have been subjected to by the people. O Most Merciful of those who are merciful. O Lord of the weak and my Lord too. To whom have you entrusted me? To a distant person who receives me with hostility? Or to an enemy to whom you have granted authority over my affair? So long as You are not angry with me, I do not care. Your favor is of a more expansive relief to me. I seek refuge in the light of Your Face by which all darkness is dispelled and every affair of this world and the next is set right, lest Your anger or Your displeasure descends upon me. I desire Your pleasure and satisfaction until You are pleased. There is no power and no might except by You."*

