

THE SOCIAL BOYCOTT, 617 - 620 AD

- This was the confinement of all the Muslims together with their sympathizers especially the Banu Hashim clan irrespective of whether they were Muslims or not.
- In the year 617 AD, all the Muslims and their sympathizers including the prophet's uncle Abu Twalib were sent in a valley pass on Abu Twalib's land called **SH'IBI ABU TALIB**.
- The Muslims were confined in this valley and boycotted for three years until 620 AD.
- While in this valley, the Meccans were not allowed to marry Muslim women or give them their women for marriage.
- They were not allowed to buy from or sell to them anything or to relate with them in any way.
- The Muslims suffered so much in this period when they ran short of food, water, medical care, clothes and other necessities. They started eating leaves of trees and wild roots.
- It was partly because of this that soon after the social boycott, the prophet's uncle Abu Twalib and his wife Khadija died.
- Due to the great suffering of the Muslims in this social boycott and the loss of the two prophet's protectors soon after the boycott, the year 620 AD has been referred to as the "**Year of sorrow**" in Islam.
- After the social boycott, the prophet PBUH tried his luck in Twaifa but he met untold hostility from the people of Twaifa until when Allah ascended him to heaven for consolation.

THE REASONS WHY THE RICH MAKANS SENT THE MUSLIMS IN A SOCIAL BOYCOTT

- The Meccan chiefs were not happy with the increasing number of Muslims in Mecca.
- They wanted to force Abu Twalib to convince the prophet PBUH to stop preaching Islam.
- They wanted to weaken the Muslims economically so as to reduce the influence of Islam.
- The differences that existed in Mecca between the Banu Hashim and Umayyad clans also forced the rich Meccans especially the Umayyads to send the Muslims in a social boycott.

- The Quraish Meccans were not happy with the migration of the Muslims to Abyssinia and the protection given to them by king Negus.
- The boycott was also due to the failure of the Meccan chiefs to return the Muslim refugees from Abyssinia to Mecca.
- The prophet's refusal to stop preaching Islam despite the Meccan appeal to do so also led to the social boycott.
- The conversion to Islam of Hamza and Umar, the two great Meccans also led to the boycott.
- They wanted to use the social boycott to intimidate other people from converting to Islam.
- They wanted to demoralize the Muslims so that they would leave Islam after suffering for three years.
- Allah wanted to test the faith of the Muslims to see whether they were firm in Islam.
- Allah also wanted to show the prophet PBUH the great task ahead of him and the kind of people he was going to deal with.
- The boycott was due to the great hatred the Quraish Meccans had against Islam.

THE RESULTS OF THE SOCIAL BOYCOTT ON THE PROGRESS OF ISLAAM

- The prophet PBUH lost his wife Khadijah and Uncle Abu Talib immediately after the boycott.
- Muslim tasted a period of great suffering for three years without food, water and other necessities.
- It weakened the Muslims economically because they could not buy or sell anything.
- It showed the prophet PBUH how the rich Meccans hated Islam and how they were determined to fight it.
- Muslims were separated from their families and suffered loneliness for three years.
- The Muslim properties were taken away by the Quraish Meccan during the boycott.
- It led to the prophet's journey to Twaifa where he also met strong hostility from the people of this city.
- It resulted into the prophet's Night journey to heaven (Isra and Miraj) in 621 AD in which Allah wanted to console him.
- It increased the Meccan plan to kill the prophet after the death of his uncle Abu Talib.

- It left the Quraish Meccans divided because some of them like Abu Jahal wanted the boycott to continue while others felt sympathetic with the suffering of the Muslims.
- It showed the prophet's determination to spread Islam despite the strong opposition from the Jahiliyya Arabs.
- It also showed the prophet PBUH that some of the Quraish Meccans like Abu Twalib were sympathetic with the Muslims though they were not Muslims.
- It was a lesson to the Muslims that Allah is the Protector and Guardian of those in suffering.
- It was also a lesson to the Muslims that Islam is a religion of patience and endurance.
- It reminded the prophet PBUH of the great task ahead of him in his mission.
- The boycott denied the Muslims their social rights like freedom of movement and association.
- It was a lesson to the Quraish Meccans that Muslims were ready to die than leaving Islam.
- It was also a sign to the pagan Quraish that Islam as a religion had come to stay.

