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.

15

* 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 t 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 to 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 Khadiijah and Uncle Abu Twalib  
  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 Twalib.

16

* 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.

## 