

Investigating the Reasons for Imposing the First Sanction in History and the Factors contributing to its Failure

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Abstract: The Meccan boycott of the Muslims and the Hashemites was the first multilateral and targeted policy of sanctions in history that was put to action in 617AD by the idolaters. Muhammad's declaration of prophecy in 610 AD was the greatest monotheistic (Tawhid), intellectual revolution, which went public in 613 AD after three years of secret invitation to Islam. When the invitation and the intentions of Islam were revealed, Islam and Muslims were met with a wave of backlash. One of these backlashes was that of their boycotting of the BanūHāshimītes and Muslims in Mecca, which was aimed to separate the Muslims from the prophet, and to discourage the BanūHāshimī from protecting Muhammad. This policy could not achieve its purpose and failed in 620 AD due to the insight and management of Prophet Muhammad and the diligent collaboration of the Muslims and the Hashemites despite severe conditions. Using the original sources and a descriptive-analytical method, this study attempts to answer these questions: What was the main reason behind the imposition of the boycott by the idolaters? And what policies were adopted by Prophet Muhammad against the said boycott? The results suggest that the root cause of opposition against the new religion and the policy of sanctions was the threat posed by Islam against the economic and social interests of the idolaters. The prophet paved the way for neutralization and collapse of their sanctions by devising a plan based on resistance economy, immigration to the Valley of Abu Talib, managing the BanūHāshimītes and the Muslims, as well as taking advantage of the sacred months.

Keyword:- *BanūHāshimī, idolaters, Islam, policy of sanctions, Prophet Muhammad (A.S.).*

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Statement of Problem:

Muhammad's Prophet Hood was the greatest revolution in the history of mankind, where through him, God revealed the last and most complete religious commandments to humans so as to guide them. With the support of the Qur'an and Muhammad's insight and plans, he, who was the example of a perfect man, began his struggle on the path of guidance of the world from Hejaz, which was at the height of its ignorance and perversion. The 23 years of his mission were all dedicated to the guidance of people who at the time were enslaved by ignorance and oppression of tyrants, or as Ali, the Amir-Ol-Mo'menin, puts it: "... and signs of destruction had appeared"¹. This 23-year period (13 years in Mecca and 10 years in Medina) were the era of patience, resistance, struggle, and jihad; the Prophet and his faithful companions never stopped trying and gave their all until the last breath for the promotion of Islam. One of the hardest periods for Muslims and their supporters within BanūHāshimī was living in the Valley of Abu Talib in the seventh till the tenth years of Muhammad's mission. When the hostile plots of the idolaters failed to block the expansion of Islam, they decided to boycott the Muslims and their Hashemite supporters. With the adoption of this agreement by the heads of Quraysh and their allies in Mecca, the Muslims and Hashemites were deprived of many of their social rights and were forced to live in a canyon near Mecca called the Valley of Abu Talib for three years. During these three years, the residents of the valley resisted despite severe economic, social, and especially mental pressure; all of which were impossible without the competent management of Muhammad, the brave cooperation and leadership of the BanūHāshimī, and the endurance of those targeted by the boycott.

¹Allah sent the Prophet after the mission of other Prophets had stopped and the people were in slumber for a long time. Evil was rising, all matters were under disruption and in flames of wars, while the world was devoid of brightness, and full of open deceitfulness. Its leaves had turned yellow and there was absence of hope about its fruits and its water had gone underground. The minarets of guidance had disappeared and signs of destruction had appeared. It was stern to its people and frowned in the face of its seeker. Its fruit was vice and its food was carcass. Its inner dress was fear and outer cover was sword (Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon 89).

This study is important for two reasons; first, the life of Prophet Muhammad provides the best model for the Islamic society on how to tackle the obstacles and thus, Muslims can choose the best method to face the hardships through careful examination of his life. Second, the policy of sanctions has always been a tool in the hands of hegemonic powers to weaken the rightful front and create distances between the people and their leaders, trying to shatter the hopes of the community in their leaders and disunite them by creating obstacles and discomfort in all aspects of life. Accordingly, the examination of the engagements of Prophet with the idolaters, and the measures taken by him and the Muslims in the three years of siege in the Valley of Abu Talib are unparalleled models that should be adopted against the cruel sanctions policy of the oppressors and tyrants. This study was carried out to investigate the motives feeding the hostility of the idolaters against Islam, and the subsequent boycott of the BanūHāshim and Muslims as well as to delineate the reaction of Prophet Muhammad, the Muslims, and the Hashemites against the boycott. Using original sources, it was attempted to analyze the policies of the Prophet and the Muslims which helped defeat the plots of the idolaters and their allies. This study was organized in two sections. The first section takes a brief look at the reaction of the idolaters to Islam, including the policy of sanctions when the Prophet began to preach the public. The second section examines Prophet Muhammad's measures against this boycott and the consequences of the policy of sanctions.

1.2. Background:

Despite extensive studies on the biography of the Prophet, there has not been an independent study regarding the boycott imposed on Muslims by the idolaters and the measures taken by him against such policies; whereas less significant subjects, such as assembly at the house of Al-Arqam ibn abil-Arqam, have been turned into a paper (Mohammadi, 2002: 138-151). It should be noted that this negligence is not limited to the contemporary researchers; former historians and biographers have also neglected this subject. It seems that this ignorance flows from the ethnic relations or interests of the biographers of the time who deliberately disregarded the event of the Valley of Abu Talib to undermine the role of the BanūHāshim in helping the prophet and the development of Islam. The misery endured in the Valley and the sacrifices made by BanūHāshim are sources of honor in the history of Islam, which the Umayyad and even the Abbasid Caliphates had tried to cover up dearly.

2. Objective:

2.1. Muhammad's Prophet Hood and the Reaction of the Idolaters: Immediately after the beginning of his mission, on the 27th of Rajab, in the 40th year of elephant (610 C.E.) (Ibn Hisham, No date, Vol. 1: 225); simultaneous with the revelation of the beginning of Surah 96:1-5, the prophet encountered numerous problems, but was able to surmount all of them gradually through wise and realistic decisions. His attitude toward Quraysh in Mecca was based on a defensive and conflict-free policy. He then started his invitation to Islam in private, because he did not want to suddenly influence and attack the foundation and structure of the Meccan idolatry and Quraysh clans. The first step of invitation was taken considering the extent of power he held, and this stage continued for three years (Ibn Hisham, No date, Vol. 1: 262). The first stage of Muhammad's job in terms of conveying revelation to the world involved introducing himself as the prophet and then inviting people to listen and follow the divine verses. He did not burden the converts with requests regarding the quality of life or with tasks that would surpass their capacity. He was well aware that what urged the Quraysh to oppose Islam was the urge to protect various economic and tribal benefits and concessions that they enjoyed because of the ongoing idolatry in Mecca. Accordingly, the early revelations were concerned with this issue and mostly warned and invited the polytheists of Quraysh (96:1-19) and were mainly focused on three themes: revelation, monotheism, and the hereafter; which were fully dismissed by the Quraysh (Abbas Zaryab, 1991: 147). After the revelation of the verses that ordered Muhammad to invite his close relatives to Islam (26:214), he invited the chiefs of BanūHāshim to a feast and communicated his prophetic mission to them. Despite the opposition from AbūLahab, Abu Talib and his children announced their support of Muhammad (yaghoubi, No date: 27; Tabari, 3, 1967: 320-322). Soon after, the prophet was mandated to openly declare his prophetic mission (15:94-95). Hence, he went to the top of Mount Safa and invited people to Islam publicly (Ibn Sa'd, 1990, Vol. 1:156).

At this point, the heads of the Quraysh were alarmed, considering that the teachings of Islam were contrary to the then current Arab beliefs and traditions. The Islamic teachings were criticizing idolatry and humiliating the idols¹, which was unacceptable for the Arabs who were taking advantage of idols around Kaaba to grow their business. On the other hand, with the conversion of people from different clans to Islam, it was not easy to make a definitive decision about this group (Sobhani, 1992:107). The Quraysh grew more aggressive when they felt not only their beliefs but also their special interests were negated and threatened by this new

¹Some of the views of Qur'an on idols and idolatry are delineated in these verses: 21:66, 52, 53, 54, 67; 19:42; 7:62, 68, 70, 139, 191, 192; 53:23; 39:63; 6:102; 10:3; 13: 14; 109:1-6; 14:10; 34:43; 11:62

religion, which was especially hard to accept by the Quraysh's aristocracy. After introduction of Islam in Mecca, and the conversion of a number of youth, slaves, and women to Islam, the chiefs of the Quraysh reacted and began to confront Muhammad.

At first, the Quraysh adopted the policy of dialogue and negotiation to counter the expansion of Islam. On the one hand they knew that they would not be able to harm the prophet, while he was protected by the BanūHāshim and the children of Abdul Muttalib. On the other hand, the continuation of their business required peace; the murdering of Muhammad would undermine the peace and security of Mecca. Under such circumstances, the Quraysh decided that the best option for controlling the growth of Islam and for restraining the prophet's actions was negotiation. They met with Abu Talib several times and asked him to put an end to Muhammad's religious invitation (Ibn Hisham, No date, Vol.1:265). Abu Talib tried to allay their concerns and promised them to talk to Muhammad, however, Muhammad replied to him: "O my uncle! by God if they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left on condition that I abandon this course, until God has made me victorious, or I perish therein, I would not abandon it" (Ibn Hisham, No date, Vol.1:267). Thus, Abu Talib announced his full support of Muhammad, and to the irrational requests of the Quraysh by saying: It is really an unfair bargain. You give me your son to bring him up and I give you my son to kill him! ... This is not fair, you want to humiliate and frustrate me (Al-Baladhuri, 1996, Vol1:231-232).

The heads of the Quraysh had been cautious so far, and had seen nothing but failure; therefore, they changed their policy and aimed for the defamation of Muhammad's character, undermining his mission, and finally a complete ban of the invitation to Islam. The first stage of this policy was mockery and ridicule (Ibn Hisham, No date, Vol.1:316). A clear example of mockery was calling Prophet Muhammad abtar (progeny-less, incomplete), in answer to which the Surah Al-Kauthar was sent down. God consoled Muhammad and said¹: "well know we that they bosom is oppressed by what they say" (15:97), and said elsewhere: "Lo! We defend thee from the scoffers" (15:95). Quraysh was well aware that the legitimacy of Muhammad among people and the growing number of his followers would make the fight against him ineffective. In other words, Muhammad's personal base was an antidote against their policies. Hence, Quraysh begin to provoke the masses against him, and introduced him as the one against the beliefs of their ancestors. The other plot included introducing him as divisive among the Quraysh (Hamedani, 1996:128), so as to realize their goal, which was defaming him. Their next destructive policy involved slander, insult, invective, and curses, all of which were targeting the expansion of Islam (Ibn Hisham, No date, Vol.1:270-271).

The Holy Qur'an was the biggest defense of the prophet and his mission; the opposition, who themselves, were eloquent and knowledgeable, were impotent before Qur'an and acknowledged its superiority over man-made speech (Kahil, 1995:217). All these factors made them begin an extensive campaign against the Qur'an, which included calling it Al-Asatir al-Awwalin (Tales of the ancients) (25:5). However, this claim was rejected by the Qur'an referring to the fact that Prophet Muhammad was Ummi (illiterate) (29:48). They said that the Qur'an was the speech of a soothsayer, a poet, a magician (Ibn Hisham, No date:270), to which the Qur'an responded vigorously (69:40-40). The next measure taken by Quraysh against the Qur'an was that people, especially the caravans entering Mecca, were prohibited from listening to it (Hasan Ibrahim Hasan, 1998:64). The Quraysh was implying that Muhammad's words would separate children from the parents, the husbands from wives, and the self from self (Hamedani, 1996:126). Other measures included ridiculing the verses of Qur'an, preventing Meccans from Qur'an and its influence, and tormenting the companions of the Prophet who recited the Qur'an, such as Abdullah ibn Mas'ud (Ibn Hisham, No date, Vol.1:314).

When they understood that their plots were fruitless, they adopted a new method, i.e. the harassment and persecution of the Muslims. They threatened rich Muslims with destruction of property and wealth, considering that with the support of their clan, the persons themselves were safe. Quraysh would even physically harass the new converts who lacked the support of any clan or whose clan was weak (Hamedani, 1996:146), these were the most vulnerable class of the Meccan society (Watt, 2004, Vol.1:77). Bilāl al-Hābāshī, Ammar ibn Yasir and his parents, Abdallāh ibn Mas'ūd, and Abu Dhar al-Ghifari were among those who were tortured by the polytheists (Ibn Hisham, No date, Vol.1:316-320). Eventually, because of the racial oppression, with the permission of God and the order of Muhammad, Muslims immigrated to Abyssinia, and thus, large crowds of Muslims left Mecca, some took their families and some went alone (Ibn Sa'd, 1410, Vol.1:159; Yaghoubi, No date, Vol2:29) When the idolaters were apprised, they sent envoys to the court of Negus bearing gifts, asking to send back the Muslims, which proved ineffective and the Muslims settled down under the protection of Negus (Ibn Hisham, No date, Vol.1:333; Al-Baladhuri, 1996, Vol.:232-233).

2.2. The Policy of Sanctions and Reaction of Prophet Muhammad:

The failure of Quraysh in returning the immigrants, the threat of a new center of power beyond the political power of Quraysh and the growing influence of Islam over the youth all prompted the Quraysh to adopt

¹Translation from Pickthall

a new strategy (Ibn Hisham, No date, Vol.1:351; Ibn Sa'd, 1990, Vol.1:163). They understood that none of their former policies had yielded any positive results, and now Muslims were safe and secure, harbored by the King of Abyssinia, growing so powerful that it was not possible to eliminate them except through war; a war that threatened the Quraysh and its allies more than it did the Muslims (MaaroufHassani, 1991, Vol.1:214). As it was mentioned before, Quraysh rejected and abstained from any action that would disturb the security of business in Mecca. On the other hand, the conversion of great Meccan figures like Hamza ibn Abdul-Muttalib, the paternal uncle of Muhammad, added to the concerns (Ibn Hisham, No date, Vol.351; Muqaddasi, No date, Vol4:152-153). All these factors provoked the idolaters to resort to the policy of sanctions and social and political isolation, hoping to bring the Muslims to their knees.

2.2.1. Quraysh's Pact and its Provisions:

Thus, the Quraysh assembled in Dar al-Nadwa and created a deed with four articles against Prophet Muhammad, scribed by mansoor bin akrama. This pact was signed by the elders of Quraysh and was hung inside Kaaba to ensure commitment. The deed required ostracizing the supporters of Muhammad; and that nobody could marry the women of BanūHāshim and Bani Abdul Muttalib, nor give their women to them in marriage backing the opponents of Muhammad (Ibn Hisham, No date, Vol.1:350; Bayhaqi, 1985, Vol.2:311). Quraysh was hoping to achieve its goal through this pact which included all political, economic, and social areas. Meanwhile, they had forgotten the support of people like Abu Talib, who took a firm stand against this measure, and condemned the deed in his poems (Ibn Hisham, No date, Vol.1:352).

2.2.2. Objectives of the Policy of Sanctions:

Through this policy, Quraysh was hoping to achieve these goals: first, to limit the activities of Muhammad and Muslims in Mecca and stop the expansion of Islam. Second, to pressure BanūHāshim and Bani Abdul Muttalib to withdraw their protection from Muhammad, ultimately planning to displace and destroy him. Third, to wage a psychological war, shake their fortress of stability, and break the certainty in the hearts of believers (Uways, 1989:71). Finally, they planned to cut off the relationship between Muhammad and other clans and tribes, hoping to distance them from Islam. Generally, Quraysh was aiming to sow division among the prophet's supporters, weaken them from within and then strike them externally and pulverize them.

2.2.3. Moving of Prophet Muhammad and BanūHāshim to the Valley of Abu Talib:

Abu Talib, the sole supporter of Muhammad throughout his prophetic mission, requested BanūHāshim and Bani Abdul Muttalib to protect Muhammad, when he found out about the deed signed by the Quraysh. Although many within these two clans were not Muslims, they accepted his request and protected Muhammad till death. Muhammad coordinated with Abu Talib and transferred BanūHāshim and other Muslims to the Valley of Abu Talib¹ (Ibn Hisham, No date, Vol.1:351), hoping to reduce the pressure and the effect of cruel sanctions. Taking refuge in the valley included some benefits for the nascent Islamic society and its supporters, including:

- It kept the community united against the economic and social pressures
- It kept Muhammad safe while he was living a normal life, which was impossible in Mecca
- It protected tribal sensitivities and alliance; because the aggregation of BanūHāshim in the valley provoked the emotions of related clans against Quraysh, encouraging them to turn down their aggressive policies.
- The proximity of the BanūHāshim to Muhammad provided the context for their familiarity with Islam.
- The humanitarian crises, including the hunger of Hashemite women and children, created division among the Meccans encouraging them to stop their aggressive policies and actions.
- BanūHāshimites, especially women and children, were mentally safe and relaxed in the valley. Otherwise, with the sanctions in place in Mecca, they could feel the different conditions of their life compared to others, which could weaken their morale, pressuring the heads of households as a result.

2.2.4. Living Conditions of the Muslims in the Valley:

¹This valley was located approximately 200-300m to the east of Kaaba between the Valley of Abu Ghabis and the Valley of AbiAmer (Jafarian, 1994, Vol.1:298). This valley was called the Valley of Abi Yousef at first and belonged to AbdManaf. When Abdul Muttalib lost his eyesight, he divided his share among his sons and this valley was inherited by Abu Talib (Azraqi, 1989, Vol.2:488), which during Muhammad's mission came to be known as Valley of Abu Talib. The city of Mecca is surrounded by extensive mountains among which there are small hillsides and valleys. These were called Ash-Shi`b. Every Meccan clan had a valley, which was named after the family. There were small houses and sunshades in the Valley of Abu Talib (Azraqi, 1989: Vol.2:298).

Considering that the deed banned any form of transaction with these two clans, it was very hard for them to procure food. They acquired food supplies in two ways; first, they could leave the valley and buy their necessities during the Sacred Months. Second, they were secretly helped by their friends and relatives. Generally, they couldn't get anything except in secret (Ibn al-Athir, 1991, Vol.2:pp. 10 and 909). A good example of this is Hakīm ibn Hizām and the nephew of Khadija. One day he was carrying food for his aunt but was stopped by Abu Jahl, and was able to take them to the Valley only after the mediation of Abu Al-Bakhtari. BanūHāshim was living in harsh conditions during the boycott, such that a piece of bread was considered a scarce commodity (Najah al-Taie, 1419, H:5). They ate leaves and one date was divided between two people (Salman, 1428, H:90), children were heard crying from outside the valley (Ibn Sa'd, 1410, Vol.1:163). It should be noted that at the beginning the boycott was not enforced strictly, rather it grew in intensity at the end of the three-year period (Abbas Zaryab, 1991:176).

These hardships and challenges never interfered with Muhammad's mission. He invited the boycotted people to trust in God, endurance, and persistence; resistance against poverty and hunger was the spiritual food of Muslims (AtifAlzain, 1380, Vol.4:15). Until then, no meetings and conferences were held in Mecca, however, despite the boycott, Muhammad continued preaching Islam and educated individuals who would become famously known as the Sahabah (companions), these would extend the call of Islam to all corners of the world in less than half a century (Salehi, 2005:33). Moreover, in the Sacred Months when he could leave the valley, he would call people to Islam, such that a large number of people from Arab and Quraysh clans converted to Islam, during this period (Hamedani, 1996:166). One should not ignore the support of Abu Talib during this time. He had nurtured Prophet Muhammad from when he was a child and held him dear, so much so that in the poem he wrote against Quraysh's decision to kill Prophet, he said: "I swear by the Almighty, your enemy cannot even touch you until I am buried beneath the soil. You invited me towards Islam and I came to know that you are honest in your claim and whatever you said was the truth and that this religion is better than all religions of the world" (Yaghoubi, 1992:Vol.1:388).

2.2.4. The collapse of the Boycott:

Eventually, the boycott failed after three years, the beginning of which, Ibn Sa'd believes, was the first day of Muharram in the seventh year of Muhammad's mission. Two narratives exist regarding the end of the boycott: the first one suggests that Hisham Ibn Amr Ibn Rabia went to see Zuhair ibn Abu Umayyah and said: While we are living in comfort, BanūHāshimites who are our relatives are perishing. Zuhair declared that he is ready to support him and said: go and find someone else who would back us (Al-Baladhuri, 1996, Vol.1:235-236; Hamedani, 1996:178). Hisham went to Motaem, who agreed and said I withdraw from the pact. The fourth and fifth ones to join them were Abu Bakhtari bin Hisham and Zmah bin Aswad bin Abdul Muttalib, they also swore to go to the circle of Quraysh and annul the pact. Zuhair said: I will begin speaking before you (Ibn Kathir, 1432, Vol.2:510). The following day Zuhair visited the Quraysh in their assembly place and spoke to them: "O Quraysh! It is not right for us to indulge in the amenities of life with our families, while BanūHāshim and their children are living in hardship. By God I will not rest until I annul this pact. Finally, four others joined them. Mut'im ibn 'Adi stood, went to the Kaaba, brought the parchment and tore it apart" (Hamedani, 1996:179).

The other narrative is that the prophet was appraised by God that white ants have eaten the parchment save the name of Allah. Abu Talib informs his brothers, and they all assembled at the Masjid al-Ḥarām (Ibn Sa'd, 1990, Vol.1:206). Abu Talib says: If the parchment was eaten by the white ants and my nephew was right, you should annul the deed, if he was wrong you can kill him or let him live (Ibn Sa'd, 1990, Vol.1:163-64). Abu Talib said this lest they would examine the deed before bringing it (Bayhaqi, 1982, Vol.2:67). They brought the deed and opened it to see that Prophet was right; however, the Quraysh opposed and did not annul the deed, calling the event magic. Abu Talib writes in his poem: They say: a big lie and following it an eerie magic had found their way inside this deed, while no magic is imaginable¹ (Ibn Kathir, 2011, Vol.3:97; Bint al-Shati, 1958:111). And the five who were mentioned above agreed, brought the deed and annulled it.

The analysis of these two narratives suggests that like all their other policies, this policy of Quraysh failed. Through God's will, the prophet's actions, Abu Talib and Khadijah's support and ultimately tribal and blood relations the boycott was broken. And the Qurash who thought they could block the expansion of Islam with this policy received a hard blow, and were brought to their knees by the patience and endurance of those who were boycotted. God says in the Qur'an: "That which ye have wasteth away, and that which Allah hath remaineth. And verily we shall pay those who are steadfast a recompense in proportion to the best of what they used to do" (16:96).

أَتْرَاوَحَهَا إِفْكٌ وَسِحْرٌ مُجْمَعٌ وَلَمْ يُلْفِتْ سِحْرٌ آخَرَ الدَّهْرِ لَصَعْدُ

In his letter to Muawiyah, Ali ibn Abi Talib believes that this boycott was broken by God's will. "Thank God who made his promise come true, and completed to him his victory, and extended his hand to countries, and helped him prevail against his enemies and detractors; made him dominant over those from his clan who attacked him, despised him, called him a liar, showed their hostility, conspired to exile him and his friends [and relatives] and provoked the Arabs against him and mobilized them to fight him, worked against him as hard as they could, tightened the noose around him. and God's will prevailed while it was unpleasant for all of them, while the most persistent of people colluding against him were his own family and those closer to him from his own clan were more obstinate, save the one who God kept him sinless" (Nasr Ibn Mozahem Menqari, 1991:125).

2.2.5. Reasons of the Collapse of the Boycott:

The boycott of Prophet Muhammad and Banū Hāshim lasted for three years. Quraysh was hoping that Banū Hāshim would withdraw its protection from Prophet under pressure and hardship exerted through the boycott, enabling them to defeat him and Islam. However, the Hashemites never wavered in their zealous protection of Muhammad and the cruel boycott was broken after three years. Some of the factors contributing to this failure were:

- 1. God's will and His grace toward His prophet.** The most important reason for this failure was God's will. The destruction of the provisions of the deed, saved God's name, awareness of Muhammad of this phenomenon, and the Quraysh witnessing it contributed to the failure of the boycott. Most of the historians, including Yaghoubi and Ibn Sa'd, consider the destruction of the parchment as the main reason for its failure; meanwhile, after witnessing Muhammad's honesty, not only did they not accept Islam, but they called him a magician and intensified their enmity. Considering that most of the signatories to this pact participated and were killed in the Battle of Badr, this is solid evidence that they overlooked this miracle and that of the existence of a higher power.
- 2. The patience and endurance of those subject to the boycott.** Considering that most of the people who were boycotted were wealthy, famous and officials, they were not used to living under harsh conditions. But they honored their promise to Abu Talib and Muhammad and conformed to sacrificial tribal codes and chose the path of forbearance and resistance, which foiled the plot of the idolaters to pressure them into dropping their support of Muhammad.
- 3. The prophet's wise and insightful management.** He minimized the adverse effects of the boycott by moving the Banū Hāshim and other Muslims to the Valley; and maintaining their unity and reinforcing their will for resistance by carefully governing the people in the valley.
- 4. Abu Talib and Banū Hāshim's support of Muhammad.** Because of this support, the idolaters were not able to murder Muhammad or take actions against his person.
- 5. The compassion of some of the Quraysh who were relatives of Banū Hāshim and Bani Abdul Muttalib.** Banū Hāshim was not a closed and isolated clan, rather they were connected to other Quraysh families socially and through intermarriage, and some within Quraysh had relatives among Banū Hāshim and could not endure their hunger and misery (Abbas Zaryab, 1991:175). They sympathized with Banū Hāshim and Bani Abdul Muttalib and took the initiative to annul the deed.
- 6. The congregation of Muslims and Banū Hāshim around Muhammad.** This familiarized them with the content of his invitation, and with the truth of his words and deeds, forming the foundation of Islam and the first bases of resistance against the idolaters. That is why cunning Meccan aristocrats pushed to end the boycott by threatening Abu Jahl and his allies, because they were aware of the adverse effects of the presence of Banū Hāshim in the valley. They secretly conferred and evaluated the possible outcomes of the pact, and decided to annul it and force the same decision on the opposition (Bint al-Shati, 1998:111). They took advantage of the positive views of people, many of which were related to Banū Hāshim, went to the valley on the 15th of Rajab of the tenth year of Muhammad's mission and invited them to leave the valley (Ibn Hisham, No date, Vol.1:377).

II. CONCLUSION:

When Muhammad began preaching to the public, he was met with severe reaction of chief Meccan idolaters. Considering the importance of peace and security in Mecca which ensured their interests, the reactions which had begun with peaceful policies, grew more aggressive with the spread of Islam. When they lost hope in the enticement of Muhammad and his uncle Abu Talib, they went for the assassination of Muhammad's

character, harassment of Muslims, campaign against Qur'an, and finally the boycott of all Muslims and their supporters, especially BanūHāshim. Those who constructed and administered the boycott were aiming to create a gap between the prophet and his supporters in BanūHāshim, so as to, first, discourage him from his prophetic mission, and second, if he insisted on his invitation, find and kill him after cutting off the support of BanūHāshim and Muslims. However, God's grace, Muhammad's prudent policies, dedication of his faithful friends, including Abu Talib and Khadijah, foiled the idolaters' plot. And despite suffering great pain and discomfort, Muslims never failed to support him, and eventually this period of tribulation was over.

This three-year boycott was one of the most important and harsh periods of early Muslim history. This period was both the years of patience and resistance of Muslims and the years of Prophet Muhammad's accurate and systematic management, which, coupled by God's will, paved the way for the collapse of Quraysh's alliance against BanūHāshim. Muhammad's calculated moves not only reduced the pressure of the boycott, but also showcased his exceptional management skills, which continued throughout his mission. His treatment of Quraysh and other enemies of Islam presented general principles mostly based on rationalism and realism. He spread his timeless and universal message fully aligned with the real conditions of his time. Examples of this rationality and realism could be found in war and peace and his preaching, including:

- The general strategy of Prophet against Quraysh from the beginning until the end was based on deterrence and avoiding confrontation.
- The result of this strategy was the protection of his men, and when the BanūHāshim was facing the boycott, Muhammad took them to the valley to save their lives.
- The Messenger of God always encouraged rationality of views and actions, through which he defeated his enemies and brought Muslims to power.

According to the results, it can be concluded that although the policy of sanctions brought about many hardships for Muslims and the Hashemites, but it could not break their will. Despite economic, social, and psychological pressure, and with the help of their faith in the rightfulness of Islam, Prophet Muhammad's management, and the support of influential figures like Abu Talib and Khadijah, they resisted and disappointed the plans of idolaters, which aimed for the annihilation of Islam. This period of Prophet Muhammad's life has a clear message that if Muslims faithfully follow his ways and practice patience and endurance, they will disappoint and prevail over their enemies.

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