



COURSE OBJECTIVE:

DERIVE ETHICAL LESSONS through:

- 1) Reciting & pondering over select passages
- 2) About stories of past prophets & people
- 3) Referring to renown *tafaseer* (commentaries)
- 4) Discussing related Hadith from Ma'sumin (a)
- 5) Relating personal experiences

Questions for Reflection

1. In what context has the story of Talut, Dawud & Jalut appeared in the Holy Qur'an?
2. What weapons did Satan use to win over Nabi Ayyub?
3. How did Nabi Ayyub invalidate Satanic plans?
4. Why did Allah allow Satan to try & test Nabi Ayyub?
5. How can you apply Ayyub's story in your life?

The elite debate with Prophet

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الْمَلَأِ مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَآئِيلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَى إِذْ قَالُوا لِنَبِيِّ لَهُمْ ائْبَثْ
لَنَا مَلَكًا يُقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ قَالَ هَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ أَلَّا
تُقَاتِلُوا قَالُوا وَمَا لَنَا أَلَّا نُقَاتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَقَدْ أَخْرَجْنَا مِنْ دِيَارِنَا
وَأَبْنَائِنَا فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ تَوَلَّوْا إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْهُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ
بِالظَّالِمِينَ

2:246 Have you not regarded the elite of the Israelites after Musa, when they said to their prophet, 'Appoint for us a king, that we may fight in the way of Allah.' He said, 'May it not be that you will not fight if fighting were prescribed for you? They said, 'Why should we not fight in the way of Allah, when we have been expelled from homes and [separated from] our children?'

Context and background to 2:246

- The connection between the obligation of fighting, the exhortation of a goodly loan to Allah and moral story of Talut, Dawud and Goliath needs no explanation ('Tabataba'I, *Al-Mizān*, 4:91)
- The Prophet referred here is Ishmu'il (Samuel). He knew of lack of spirituality & lack of loyalty in Banu Israel.
- Background to their request for asking for a King: (i) Israelites under Pharaoh, (ii) Under the leadership of Musa, (iii) Israelites over confident about their capacity till they became disobedient, (iv) lost the Ark, their power; so became weak & could not defend against smallest enemy, (v) after praying for years Allah raised Prophet Samuel for them (*The Light of the Qur'an*)

Tafsir and Tadabbur of 2:246

- After seeing that Israelites had identified their shortcomings and were ready to remedy, Samuel prayed for them
- Nabi Samuel was reveled about Talut (Saul) & was asked to give him the commandership of the troops.
- Argument of Israelites: *Why should we not fight in the way of Allah, when we have been expelled from homes and [separated from] our children?* Cf. with response of Yusuf's brother to their father's fear (12:13 & 14). Any similarity?
- Refer to Samuel 8: 19 & 20 in the Bible for comparing
- Why did not Prophet Samuel lead the Israelite against Jaloot? Why did they ask for a King to lead them?
 - “In those days battles were fought only under kings and the Prophet was only the adviser or the administrative adviser or a director of the affairs.”

The Israelites turned back

فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ تَوَلَّوْا إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْهُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ

2:246 *So when the fighting was prescribed for them, they turned back except a few of them, and Allah knows the best the wrongdoers.*

- Tabataba'i: The words (وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ) shows that the question of the Prophet to Israelites was based on divine revelation
- It is common to see many refuse to partake in war
- Refer to v 2:216 where Allah prepares Muslims to participate willingly in defending Islam.

Talut rejected as a king

وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ بَعَثَ لَكُمْ طَالُوتَ مَلِكًا قَالُوا أَنَّى يَكُونُ لَهُ
الْمُلْكُ عَلَيْنَا وَنَحْنُ أَحَقُّ بِالْمُلْكِ مِنْهُ وَلَمْ يُؤْتَ سَعَةً مِّنَ الْمَالِ قَالَ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَزَادَهُ بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ وَالْجِسْمِ وَاللَّهُ يُؤْتِي مُلْكَهُ مَن
يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

2: 247 *Their Prophet said to them, 'Allah has appointed Talut (Saul) as king for you.' They said, 'How can he have kingship over us, when we have a greater right to kingship than him, as he has not been given ample wealth?' He said, 'Indeed Allah has chosen him over you, and enhanced him vastly in knowledge and physique, and Allah gives His kingdom to whomever He wishes, and Allah is all-bounteous, all-knowing.'*

Tafsir and Tadabbur 2:247

- Reflect on the argument of Israelite: *‘We have a greater right in kingship than him as he has not been given ample wealth?’*
- Israelites have not given up their attitude
- Saul was an unknown poor shepherd

Now see what Samuel’s response: *Indeed Allah has chosen him over you, and enhanced him vastly in knowledge and physique,*

- Knowledge ahead of other qualities, then physique
- Talut was for height/tallest & strength (Sam 10:23)
- Appointed by Allah, so he had the authority

Then the Qur’an says: *Allah gives His kingdom to whomever He wishes* – this shows that besides logic Allah has full power

Connection to the theme

Only a few cared for the trial

فَلَمَّا فَصَلَ طَالُوتُ بِالْجُنُودِ قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مُبْتَلِيكُمْ بِنَهَرٍ فَمَنْ شَرِبَ مِنْهُ فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي وَمَنْ لَمْ يَطْعَمْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي إِلَّا مَنِ اغْتَرَفَ غُرْفَةً بِيَدِهِ فَشَرَبُوا مِنْهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِنْهُمْ

2:249 As Talut (Saul) set out with the troops, he said, 'Allah will test you with a stream: anyone who drinks from it will not belong to me, but those who do not drink from it will belong to me, barring someone who draws a scoop with his hand.' But they drank from it, [all] except a few of them.

Reflections v. 2:249

- Allah will test you through a river, i.e. facing thirst
- Use of words “not belong to me,” & “belong to me” was employed by the Holy Prophet (s) in many Hadiths

Imam al-Sadiq (a): Allah reports the words of Talut: *Allah will test you with a stream: anyone who drinks from it will not belong to me, but those who do not drink from it will belong to me*, But all of them drank from it, except three hundred and thirteen men, among them were those who took a handful of water as well as those who did not drink at all. When they went out against Goliath, those who had taken handful of water said, ‘We have today no power against Goliath and his forces’; and those who had not taken it said, ‘*How many a small party has overcome a larger by Allah’s will! And Allah is with the patient*’.” (al-Kafi)

Even the faithful faltered

فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَهُ هُوَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ قَالُوا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا الْيَوْمَ بِجَالُوتَ
وَجُنُودِهِ قَالَ الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُم مُّلاقُوا اللَّهِ كَمْ مِّنْ فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً
كَثِيرَةً بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ

2:249 *So when he crossed it along with the faithful who were with him, they said, 'We have no strength today against Jalut (Goliath) and his troops! Those who were certain that they will encounter Allah said, 'How many a small party has overcome a larger by Allah's will! And Allah is with the patient.'*

- But those who had certainty were confident
- Imam Ali (a) on benefits of having confidence
- Tabataba'i: those who said 'we have strength' had taken a handful of water and those who said, *How many a small party* who had not tasted the water at all.

Beautiful Du'a for patience

وَلَمَّا بَرَزُوا لِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَثَبِّتْ
أَقْدَامَنَا وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ

2:250 So when they marched out for [encounter with] Goliath and his troops, they said, 'Our Lord, pour patience upon us, make our feet steady, and assist us against the faithless lot.'

Asked for three things:

- 1) Patience & perseverance – inward aspect
- 2) Steadfastness, not to fall – outward aspect
- 3) Allah's help to be victorious over infidels

Dawud killed Jalut

فَهَزَمُوهُمْ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَقَتَلَ دَاوُدُ جَالُوتَ وَآتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ
وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَهُ مِمَّا يَشَاءُ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ
لَفَسَدَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ

2:251 Thus they routed them with Allah's will, and David killed Goliath, and Allah gave him the kingdom and wisdom, and taught him whatever He liked. Were it not for Allah's repelling the people by means of one another, the earth would surely have been corrupted, but Allah is gracious to the world's creatures.

Reflections on v. 2:251

- They routed with Allah's will (*bi-idhni Allah*)
- Dawud was very young but vigorous & brave
- Dawud threw one or two stones using a sling
- He aimed well, hitting the head of Goliath. It pierced his forehead, he cried loudly & fell down.
- The troops ran due to fear & terror
- “Allah had decided to show his authority by demonstrating how a king, with all that glory and abundant force could be destroyed by a lad inexperienced in fighting, and particularly with an apparently simple and worthless tool, a sling.” (*Light of the Qur'an*)

David & Goliath – Bible story summary

- <http://christianity.about.com/od/biblestorysummaries/p/davidandgoliath.htm>
- **Scripture Reference:** 1 Samuel 17
- The Philistine army had gathered for war against Israel. The two armies faced each other, camped for battle on opposite sides of a steep valley. A Philistine giant measuring over nine feet tall and wearing full armor came out each day for forty days, mocking and challenging the Israelites to fight. His name was Goliath. Saul, the King of Israel, and the whole army were terrified of Goliath.
- One day David, the youngest son of Jesse, was sent to the battle lines by his father to bring back news of his brothers. David was probably just a young teenager at the time. While there, David heard Goliath shouting his daily defiance and he saw the great fear stirred within the men of Israel. David responded, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of God?"

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- **Scripture Reference:** 1 Samuel 17
- So David volunteered to fight Goliath. It took some persuasion, but King Saul finally agreed to let David fight against the giant. Dressed in his simple tunic, carrying his shepherd's staff, slingshot and a pouch full of stones, David approached Goliath. The giant cursed at him, hurling threats and insults.
- David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied ... today I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air ... and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel ... it is not by sword or spear that the Lord saves; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give all of you into our hands."
- As Goliath moved in for the kill, David reached into his bag and slung one of his stones at Goliath's head. Finding a hole in the armor, the stone sank into the giant's forehead and he fell face down on the ground. David then took Goliath's sword, killed him and then cut off his head. When the Philistines saw that their hero was dead, they turned and ran. So the Israelites pursued, chasing and killing them and plundering their camp.