

Tarbiyah Resource Development

Jumada at-Thani, 1446 | December 2024

Gaza: Redefining the Truths of our Times



January 19, 2025 / Rajab 20, 1446 marks the beginning of a ceasefire in Gaza after over 15 months of indiscriminate killing, wanton wide-spread destruction as the main elements of a genocide that the whole world became a witness to. It should mark, also, for us the time to engage our members, community, students, families, youth, and children to actively connect with our heart, mind, and actions. As believers, standing against injustice is a fundamental value and we stand for justice everywhere and with all those who are oppressed. When it comes to the trials facing our Ummah, and as belonging to the Ummah is a fundamental part of our faith, what afflicts any part of our Ummah afflicts us directly. For us Muslims, Palestine has a particular importance because it is the sacred land of Al-Aqsa and as believers we have a spiritual connection to the mosque and to the land.

As we see the ceasefire unfold, we thank Allah ﷻ for the relief that will come to all the people of Gaza; martyrs, wounded, amputated, widowed, orphaned, men, women, children and infant. The survivors, and the martyrs, have shown the world the power of moral resolve and willpower driven by faith and love of your homeland that enabled them to foil the wicked inhumane schemes that went hand-in-hand with barbarous bombing that destroyed homes, schools, hospitals, mosques churches, farms. The faith of the people of Gaza enabled them to withstand this and refuse be removed from the sacred land. They were inspired, in their toughest and most difficult moments, by Allah's ﷻ words in the Quran:

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُدْخَلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَّاءُ وَزُلْزِلُوا حَتَّى يَقُولَ
الرُّسُلُ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَى نَصُرُ اللَّهُ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ



Do you think you will be admitted into Paradise without being tested like those before you? They were afflicted with suffering and adversity and were so shaken that [even] the Messenger and the believers with him cried out, “When will Allah’s help come?” Indeed, Allah’s help is [always] near.

(Al-Baqarah: 214)

Gaza has Taught us the Meaning of Steadfastness and Struggle. There is no Equivalence between the Oppressor and the Oppressed.

Our Palestinian brothers and sisters in Gaza have awoken the consciousness of humanity. They have elevated what it means to defy subjugation and to stand for your right to freedom and dignity. The entire world watched their resolve with admiration and awe. They became, through their sacrifice and steadfastness, true examples of role models and heroes; following the footsteps of the prophets, companions, and righteous believers.

وَكَايْنٍ مِّنْ نَّبِيٍّ قَاتَلَ مَعَهُ رَبِّيُونَ كَثِيرٌ فَمَا وَهَنُوا لِمَا أَصَابَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَمَا ضَعُفُوا وَمَا أَسْتَكَانُوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ
يُحِبُّ الصَّابِرِينَ



[Imagine] how many devotees fought along with their prophets and never faltered despite whatever ‘losses’ they suffered in the cause of Allah, nor did they weaken or give in! Allah loves those who persevere.

(Al-Imran: 146)

Journalist Wael al-Dahdouh exemplifies the profound lesson of steadfastness, sacrifice and dignity during the genocide in Gaza. At just 17, he spent eight years in prison for protesting against the occupation, enduring this hardship until his release at 25. Like many Gazans, he resisted oppression with whatever he had—rocks—yet he emerged from his imprisonment with more strength and a resolute commitment to truth. As Al Jazeera's Gaza bureau chief, he has demonstrated remarkable resilience and determination in his reporting, even after suffering the unimaginable loss of his wife, 15-year-old son, 7-year-old daughter, and 18-month-old grandson in an Israeli airstrike. Wael al-Dahdouh shed light on the harsh reality faced by Palestinian journalists when he shared, "It's a difficult moment in the life of a Palestinian journalist when they go to cover an incident for the news and find out that the news is their own family."

Through his unwavering commitment to reporting, Wael al-Dahdouh has become a symbol of the resilience of the Palestinian people and the dedication of journalists who strive to expose the harsh realities of the Genocide. His determination to stand tall amid such profound losses serves as a powerful testament to those who never falter in their struggle for justice and truth.

Every Home in Gaza has Witnessed Great Loss

The people of Gaza have experienced the loss of homes, property and loved ones. These martyrs are now in the realm of Allah ﷻ, and their sacrifices and losses in this worldly life, as they stood for the cause of Truth are immeasurable. More than we will ever know. The people of Palestine were standing for their right to their land, liberty, and dignity. They were willing to sacrifice as they had goals beyond this world and beyond their lives. This loss is not in vain, as Allah ﷻ has promised them great reward. Every one of us will be tested in this world, and like the people of Palestine, will have to remain patient and steadfast through our tests.

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُدْخَلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَّاءُ وَزُلْزِلُوا حَتَّى يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَى نَصْرُ اللَّهِ أَلاَ إِن نَّصْرُ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ



Do you think you will be admitted into Paradise without being tested like those before you? They were afflicted with suffering and adversity and were so 'violently' shaken that 'even' the Messenger and the believers with him cried out, "When will Allah's help come?" Indeed, Allah's help is 'always' near

(Al-Baqarah: 214)

Amidst the immense losses faced by the people of Gaza, Uncle Khaled Nabhan became an icon of martyrs and stands out as a poignant example of steadfastness during times of struggle. He embodied resilience in the face of overwhelming loss, having tragically lost his beloved granddaughter, Reem –the soul of his soul. In a land where every home has witnessed great loss, many have been forced to confront not just the absence of loved ones but the broader devastation of homes civic centers and community facilities. Uncle Khaled became a beacon of hope and strength for humanity, shedding light on the true reality of loss and sorrow in Gaza. Even in his profound grief, Khaled did not turn inward. Instead, he became a source of comfort and gentleness for children who were orphaned, injured, and in need. In Gaza, where home extends beyond immediate families, we witnessed the remarkable spirit of solidarity and patience through Uncle Khaled Nabhan. Tragically, he was also killed in an airstrike, his story reminds us of the resilience and compassion that can emerge even in the darkest times.

سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ فَنِعْمَ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ



"Peace be upon you for your perseverance. How excellent is the ultimate abode!"

(Al-Ra'd 13:24)

The Struggle in Gaza Demonstrated True Dignity

Gaza has taught us that strength and dignity are capable of challenging usurpers and demagogues. The people faced severe oppression and stood with honour and *izza*. Gaza is not just a land, but a symbol of dignity and integrity that is bound and upheld by truth. The determination of Palestinians to stay on their land as a sign of resistance was unbreakable. Gaza has shown it can withstand total war and not budge, even when the most powerful material resources are brought against them. Gaza taught us that steadfastness derived from faith is stronger than all the weapons of the world. There is no technological or material sophistication that surpasses the depth of strength of sophistication a believer will find in faith.

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَلِكُ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِيَدِكَ
الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ



Say, 'O Prophet,' 'O Allah! Lord over all authorities! You give authority to whoever You please and remove it from who You please; You honour whoever You please and disgrace who You please—all good is in Your Hands. Surely You 'alone' are Most Capable of everything. (3:26)

Seeing the people of Gaza praying under destructed and bombed mosques made us realize that their lives revolve around the Masjid. They work to strengthen their faith every day; they don't wait until a calamity befalls them to reinforce their Iman. They do this daily so that when a calamity strikes, they can reap the fruits of the seeds they have sown. They live by the principles they have practiced. They are not distracted by this worldly life; for them, reality is different. From the moment they are born as displaced refugees, they are prepared to demand their rights to independence and freedom and to pray without hindrance at Al Aqsa. Faced with an enemy bent on giving them only some rubbish, they understand their purpose and responsibility even if the price is martyrs and loss. This is why their will cannot be defeated. Despite the enormous powers keen on suppressing their ambition and trampling their rights, their resolve outweighs the evil and brutal forces they are facing.

Everyone in Gaza plays a role, whether it's children embodying the resilience and spirit of a generation that seeks to defend their home by throwing stones, journalists resisting oppression through the media, mothers preparing meals from only water and dough to feed entire families, doctors tirelessly working to save lives without electricity or resources, or elders comforting orphaned and injured children to ease their pain. Each individual comes, absolutely with no hesitation, to do his or her share. They work on uplifting each other, and their determination serves as a sign for all of humanity. That is why they are unbreakable. They taught us how to stand with dignity. This is to Dr. Refat Araeer, Hind Rajab, Mohamed Baher, Reem- the Soul of our Soul, Uncle Khaled Nahbun, Shaban, Aziz Madi, Falah and Samah Al-Mazini, and many more whose names we may never come to know.

A special mention is due to the sincere non-Palestinian volunteers who came, from various countries and background, to help in alleviating the plight of the people in Gaza, whether relief organizations that brought food, water, shelter and medicine or doctors doing surgeries under awfully unimaginable conditions.

Hope Through Faith in Allah (SWT)

Gaza teaches us to remain hopeful even in times of difficulty. Allah ﷻ promises support to those who stand on the haqq (Truth) for it will ultimately prevail.

إِلَّا تَنْصُرُوهُ فَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ اللَّهُ إِذْ أَخْرَجَهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ثَانِيَ اثْنَيْنِ إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْغَارِ إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ لَا تَحْزَنْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَيَّدَهُ بِجُنُودٍ لَمْ تَرَوْهَا وَجَعَلَ كَلِمَةَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا السُّفْلَىٰ ۗ وَكَلِمَةَ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ



It does not matter if you 'believers' do not support him, for Allah did in fact support him when the disbelievers drove him out 'of Mecca' and he was only one of two. While they both were in the cave, he reassured his companion,[1] “Do not worry; Allah is certainly with us.” So Allah sent down His serenity upon the Prophet, supported him with forces you 'believers' did not see, and made the word of the disbelievers lowest, while the Word of Allah is supreme. And Allah is Almighty, All-Wise. (Al-Tawbah: 40)

Dr. Ehab Bader, a Canadian doctor, who was in Gaza during the early months of the Genocide, highlighted the profound faith of its people and their unshakable reliance on the support and rewards from Allah ﷻ while standing for the Haqq (truth). He shared powerful experiences from his time in the emergency room, where he encountered a grieving father who had just lost his four children, all of whom had become martyrs. Dr. Ehab approached the father to offer some comfort; however, despite facing unimaginable grief, the father reassured Dr. Ehab by saying, “I am completely fine, with the grace of Allah ﷻ. I am satisfied. Did you not hear the words of Allah (SWT) in Surah Al-Imran?”

فَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَأُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأُودُوا فِي سَبِيلِي وَقَاتَلُوا وَقُتِلُوا لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ثَوَابًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الثَّوَابِ



“So those who emigrated and were forced to leave their homes and were harmed for my sake, and they fought and were killed in My cause, surely, I shall wipe away their evil deeds and bring them into gardens beneath which rivers flow.” (Al-Imran 3:195)

The grieving father explained that this verse outlines two phases. The first phase involves hardship: the sacrifice of one's home, wealth, health, and loved ones. He shared "I feel as though I have just experienced it. I am among those who have been forced from their homes. My children have been killed, and I have struggled in the cause of Allah ﷻ. He shared his hope in moving into the second phase, which promises grace and paradise. He said, "Bithin' Allah, I have left the first phase behind, and if Allah ﷻ wills, I will enter the second phase, "I shall wipe away their evil deeds and bring them into gardens beneath which rivers flow" (3:196). So I am completely at peace".

In this lesson, we learn that true victory is not only about overcoming challenges but also about embodying the conviction that believers hold in their hearts through faith, reflecting the promise of Allah's support and ultimate triumph over adversity. It is not defined by material gain or loss, but rather by the ability to achieve success, maintain resolve, and demonstrate unwavering determination in the face of all odds.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ



"O believers! If you stand up for Allah, He will help you and make your steps firm."
(Muhammad: 7)

The People of Gaza: Examples of how to Live the Quran

We have collectively witnessed the responses of the people of Gaza to grief, sorrow, loss, and unimaginable destruction. Yet, their continued demonstration of Taqwa has shown the world what it means to live the Qur'an. This speaks loudly and clearly; as the world watches them endure what cannot be encapsulated in words, their resilience has inspired many to accept Islam or return to practicing it, recognizing that the Truth of Allah ﷻ can overcome all. This ultimately teaches us a profound lesson: the truth is always present, but we don't see things as they are; we see them as we are. This is why the Qur'an serves as a source of purification for the heart. The truth is constant; it simply depends on our readiness to see it.

كان عمر رضي الله عنه يدعو: اللَّهُمَّ أَرِنِي الْحَقَّ حَقًّا وَوَقِّفْنِي لِاتِّبَاعِهِ وَأَرِنِي الْبَاطِلَ بَاطِلًا وَوَقِّفْنِي لِاجْتِنَائِهِ



"Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, used to pray, "O Allah, show me the truth as truth and guide me to follow it. Show me the false as false and guide me to avoid it."

أَلَا وَإِنَّ فِي الْجَسَدِ مُضْغَةً إِذَا صَلَحَتْ صَلَحَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ وَإِذَا فَسَدَتْ فَسَدَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ أَلَا وَهِيَ الْقَلْبُ



"Verily, in the body is a piece of flesh which, if sound, the entire body is sound, and if corrupt, the entire body is corrupt. Truly, it is the heart". (Sahih al-Bukhari)

This is what the Qur'an has done for the people of Gaza. They take the Qur'an as their closest companion, and it helps them see this dunya for what it is—a temporary abode of tests and trials. The Qur'an enables them to understand their purpose clearly and find solace in the words of Allah ﷻ. This is the power of the Qur'an; it speaks to the believer's heart, especially in the face of destruction, loss, and suffering. In their times of need, they find comfort in knowing that Allah ﷻ is aware of their condition, drawing strength from verses like:

اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ



Allah is the Guardian of the believers—He brings them out of darkness and into light. (Al-Baqarah: 257)

وَأذْكُرُوا إِذْ أَنْتُمْ قَلِيلٌ مُّسْتَضْعَفُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ تَخَافُونَ أَنْ يَتَخَطَّفَكُمُ النَّاسُ فَءَاوَنَكُمْ وَءَايَدَكُمْ بِنَصْرِهِ وَرَزَقَكُمْ مِّنَ الظُّبَيْتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ



Remember when you had been vastly outnumbered and oppressed in the land, constantly in fear of attacks by your enemy, then He sheltered you, strengthened you with His help, and provided you with good things so perhaps you would be thankful. (Al-Anfal: 26)

Through their example of living by the Qur'an, we recognize how seeing the truth is ultimately tied to our relationship with the Qur'an. This is why the truth is so clear to the people of Gaza; they are prepared to sacrifice everything without complaint, knowing that their eternal home lies in the Akhirah, as Allah ﷻ says,

وَمَا هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَهُوٌّ وَلَعِبٌ وَإِنَّ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ لَهِيَ الْحَيَوَانُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ



This worldly life is no more than play and amusement. But the Hereafter is indeed “the real life, if only they knew.” (Surah Al-'Ankabut 29:64)

The Land of Al-Aqsa: A Central Cause for Muslims

Our role to act is now. How will we show up for the people of Gaza? This moment calls for urgency and compassion; it is not a time to put a stop to our efforts. Instead, we must mobilize and increase our commitment to serve the people of Gaza, actively participating at this critical time. We cannot afford to let go of our learning or become complacent. This is a time for growth, both personally and communally. We must deepen our understanding of the situation and the challenges faced by the people in Gaza. It is essential that we embody our Islamic, and human, responsibility to stand firmly for justice, advocate for the Palestinian cause, and specifically towards Masjid Al-Aqsa.

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَا الَّذِي بَرَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِنْ آيَاتِنَا إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ



Exalted is He who took His Servant [i.e., Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ)] by night from al-Masjid al-Ḥarām to al-Masjid al-Aqṣā, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Seeing. [4] (Al-Israa: 1)

لَا تُشَدُّ الرِّحَالُ إِلَّا إِلَى ثَلَاثَةِ مَسَاجِدَ: الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ، وَمَسْجِدِ الرَّسُولِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى



The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Do not set out on a journey except for three Mosques i.e. Al-Masjid-Al-Haram, the Mosque of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), and the Mosque of Al-Aqsa, (Mosque of Jerusalem).

It is our responsibility to remain steadfast in our commitment to supporting Palestinians in their fight for justice, dignity, and freedom. Change begins at an individual level through our worship, our actions, and our stances. We must do everything we can, in all spaces. The ocean consists of many drops and we must raise what is individually within us. We are certain that the support of Allah ﷻ will come, and that the return of Al-Aqsa mosque to Muslim sovereignty will be achieved. However, the matter at hand is not the eventuality of its return; but rather, the question is where each of us as individuals will be in the ranks of those who strove towards this truth. How will we present ourselves and answer for ourselves to Allah ﷻ about the coming of this Truth?

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوِّمِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أُولَىٰ بِهِمَا فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىَٰ أَن تَعْدِلُوا وَإِن تَلَوْا أَوْ نَعَرْتُمْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا



“O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even though it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, be he rich or poor, Allah is a Better Protector to both (than you). So, follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest you may avoid justice, and if you distort your witness or refuse to give it, verily, Allah is Ever Well-Acquainted with what you do”. (An-Nisa: 135)

Collectively Striving Towards Upholding Truth

The people of Palestine, as part of the Muslim Ummah, have long exemplified resilience and an unwavering commitment to Truth. Their struggle is a profound reminder to all of us about the importance of upholding truth in a world where it is often distorted. Their resistance against oppression serves as a clarion call, urging the Ummah to reflect on our shared duty to stand for truth, even in the most difficult of times. That we must mobilize within our homes, our communities, and work together to strive towards upholding Truth.

Additionally, the Quran stresses our responsibility to stand with those who are oppressed. In Surah At-Tawbah (9:71), Allah ﷻ says:

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ
الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ



The believing men and believing women are allies of one another. They enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. They establish prayer, give zakah, and obey Allah and His Messenger. (Surah At-Tawbah :71)

This verse calls on the Ummah to act in solidarity, supporting one another in the face of oppression, and striving together for what is right.

As Gaza stands today, redefining the truths of our time and showing us what it means to stand with complete resolve, and unwavering, persistently striving, it is a reminder for us to strive both internally to strengthen our connection to Allah ﷻ as well as to strengthen our homes, our families, and our connection to the community around us and rise together as an Ummah that strives towards upholding the cause of Islam.

وَمَا تَوْفِيقِي إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ



And my success is not but through Allāh. Upon Him I have relied, and to Him I return
(Hud: 88)