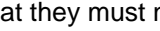
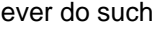
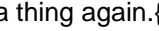


The Eavesdroppers

Contributed by pmuhammad.com
Saturday, 25 February 2006

Abu Jahl, Al Akhnas son of Sharik's and Abu Sufyan were curious to learn why so many people were attracted to the Prophet (sa) so they decided to spy upon one of his gatherings. One night after the believers had gathered in the Prophet's house, they met together and then hid among the shadows so as not to be detected and waited for him to begin.

The Prophet (sa) and his followers spent the night in prayer and also listened to the Prophet's captivating recitation of the Koran. After its recitation, the Prophet (sa) much to the delight of his followers, lovingly expanded upon its meaning and stories from the knowledge he had been given by Gabriel. He never spoke on religious matters without having first been given knowledge from Gabriel, who was entrusted by Allah to deliver the Koran and its explanation.

The hours slipped by and it was only just before dawn that the three returned home in fear that if they stayed any longer someone might see them and then misinterpret their reason for presence. As they made their way home they warned each other that they must never do such a thing again.   

However, they were to return yet again on the second, and third night then leave as they had done before dawn, but as they parted company on the third night each took a binding oath never, ever, to return again. Later on that day Al Akhnas, with stick in hand, went to the home of Abu Sufyan to ask his opinion of the past three nights. Abu Sufyan told him that he had heard things he knew and already knew what was meant by them, and that he had also heard things he had not heard before and had not known their meaning.

Al Akhnas concurred with Abu Sufyan and then went to Abu Jahl's home to ask his opinion. Al Akhnas found that Abu Jahl's position had not soften in the slightest, in fact he understood that Abu Jahl now saw the Prophet (sa) as an even greater threat and had become more opposed than ever. Abu Jahl reminded his visitor that he and his tribesmen competed with the Prophet (sa) and his followers for honor saying, "They have fed the poor, so have we; they have been generous, so have we, we are like two horses running neck-to-neck in a race. But, they say we have a Prophet to whom a Revelation is sent down from heaven -- when will we ever attain anything like that!"

It was now more evident than ever that Abu Jahl feared he would lose his chance to be the chieftain of this very powerful tribe when his uncle died. Although, if he had put his pride to one side and listened without bias he would have realized his fear was completely unfounded as the Prophet (sa) was honorable and respectful, and never took away the authority of tribal chieftains or claimed such rank for himself.

Now, in a fit of arrogant rage, Abu Jahl swore never to believe in the message the Prophet (sa) brought, nor would he ever again consider him to be truthful. The unbelievers persisted in their mockery of the Prophet (sa) saying, "There is a veil over our hearts, we do not understand what you say. There is also a heaviness in our ears so we are unable to hear you, and a curtain that divides us from you. You follow your path and we will follow ours. We do not understand anything you say!" It was then that Allah sent down the verses:

"When you recite the Koran, We place between you and those who do not believe in the Everlasting Life an obstructing barrier. We lay veils upon their hearts and heaviness in their ears, lest they understand it. When you (Prophet Muhammad) mention your Lord alone in the Koran, they turn their backs in aversion. When they listen to you, We know very well how they listen.

When they conspire, when the evildoers declare: 'You are only following a man who is bewitched.' See what they compare you to. They have surely gone astray and cannot find the Path. 'What!' they say, 'When we are (turned to) bones and broken bits, shall we be raised again in a new creation?' Say: 'Let you be stones or iron, or any other creation yet more monstrous in your minds.' They will ask: 'Who will restore us?' Say: 'He who originated you at first.' They will shake their heads and ask: 'When will this be?' Say: 'Maybe it is near, on that Day, He will summon you, and you shall answer Him with praise and you shall think you have stayed but for a little.'" (Koran 17:45-52)