

LO: To know how the prophet (SAW) communicated with different rulers in neighboring countries

TASK 1: Read the following and name three ways the prophet (Saw) communicated with Heraclius

Watch this video for more information: [Letter To Heraclius - YouTube](#)

Letter to Heraclius — the Emperor of Byzantine

The Prophet ﷺ asked his companions: "Who is prepared to carry my letter to the ruler of Byzantine and be rewarded with *Jannah* (Paradise)?" A man asked: "Even if he rejects it?" The Prophet ﷺ replied that the reward would still be his even if *Heraclius* rejected the message. *Dihyah bin Khalafah*, a pleasant and handsome man of the *Kalb* tribe, accepted the Prophet's ﷺ offer, and set forth to carry the Prophet's ﷺ message to *Heraclius*, the *Byzantine* emperor (Eastern Roman Empire).

Heraclius had just conquered the territory lost to the Persians, who had taken away the *Holy Cross* (crucifix) from *Jerusalem*. He vowed to restore the crucifix and place it in the Church of *Jerusalem*. He was given a hero's welcome when he came to *Jerusalem* to replace the crucifix. A grand celebration was organised for the occasion. It was at this time that *Dihyah* arrived there to deliver the Prophet's ﷺ message, which read as follows:

In the name of Allāh, the Most Merciful, the Most Kind.

From Muhammad, the servant of Allāh and His Messenger, to Heraclius, the ruler of the Byzantines. Peace be on those who follow right guidance. I call on you to believe in Islām. Accept Islām and you will be safe and Allāh will give you a double reward. If you refuse, you shall bear the responsibility for the Arians (the followers of Arius, who denied the Trinity and

believed in the oneness of God). And (I recite to you Allāh's statement). "O People of the Book (Jews and Christians)! Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allāh and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords beside Allāh. Then, if they turn away, say, "Bear witness that we are Muslims." (Sūrah 3, verse 64)

Heraclius treated the Prophet's ﷺ representative (envoy) with dignity but he wanted to find out for himself about the Prophet's ﷺ claim. So he ordered his aides to find any person from *Arabia* that he could ask questions about the Prophet ﷺ. *Abū Sufyān bin Harb*, the *Quraysh* leader who considered the Prophet ﷺ his enemy, happened to be in *Gaza* with some of his companions on a business trip. They were taken to *Heraclius* who asked them through a translator: "Who among you is the closest relative of *Muhammad* who claims to be a Prophet?" *Abū Sufyān* said that he was the closest relative. *Heraclius* asked *Abū Sufyān* to come forward and answer his questions. He also asked *Abū Sufyān's* companions to point out if *Abū Sufyān* would tell any lie.

Heraclius then asked *Abū Sufyān* a series of questions:

Heraclius: What is his family status amongst you?

Abū Sufyān: He belongs to a good (noble) family amongst us.

Heraclius: Was any of his forefathers a king?

Abū Sufyān: No.

Heraclius: Has anyone among you made a similar claim before him?

Abū Sufyān: No.

Heraclius: Do the rich or the poor follow him?

Abū Sufyān: It is the poor who follow him.

Heraclius: Are his followers increasing or decreasing?

Abū Sufyān: They are increasing.

Heraclius: Does any of them become displeased or turn away from his religion after having embraced it?

Abū Sufyān: No.

Heraclius: Have you ever known him to lie before he started to make his claim?

Abū Sufyān: No.

Heraclius: Does he ever betray or break his promises?

Abū Sufyān: No. We, however, have a peace agreement with him for the time being, and we do not know what he will do during this period.

Heraclius: Have you ever had a war with him?

Abū Sufyān: Yes.

Heraclius: What was the outcome of your battles?

Abū Sufyān: Sometimes he was victorious and sometimes we.

Heraclius: What does he order you to do?

Abū Sufyān: He tells us to worship Allāh alone, and not to worship anything along with Him. He tells us not to follow our forefathers. He commands us to pray and to be truthful and chaste and kind to our relations.

Heraclius: I asked you about his family and your reply was that he belonged to a very noble family. In fact all the Messengers come from noble families amongst their respective peoples. Then I asked you whether anyone of his ancestors was a king. Your reply was in the negative, and if it had been in the affirmative, I would have thought that this man wanted to take back his ancestral kingdom. I questioned you whether anybody else amongst you claimed such a thing, your reply was in the negative. If the answer had been in the affirmative, I would have thought that this man was following the previous man's statement. I then asked you whether the rich people followed him or the poor. You replied that it was the poor who followed him. And in fact all the Messengers have been followed by this very class of people. Then I asked you whether his followers were increasing or decreasing. You replied that they were increasing, and in fact this is the way of true faith, till it is complete in all respects. I further asked you whether there was anybody who, after embracing his religion, became displeased and discarded his religion. Your reply was in the negative, and in fact this is (the sign of) true faith, when its delight enters the hearts and mixes with them completely. I further asked whether he was ever accused of telling lies before he said what he said, and your reply was in the negative. So I wondered how a person who does not tell a lie about others could ever tell a lie about Allāh. I asked you whether he had ever betrayed. You replied in the negative and likewise the Messengers never betray. Then I asked you what he ordered you to do. You replied that he ordered you to worship Allāh alone and not to worship any thing along with Him and forbade you to worship idols and ordered you to pray, to speak the truth and to be chaste. If what you have said is true, he will very soon occupy this place underneath my feet and I knew it (from the Scriptures) that he was going to appear but I did not know that he would be from you, and if I could reach him definitely, I would go immediately to meet him and if I were with him, I would certainly wash his feet.

Heraclius thus was close to accepting Islam, but he did not do so for fear of the loss of his Throne. He therefore sent back a diplomatic reply, pretending that he personally accepted Islām but was not in a position to announce this publicly. He sent gifts to the Prophet ﷺ through Dihyah and the Prophet ﷺ gave them away to the poor Muslims in Madīnah.

TASK 2: Watch the video below and explain two of the lessons learnt from this

[Letter To Negus \[Najjashi\] - YouTube](#)