Days with the Imam (4)

By Sheikh Mujahid Ayman al-Zawahiri,
May Allah Protect Him

In the name of Allah, and all praise be to Allah. Peace and prayers be upon the Messenger of Allah and his family, companions, and allies.

Dear Muslim brothers everywhere: Peace and Allah’s mercy and blessings be upon you. And to proceed:

This is the fourth episode of the series “Days with the Imam” in which I reminisce about the good memories I spent with Sheikh Usama bin Laden, may Allah have great mercy on him and allow us to join him.

To begin this episode, I would like to point out an important matter, that in this as well as previous episodes, I want to place great emphasis on the martyrs with whom I have lived through the same events (all that took place on the battlefield over a period of time) and not to talk about those who are still alive, out of concerns for their safety as the battle is ongoing and the enemy is lurking and eager for any piece of information to be used to harm a Muslim or a Mujahid or a supporter of Jihad and the Mujahideen. In the meantime, my gratitude to those still alive is acknowledged. I cannot and the brothers (those still alive) cannot forget what they have offered for Jihad and the Mujahideen in this critical, difficult and intense time in which the faithful groups with limited ordnance have encountered
and defeated, with Allah’s grace, the strongest military force in human history.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those that are still alive who supported Jihad and all the Mujahideen and us, and I tell them that if I do not overtly speak about you, it is for your own safety and security and, Allah willing, the day will come when we extol your virtues, liberality, and exploits.

Moreover, I would like to commend the entire Afghan and Pakistani people, who stood with us in this severe ordeal, and especially the proud Pashtun and Baloch tribes. I ask Allah the Almighty to reward greatly all those who stood with Jihad and the Mujahideen. This is the first comment.

The second comment: I honestly felt negligent in paying tribute to the Imam (sovereign), the reviver, and Mujahid, Sheikh Usama bin Laden. I might be at fault and I appeal to the brothers to excuse me as it is due to instability and preoccupation with the raging battle and the imposing of the security situation upon the Mujahideen and us.

Actually, I severely scold the writers and intellectuals loyal to the Islamic Ummah and the jurists who love and appreciate Sheikh Usama bin Laden and know his stature, those who love the Sheikh and his friends and comrades in the footpath of Jihad and Hijrah, for not talking about Sheikh Usama bin Laden, this Imam, the reviver (of Jihad and establishing the rules of Allah), who stands out as towering giant throughout Islamic history. I would not be exaggerating if I say that he is the Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi of this day and age.

He is a man who left his wealth, his studies, his family, and his country and even his nationality and identity papers. He left it all in the way of Allah the Almighty. Allah honored him with having him engaged in Jihad since his youth. He was engaged in Jihad against the enemies of Islam and was honored by Allah the Almighty by participating in the defeat of the Communist Russian Empire, and he also participated in the defeat of the Western American Crusader Empire. Both (his participation in defeating the two empires) were accomplished in a short span of time, less than a mere two decades. In both cases, he gave freely, openly, and generously and was one of the heroes of this Ummah, which should recognize and
commend its heroes and convey their news (about their path and accomplishment in serving Allah) to future generations.

So where are these brothers? Where are those who know the stature of the Sheikh? There are plenty of them in this Ummah, I am certain of that. Why do they remain silent? I was hoping that they take this burden off me even though it is my duty.

Unfortunately, if a football player, a singer, or a crooked politician dies, tens of books, programs and movies are released (on that person's behalf). Where is your participation, my brethren, in paying tribute to the Sheikh? Sheikh Usama bin Laden, the reviver and Mujahid Imam who waged Jihad against Hobal\(^1\) of the present era, America, and America used to consider him its number one enemy?

Honestly, I admonish all these brothers and I call on everyone who knows the stature of the Sheikh. I also call on the Sheikh’s beloved, colleagues, friends, and those who joined him on the pathway of Hijrah and Jihad, to show by spreading and publicizing any and all of his great deeds in words and in print.

Moreover, whoever cannot write or articulate well, let him seek assistance from the people of goodwill who will help him in this endeavor, and collect these good memories and pleasant history, the ones of which I witnessed part and they witnessed most.

In fact, I call upon them and entrust them not to conceal the pleasant history of the Sheikh, but to shed light and extol his exploits and virtues and get the word out, because this is part of the Jihad against America, which is trying to distort the image of the Sheikh and his journey. This is what I wanted to point out.

Another thing, when some of the brothers speak of Sheikh Usama bin Laden, they speak of his morals, behavior, mild manner, and generosity. No doubt, he had all these virtues to which friends and foes have testified. We should indeed point out those virtues and extol them. However, did Sheikh Usama bin Laden become an imam because he had good morals, was pleasant to be with, or was mild-

---

1 An idol worshipped by pagan Arabs before Islam.
Sheikh Usama bin Laden is the reviver imam, the Mujahid who triggered Jihad against America and participated in Jihad against the Russians. He exposed the corrupt rulers and mischief-doers. It is those aforementioned facts that are the most momentous aspects of the life of the Sheikh. For this reason my brethren, if you talk about the Sheikh, why do you stay clear of this pivotal side of Sheikh Usama bin Laden that earned him the title, Imam?

In addition, when some of the brothers talk about the Sheikh, they only mention his Jihad against the Communist Russians and remain silent and quiet on two extremely important issues in the life of the Sheikh. The first issue is the Jihad of the Sheikh against America. Sheikh Usama bin Laden was able to mobilize and rally the Islamic Ummah against a common enemy, America. In this, his diligence was successful by the grace of Allah, Glorious is He and Exalted.

The second pivotal issue is the stance of Sheikh Usama bin Laden on the corrupt and immoral rulers. It is true that Sheikh Usama bin Laden said that we should all unite against the biggest enemy, against the head of the snake. He also used to say we should unite against Hobal of the current era. If that huge idol falls, its followers will fall and scatter, too. At the same time, he was exposing, revealing, challenging, criticizing, and divulging the corruption of the rulers and inciting the Ummah against them. So my brothers, where are these two issues mentioned? Why are you not addressing those two issues when you talk about the Sheikh? How come these two momentous aspects of the life of the Sheikh are absent from your presentations?

My beloved brothers, Sheikh Usama bin Laden commended the revolution of the Arab nations against the corrupt rulers, and he was amongst those who incited it even earlier. He incited the nations to mobilize, revolt, and rise (against their corrupt rulers). And when those revolutions started, he stood up, supporting, praising, and congratulating them and most importantly, he was guiding them. He was guiding them because these revolutions must be oriented in the right direction, leading to governance by Islamic laws, liberation from the corrupt rulers and external hegemony as well as internal corruption.
The events following the uprising proved that the perspective of the Sheikh, may Allah have mercy on him, in warning the Ummah against the democratic and secular quagmire, was insightful. The reality has been exposed and the masks have fallen off, and America and its agents have bared their fangs and displayed their real agenda. They crushed the revolutions with tanks, bombs, air raids, and shots using guns and cannons. They consumed the idol of democracy that they created and worshipped. The unfolding of events showed the insight of the Sheikh and the validity of his viewpoint, and that he was calling for these revolutions to complete their mission (towards fulfilling their goals). These revolutions got lost in the quagmire of democracy, and many of the groups that associated themselves with Islam got sidetracked, confused and missed the (straight) way (leading to the intended goal) in the midst of the temptations and mirage that they held on to.

Today, (as events unfold), we see that all of what is happening in al-Sham, Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia is proceeding according to a single American plan, and even if the details and timing may vary, all of it aims at one thing – that is to lure the Islamic movement into the quagmire of democracy, secularism, and nationalism, and there the strength (and effectiveness) of this movement will dissipate just like the force of a gushing river dissipates as it encounters swamps and jungles. And if that (course of action) does not work, then Plan B is activated and the American enemy then reveals its ugly face, thereby giving the nod to its agents to take over and proceed using force to kill, subjugate, and trample the hope of the Arab nations to be governed by Islamic laws, liberated from external hegemony, and be purged from internal corruption.

What is happening today O brothers in Egypt, is a perfect crime in which the secularists and advocates of liberalism, human rights, democracy, and idle talk have banded together with the American enemy offshore. They utilized the overpowering military machine, which has been nurtured, financed, and trained and has gone through exercises and maneuvers by America and under its watchful eye. This dangerous trio, and sadly it has been joined by "The Falsehood Party" to

---

2 An allegorical expression demonstrating a state of anger, malicious intention, and readiness to strike.
3 The Sheikh is mocking the Egyptian Salafi party known as the Nour Party.
attribute a bit of false, lack-luster legitimacy to Sisi and the Americanized military institution along with the separatist Christians. All of these today, dear brothers, are standing to serve and advance the American military project, and all of these are standing in the way of the revolutions of the Arab nations so that they may not return to their Islam, and become free and restore their will to be governed by the Shariah of Islam, and liberate themselves from the external hegemony and rid themselves of from internal corruption.

Today, O brothers in Egypt, we are facing immoral and obscene secularists, a murderous army, and dishonest judges. We are facing this gathering of corrupted rulers and this fully thought-out and executed criminal act. These criminals transgress against the Ummah. It is the right of the Ummah to combat and repel their oppression. The jurists have decided that the oppressor upon the honor, religion, and wealth should be repelled by all means. It is also the right of the Ummah to decide what means to repel them with. It is the right of the Ummah and that of the upright (individuals) from this Ummah to choose any available way that suits them to combat this transgression. It is not the right of the criminal to impose upon his victim the way with which he should combat them. It is not the right of the oppressor to impose upon the oppressed the way in which he should repel his transgression. Repelling transgression is a Shariah obligation that has been decided by Islam and it is not the right of anyone to stop any other from using the correct means to combat this oppression.

This is what I wanted to mention in the beginning of today’s talk. And as I promised you earlier, I wanted to talk about Sheikh Usama bin Laden in Tora Bora, as it was a situation in which the superior qualities of the Sheikh became apparent in terms of reliance on Allah and belief in His victory and steadfastness before the enemy, as well as his political and military prowess in managing the difficult and tiresome battle in which a mere 300 lions of Islam faced off against America, its allies, agents and hypocrites.

At that time dear brothers, in the battle of Tora Bora, which began actually on the 17th of Ramadan the brothers were - how should I say it- they remind me of the
situations of Syedna⁴ Husain bin Ali, may Allah be pleased with them both, as they were before their enemy, they were cut off and alone, aid and supplies had been cut off from them, and they were trapped from everywhere by bands of hypocrites. America and its Western allies (at the time) had concluded the military conflict in Afghanistan, and they turned their focus and dedicated their effort to Tora Bora. The battle of Tora Bora had made its mark on the Islamic history – it has been characterized by extraordinary sacrifices by those brothers. They sacrificed with their blood, sweat, patience, and endurance, as was demonstrated by those who fell as prisoners in this battle, and several extremely critical overtones emerged, and I would like to relate these:

First of what I would like to relate in the battle of Tora Bora - firstly I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation for the friends, helpers, and beloved ones from the Ansar who aided the Mujahideen in Tora Bora, and by contrast, I would also like to give some examples of traitors, agents, and hypocrites who lined up under the banner of the American Crusade to face this small group of believers.

First of whom I speak about amongst the friends, helpers, supporters, and beloved ones, is the Sheikh of Jihad, the Mujahid, the patient, the steadfast upon truth, Sheikh Yunus Khalis, for whom I ask Allah the Almighty to accept him in the most exalted place. His eminence, the Mujahid, Sheikh Muhammad Yunus Khalis, may Allah have mercy on him, whom I have talked about in a previous episode. I talked about his steadfastness, Jihad, and love for the Sheikh (Usama) and his strong relationship with Sheikh Usama, may Allah have mercy on them both, but here I would like to mention a really noble stance of his in the events of Tora Bora. When the Americans, with their faction of hypocrites in front of them, proceeded into Jalalabad and surrounding areas, Sheikh Muhammad Yunus Khalis, may Allah have mercy on him, made his house available to the Arab women and children to shelter them so that these hypocrites would not trade them. He kept them under his care until he escorted them to safety, so may Allah reward him abundantly for this noble stance. And I have also mentioned earlier that in spite of his severe illness that made him almost paralyzed, he insisted on releasing a video statement calling the Muslim Ummah in Afghanistan to wage Jihad against the Americans, who had

⁴ A word used to refer to noble individuals.
occupied the land. This made Jihad Fard Ayn⁵ even though he was in their clutches and was weak, paralyzed, and powerless, so may Allah have great mercy on him.

The second hero about who I want to praise and mention is the hero commander, Mu’alim⁶ Awal Gul, may Allah have mercy on him, Mu’alim Awal Gul is from the province of Laghman, which neighbors Jalalabad. He was one of the friends of Sheikh Muhammad Yunus Khalis and a high ranking staff member of his Jihadi organization. When the Islamic Emirate was established in Afghanistan, he became one of its commanders - and he was made the commander of the tank brigade in Jalalabad. His relationship with Sheikh Usama goes back to the early days of Jihad. He was also their (Sheikh Usama and other brothers) neighbor in Jalalabad, where he lived in Najm al-Jihad, the same village they lived in, which was set up by Sheikh Muhammad Yunus Khalis and his Mujahideen friends in Jalalabad. The Sheikh (Usama) used to visit him a lot and was in constant contact with him, until Sheikh Usama had to leave Jalalabad and moved to Kandahar. Whenever Sheikh Usama visited Jalalabad he made sure to drop by Sheikh Mu’alim Gul, may Allah have embracing mercy on him.

Sheikh Mu’alim Awal Gul, may Allah have embracing mercy on him, had a heroic and noble stance in Tora Bora when the Americans and hypocrites entered Jalalabad. These people thought that Mu’alim Awal Gul may not have a hostile stance towards them, at least in the beginning phase, so they did not change his post as the commander of the tank brigade in Jalalabad. Mu’alim Awal Gul sent a letter to Sheikh Usama bin Laden, and said to him. ‘I am under your command, if you order me I will migrate from Afghanistan leaving this post, or if you order me, I will stay at this post and be an eye for you and a helper and send you the news and developments first hand’. Truly, Mu’alim Awal Gul, may Allah have mercy on him, would send news and developments to Sheikh Usama first hand. He used to send on regular bases all the details about the plans of the hypocrites and their meetings, who did or say what, where, when, and how, and what they had plotted against the brothers, and what was their stance against the brothers in Tora Bora. Then, when the Americans decided to attack Tora Bora – of course, the Americans

---
⁵ Obligatory to all able ones.
⁶ Instructor.
do engage in face-to-face fight (this is one of the lessons learnt from the events in Tora Bora that we shall go over), but the Western Crusader forces led by the Americans are cowards, very fearful, and cling to this life and the glitter thereof, and they do not fight face to face, unless they assemble a huge force in fighting their enemy, for they always prefer to push the hypocrites in the front line, as happened in Iraq and Vietnam, and as it has happened in many of their wars - so the Americans decided to advance the hypocrites to besiege Tora Bora, and within the forces that they decided to push forward was the tank brigade of Jalalabad. The role of the Westerners would have been to control the skies and bomb from high altitude so as to remain safe and avoid direct combat with Mujahideen or storm their positions. So when the orders came to Mu’alim Awal Gul to move his unit to take part in the siege of Tora Bora, he contacted Sheikh Usama for consultation. He said to him, ‘What do you think I should do? Should I leave my post and migrate from Afghanistan, or move with my unit to siege Tora Bora? But I promise you, that my bombs shall be directed to empty mountains away from the positions of the Mujahideen’. We received this news while we were in Tora Bora, so I and another brother were taken by our bonds, and we said, how could Mu’alim Gul agree to be with the apostate forces and he is a Mujahid. So we were taken in by emotions. But Sheikh Usama bin Laden - and here I note his political insight - said: ‘O brothers, he is a man who is our helper and beloved, and who shall direct his bombs to the empty mountains away from us. This is better than a devil that directs his bombs at us and hits us directly’. We said, yes Sheikh, by Allah you are right. So he sent a letter to Mu’alim Gul saying, ‘Alright, put your reliance on Allah and proceed with this plan’. And truly we were not hit by a single bomb from Mu’alim Gul’s tanks. We used to watch them hit empty mountains surrounding us.

The other heroic stance of Mu’alim Awal Gul took place when the Sheikh decided to withdraw from Tora Bora - and this is another story that we shall revisit, Allah willing, about the political prowess of the Sheikh and how he succeeded in breaking the siege and saving most of his personnel from Tora Bora to prepare them for the upcoming long term battle - the Sheikh arranged, as we shall mention later in detail, Allah willing, to exit Tora Bora. What is important is that the Sheikh and a group with him transferred to a transitional location and from there to several other interim places until they exited the Jalalabad area entirely. Who is the person who took the Sheikh out of Jalalabad? The one who took Sheikh Usama bin Laden
out from Jalalabad is the martyred hero Mu’alim Awal Gul, may Allah have mercy on him. He took Sheikh Usama in his own car under his guardianship and whisked him away and out of the Jalalabad area, taking advantage of his position and status as the commander of the tank brigade in Jalalabad. This is the first time that I am praising and attributing this heroic stance to this heroic martyr. The Americans grew suspicious of him after that, and that led to his arrest. He was then transferred to Bagram prison, and then to Guantanamo. They claimed later on that he died there of a heart attack. I personally doubt very much this claim. I suspect that they killed him or plotted his death as a revenge for his heroic stance, which I do not know whether they discovered it or not, but at least they knew of his history, and his long-term strong friendship with Sheikh Usama bin Laden, may Allah have embracing mercy on him. So may Allah have mercy on Mu’alim Awal Gul.

I also remember a noble stance of Sheikh Mu’alim Awal Gul before the beginning of the severe air raid on Afghanistan. He said to Sheikh Usama bin Laden, may Allah have mercy on him: ‘I am ready to gather the best of the Mujahideen for you in Afghanistan and they are ready and need nothing more than some little ammunition in order to be ready if the Americans come in to overtake us, and I am ready, too’. So may Allah have embracing mercy on him.

Sheikh Usama bin Laden would always mention and remember him well for his noble acts. These noble and heroic acts were not unique to Mu’alim Awal Gul alone, but they were common characteristics of many of the people of Jalalabad and its environs. As I previously said, I ask for forgiveness from my brethren if I do not mention the names of the living heroes who aided us, stood with us, supported us, showed their true Islamic Jihadi mettle, and showed the true face (what they are made of) of the Afghan Muslim Ummah that defeated the Russians and then defeated the Americans, thanks to Allah the Almighty.

I call on those who love Mu’alim Awal Gul, his sons and family, the residents of Jalalabad, and the Islamic Ummah in Afghanistan to avenge this lion against the Americans who killed him or caused his death, and from the traitors who turned him in and pointed the finger at him. I would make reference to one of them, Allah willing. So I call on those aforementioned not to abandon revenge for Mu’alim Awal Gul, as it is entrusted to them and every Afghan Mujahid and every Muslim,
that they must avenge this hero that stood firm during these difficult times. One of the messengers that he used to send came to us once and said that Mu’alim Awal Gul would close his door and cry wondering what he could do for Sheikh Usama bin Laden and his brethren (as he was helpless in his prison cell). This brother used to console and remind him that (what he is going through) this is the history and familiar path of the prophets, messengers, and the righteous, and he must be tested and tried. May Allah have mercy on Mu’alim Awal Gul.

I also recall an incident with respect to Mu’alim Awal Gul, may Allah have mercy on him. One of the brothers came to Sheikh Usama bin Laden and informed him that they have identified the person who betrayed Mu’alim Awal Gul, and they want to arrange for his death. Sheikh Usama bin Laden said to them: "Brethren, fear Allah, do not judge people out of suspicion, and do not kill anyone based on mere suspicion unless you are certain that he had a hand in it and was actually working with the Americans."

The other hero who I want to pay tribute to during the events of Tora Bora, is the hero martyr Qari Abdul Ahad - a Jihadist hero who fought against the Russians and was a member of the organization of Sheikh Muhammad Yunus Khalis - Islami Afghanistan. He was a ranking officer in the party of the Sheikh during the Jihadi days against the Russians. He stood by our side in Tora Bora. He used to visit us, commit himself to helping us, and deliver the news to us. He, may Allah have mercy on him, was the one who got me along with a number of brothers out of Tora Bora - he got us to safety or at least one of the stages of our departure from Tora Bora until we relocated to a safe place, so may Allah reward him greatly.

In the course of our exit from Tora Bora, we went through a miraculous situation in which the glory of Allah the Almighty was clearly manifested and His absolute power and judgment were demonstrated, and that nothing will happen to a person except what Allah has decreed for him. I may have mentioned this situation during one of my talks. In brief, the brothers, some of the Ansar and I were marching at night with Qari Abdul Ahad going from one location to another until we reached some place. Qari Abdul Ahad asked us to wait. He went to scout the road and said that the road ahead is safe to move forward. At some distance ahead, there appeared a building or something looking like a building with a wall around it. As
we approached that building, I found out that this building is one of the headquarters for the hypocrites who took over the Jalalabad area and its surroundings. I also discovered that just 4-5 meters away, the part of the wall right in front of us had a huge hole that is approximately 3-4 meters wide. As we were walking right in front of it, one of the cars of the hypocrites approached that hole and pointed its headlight at us, thus fully exposing us. We came face-to-face with it. I happened (at that time) to have been behind a tree that Allah blessed me with, along with a brother. That brother instructed me to pull out my weapon and get it ready. Why, I asked? He said that they became aware of our presence. That meant we are going to engage them. One of the other brothers was tall and could not find anything to take cover with so he had to lie on his back to hide himself. We stood still like that for a few seconds, ready for a fight and scuffle to start, but behold, Allah the Almighty ordained that the car driver pull back and move elsewhere. I do not know if he wanted to change his location or that he spotted us and got fearful and panicked. When the car pulled away, one of the Ansar with a muscular build approached me, grabbed me, and pulled me very hard, dragging me away. After just three steps in the dark, we encountered a dry water ditch which we could not see in the dark; consequently we slipped and fell in it. Our weapons got scattered and so did we. He quickly got a hold of himself, stood up, and again pulled me up very hard and took me with him. We circled the headquarters, found our way, and continued forward. The Ansar that were with us, praise be to Allah, were in their youth and I was in my fifties, and as such I was not in good physical shape. One of the brothers told the muscular man to carry the doctor on his back. No, I said, do not carry me on your back. So we continued and kept on moving forward. A car came by and stopped briefly on top of the road, but praise be to Allah, who, by His grace and favor, saved us from (adverse consequence) such an incident. Finally, Qari Abdul Ahad took us to a safe place and got us food and lodging. Afterwards, we moved to another location, by the grace and care of Allah.

Qari Abdul Ahad was killed as a martyr at the hands of the treasonous Afghan forces when they came to search his home, may Allah have mercy on him. As I told my Mujahideen brethren in Jalalabad and in Afghanistan and everywhere, avenging Mu’alim Awal Gul, Qari Abdul Ahad, and every martyr killed in Afghanistan is entrusted upon them and should be taken from the necks of the Americans and the necks of the (local) agents who helped them.
I will suffice with that and I bid you farewell. I entrust your care and safety to Allah, whose entrustment never fails or is lost.

Peace and Allah’s mercy and blessings be upon you. May Allah bless our Prophet Muhammad and his family and companions. Our last supplication is praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.

Issued by As-Sahab Media

Rajab 1435 / May 2014

Source: Al-Fajr Media Center

Translated by

The Global Islamic Media Front
Observing Mujahideen News and Inspiring the Believers