

Noble Life of The Last  
Prophet & Messenger of Allah

**MUHAMMAD** ﷺ

Religion & State

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***King Fahd National Library Cataloging-in-Publication Data***

Al-Oumari, Abdulaziz Ibrahim

Noble Life of The Last Prophet & Messenger of Allah  
Muhammad -Religion & State ./ Abdulaziz Ibrahim

Al-Oumari,- Riyadh , 2020

Pages 402, size 17x 24 cm

ISBN: 978-603-500-457-2

1- Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) I-Title

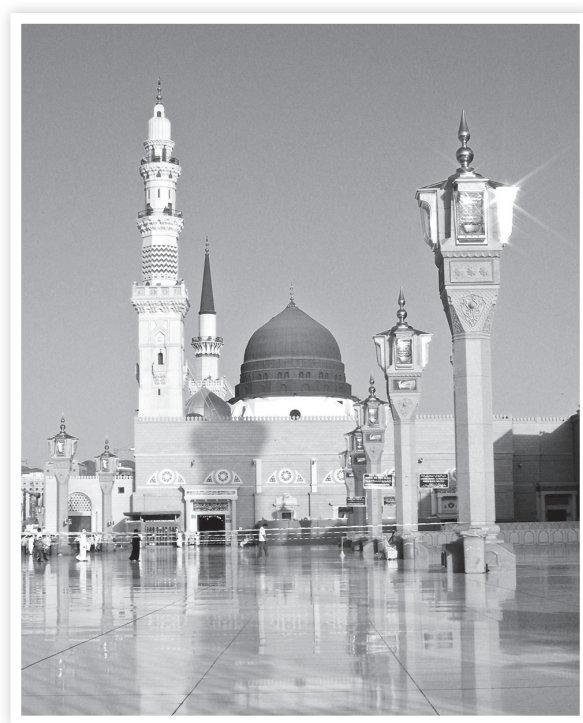
239 dc 1442/2648

**L.D. no. 1442/2648**  
**ISBN: 978-603-500-457-2**

- Title of Book: *al-Istifa' min Seerat al-Mustafa (saw)* [A Selection from the Biography of the Prophet (saw)]
- Author: Prof. Dr. Abdul Aziz bin Ibrahim al-Omary
- 1<sup>st</sup> edition: 1440 AH/2019 CE
- P O Box 100437 Riyadh 11635  
Phone: + 966 11 274 6677  
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e-mail: [azizomary@hotmail.com](mailto:azizomary@hotmail.com)
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- Publisher: Darussalam

Noble Life of The Last  
Prophet & Messenger of Allah  
**MUHAMMAD** ﷺ

Religion & State



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the Name of Allah,  
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*

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# Foreword

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and may His peace and blessings be upon His Messenger, the leader of the Prophets, our master, Muhammad the son of `Abdullah, and on his family, companions, and all those loyal to him.

Firstly, I fully acknowledge that there are many books about the Prophet's life, written by tireless researchers and exceptional authors over the generations. These books have covered every aspect of the seerah, extracting lessons from it as well as Islamic rulings and many other benefits. It has been a centuries-long group effort, written in various languages for every type of audience.

I hold these works and their authors in great regard, and I ask Allah to grant them the highest honors, for they are my predecessors in this field. It is my humble dream to be admitted into their ranks, as one who stands behind his imam, following him in prayer. I have found that writing about the Prophet's life granted me great joy, and I hope to pass that on to my readers. Perhaps Allah will accept this deed from me and grant me the intercession of His Prophet ﷺ, and allow me to meet my beloved leader, what a wonderful honor that would be.

Simply reading about the seerah – let alone studying it or writing about it – creates a special kind of love within oneself that radiates towards Muhammad ﷺ, for he was a magnificent person in all his affairs. One feels such love deep within his heart as his faith is rejuvenated and he gains insight, page after page. This is because the Prophet ﷺ lived a humble yet extraordinary life that will touch the soul of every human being who seeks to learn about it, regardless of their circumstances.

The biggest factor that drove me to write about the seerah was the love that I feel while reading about the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. My immense love for him is indeed an honor for me that I wear proudly, as one would a badge, and I seek closeness to my Lord through this work of mine, hoping that He accepts it of me.

I also, of course, hope that this book helps those who wish to learn more about Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The path I chose to take in my writing was to make a narration of events of the Prophet's life in chronological order, connecting them to the verses of the Qur'an, and discussing some pertinent lessons along the way.

This book was originally published in five volumes with the title “The Messenger of Allah, the Final Prophet” but many people requested an abridged version to make it easier to read and translate, so I abridged it in this book. It was a difficult task having to decide what to include or remove, but with the goal of brevity in mind, I was able to complete it.

This abridged version follows the same general course as the original, i.e., narrating the events in order, while referencing the Qur’an and hadith often, especially when it pertains to deriving Islamic rulings from the texts. The seerah is a treasure trove of lessons to be learned, and I tried to note as many of them as possible within the chapters of this book. I touched upon similarities and differences in culture, while also delving into the topic of the birth of the Islamic Ummah, or nation, and how the first Islamic government formed under the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ, which was truly a remarkable feat, aided by Allah the Most Powerful, and it set an example for mankind for generations thereafter.

Just as I was blessed to have spent countless hours living with the seerah writing these pages, I pray that Allah allows me to one day have the honor of meeting the one whom I have written about, my role model Muhammad ﷺ. Despite the centuries that have passed between his time on this earth and mine, I feel closeness to him and his struggle as he fought the uphill battle to free mankind from the chains of idol-worship and bring them to the light – the worship of Allah alone. I am not stingy with this feeling; rather, I would much love that the reader experience it too, and it is my hope that this book will facilitate that.

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the esteemed Dr. `Ali bin Ibrahim bin Hamad an-Namla, who encouraged me to write this book and then later encouraged me to abridge it. He also gave me advice along the way, from which I benefited greatly, so may Allah reward him and all those who helped me accomplish this task.

This is the second publication of the abridged version. It includes some revisions of some minor issues that were pointed out to me by readers of the first print – many thanks to them and may Allah reward them. I ask Allah to grant us all beneficial knowledge and pious actions, for certainly He is the one to turn to and is capable of all things.

Professor Abdulaziz Ibrahim Alomary

Riyadh

Ramadan 1438 AH

# The Goals and Benefits of Studying the Seerah<sup>1</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ is the most beloved of all creation to Allah, for He chose him from amongst them all and honored him, and revealed the final message to him. What could possibly motivate us more to learn about Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and study his life?

Indeed, reading about Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is part of his rights upon us, and it is a sign that one truly loves him and loves Allah the Exalted, for Allah said: “Say (O Muhammad to mankind):

*“If you (really) love Allah then follow me; Allah will love you and forgive you of your sins. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”*

(Surah Aal `Imran: 31)

One who studies the Prophet’s life begins to see exactly how it was the embodiment of Islam, for he ﷺ lived his life as a servant of Allah, perfectly balancing between this world and the afterlife. His character and deeds were a perfect example for us, teaching us the laws of Allah, and showing us how to dedicate our lives and wealth to Allah’s cause.

Studying the seerah is a way to learn about the life of the greatest and most influential person that history ever witnessed. It is part of human nature to want to familiarize ourselves with the lives of the greatest among us, and every civilization does what it can to preserve and spread the stories of the best people they produced. Often it reaches to the extent where stories are embellished or even fabricated to make a civilization or individual look better and more marvelous than they were.

As for Muslims, our beloved leader, Muhammad ﷺ, was indeed the greatest of all mankind – without exaggeration or embellishment. By studying his life, we do our part to preserve and spread the story of his blessed life – but we do so by seeking authentic, truthful narrations about him, and as we learn more, our

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1. The word ‘Seerah’ here means the biography of the Prophet. (Translator’s note)

love for him only grows.

Many non-Muslims have considered the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ the most influential person in history, so how can we – his followers who are obliged to revere him above any other person, whether it be a king, president, scholar, or anyone at all – how can we be satisfied with studying the lives and history of others before studying his?

An American author, Michael Hart, wrote a book titled *The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History*. In it, he ranked Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as the number one most influential person in the history of mankind. Hart writes: “My choice of Muhammad to lead the list of the world’s most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular levels. Of humble origins, Muhammad founded and promulgated one of the world’s great religions, and became an immensely effective political leader. Today, thirteen centuries after his death, his influence is still powerful and pervasive.”<sup>1</sup>

Gustave Le Bon, a French anthropologist, wrote in his book *La Civilisation des Arabes*: “If the value of men is measured by the greatness of their actions, then Muhammad is the greatest man in history.”<sup>2</sup> William Muir, a Scottish orientalist, wrote:<sup>3</sup>

Allah, in His infinite wisdom, tasked the Muslims with studying the lives of the Prophets and the history of their peoples as part of Islamic ritual worship.<sup>4</sup> Allah shows us how they interacted with their societies, how their people reacted to the divine Message, and how He – ultimately – dealt with them. Indeed, Allah made His Prophets a light of guidance for mankind to follow, and He immortalized their mention in the Qur’an as it continues to be recited by billions to this day:

*“We relate unto you (Muhammad) the best of stories through Our Revelations unto you, of this Quran. And before this (i.e. before the coming of Divine Inspiration to you), you were among those who knew nothing about it.”* (Surah Yusuf: 3)

1. Hart, Michael. *The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History*
2. Le Bon, Gustave. *La Civilisation des Arabes*
3. Prophet of Islam, Personality, Life and Message (in a modern way), p:6
4. In Islam, the Qur’an is recited regularly as an act of worship, and it is full of stories of various Prophets and lessons derived from their interaction with their people. (Translator)

Just as the stories of the previous Prophets were a source of strength for Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and an example for him to follow, his seerah provides the same effect for Muslims who choose to learn it. It completes the picture of Islam, fitting seamlessly within the framework laid out in the Book of Allah.

Allah the Exalted said:

*“Indeed in their stories, there is a lesson for men of understanding. It (the Quran) is not a forged statement but a confirmation of the Allah’s existing Books and a detailed explanation of everything and a guide and a Mercy for the people who believe.”* (Surah Yusuf: 111)

*“Those were the towns whose story We relate unto you (O Muhammad ﷺ). And there came indeed to them their Messengers with clear proofs, but they were not such as to believe in that which they had rejected before. Thus Allah does seal the hearts of the disbelievers (from each and every kind of religious guidance).”* (Surah al-A`raf: 101)

*“Thus We relate to you (O Muhammad) some information of what happened before. And indeed We have given you from Us a Reminder (this Qur’an).”* (Surah Taha: 99)

These verses and many others affirm that studying the stories of the Prophets is a crucial and significant part of Islam, and part of the sacred knowledge that guided the life of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his followers. Their stories are vital pieces of knowledge, essential to guidance, indispensable until the Day of Judgment.

Finally, when one studies the seerah, he or she is observing the command of Allah, who said:

*“Indeed in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much.”* (Surah al-Ahzab: 21)

and also said:

*“Similarly We have sent among you a Messenger of your own, reciting to you Our Verses and sanctifying you, and teaching you the Book and wisdom, and teaching you that which you used not to know.”* (Surah al-Baqarah: 151)

Following the Prophet’s example is not possible without first learning his sunnah





and seerah. He ﷺ is the role model for all believers from all walks of life.

He is the role model for those who strive in the path of Allah, spreading Islam diligently with hard work, sincerity, compassion, and lofty aspirations for their fellow man.

He is the role model for husbands and wives, teaching them how to treat one another with mercy, compassion, and true love.

He is the role model for leaders, showing them how to always work for the greater good of those under their command, while dealing with them mercifully and respectfully: with trust, honor, and sincerity.

He is the role model for neighbors, teaching them the proper way to treat one another: by being kind, giving gifts, and protecting each other's rights.

He is the role model for everyone trying to fix society's ills. He teaches them how to be patient and goal-oriented, how to persevere and prioritize, how to truly care for the betterment of others.

He is the role model for parents, showing them how to raise and teach children with sympathy and love.

He is a role model for those dealing with poverty, showing them how to have patience and remain true, even in the face of hunger and difficulty.

He is a role model for the rich, teaching them to be humble and charitable at all times, trustworthy and altruistic, modest and resourceful.

He is a role model for those afflicted with illness, showing them how to be patient, how to expect the best from their Lord, and pray for recovery while seeking treatment within the boundaries of what is permissible.

In other words, he is a role model for everyone who believes in Allah and the Last Day, and one cannot properly follow a role model without first learning about him.



## To truly love the Prophet ﷺ, one must study his Seerah

A Muslim's love for Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is such that it takes precedence over one's love for his or her own self. A Muslim's love for the Prophet ﷺ stems from his beautiful manners and virtuous actions. It is the love that one offers to someone who has given him so much that he is bursting with praise and veneration. How could one not love the Prophet ﷺ after all he gave to the Muslims and to all of mankind? He carried the Message of guidance from Allah and delivered it to us. Our love for him is the highest level of love that one can feel for another human being, for he is the one person who has had the most influence in our lives. Indeed, our love for him only fulfills part of his rights upon us. We prefer him over our own selves and over anyone else. His commands and advice are far superior to any other human's, and we happily follow him, for Allah the Exalted said:

*“And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad) gives you, take it, and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain from it.”* (Surah al-Hashr: 7)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

*“By Allah, none of you truly believe until I am dearer to him than his father, his child, and all the people.”<sup>1</sup>*

Now, of course the Prophet ﷺ did not say this out of his own accord, simply because he wished to be loved by all. This is a statement of fact, something for us to reflect upon. One's faith is not yet complete until his love for the Messenger who came with Allah's guidance surpasses his love for any other person.

Allah the Exalted said:

*“And thus We have sent to you (O Muhammad) an Inspiration, and a Mercy of Our Command. You knew not what is the Book, nor what is Faith, but We have made it (this Qur'an) a light wherewith We guide whosoever of Our slaves We will. And verily, you (O Muhammad) are*

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1. Bukhari:1/9

*indeed guiding (mankind) to the Straight Path. The Path of Allah, to Whom belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. Verily, all the matters at the end go to Allah (for decision).”* (Surah ash-Shura: 52-53)

Regarding the importance of studying the history of the Prophets, Allah the Exalted said:

*“Indeed in their stories, there is a lesson for men of understanding. It (the Qur’an) is not a forged statement but a confirmation of the Allah’s existing Books [the Torah, the Gospel and other Scriptures of Allah] and a detailed explanation of everything and a guide and a Mercy for the people who believe.”* (Surah Yusuf: 111)

When we study the seerah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, we also learn about the different nations and systems that existed before Islam and ruled the world at the time – political, ideological, religious, and social. When we read about these systems in comparison to Islam, it becomes abundantly clear that Islam came as a blessing and a mercy for the lives of mankind. `Umar ؓ said: “He who does not know jahiliyyah<sup>1</sup> cannot truly know Islam.”

It is important to note that the seerah of the Prophet ﷺ has been recorded with a level of authentication that was not done for any other individual throughout history. When we study the seerah, we are learning about true events, not embellished stories or even fabrications as it often happens with historical personalities to the extent that their stories become something of legend.

The arrival of a final Prophet, Muhammad, was foretold in previous nations. For example, Prophet `Isa ؑ informed his people, as Allah the Exalted tells us:

*“And (remember) when `Eesa, son of Maryam, said: “O Children of Israel! I am the Messenger of Allah unto you confirming the Torah [which came] before me, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmed. But when he (Ahmed i.e. Muhammad) came to them with clear proofs, they said: “This is plain magic.””* (Surah as-Saff: 6)

Similarly, it was revealed during Prophet Musa’s ؑ time:

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1. Jahiliyyah, lit. ‘ignorance,’ is an Arabic term referring to the period before Islam came to Arabia. The Arabs worshipped various stone idols and other gods, and had many societal ills. In a more general sense, jahiliyyah may also refer to any culture where Islam is not present, and many societal ills exist. (Translator)

*“Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e. Muhammad) whom they find written with them in the Torah and the Injeel (Gospel) - he enjoins upon them what is right and forbids them what is wrong and makes lawful for them the good things and prohibits for them the evil. He releases them from their heavy burdens (of Allah’s Covenant), and from the fetters (bindings) that were upon them. So those who believe in him (Muhammad), honour him, help him, and follow the light (the Qur’an) which has been sent down with him. It is they who will be successful.”* (Surah al-A`raf: 157).

The news of Muhammad ﷺ and even some details about him were foretold centuries before his birth. The scholars of Bani Isra’eel were awaiting his arrival. To this day, there remains some mention of a ‘final prophet’ in some Christian books, and the descriptions therein clearly point to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.<sup>1</sup>

By studying the seerah, we become more acquainted with the Book of Allah, for it was revealed over time to the Prophet ﷺ. As we learn about his life, we learn about the events surrounding the revelation of different verses and chapters. Furthermore, some of the chapter titles in the Noble Qur’an are closely related to events in the seerah, such as al-Anfal, at-Tawbah, al-Isra’, Taha, al-Ahzab, ash-Sharh, and many others. Most chapters in the Qur’an also include verses that are tied to various events in the seerah.

It thus becomes apparent that studying the seerah helps a Muslim contextualize the verses of the Book of Allah and become aware of which events resulted in the revelation of specific verses or chapters. It certainly leaves a unique impression – one feels as if he is experiencing it with the Prophet ﷺ as the Qur’an is being revealed to him, as he and his Companions face immense challenges in the path of Allah. One who reads the seerah sees how Allah strengthened their faith as they witnessed events come to pass that had been prophesized in the Qur’an a short while prior.

By studying the seerah, we learn about the Companions of Prophet Muhammad – may Allah be pleased with them all. We see what led to their acceptance of Islam, the journey they took, how they reacted to the obstacles they faced along the way, and how they grew into the first generation of this Islamic Ummah. Those amongst the Companions who accepted Islam early on were able

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1. We will delve into this topic more in depth later in this book.

to spend that much more time with the Prophet ﷺ and thus attained a higher rank. Allah the Exalted says: “...Not equal among you are those who spent and fought before the conquering (of Makkah) (with those among you who did so later). Such are higher in degree than those who spent and fought afterwards. But to all, Allah has promised the best (reward). And Allah is All-Aware of what you do.” (Surah al-Hadid: 10) Imam al-Bukhari, one of the great scholars of Islam, details the ranks of the Companions in his book, Sahih al-Bukhari.<sup>1</sup>

Over a thousand years before the birth of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, when Prophet Musa ؑ told Bani Isra'eel about the Prophet that will one day come, he also informed them about the companions that will be with him, as is mentioned in the Qur'an:

*“...Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e., Muhammad)...”* (Surah al-A'raf: 157)

These Companions were the students of Muhammad ﷺ. Amongst them were the four Rightly-guided Caliphs, countless wise leaders, governors, heroes, and scholars who lead the world and spread justice, monotheism, and mercy to mankind.

By studying the seerah, we learn about the virtues that Allah granted His Messenger ﷺ as a blessing for him, for it is a great honor from Allah that He made Muhammad a mercy for mankind. Allah the Exalted said:

*“And We have not sent you (O Muhammad) except as a mercy for all creatures.”* (Surah al-Anbiya': 107).

He ﷺ was the greatest of mankind, chosen by Allah who elevated him above the rest:

*“He it is Who sent among the unlettered ones a Messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His Verses, purifying them, and teaching them the Book (this Quran, Islamic laws and Islamic jurisprudence) and wisdom, and verily, they had been before in manifest error.”* (al-Jumu'ah: 2).

He was the seal of the Prophets – merciful, honorable, trustworthy, and pure. His duty was to deliver the Message and he was aided in this mission with

1. Note: Sahih al-Bukhari refers to 'The Collection of Authentic (Hadiths) by al-Bukhari' and is not the actual title of the book, just a reference to its contents, but it is how it came to be widely known.

miracles and clear signs from Allah, witnessed by the people living at the time and understood by those of knowledge amongst them, and thus the mention of Muhammad spread far and wide, as per the promise of Allah the Exalted.

Allah confers His blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, His angels pray for him, and He commands the believers to do so as well:

*“Allah sends His Salat (Graces, Honours, Blessings, Mercy, etc.) on the Prophet (Muhammad) and also His angels too (ask Allah to bless and forgive him). O you who believe! Send your Salat on (ask Allah to bless) him, and (you should) greet (salute) him with the Islamic way of greeting (salutation i.e., As-Salamu ‘Alaikum).”* (Surah al-Ahzab: 56)

Allah granted him victory in this life, and forgiveness in the next:

*“Verily, We have given you (O Muhammad ﷺ) a manifest victory. That Allah may forgive you your sins of the past and the future, and complete His Favour on you, and guide you on the Straight Path.”*  
(Surah al-Fath: 1-2)

Studying the seerah serves to strengthen the believers’ resolve, for it teaches us to persevere in the face of great difficulties. It opens the doors of hope, reminding us that after hardship comes ease, and truth will always triumph over falsehood. The Deen of Allah will overcome all obstacles that wish to suppress it, and strength will return to the Ummah even if it experiences periods of weakness, for Allah will aid His Deen, His Prophet, and His Ummah until the Last Day.

The seerah is a field of knowledge in and of itself, but it is also the key to many other doors of knowledge, for through studying the seerah a Muslim will learn the manners of the Prophet ﷺ, in order to emulate him and incorporate them into his or her life. A Muslim will also learn about correct Islamic `aqeedah (creed) and its principles, fiqh (Islamic rulings), Islamic laws and its system of governance, politics in Islam (i.e., how the Prophet ﷺ interacted with various peoples at different stages of his mission).

## How to study the Seerah

When one embarks on the blessed journey of reading or studying the seerah, it is important to keep in mind that this is the life of a man chosen by Allah the Exalted, a man to whom the final Message of guidance was revealed, a man who was protected by Allah and guided to the best of manners and actions, who dedicated his life to his Lord and worshipped Him in the best way. He was a man who steered clear of polytheism and dishonorable behavior before and after receiving revelation. He was known for his sense of justice, his trustworthiness, and his compassion for others even before his mission of Islam began. He kept an honest tongue, never uttering a lie, and he conducted himself with utmost dignity and respect for himself and others. He grew under the care of Allah the Exalted, who guided him to the best actions and demeanor.

Therefore, when one studies the seerah, one should observe proper respect for the Prophet ﷺ when speaking about his life and actions. One should also keep in mind what Allah the Exalted informed us in the Qur'an, and what the Prophet ﷺ said about himself, i.e., that he is a servant and messenger of Allah, and he is a human being like any other, but he is the best among mankind.

The Prophet ﷺ said:

*“I am the leader of the children of Adam on the Day of Resurrection, and I do not say this to boast. I will be holding the banner of praise, and I do not say this to boast. All the Prophets, including Adam, will be under my banner, and I will be the first one for whom the earth will open.”<sup>1</sup>*

There is no doubt that he is the greatest of all mankind, however he ﷺ insisted on clarifying that he is a slave from the slaves of Allah the Exalted, as is mentioned in many verses in the Qur'an, such as:

*“Glorified be He (Allah) Who took His slave (Muhammad) for a journey by night from al-Masjid-al-Haram (at Makkah) to the farthest mosque (in Jerusalem)...” (Surah al-Isra': 1)*

1. Tirmidhi:3615. Ibn Kathir:2/1085.

In this instance—the story of al-Isra’ wal-Mi`raj<sup>1</sup>—Allah the Wise specifically referred to the Prophet ﷺ as `abd, i.e., slave. This prevents people in later generations from following in the footsteps of the Christians and attributing supernatural abilities to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ himself, as the Christians did with Prophet `Eesa ﷺ. Allah mentions the miracle that He bestowed upon Prophet Muhammad ﷺ by taking him on a journey, and had He used the word rasool (messenger) or nabi (prophet), the meaning would have been understood. However, He used `abd to reaffirm that this miracle was not through any supernatural power of the Prophet ﷺ himself, rather it was conferred upon him by his Lord.

It is important to note that the title of `abd is an honor for the Prophet ﷺ and indeed for all of mankind. Allah the Exalted instructs the Prophet ﷺ: “Say (O Muhammad):

*“I am only a man like you. It has been inspired to me that your God is One God. So whoever hopes for the Meeting with his Lord, let him work righteousness and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord.”* (Surah al-Kahf: 110)

Indeed, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was but a slave and servant of His, but that does not detract from his status as the greatest of the slaves of Allah, the best of mankind. No Muslim prefers anyone to the Prophet ﷺ, be it their ancestors, their children, or anyone else. Rather, it is a thing of virtue to be a humble servant of the Lord, and indeed, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said so about himself.

The Mother of the Believers, `A`ishah ؓ, once saw him praying at night, standing for hours until the skin on his feet was cracking. She asked him why he did so, and he said: “Should I not be a grateful slave?”<sup>2</sup> He did not say ‘a grateful prophet’ or ‘grateful messenger,’ rather he saw that it was a thing of honor to be a slave of Allah, as per Allah’s command in the Qur’an:

*“Nay! But worship Allah (Alone and none else), and be among the grateful.”* (Surah az-Zumar: 66)

Allah further honored Prophet Muhammad ﷺ by choosing him to be the recipient of the Final Message. He is the leader of mankind, sent to show us the correct path to worshipping Allah the Exalted alone without partners. He ﷺ led by example, acting upon the commandments of Allah before telling others to do so.

He ﷺ lived like any other man – he ate, slept, married, bought and sold at

1. We will discuss it in further detail a bit later.  
2. Bukhari, Muslim: 2820



the marketplace, befriended some people and avoided associating with others, and all this is included in being a slave of Allah. Allah the Exalted said: “Say (O Muhammad):

*“Verily, my Salah (prayer), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists).”*  
(Surah al-An`am: 162)

When studying the seerah, it is important to be aware of several things:

- A. The socio-economic, and environmental factors that shaped the era in which the Prophet ﷺ was born. This will help the reader properly understand the difficulties that the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions faced in their mission. For example, the geographical challenges included the intensely hot desert climate, and limited resources (agriculture, livestock, people, etc.). Society was dominated by the Arabian tribal system, rife with pagan rituals and rigid cultural traditions.
- B. The different stages that the Prophet’s mission went through, which we will discuss in further detail later in the book.
- C. Studying the seerah goes hand-in-hand with studying the Qur’an, and many events in the seerah are, themselves, the circumstances or causes of the revelation of particular verses. If needed, the reader can consult the books of tafseer for further details about the verses mentioned in this book.
- D. When reading the seerah, one should reflect on the similarities or differences between the events that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ experienced against what we experience today. Notice that history repeats itself, for Allah, the Wise, has made certain laws that recur in civilization throughout history.
- E. Keep in mind that you are reading about the most important person in history, one chosen by Allah to be the perfect example to follow for mankind until the Last Day.

The seerah has been recorded and preserved throughout the generations, certain parts of it in great detail. Muslim scholars and historians worked meticulously for hundreds of years to compile the seerah, checking the authenticity of narrations and weeding out fabrications, keeping in mind the hadith of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ: “Whoever lies about me intentionally, let him take his seat in the Fire.”<sup>1</sup> Many scholars consider seerah to be a science in-and-of-itself, as a branch of the study of the Sunnah.

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1. Bukhari 1/36, Muslim

## Attributes of the Seerah

There is no doubt that the seerah is a very important subject, for it chronicles the life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the one chosen by the Lord of creation. It includes events that are recorded in the Qur'an and will be recited by millions of Muslims until the Last Day. Some of the attributes of the seerah are:

- It recounts the life of the most important man to walk this earth, chosen by Allah to lead the last generations of mankind, an example for all until the day all return to Allah.
- Many events in the seerah are corroborated by the Qur'an itself, as are details about Prophet Muhammad's character and disposition.
- It is the most comprehensive and detailed biography of a prophet. No other such biographies exist, not even for regular historical figures. This is because the Companions and their students were meticulous in learning whatever they could from Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, kept records of what they learned, and passed it down to the next generation.
- It is the most rigorously-authenticated biography in history. The Noble Prophet ﷺ himself was honest and trustworthy, as were his Companions who witnessed the events of the seerah firsthand. The narrations were recorded and passed down via the science of hadith, which grades the authenticity of each narration based on a number of factors.
- It details of the Prophet's life with regards to his ritual worship and relationship with Allah, his worldly affairs, his politics, expeditions, and battles, his Companions, and other nations and societies.
- The geographical locations and landmarks found in different events in the seerah are well known and still around today.
- It is full of wisdom and lessons that a Muslim or non-Muslim can benefit from immensely, regardless of age, profession, or social status, to achieve success and happiness in this life and the next.
- Allah's protection of the Prophet ﷺ throughout his life is a miracle in itself, and throughout the seerah, one can watch this miracle unfold from the

blessed birth of the Prophet ﷺ to the victory of Allah and His promise being fulfilled.

- The seerah is studied by scholars of different fields, including hadith and fiqh.
- Throughout the seerah, we witness the laws of Allah with regards to His creation, and the victory of Allah come to pass. Allah the Exalted said: *“Verily, We will indeed make victorious Our Messengers and those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah Islamic Monotheism) in this world’s life and on the Day when the witnesses will stand forth (i.e. Day of Resurrection).”* (Surah Ghafir: 51)
- The seerah details all aspects of the Prophet’s life and relates it to Islam and Allah’s laws. “Say (O Muhammad): *“Verily, my Salat (prayer), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists).”* (Surah al-An`am: 162)
- The seerah is an account of a universally important time in mankind’s history, for it – without exaggeration – changed the course of history. Islam’s impact on the world began with the Prophet’s mission and continues to this day as a guiding light, removing people from the darkness of shirk to the light of worshipping Allah alone.
- Reading seerah allows a person to spend time with the Prophet ﷺ, and this will undoubtedly have a positive effect on one’s heart and character, as well as increase the love of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in his or her heart.
- The role the Companions ؓ played in the Prophetic mission is one of sacrifice, loyalty, and dedication to Allah and His cause, as well as immense love for His Prophet ﷺ. It is therefore incumbent to defend their honor and avoid disparaging them, for they were friends of the Prophet ﷺ, and even his family through blood and marriage, such as Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman, and `Ali, the Mothers of the Believers, and the rest of the Prophet’s noble family and companions – Allah is pleased with them and they with Him.
- From the perspective of the story itself, the seerah is a beautiful story of the triumph of good over evil.
- The seerah is one of the ways to truly understand the Qur’an properly because it familiarizes the reader with many of the events and circumstances that are mentioned in the Qur’an.

# Pre-Islamic Arabia

Prophet Muhammad's mission was like a lamp that shone its light far and wide, overcoming darkness and spreading faith, truth, justice, and knowledge to the people. For this reason, Pre-Islamic Arabia is known as the period of jahiliyyah, i.e., ignorance. Islam is a blessing for all of mankind, but since it began in Arabia, it played quite a revolutionary role in the advancement of the region and people. To really understand this, we must look at Pre-Islamic Arabian society from all angles – for Islam is not simply a religion of ritual acts of worship, rather it is a complete way of life: manners, social customs, and interaction with others are all part of Islam.

Because the bulk of the seerah takes place in the Arabian Peninsula, it makes sense to familiarize ourselves with the environment that Islam was first introduced to. Geographically, the Arabs were surrounded by ocean from three sides: east, west, and south. In the center of the peninsula lies a huge desert, with very limited water and resources, and small pockets of civilization scattered throughout its vast land, usually built around oases. The southernmost region of the peninsula is more arable and has a relatively moderate climate surrounded by mountains, in present-day Yemen and Oman.

## Religion

Most of the Arabs were polytheists, i.e., they believed in more than one god. They were pagans, for they worshipped various idols in different well-known religious centers throughout Arabia, often travelling to these centers to perform various rituals and offer sacrifices. They would supplicate to their idols – each tribe or region according to their own tradition – asking them for strength and blessings in life. No region of Arabia was free of idol-worship, not even Makkah, the original home of monotheism.

Some Jewish tribes lived in Arabia, mainly in a region that was called Yathrib, in present-day Madinah. There were also some Jews living in Khaybar, Tayma, Fadak, and Wadi al-Qura. Together, they formed a relatively sizable minority in Arabia.

Another minority living in Arabia at the time were people known as Mawali. They were non-Arabs who, for one reason or another, settled mainly in the main cities of Arabia.

Christianity was present in some Arab tribes, concentrated mostly in the region of Najran<sup>1</sup>. Although it is one of the three Abrahamic faiths, and has monotheistic origins, it had been changed over time, to the extent that it was polytheistic. Not unlike other Christians throughout the world, the Arab Christians were divided into sects. Some worshipped Jesus the son of Mary, considering him to be God, while others believed he was the son of God. They also sanctified their clergymen and considered their commands and prohibitions to be law, which, as you can imagine, opened the door to many distortions and reinterpretations over the centuries.

The Arab Christians were known for having more knowledge and culture than the rest of the Arab groups, for they were in constant contact with Levantine Arabs, Iraqis, and Europeans, and this exchange of culture had a positive effect on them.

We will see each of these groups and their interaction with the Muslims as we traverse the story of the seerah in the coming chapters.

## Society

Arab society was somewhat paradoxical in the sense that it was heavily influenced by religion, yet drinking alcohol, gambling, and dealing in usury were all deeply intertwined in the culture. Fornication was common, although it was considered beneath a free woman to engage in it. Arabs treated their women unfairly; they much preferred to have sons, and would deny their daughters a share of inheritance. Men could marry as many women as they liked, with no limit to how many wives one can have at a time. Rarely, women had multiple husbands as well. In some traditions, a son would inherit his father's wife upon his death, and it was not prohibited for a man to be married to two sisters or relatives.<sup>2</sup>

There were, of course, some good aspects of Arab culture before Islam, such as their insistence on honoring guests, their bravery, and their skill in horsemanship. Arabs were also known for their wit and intellect, and their love of freedom.<sup>3</sup>

1 Muhammad bin Auz Al-Utaibi Najran in the era of the Prophet and Rightly Guided Caliphs

2 Jawad Ali, Al-Mufazzal fee Tareekh al-Arab:38

3 Balogh al- Irab:2/4

The Arabic language is very beautiful and poetic, and indeed Arab societies – with their differing dialects – celebrated their poets and eloquent speakers.<sup>1</sup> It is from this angle that the miraculous eloquence of the Qur'an really shines. The best speakers in all the different tribes could not ignore the fact that the language used in the Qur'an was not something a regular person could produce. Even though Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was an eloquent speaker himself, it was clear that the Qur'an was not his words.

Allah challenges the disbelievers to produce something like the Qur'an:

*“Or they say, “He (Prophet Muhammad) forged it (the Qur'an).” Say: “Bring you then ten forged chapters like unto it, and call whomsoever you can, other than Allah (to your help), if you speak the truth!” (Surah Hud: 13).*

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1 Shauqi Zaif, Al-Adabul-Arabi:123

## Religion Outside of Arabia

Staying relevant to the seerah, we will focus on the religions that dominated the regions closest to Arabia. In general, Allah tells us the state of the people in the times of jahiliyyah in the following verse

*“Evil has appeared on land and sea because of what the hands of men have earned (by oppression and evil deeds, etc.), that Allah may make them taste a part of that which they have done, in order that they may return (by repenting to Allah, and begging His Pardon).”* (Surah ar-Rum: 41).

As we mentioned before, religion was the biggest influence in the daily lives of people in that era. We will begin by discussing the two Abrahamic religions, Judaism and Christianity. They were both known for their adherence to a heavenly Scripture, their veneration of knowledge, and their long history and culture.

### Judaism

It started as the religion of those from the progeny of Ya`qub (i.e. Isra`eel) who followed Musa ﷺ, to whom the Torah was revealed. They were upon the Truth from Allah, and He sent them many prophets at different times. Over time, the followers of Judaism became corrupted, for they altered the Torah and began to murder the Prophets that were sent to them. They went against the advice of their earlier Prophets and disrespected their Lord. They sanctified their clergymen and followed their commands even when they went against the commands of Allah.

They were closer to the Truth than the idol-worshippers, but they incurred the anger of Allah due to their disrespectful ways. In Islam, those who practice Judaism are known as People of the Book because they follow the Torah and their religion has heavenly origins.

The Jews in Pre-Islamic Arabia claimed that they were awaiting the arrival of the Prophet of the final days, so they can follow him in guidance.

## Christianity

It is the religion of those who profess to follow Prophet `Eesa ﷺ. It is the most common religion in the world today, but they are divided into many sects. Before Islam, Christianity was the dominant religion in the Levant, Iraq, Egypt, Ethiopia, and Eastern and Southern Europe. It was the official religion of the Roman Empire.

The Roman involvement in Christianity inserted a lot of polytheistic beliefs and traditions into the religion, which started in approximately the fourth century in the Gregorian calendar, under the rule of Constantine the Great. The monotheism of Christianity was overwritten, merged with other beliefs, especially the idea that the Messiah (i.e., Jesus, or Prophet `Eesa) was God. It escalated to the extent that whoever did not worship Jesus was considered outside of the faith according to the official views of the Church.

This version of Christianity was supported militarily and politically by the Roman Empire and their client states such as the Ghassanids and the Kingdom of Abyssinia. The various sects of Christians differ in the details of their religion, including the reality of the Messiah. Some sects declare others to be disbelievers, and they have fought each other at different points in history, such as the Roman Christians fighting the Egyptian Christians and so on.

Most of the Christians in Pre-Islamic Arabia were Jacobites. The other prominent sect was Nestorianism, to which some of the Arabs – particularly in Iraq – and Persians ascribed. They were different than their European counterparts. In brief, the Christians in the era that immediately predated Islam had mostly embraced polytheism and strayed away from the worship of Allah alone without any partners.<sup>1</sup>

## Zoroastrianism

The religion of Zoroastrianism existed in various parts of the world. It incorporates elements of paganism, focusing on the divinity or sanctity of natural elements. The Zoroastrians had their own temples of worship throughout Persia, for it was the official religion of the Persian Empire. The religion spread everywhere that the empire did, even reaching some of the Arab lands, Bahrain in particular. Some Persians had settled in Bahrain and their presence had a clear effect on the locals.<sup>2</sup>

1 Al-Mawsoah Al-Muyassarah:502,503

2 Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, As-Seerah:26





## Buddhism

Buddhism is a religion that also incorporates elements of polytheism, including idols that represent religious figures or gods. It was and continues to be prominent in India, China, and southeast Asia.

Allah the Exalted said:

*“Had there been therein (in the heavens and the earth) gods besides Allah, then verily both would have been ruined. Glorified be Allah, the Lord of the Throne, (High is He) above what they attribute to Him!”*  
(Surah al-Anbiya’: 22)

. Hinduism, which similarly includes the worship multiple gods, is also prominent in the same region.<sup>1</sup>

Even though polytheism and idol-worship was rampant in the entire Arabian peninsula, the Arabs did not have much of a mythology for their gods like other cultures did. They did not have an elaborate written record of the gods’ histories and abilities as you see in other pagan traditions. It appears that they simply worshipped these idols and false-gods out of blind following of their forefathers, accepting the claim that it would bring them closer to Allah.

Allah the Exalted said: “Surely, the religion (i.e. the worship and the obedience) is for Allah only. And those who take Auliya’ (protectors and helpers) besides Him (say):

*“We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allah.” Verily, Allah will judge between them concerning that wherein they differ. Truly, Allah guides not him who is a liar, and a disbeliever.”* (Surah az-Zumar: 3)

They also rejected the concept of a resurrection. Allah the Exalted says: “And they say:

*“There is nothing but our life of this world, we die and we live and nothing destroys us except time. And they have no knowledge of it, they only conjecture.”* (Surah al-Jathiyah: 24)



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1 Abdul-Hasan An-Nadwi As-Seerah:27, Mahdi Rizq-ul-Allah, As-Seerah:51



# Politics in Pre-Islamic Arabia

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was sent primarily to call people towards tawhid, i.e., the worship of Allah alone without partners. Part of his mission was to create a community and eventually a nation that would be based around the worship of Allah and following His commands. In order for us to properly understand what this new nation, or Ummah, was going to replace, it is important that we have an idea about the political climate in Arabia before Islam.

## The Political System

There was no real, concrete system of governance in the central regions of the Arabian Peninsula in the generations before Islam. The Arabs of the region were not, as a whole, under the rule of a king or government, nor did they consider themselves one nation, or take particular interest in codifying their rule of law.

Various kingdoms existed, however, in Yemen and elsewhere. Banu Hanifah, in northern Arabia, were at one point considered a kingdom, and the Prophet ﷺ once wrote a letter to their king, Hautha bin `Ali al-Hanafi. Similarly, another kingdom was known to have existed in Bahrain, although it was likely a client state of the Persian Empire. The Prophet ﷺ also corresponded with their king, al-Munthir bin Sawa al-`Abdi, who accepted Islam, as did many of his constituents. As for central Arabia, the region that includes Makkah and Madinah, they ruled mostly by tribal laws and customs.

The Ghassanids were a Christian Arab kingdom in the Levant, a client state of the Romans. They later faced the Muslims in several notable battles, including Yarmuk.

To the south, in Yemen, kingship was the norm. However, in the time just before the Prophetic mission, there was some involvement in the politics of the region from the Romans and even the Persians.

Neighboring Arabia was Persia, or the great Persian Empire. It was several times more advanced than the entirety of Arabia, although they were facing

much internal political turmoil as the Prophetic mission began.

To the north was the Roman Empire, which ruled over the Levant, Egypt, Northern Africa, and parts of Europe. Its capital was Constantinople, and the official religion was Christianity. They are referred to in the Qur'an in the following verse:

*“Alif-Lam-Mim. The Romans have been defeated In the nearer land,  
and they, after their defeat, will be victorious.”* (Surah ar-Rum: 1-3)

They, along with the Persians, were far more advanced than their Arabian neighbors could hope to become, without something unifying them and showing them the path out of their cycle of backwardness.<sup>1</sup>

## The Bedouins

The Arabs were, for the most part, divided into tribes, which could be further broken down into sub-tribes, tied together by blood. Each tribe typically governed themselves, with the eldest men in the tribe assuming the roles of leadership and mediation. They did not follow any particular political methodology; when a situation arose, the leaders would simply congregate and work out a solution together, granting more weight to the opinion of the eldest and those of higher status.

In the event of an attack from an outside enemy – usually another Arab tribe, as was quite common in the times of jahiliyyah – the entire tribe would band together to defend their people and homeland. Even during peacetime, they would train in horse-riding and weaponry to be ready to defend or attack with their tribes when called upon.

There were attempts by some tribes to turn their region into a kingdom, by appointing a king from their own men, but the attempts proved unsuccessful for one reason or another.<sup>2</sup>

## Makkah and Madinah

Makkah was considered a sacred city even before Islam; people flocked there from all over Arabia to perform their own version of Hajj and other rituals.

The inhabitants of Makkah were several tribes, the most important of whom were Quraish. Makkans were skilled tradesmen who traveled to different parts of Arabia for trade, including Yemen, Iraq, and even reaching the Levant. This is

1 Fatooh Al-Buldan:89,90

2 Muhadhrat fee Tareekh Al-Arab:1/158 As-Subhi As-Salih An-Nuzumul- Islamiah:50

mentioned in the Qur'an:

*“For the accustomed security of Quraish, their protection during their trading caravans in the winter and the summer...”* (Surah Quraish: 1-2)

Their extensive travel experience, combined with their interaction with many different people in Makkah, granted them a wealth of cultural exchange which greatly benefited them. Makkah was generally under tribal rule, and the nobles and leaders would gather regularly to solve problems together, usually at the Ka'bah. Besides this they did not have much of a structure of governing like some of their neighbors to the north or south, and they rejected the notion of being under the rule of kingship. Perhaps this aversion to a structured rule of law was one of the factors that allowed oppression to become a norm in their society.<sup>1</sup>

As for the region known today as Madinah, it was different in certain ways. Its inhabitants were primarily two Arab pagan tribes, as well as a few Jewish tribes, and there was plenty of conflict and tension between all parties. The two pagan tribes would go to war every so often, with plenty of encouragement from their neighbors, who benefited from their quarrels.

Al-Aws and al-Khazraj, the two pagan tribes, were ruled by tribalism, not unlike their Makkan counterparts. This type of mentality was very pervasive and, as you can imagine, not too conducive to a harmonious society. It also made it quite easy for their Jewish neighbors to take advantage of them and keep them busy with one another. Thus, they lived without any central government or social structure that would allow them to advance. The Jewish tribes in the region, however, were more organized and had some level of a structured society.<sup>2</sup>

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1 Ibn Hisham As-Seerah:1/244, Mahmood Shakir As-Seerah:33

2 Dr. Muhammad Ammarah, Al-Islam wa Falsafah-al-Hukm: 50

# Awaiting the Arrival of the Prophet

Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام and his children believed in only one God. He supplicated to Allah the Exalted, asking Him to guide his progeny to faith and worship, and he also prayed for the inhabitants of the Sacred House (i.e., the Ka`bah). His supplication is recorded in the Qur`an:

*“Our Lord! Send amongst them a Messenger of their own, who shall recite unto them Your Verses and instruct them in the Book (this Qur`an) and wisdom, and sanctify them. Verily! You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.”* (Surah al-Baqarah: 129)

## The Jews

The Jews who settled in Madinah and Khaybar were awaiting the arrival of the Final Messenger, in accordance with the prophecies of their Scripture,<sup>1</sup> but when it became clear that it was Muhammad ﷺ, they rejected him. This is mentioned in the following verse:

*“And when there came to them (the Jews), a Book from Allah confirming what is with them [the Torah and the Gospel], although aforesome they had invoked Allah (for coming of the Prophet) in order to gain victory over those who disbelieved, then when there came to them that which they had recognized, they disbelieved in it. So let the Curse of Allah be on the disbelievers.”* (Surah al-Baqarah: 89)

Several narrations indicate that many Jews and their scholars recognized the signs in Prophet Muhammad ﷺ based on his description in their Scripture. Allah the Exalted said:

*“Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e., Muhammad) whom they find written with them in the Torah and the Gospel...”* (Surah al-A`raf: 157)

In another verse:

*“Those to whom We gave the Scripture (Jews and Christians) recognize him as they recognize their sons. But verily, a party of them conceal*

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Hisham, As-Seerah:1/143

*the truth while they know it.”* (Surah al-Baqarah: 146)

Many of those who rejected and even obstructed Prophet Muhammad ﷺ were certain that he was a prophet. Huyayy bin Akhtab and several other prominent Jewish leaders in Madinah knew that he was sent from Allah but still chose to be his enemy.

Some of the texts in the Torah that indicate the prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ and his emergence in Makkah still exist today. One such verse is the following:

*“Blessed in the man whose strength is in thee in whose Heart are:the says of then passing through the valley of (Baca) make it well”<sup>1</sup>*

*“And as for Ismael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him , and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princess shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.”<sup>2</sup>*

There are still some indications that remain in the verses of the Old Testament referencing the House of Allah in Makkah and the advent of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. For example:

*“Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage. As they pass through the Valley of Baka, they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools”* (Pslams 84: 5-6)

And:

*“And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation.”* (Genesis 17:20)

Also:

*“The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him.”* (Deuteronomy 18:15)

As well as:

*“I will shake all nations, and what is desired by all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory,” says the Lord Almighty. ‘The silver is mine and the gold is mine,’ declares the Lord Almighty. ‘The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,’ says the Lord Almighty. ‘And in this place I will grant peace,’ declares the Lord Almighty.”* (Haggai 9:7-9)

1 Psalms 89-5-76)

2 Genesis 12:20) Abul Al-Hasan Nadwi, As-Seerah:42, Jewish Encyclopedia: 9/589

## The Christians

Christianity was the dominant religion in Egypt, the Levant, and the Roman empire. Its presence in the Arabian Peninsula was mostly limited to the northern regions, and in Najran, which was the stronghold of Christianity in Arabia.

The Qur'an tells us that Prophet `Eesa ﷺ informed his followers about the eventual arrival of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and commanded them to follow him. Allah the Exalted said:

*“And (remember) when `Eesa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), said: “O Children of Israel! I am the Messenger of Allah unto you confirming the Torah which came before me, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmed. But when he (Ahmed i.e., Muhammad) came to them with clear proofs, they said: “This is plain magic.”” (Surah as-Saff: 6)*

An authentic narration collected by Bukhari details the story of the great Companion, Salman al-Farisi ؓ. While living in the Levant, he was informed by a Christian scholar that the time for the arrival of the Last Prophet had come, and that if he were to meet him he should follow him. The story continues with Salman ؓ being enslaved, serving a Jewish man living in Yathrib (i.e., present-day Madinah). While there, he was able to hear the Prophet ﷺ speak, and he witnessed the sign of prophethood that the Christian scholars told him about, and this led to him accepting Islam and following Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

In the present day, many Christians accept Islam every year. Some of those who have embraced Islam in our era have dedicated time to research what was mentioned about Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in Christian scripture and books. One such person is Ibrahim Khalil Ahmed, who used to be a Christian minister in Egypt before embracing Islam. He wrote a book in Arabic called “Muhammad in the Torah and the Gospel,” in which he mainly references the Bible, both the Old and New Testament. He wrote: “The Bible contains some verses that very clearly point to the ‘Unlettered Messenger’ and his mission.”<sup>1</sup>

Note that there are verses in the Qur'an that tell us about those amongst the Jews and Christians who recognize Prophet Muhammad ﷺ due to the signs indicated in their respective Scriptures. One such verse is the following:

*“Those to whom We gave the Scripture (Jews and Christians) recognize him (Muhammad) as they recognize their sons. But verily, a party of*

1. Ahmed, I. K. *Muhammad in the Torah and the Gospel*, P:30 Mahdi Rizq-ul-Allah As-Seerah:1/132

*them conceal the truth while they know it.*” (Surah al-Baqarah: 146)

David Benjamin Keldani was a Catholic priest who converted to Islam by the grace of Allah, and adopted the name `Abd al-Ahad Dawud. He wrote a similar book titled “Muhammad in the Bible.”

A number of authors also wrote about the same topic, including the late Ahmed Deedat, a well-known South African preacher, who wrote the book “What the Bible Says About Muhammad.” To date, it has been printed millions of times in English and Arabic, and read around the world.

Some verses from the Bible that indicate the arrival of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ:

All these verses point to the advent of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, who will be of the descendants of Ismael عليه السلام, not Isaac as some of the Jews fabricated and altered in their books.

Likewise, it is narrated in the Gospel:

“Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.” (Matthew 21:42-44)

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “The similitude of me and the other prophets before me is that of a man who has built a house nicely and beautifully, except for one brick in a corner. The people go about the house and marvel at its beauty, but say: ‘Would that this brick be put in its place!’ I am that brick, and I am the last of the Prophets.”<sup>1</sup>

Strangely, the Bible commentary that I researched did not speak about the person that is mentioned in the verse. Instead, the author simply spoke about the death of Christ and how it was for the sins of mankind.<sup>2</sup>

According to my research, the original word used in the Bible was ‘Periglytos,’ i.e., one who is praised or praiseworthy (which translates to ‘Muhammad’ or ‘Ahmad’ in Arabic). However, it was intentionally changed to ‘Paraclete’ i.e., one who consoles, in order to misdirect people from the obvious reference to

1. Bukhari, chapter:18

2. The author references an Arabic Bible commentary titled ‘at-Tafsir at-Tatbiqi lil-Kitab al-Muqaddas.’



Prophet Muhammad ﷺ which would lead them to the truth.<sup>1</sup>

Another verse in the Bible states: “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.”<sup>2</sup> Perhaps this is similar to what Allah the Exalted said in the Qur’an:

*“Nor does he speak of (his own) desire. It is only an Inspiration that is inspired.”* (Surah an-Najm: 3-4)

Other Bible verses foretell the coming of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, such as:

There are verses in the Gospel which correspond to the Hadith regarding the advent of the Prophet ﷺ. For example, in the Book of John:

*“But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.”*  
(John 15:25-27)

And:

*“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.”* (John 16:13)

Allah tells us in the Qur’an that the description of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his Companions is mentioned in the Torah and Gospel, and that the Jews and Christians can recognize them:

*“Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and those who are with him are severe against disbelievers, and merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and falling down prostrate (in prayer), seeking Bounty from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure. The mark of them (i.e. of their Faith) is on their faces (foreheads) from the traces of (their) prostration (during prayers). This is their description in the Torah. But their description in the Injeel (Gospel) is like a (sown) seed which sends forth its shoot, then makes it strong, it then becomes thick, and it stands straight on its stem, delighting the sowers that He may enrage the disbelievers with them. Allah has promised those among them*

1. `Abd al-Ahad Dawud Muhammad as He mentioned in the books of Jews and Christians:23  
2. John, 16:13, English Standard Version

*who believe and do righteous good deeds, forgiveness and a mighty reward.” (Surah al-Fath: 29)*

Allah ﷻ emphasizes in the Holy Quran that the descriptions of the Prophet ﷺ and his companions were foretold in the Torah and the Gospel and were well-known to the Jews and Christians. Allah ﷻ said:

“Muhammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allah, and those who are with him are severe against disbelievers, and merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and falling down prostrate (in prayer), seeking Bounty from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure. The mark of them (i.e. of their Faith) is on their faces (foreheads) from the traces of (their) prostration (during prayers). This is their description in the Taurat (Torah). But their description in the Injeel (Gospel) is like a (sown) seed which sends forth its shoot, then makes it strong, it then becomes thick, and it stands straight on its stem, delighting the sowers that He may enrage the disbelievers with them. Allah has promised those among them who believe (i.e. all those who follow Islamic Monotheism, the religion of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ till the Day of Resurrection) and do righteous good deeds, forgiveness and a mighty reward (i.e. Paradise).” (Al-Fath, 29)

In the Book of Isaiah we see the verses:

“A prophecy against Arabia: You caravans of Dedanites, who camp in the thickets of Arabia, bring water for the thirsty; you who live in Tema, bring food for the fugitives. They flee from the sword, from the drawn sword, from the bent bow and from the heat of battle.” (Isaiah 21:13-15)

In my opinion, it seems that these verses are indicative of the Revelation to be received by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the Arab Prophet, the subsequent wars between him and the Jews, and their eventual exit from the lands of Arabia during the era of Umar ibn Al-Khattab. And Allah knows best.

The era of Umar ibn Al-Khattab, and more specifically the Muslim conquest of Jerusalem, is also prophesized in the Gospel. In the Book of Matthew, we have the verse:

“Say to Daughter Zion, ‘See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey’” (Matthew 21:5)

I believe this verse clearly describes Umar, for it is well known that he rode on a donkey to Jerusalem after its official conquest by the Muslims. As he entered, the Jewish and Christian scholars acknowledged that his description was found

in their texts, so perhaps this is one such verse.

Some scholars, such as Abdul-Ahad Dawud, have interpreted this verse to mean the Prophet's migration to Madinah as opposed to Umar's conquest of Jerusalem.

Whatever the case may be, we have perfectly clear indications in the Hadith that the Muslims would conquer the lands of the previous revelations (i.e the Jews and Christians) and this is the actualization of the verse:

*“And indeed We have written in Zabur (Psalms) [i.e. all the revealed Holy Books the Taurat (Torah), the Injeel (Gospel), the Quran] after (We have already written in) Al-Lauh Al-Mahfuz (the Book, that is in the heaven with Allah), that My righteous slaves shall inherit the land (i.e. the land of Paradise).” (Al-Anbiya, 105)*

The Zabur (Psalms) were revealed to Dawud (David) and recited among the Jews.

It is mentioned in Isaiah:

*“Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations. He will not shout or cry out or raise his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his teaching the islands will put their hope.” This is what God the Lord says—the Creator of the heavens, who stretches them out, who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it: “I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness. “I am the Lord; that is my name! I will not yield my glory to another or my praise to idols” (Isaiah 42:1-8)*

Similar words are mentioned in Matthew 12:18. Some tried to interpret the verses as pertaining to `Isa but this is obviously not the case since they do not fit the Prophet `Isa at all. Rather, they are clear indications of the advent of the

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and match his descriptions in the Quran.

For example, in Deuteronomy:

“This is the blessing that Moses the man of God pronounced on the Israelites before his death. 2 He said: “The Lord came from Sinai and dawned over them from Seir; he shone forth from Mount Paran.” (Deuteronomy 33)

The area of Paran is the Arabian Peninsula, specifically Makkah, in which revelation descended upon the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. These verses are similar to those in Surah At-Tin:

*“By the fig, and the olive, By Mount Sinai, And by this city of security (Makkah).” (At-Tin, 1-3)*

We find more indications that these verses point to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his advent in Makkah in Genesis in the story of Ibrahim and his family. The verses mention that Ibrahim left his family in the Desert of Paran and even mention the Well of Zamzam:

“The child grew and was weaned, and on the day Isaac was weaned Abraham held a great feast. 9 But Sarah saw that the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham was mocking, 10 and she said to Abraham, “Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that woman’s son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac.”

11 The matter distressed Abraham greatly because it concerned his son. 12 But God said to him, “Do not be so distressed about the boy and your slave woman. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring[a] will be reckoned. 13 I will make the son of the slave into a nation also, because he is your offspring.”

14 Early the next morning Abraham took some food and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar. He set them on her shoulders and then sent her off with the boy. She went on her way and wandered in the Desert of Beersheba.

15 When the water in the skin was gone, she put the boy under one of the bushes. 16 Then she went off and sat down about a bowshot away, for she thought, “I cannot watch the boy die.” And as she sat there, she[b] began to sob.

17 God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, “What is the matter, Hagar? Do not be afraid; God has heard the boy crying as he lies there. 18 Lift the boy up and take him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation.”

19 Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. So she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink.

20 God was with the boy as he grew up. He lived in the desert and became an archer. 21 While he was living in the Desert of Paran, his mother got a wife for him from Egypt.” (Genesis 21:8-21)

It is apparent that there have been many distortions in these verses but much truth still remains within them: the story of the Well of Zamzam in Paran (Makkah) and the description of Ismail and his mother Hagar. For example, we have the Hadith which coincides with these verses: “The Prophet ﷺ happened to pass by a group of people who were having a shooting match. (Upon seeing them,) He said, “Shoot, O sons of (Prophet) Isma’il, for your father was an archer.”<sup>1</sup>

It is a definite fact that no individual ever claimed prophethood in the region of Paran/Makkah after the time of `Isa ﷺ, for Allah protected the region from such a false claim until His true Messenger would appear. After the advent of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, false prophets attempted to copy his claim in Yemen, Najd, and Yamamah. As for Makkah, Allah protected this holy land from such blasphemy both before and after the Prophet Muhammad.

We see yet another example in Habakkuk:

“God came from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran.[b] His glory covered the heavens and his praise filled the earth. His splendor was like the sunrise; rays flashed from his hand, where his power was hidden. Plague went before him; pestilence followed his steps. He stood, and shook the earth; he looked, and made the nations tremble. The ancient mountains crumbled and the age-old hills collapsed— but he marches on forever.” (Habakkuk 3-6)

And in Matthew:

“And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come.” (Matthew 11:14)

It is most likely that many of these verses explicitly mentioned the name “Muhammad” but were distorted over time by the People of the Book. This can be found in the controversial Gospel of Barnabas, along with a view of `Isa that is more in line with his reality (i.e that he was a Messenger of Allah and never preached that he was the Son of God) and teachings generally closer to those found in Islam.

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1 Bukhari:3/227

## How modern Western thinkers view the Prophet ﷺ

It was around the 18<sup>th</sup> century when European opinion of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ became fairer and even favorable. Rudensn Maxim mentions, “With the appearance of a number of European historians during the Renaissance in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a clearer picture appeared – a picture of Muhammad the tolerant judge, the wise legislator.”

George Bernard Shaw mentions this shift of opinion and how Europe, despite their centuries long smear campaign against the Prophet ﷺ, began to understand who he was. He says: “Only now did Europe begin to see the wisdom of Muhammad and live his religion. And so the Islamic faith shall be innocent of the false accusations of the medieval Europeans.”

Marcel Pourzar also notes how the truth regarding the Prophet Muhammad and his religion manifested despite the false accusations. He states: “Every detail regarding the Prophet Muhammad’s life has been previously recorded, shedding light on his entire life as we know it, down to the finest detail. The resulting picture left is the legacy left by the Prophet Muhammad in his great religion, despite the efforts of those who insist on smearing it. The Prophet Muhammad will not be remembered in history as simply another religious founder, rather he also established a political entity which changed the course of history and developed those under it in the most grandiose of ways.”

Eduard Perroy acknowledges that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was the final Prophet and that the law he came with was, in fact, divine revelation that encompasses all aspects of life. Perroy states: “Muhammad, the son of `Abdullah, the Arab Prophet and the Seal of Prophets, came to give glad tidings to the Arabs and the rest of the world of a new religion. He called to the statement ‘There is no [true] god except Allah, the One, the Only. In his call, faith and doctrine were inseparable from law, which was also derived from Divine Authority. It [Sharia law] does not only rectify religious affairs, rather it also rectifies the worldly

affairs; it obligates charity upon the Muslim, warfare upon the enemies, and the spreading of this pure religion. When the Arab Prophet ﷺ dies in 632, he had completed his call, and in doing so completed the establishment of a social system far superior to the tribal customs that the Arabs had followed before Islam. He had also unified them into one strong entity, bringing the entire Arabian Peninsula into the fold of one solid religion; a feat never before accomplished.”

Leitner also defended the Prophet ﷺ and the fact that he received revelation, mentioning the numerous signs which indicate the truthfulness of his prophethood. He says: “Based on what I know of the religions of Judaism and Christianity, I can say that the teachings of Muhammad were not derived from either. Rather, it is beyond a doubt that he, in fact, received revelation. With all due respect and humility, I say: his personal sacrifices, true nature of his goal, firm faith of heart, bright vision, and desire to erase misguidance and evil using the best of means are all clear indications of his prophethood and that he was, indeed, receiving revelation.”

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ wished to return Christianity to its true foundations as taught by `Isa عليه السلام, in contradiction to what was taught by Paul and which led to the splitting of the religion into many denominations. The Prophet ﷺ hoped that the blessings of the Religion of Ibrahim عليه السلام would not be confined to his people alone. Instead, he wished this blessing would reach all people. And so, his just and moderate religion became the guiding light for billions who would have otherwise drowned in chaos and barbarism.

This is what many of the Western thinkers were drawn to, beginning with Tawhid (pure monotheism), the crown jewel of the teachings of Islam, and the main principle taught by all prophets.

Voltaire states: “The doctrine of Muhammad is free of any doubt or ambiguity, and the Quran is a renewal of the concept of monotheism.”

Rom Landau says: “Never did Muhammad during his days attribute divinity or supernatural ability to himself. On the contrary, he was keen to teach that he was simply a messenger chosen by God to relay what was revealed to him to the people.”

Arnold J. Toyubee reiterated the fact that the Prophet ﷺ taught pure monotheism, tying it to legislation and the systems of social authority and justice stating: “Muhammad devoted his life to fulfilling his message in these two

spheres [the religious and legislative spheres of society] of the Arabic society. And this was fulfilled through the comprehensive structure brought by Islam which brought unity and authority.”

Washington Irving cites the Conquest of Makkah as proof that Muhammad ﷺ was the final prophet. He says: “Muhammad was, in fact, the Seal of Prophets and the greatest of messengers sent by God calling the people to worship Him. The events following the Conquest of Makkah indicate that he was, in fact, a prophet sent by God. For he showed mercy and leniency in numerous instances, despite that he had now become powerful, but he chose to crown his victory and success with forgiveness and pardon.”

Some western thinkers were even bewildered that so much praise and acknowledgement of the Prophet Muhammad’s miraculous accomplishment could be paired with a lack of belief in his prophethood. Thomas Carlyle says: “It is a great embarrassment that anyone in this age can agree with the false claim that the religion of Islam is untrue and that Muhammad was a fabricator.”

Will Durant, the American historian, says: “It is widely known that Muhammad neither read nor wrote, and that he never wrote a single thing in his life. Yet, this did not come between him and his ability to fully learn the affairs of the people, an intimate knowledge that the most learned of people never reach. He was a most skilled leader, a shrewd politician who knew how to pave a road to peace after war. If we were to judge based on greatness, then Muhammad was of the greatest men in history.”

Other thinkers acknowledged the Prophet’s comprehensively exemplary character, and how Europe fell short in producing such a leader.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe says: “As for us, the people of Europe in its entirety, we have never accomplished what Muhammad accomplished. None can precede him. I have searched the annals of history for an example of the most exemplary human being and I found it in the Prophet Muhammad. Thus, it is obligatory for the truth to show its superiority, just as Muhammad succeeded, with the world humbling itself before the monotheism he came with.”

Gustave Le Bon, the French physician and historian, states: “If men were judged based on the greatness of their actions, then Muhammad is of the greatest men in history. Western scholars have only just begun to study his legacy objectively, after religious fanaticism blinded historians from seeing his virtues



without bias. No feat is more impressive than Muhammad's unification of the civil, military, and religious authorities under one banner during an era in which the Arabian Peninsula was completely divided. We cannot begin to understand the value of this accomplishment. Thereafter, the Arabs conquered the world within one century, before which they were disunited tribes similar to the Berbers, constantly warring with one another before the advent of Muhammad."

Etienne Dinet also praises the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his exemplary personality stating: "The personality exhibited by Muhammad can only be described as supernatural. It had such a profound effect wherein it left its strong imprint in his laws bringing innovation and reform wherever it went."

European writers have also been awed by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Jacques Augustin Berque writes: "There is no doubt that the religion of Islam, for which the Creator chose Muhammad to relay, was worthy of Muhammad and Muhammad was worthy of it."

This awe led many of them to acknowledge his Prophethood and revelation, as previously mentioned. Clement, the French scholar, states: "Muhammad was not a normal Prophet. He is truly worthy of being the Seal of Prophets. If the Muslims truly took their Prophet as a role model in spreading his call, the whole world would become Muslim."

Western scholars were also thoroughly impressed with the Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ dealings with followers of other faiths, and Christians in particular. George Bernard Shaw says: "I have studied Muhammad for he was an amazing man. I have found that he was far from exhibiting any animosity to Jesus. Instead, he must be called the savior of humanity. Europe has only just begun to understand the creed of monotheism and its ability to solve its problems in a way that would result in its happiness and well-being. If we judged greatness based on the ability to effect people, then we would have to say that Muhammad, the Prophet of the Muslims, was the greatest man ever. He has defied the slander and fabrications produced against him, and established a clear and powerful religion over Jews, Christians, and followers of the old religion of his land able to last until today with strength and greatness. History does not contain any man besides Muhammad who carried such a message and built such a unified nation, which was unified by the strength of its religion."

Some Christians also noted the position which the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had regarding 'Isa عليه السلام and the respect given to him in the Quran and the Sunnah.

The orientalist Louis Pierre Sedillot says: “The studies of history have produced that the miraculous success of the unknown nation previously confined in the corner of Asia, which rose to the highest position and stamped its name in all corners of the world for seven centuries; the source of its success was one man: Muhammad.”

Lady E. Cobold, who accepted Islam and visited Madinah, recorded her impressions saying: “Before Muhammad ﷺ, the Arabs were a nation of no importance and whose tribes and societies presented no significance. After Muhammad came, he revived this nation in a miraculous fashion, after which they conquered the world and ruled for centuries.”<sup>1</sup>



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1 Al-Husaini Mu'addi, Ar-Rasool Fee Uyoon Ghair Munsifah, P:105,175,147,170,154,127,128, 167 Ammad-ud-Deen Khalil, Dirasah Fee As-Seerah:225

## The era of the Prophet ﷺ

When researching an individual, it is important to be well-acquainted with his or her surrounding circumstances. Of course, since the seerah begins with the birth of the Prophet ﷺ, we can start our journey shortly before that, in order to learn more about his tribe, Quraish, and of course his family and parents.

Muhammad, the son of Abdullah, was born on a Monday, in the Year of the Elephant.<sup>1</sup> The Prophet ﷺ said:

*“I was born on Monday.”*<sup>2</sup>

Though the exact date is not certain, many scholars have concluded that it was on the 12th of Rabi` al-Awwal, 571 AD.

The time of the Prophet’s death is agreed upon by the scholars to have been the morning hours of Monday, the 12th of Rabi` al-Awwal, coinciding with the 8th of July, 633 AD.

The approximate midpoint of the seerah can be defined by the Hijrah, for it separated the Prophet’s life into two main parts: before and after the Hijrah. The first year after the Hijrah coincides with 622 AD.



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1. The Year of the Elephant is said to have been approximately 570 AD. The name is derived from the well-known event that occurred in Makkah when Abraha, the Abyssinian ruler of Yemen, marched upon the Ka`bah in with a large army, which included elephants.
  2. Recorded by Muslim:1162.Abdus-Salam At-Tarmayini, Azminah At-Tareekh al-Islami:1/29,344

## The Prophet's birthplace

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was born in Makkah, known as Umm al-Qura,<sup>1</sup> and continued to live and work there for most of his life. He married and had children in Makkah, and it was the home of most of his friends and early Companions. It is also where he first received revelation.

Makkah is located in the bottom of a valley, where Prophet Ibrahim ﷺ left his wife Hajar and his son Isma'il. Allah the Exalted tells us that Ibrahim ﷺ said:

*“O our Lord! I have made some of my offspring to dwell in an uncultivable valley by Your Sacred House (the Ka'bah at Makkah); in order, O our Lord, that they may perform As-Salat (Iqamat-as-Salat), so fill some hearts among men with love towards them, and (O Allah) provide them with fruits so that they may give thanks.”* (Surah Ibrahim: 37)

Makkah was the first center of tawhid, or monotheism, in the land of the Arabs ever since the days of Prophet Ibrahim ﷺ and his son Isma'il ﷺ. Prophet Ibrahim supplicated to Allah, asking Him to bless the land and its people. He built the Ka'bah in Makkah, and other Prophets made pilgrimage (Hajj) to it over the generations.

Allah the Exalted said:

*“And (remember) when We made the House (the Ka'bah at Makkah) a place of resort for mankind and a place of safety. And take you the Maqam (place) of Ibrahim [or the stone on which Ibrahim stood while he was building the Ka'bah] as a place of prayer, and We commanded Ibrahim and Isma'il that they should purify My House (the Ka'bah at Makkah) for those who are circumambulating it, or staying (I'tikaf), or bowing or prostrating themselves (there, in prayer). And (remember) when Ibrahim said, “My Lord, make this city (Makkah) a place of security and provide its people with fruits, such of them as believe*

1. Umm al-Qura, lit. 'the mother of cities,' is another name for Makkah.

*in Allah and the Last Day.” He (Allah) answered: “As for him who disbelieves, I shall leave him in contentment for a while, then I shall compel him to the torment of the Fire, and worst indeed is that destination!” And (remember) when Ibrahim and Isma’il were raising the foundations of the House (the Ka’bah at Makkah), (saying), “Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us. Verily! You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.” “Our Lord! And make us submissive unto You and of our offspring a nation submissive unto You, and show us our Manasik (all the ceremonies of pilgrimage - Hajj and ‘Umrah, etc.), and accept our repentance. Truly, You are the One Who accepts repentance, the Most Merciful. “Our Lord! Send amongst them a Messenger of their own (and indeed Allah answered their invocation by sending Muhammad Peace be upon him), who shall recite unto them Your Verses and instruct them in the Book (this Qur’an) and wisdom, and sanctify them. Verily! You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.”” (Surah al-Baqarah: 125-129)*

Geographically, the city of Makkah differs from other regions in Arabia, for it is surrounded by mountains and valleys from every side.

The most prominent tribe living in Makkah at the time of the Prophet’s birth was a tribe called Quraish. They were experts in trade and thus quite wealthy. They ran the affairs of Makkah, for they were relatively well-traveled and educated compared to the other local tribes, and they had many influential connections outside of the city.

Makkah was, of course, famous for housing the Ka`bah, which Prophet Ibrahim ﷺ built. Allah the Exalted said:

*“And (remember) when Ibrahim and Isma’il were raising the foundations of the House (the Ka’bah at Makkah), (saying), “Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us. Verily! You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.”” (Surah al-Baqarah: 127)*

The city was divided into four quadrants occupied by the various sub-tribes of Quraish and their subdivisions<sup>1</sup>, where they lived and held their own gatherings and events for the most part. Each sub-tribe was entrusted with specific duties such as providing food and drink to pilgrims, carrying the banner during war, and collecting taxes from merchants who would come to Makkah.

1. i.e., The entire tribe is Quraish, but it is divided into many subtribes, who also branch out into smaller subdivisions.

Makkah was also known for Dar an-Nadwah, a gathering wherein the noblemen and leaders of Quraish would meet to discuss the latest issues, aiming to strengthen their ties and keep their tribes united.<sup>1</sup> They would fiercely defend the pagan traditions that the Arabs had come to accept, for many of these traditions kept power and wealth in Quraish's hands. Their insistence on old traditions also stemmed from the Arabs' deep-rooted veneration of their ancestors. Allah the Exalted tells us in the Qur'an:

*“Nay! They say: “We found our fathers following a certain way and religion, and we guide ourselves by their footsteps.””* (Surah az-Zukhruf: 22)

This veneration was so deeply engrained in their culture that ancient traditions were simply accepted without thought, generation after generation. They engaged in usury, drank alcohol, played musical instruments, danced, fornicated – chasing desire. They did not see any problem with these actions, for they did not believe in any resurrection or accountability for their deeds after death. Allah the Exalted said:

*“O you who believe! Intoxicants (all kinds of alcoholic drinks), gambling, Al-Ansab, and Al-Azlam (arrows for seeking luck or decision) are an abomination of Shaitan's (Satan) handiwork. So avoid (strictly all) that (abomination) in order that you may be successful.”* (Surah al-Ma'idah: 90)

Unfortunately, unbelief and paganism had established themselves quite firmly in Makkah.<sup>2</sup>

## The Prophet's ﷺ lineage

He is Muhammad, son of `Abdullah, son of `Abd al-Muttalib Shaibah, son of Hashim, son of `Abd Manaf, son of Mudar, son of Kilab, son of Murrah, son of Ka`b, son of Lu`ayy, son of Ghalib, son of Fihir, son of Malik, son of an-Nadr, son of Kinanah, son of Khuzaimah, son of Mudrikah, son of Ilyas, son of Mudar, son of Nizar, son of Ma`d, son of `Adnan, son of Udad, son of Muqawwam, son of Nahur, son of Terah, son of Ya`rub, son of Yashjub, son of Thabit, son of Isma`il ﷺ, son of Ibrahim ﷺ.

The names between `Adnan and Isma`il are disputed amongst the scholars.

1 Al-Azraqi Tareekh Makkah:107,110

2 Ibn Kathir:2/1679

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Indeed, Allah chose Isma`il from the children of Ibrahim, and He chose Kinana from Isma`il, and He chose Quraish from Kinana, and He chose Hashim from Quraish, and He chose me from the children of Hashim.”<sup>1</sup>

## The birth of the beloved Prophet ﷺ

The Prophet’s parents were `Abdullah bin `Abd al-Muttalib and Aminah bint Wahb. Aminah became pregnant with the Prophet ﷺ shortly after their marriage. A few months before she was due to give birth, her husband `Abdullah passed away. She saw a dream in which a light radiating from her that reached so far it illuminated the city of Bozrah in the Levant. Shortly afterward, she gave birth to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in the blessed land of Makkah.

In a hadith, the Prophet ﷺ said: “Truly I was [already], in the sight of Allah, the Seal of Prophets, when Adam was still kneaded in his clay. I shall inform you of the meaning (ta`wil) of this. It is the supplication of my father Ibrahim, and the glad tidings of my brother `Isa to his people; and the vision my mother saw the night I was born.”<sup>2</sup>

As for the exact date of his birth, there is no actual consensus amongst scholars and historians, however, we know the day itself due to the hadith in which the Prophet ﷺ said: “I was born on a Monday.”<sup>3</sup> It is no surprise that the exact date was not recorded, for at the time the people assumed he was a normal boy. They could not have yet known that he was the chosen one for whom great things were decreed, the final Prophet sent by Allah to mankind. Allah the Exalted said:

*“And thus We have sent to you (O Muhammad) an Inspiration, and a Mercy of Our Command. You knew not what is the Book, nor what is Faith, but We have made it (this Qur`an) a light wherewith We guide whosoever of Our slaves We will. And verily, you (O Muhammad) are indeed guiding (mankind) to the Straight Path.”* (Surah ash-Shurah: 52)

Scholars and historians have speculated as to the blessed Prophet’s exact birthdate. Some said it was the 12<sup>th</sup> of Rabi` al-Awwal, in the Year of the Elephant, coinciding with 571 AD. It is not known that Prophet ﷺ made mention, nor attributed any importance to his exact birthdate.

The Prophet ﷺ was born in the home of his uncle, Abu Talib, in the valley

1. Muslim Sarah an-Nawawi:15/26
2. Ibn Kathir:1/212, Ibn Hisham:1/158
3. Muslim :1162

of Banu Hashim. The house itself remained standing for two centuries after the Prophet's death, passing from one owner to the next, until al-Khaizuran, the mother of the Caliph Harun ar-Rashid, converted it into a masjid.

After his blessed birth, he was breastfed by Thuwaibah, the slave of his uncle Abu Lahab and cared for by Barakah Umm Ayman, who was also a slave at the time. Though Thuwaibah only nursed him for a few days, the Prophet ﷺ remained grateful to her for the rest of his life. Likewise, he treated Umm Ayman very kindly throughout her life, and decades later she accepted Islam and emigrated to Madinah, and was still alive at the time of his passing.

The first thing that the Prophet's mother did after his birth was send word of the good news to his grandfather, `Abd al-Muttalib. As soon as he heard the news, he was overcome with joy and rushed to see his grandchild. When he arrived, he picked up the infant and hugged him close to his chest, then he took him to the Ka'bah, thanking Allah and supplicating to Him. He chose to name the baby Muhammad, which was a unique name, almost non-existent among the Arabs at the time.<sup>1</sup>

## A young orphan

Allah the Exalted said:

*“Did He not find you (O Muhammad) an orphan and gave you a refuge?”* (Surah ad-Duha: 6)

As we mentioned, the Prophet's father passed away a few months before his birth. His mother loved him very much and did her best to raise him, as did his grandfather, `Abd al-Muttalib, who took the place of his father.

When Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was only six years old, his mother took him on a journey to Madinah. As they were returning to Makkah, she passed away in a place called al-Abwa', where she was then buried. Umm Ayman was present during this journey, and she took care of the young boy until they returned safely to Makkah. Once there, she took him to `Abd al-Muttalib, who raised him until his passing. Umm Ayman also attended to him every so often, for she had grown very fond of the boy who had lost both parents at such a young age. The Prophet ﷺ never forgot her kindness to him. Decades later in Madinah, he would visit her, and would say: “She is my second mother.”<sup>2</sup> After he passed away, Caliphs Abu Bakr and Umar continued to visit her and held her in high regard.

1 Ibn saad, At-Tabaqat:1/108, Ibn Hisam, As-Saerah:1/109, Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:209,201

2 Al-Isabah:13/177



## His youth

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ spent the next two years under his grandfather's care until he, too, passed away when Prophet ﷺ was only eight years old. His paternal uncle, Abu Talib, took him in and treated him as one of his own children. He was very fond of Muhammad ﷺ and took him along on his journeys. In one narration<sup>1</sup>, when Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was with Abu Talib on a trip to the Levant, they met a monk named Bahira.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ did not want to be a burden on his uncle, so he took up a job as a shepherd from an early age, and would give his wage to his uncle. In one hadith, the Prophet ﷺ said: "Every Prophet has herded sheep." His Companions asked: "Did you herd sheep, O Messenger of Allah?" He replied: "Yes, I used to herd sheep for the people of Makkah for such-and-such<sup>2</sup> a wage."<sup>3</sup> This job developed a sense of self-reliance within the Prophet ﷺ at a young age, as well as a sense of duty to help others. The Prophet ﷺ always encouraged his Companions to work hard, produce value for the community, and rely on themselves.

Despite living in a society filled with paganism, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ never accepted the concept of idol-worship, and never attended any of their events or participated in pagan rituals. Allah the Exalted protected Muhammad ﷺ – even before his Prophethood – from all sinfulness, evil, and unbecoming deeds. The Prophet ﷺ never drank alcohol even though it was very common in Makkan society. In fact, he hated it.

He was always trustworthy and honest, never known to tell a lie even in jest. He treated others with kindness, and was a very compassionate and merciful person. Truly, Allah elevated him and protected him before his Prophethood and after. Allah the Exalted said:

*"Allah knows best with whom to place His Message."* (Surah al-An`am: 124)<sup>4</sup>

1. Many classical and contemporary considered this narration to be inauthentic. There is a lot of controversy surrounding it due to Orientalists claiming that the Prophet's call to Islam was based on what he learned from the monk Bahira, including the Qur'an itself. If we are to assume the narration is authentic, it is still very far-fetched to claim that the Prophet ﷺ learned so much from Bahira at such a young age, retained it all, and then preached it many years later. The claim that Bahira taught him ﷺ the Qur'an is absurd, due to the Qur'an speaking directly about various events that occurred decades after the Prophet ﷺ met Bahira!
2. The hadith mentions 'qararit' i.e., a part of a dinar.
3. Bukhari:3/48
4. Ibn Hisham As-Seerah:1/180 Zad al Ma`ad:1/76

## Adulthood

By the time Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was a young man, he was well-respected in his community. His people had given him the nickname ‘as-Sadiq al-Ameen,’ i.e., the Honest and Trustworthy One, due to these traits being so prominent in him. He was also known for keeping his ties of kinship, and his generosity towards the poor and those in need. There is no better summary of his character than what Khadijah ؓ said to him: “Allah will never humiliate you, for you are good to your relatives, you honor guests, you help those who are in need, you support the weak, and you answer the call of those who are in distress.”<sup>1</sup>

He was truly a person who stood up for justice with a heart full of mercy and compassion for his fellow man. He never allowed someone to be oppressed if he could help it. When he was only twenty years old, he participated in a pact called Hilf al-Fudool in which some men from Quraish gathered in the home of `Abdullah bin Jud'an – one of the noblemen of Makkah – and made a pact to stand up for any oppressed person until he receives his right.

The Prophet ﷺ was an honorable person, and he only kept honorable company. Even his friends were exemplary people known for their noble character. His closest friend was Abu Bakr ؓ, who was very similar in age to the Prophet ﷺ and was also well-known for his manners and generosity.

Khadijah bint Khuwaylid ؓ was one of the wealthy noblewomen of Quraish. She employed merchants to travel with her wealth to various places and buy and sell, in return for a share of the profits. Many men were eager for the opportunity to work for her, but she was looking to employ only an honest person, for he would be traveling with a large sum of her wealth. Prophet Muhammad's reputation was well-known amongst the tribes, so when Khadijah ؓ was looking to hire someone, people immediately told her about as-Sadiq al-Ameen ﷺ. She offered him the job and he accepted.

He ﷺ began to travel to the neighboring sooqs (marketplaces) with her wealth, buying, selling and trading. With him was Maysarah, one of Khadijah's servants. Khadijah learned much about Muhammad ﷺ from Maysarah, how he dealt with the people in the best manner; with honesty and integrity. He was also a skilled tradesman, and thus generated a handsome profit for her business.

Travelling regularly and dealing with people from all walks of life allowed

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1. Bukhari:7/128

the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to gain experience in a relatively short period of time, for travel broadens one's horizons and increases wisdom and insightfulness.<sup>1</sup>

## Prophet Muhammad ﷺ marries Khadijah رضى الله عنها

Khadijah daughter of Khuwaylid, son of Asad son of `Abd al-`Uzza, son of Qusayy, son of Kilab. An honorable, wise woman of Quraish. Her father, Khuwaylid, one of the nobleman of Makkah, was killed in battle in Harb al-Fijar. She was one of the richest women in Quraish, and she employed many of its men, and one of those employees was Muhammad ﷺ son of `Abdullah.

Khadijah was forty years old. She had been previously married. Several men from Quraish had come to ask for her hand in marriage but she politely declined them all. She was not in a rush to get remarried, for she did not want to marry someone who was simply drawn to her status and wealth. Her experience with Muhammad ﷺ revealed nothing but good about him. She found him to be very articulate, well-mannered, a good businessman, and so she wished to marry him. There is no doubt that Allah the Exalted and Wise would choose only the most virtuous and honorable woman for His Prophet ﷺ.

Khadijah sent one of her friends to Muhammad ﷺ to bring the matter to his attention in a respectable manner according to their custom. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ only knew good about Khadijah from his interactions with her as an employee, and from her reputation in their city, so it is no surprise that he agreed to marry her. He informed his uncles of the situation, and two of them – Hamzah and Abu Talib – went with some of the nobles of Quraish to the uncle of Khadijah, `Amr bin Asad, and the couple was officially engaged. Soon after, Muhammad bin `Abdullah ﷺ married Khadijah bint Khuwayid رضى الله عنها, and she took her place as the first Mother of the Believers, wife of the Prophet of Allah in this world and in Paradise.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was twenty-five years of age at the time. They remained married until her death twenty-one years later. All the Prophet's children were from his first wife Khadijah, except for his son Ibrahim. Khadijah رضى الله عنها passed away when she was sixty-five years old. She was a wonderful wife and friend, a wise advisor, and a strong companion during the most difficult years on the path of Allah. Allah the Exalted chose her for Muhammad ﷺ, and He chose Muhammad ﷺ for her. She stood by her husband when he first received revelation from Allah. She used her wisdom during those difficult times, and

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Hisham:1/250, Ibn Sa`ad At-Taaqat:128

concluded that Allah would not ruin someone who lived such a virtuous life helping others and staying away from disgraceful actions.

## The situation at the Ka`bah

Five years before Muhammad ﷺ first received revelation and the Prophetic mission began, two incidents occurred at the Ka`bah. Traditionally, the pagans of Quraish would adorn the Ka`bah with wool and leather, and hang incense around it. On one such occasion, the burning incense was placed incorrectly, and the cloth covering the Ka`bah caught on fire. When the fire was finally put out, the covering was ruined, and a part of the actual structure had cracked. Some time later, heavy rains flooded the area and further damaged the Ka`bah, which led Quraish to realize that the only solution was to completely rebuild it.

The method of building structures in Makkah at the time was very primitive: pillars made of mud-bricks and stones, and a roof of wood. However, while they were planning to rebuild the Ka`bah, a ship going from Europe to Abyssinia was damaged and forced to dock not too far from Makkah. The ship was transporting wood, and one of the passengers was a well-known carpenter named Baqum. Quraish sent some men to where the ship had docked to purchase the wood and request Baqum's services. He agreed, so they returned to Makkah and began to take down what remained of the Ka`bah, stopping only when they reached the old foundation, which was traditionally left untouched every time the Ka`bah was renovated or rebuilt.

Even though they did not have a problem generating many forms of questionable income such as gambling and usury, nor did they believe in an afterlife, Quraish insisted on using only pure earnings to rebuild the Ka`bah. Under Baqum's supervision, Quraish divided the work between its sub-tribes, giving one section of the Ka`bah to each sub-tribe. They considered the rebuilding of the Ka`bah to be an immense honor, and this method ensured that no branch of Quraish would feel like they were robbed of the honor of participating.

Once the structure was finished, all that remained was to place the Black Stone<sup>1</sup> back into its original location. A problem arose: each sub-tribe wanted the honor of placing the stone, and they were unable to come to an agreement. The situation escalated to the extent that they were on the brink of fighting. They finally agreed to leave the matter in the hands of the next person to

1. The Black Stone is a rock set into the eastern corner of the Ka`bah. Pilgrims begin and end each circuit of tawaf at the Black Stone. The Prophet ﷺ used to touch or kiss the stone during tawaf when possible. Ibn Sa`ad: 1/130-132- Ibn Hisham:1/189

enter the Haram<sup>1</sup>.

Some time elapsed, and the next person to walk in was none other than Muhammad son of `Abdullah ﷺ. When the disputing men saw this, they were overcome with joy and relief. “It is al-Amîn, it is Muhammad! We are satisfied with al-Amîn as an arbiter!” It is important to note that this was before his Prophetic mission had begun. His people had only good things to say about him, even those who later became his enemy due to their rejection of his Message could not claim otherwise.

The Prophet ﷺ solved their dispute quite easily. He removed his cloak and placed the Black Stone in the center of it. He then told them to have one man from each sub-tribe carry the cloak together and bring it to its spot at the Ka`bah. When they brought it there, he lifted the Stone with his blessed hands and placed it in. They were all satisfied with this solution and felt that they had received their share of the honor. Scholars note that this incident occurred when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was thirty-five years old.<sup>2</sup>

## Signs before the Prophetic mission

Allah the Exalted was training Muhammad ﷺ to one day begin his mission as the Messenger of Allah. Shortly before the mission was to begin, certain things started to happen in Muhammad’s life indicating that the time was near. One of these signs were, as `A’ishah ؓ narrates:

*“The first revelations that occurred to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ were in the form of true visions in his sleep. He did not see any dream except that it would come true as clear as the daylight comes in.”<sup>3</sup>*

He ﷺ had also taken to spending more time in worship and contemplation, seeking closeness to Allah. He would go out to the valleys of Makkah and walk across them, reflecting on the creation of Allah. He had not yet received revelation for that was not under his control, nor any other human’s. Only Allah chooses in His infinite wisdom, as He tells us in the Qur’an:

*“Say (O Muhammad): “If Allah had so willed, I should not have recited it to you nor would He have made it known to you. Verily, I have stayed amongst you a life time before this. Have you then no sense?”” (Surah Yunus: 16)*

1. i.e., the Sanctuary, the boundaries of what is now the Sacred Mosque.

2 Al-Azraki Akhbar Makkah:1/157-160 Ibn Sa`ad:1/145,Ibn Hisham:2/195-196

3. Bukhari:3

Prophet Muhammad's people were pagans, something that his heart and soul simply could not accept. Their idol-worship and distasteful traditions became wearisome for him to witness, and he began to enjoy contemplating in solitude. He would go to the Cave of Hira', located in a mountain east of Makkah, known today as Jabal an-Nur (the Mountain of Light), and spend days at a time there, alone, worshipping Allah by contemplating His creation, and reflecting on the condition of his people. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was not commanded to do so, since this was all before he received the first revelation from Allah. He was certainly inspired by Allah to distance himself from the polytheists and their evil actions, and he naturally sought to reflect and contemplate about himself, his people, and the creation that he saw all around him.

`A'ishah رضي الله عنها said:

*"Solitude became beloved to his heart, and he used to spend many nights in the Cave of Hira worshipping Allah. He would then return to his family, gather some supplies, and return, until the Truth came to him while he was in the Cave of Hira."*<sup>1</sup>

Allah the Exalted said:

*"And thus We have sent to you (O Muhammad) an Inspiration, and a Mercy of Our Command. You knew not what is the Book, nor what is Faith, but We have made it (this Qur'an) a light wherewith We guide whosoever of Our slaves We will. And verily, you (O Muhammad) are indeed guiding (mankind) to the Straight Path."* (Surah ash-Shurah: 52)

Ramadan was the most beloved month to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ even before revelation. He would fast and spend time in seclusion and worship during this month. His wife Khadijah aided him in his worship by encouraging him and preparing the supplies he needed. When he returned from the cave, he would first go to the Ka`bah and perform tawaf<sup>2</sup> while avoiding the idols, before returning home.

The Cave of Hira offered a good view of the sky as well as the vast lands of Makkah, which certainly aided the Prophet ﷺ in his reflection and contemplation.

The Prophet ﷺ was always a kind, generous person who gave what he could to those in need, and as he grew older he only became more generous.<sup>3</sup>

1. Bukhari, Fath Al-Bari, Muslim:1/139,140

2. An act of worship in which one circumambulates the Ka`bah seven times.

3 Abu Shahbah, As-Seerah:256, Ibn Hisham:1/235

# The Prophetic Mission

## The meaning of revelation

Linguistically, the word wahy means to communicate secretly and quickly.

As defined in Islamic literature, wahy, or revelation, means the following: Allah communicating with His Prophets and Messengers, revealing unto them Scripture or law.<sup>1</sup>

## Revelation descends

The Prophet ﷺ was never known to have made any mention of revelation or communicating with God before he was forty years old. He was not learned in the history of previous Prophets, nor did he study any of the old Scriptures. Allah the Exalted said:

*“...You knew not what is the Book, nor what is Faith, but We have made it (this Qur’an) a light wherewith We guide whosoever of Our slaves We will...”* (Surah ash-Shurah: 52)

During the month of Ramadan, when Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was forty years of age, he was worshipping Allah in seclusion in the Cave of Hira – as he had become accustomed to doing – when the first of revelation descended upon him. `A’ishah ؓ narrates the story:

*“...the Angel came to him and said, “Read.” The Messenger of Allah replied, “I cannot read.” The Angel then grabbed him forcefully and pressed him until he could no longer bear it, and then he released him and said again, “Read.” The Messenger of Allah replied, “I cannot read.” Then he grabbed him and pressed him again until he could no longer bear it, and then he released him and said once more, “Read.” The Messenger of Allah replied again, “I cannot read.” He pressed him again forcefully and then released him and recited: “Read! In the Name of your Lord, Who has created (all that exists).”* (Surah al-`Alaq: 1)<sup>2</sup>

1 Abu Shahbah,As-Seerah:1/267

2. Bukhari:3 Ibn kathir:2/2010, Fathul Bari

Allah the Exalted tells us of this event in the following verses:

*“The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Qur’an, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and wrong)...”* (Surah al-Baqarah: 185)

*“Verily! We have sent it (this Qur’an) down in the night of Decree.”*  
(Surah al-Qadr: 1)

*“We sent it (this Qur’an) down on a blessed night. Verily, We are ever warning [mankind].<sup>1</sup>”* (Surah al-Dukhan: 3)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ returned home with his heart pounding. As soon as he saw Khadijah, he said: “Cover me, cover me.” She brought a cloak and wrapped him with it, and he remained silent for a time. He then told Khadijah what he heard and saw, and said: “I feared for myself.” Khadijah replied: “No, By Allah! Allah will never humiliate you, for you are good to your relatives, you honor guests, you help those who are in need, you support the weak, and you answer the call of those who are in distress.”<sup>2</sup>

Khadijah ﷺ then asked him to accompany her, and they set out to the home of her cousin, Waraqah bin Nawfal. Waraqah was a Christian Arab scholar who was also fluent in Hebrew. He was very old when Khadijah and Muhammad ﷺ visited him, and he had gone blind.

Khadijah said to Waraqah:

*“O cousin, listen to what your relative (i.e., Muhammad) has to say.” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ recounted the events of the cave. Waraqah said: “This is the Messenger (Angel Jibreel) that was sent to [Prophet] Musa! I wish I was younger to stand with you when your people expel you!” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked: “Will they expel me?” Waraqah replied: “Yes. Every man that brought his people a message like yours was treated with enmity. If I am alive to witness that time, I will support you with everything I have.” However, Waraqah passed away soon after their meeting.*

Indeed, all the verses that Allah the Exalted revealed to Muhammad ﷺ were a mercy from Him. Allah was opening the doors for divine knowledge to come down to mankind, and the first word that was revealed was ‘iqra,’ i.e., read. Read in the name of your Lord. Your Lord who created you and created everything, and allowed you to receive this revelation from him. It was not through any power

1 Ibn Kthir:1/1934

2. Ibn Abi Shaibah p:103



that you previously possessed. You have become the recipient and Messenger of divine revelation just as the Prophets before you, for Allah the Exalted said:

*“Verily, We have inspired you (O Muhammad) as We inspired Nuh and the Prophets after him; We (also) inspired Ibrahim, Isma`il, Ishaq, Ya`qub, and Al-Asbat [the twelve sons of Ya`qub], `Eesa, Ayyub, Yunus, Harun, and Sulaiman, and to Dawud We gave the Zabur (Psalms).”*  
(Surah an-Nisa’: 163)

Allah also said:

*“Neither did you (O Muhammad) read any book before it (this Qur’an), nor did you write any book (whatsoever) with your right hand. In that case, indeed, the followers of falsehood might have doubted.”* (Surah al-`Ankabut: 48),

*“And verily! Your Lord, He is indeed the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful. And truly, this is a revelation from the Lord of the `Alamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists), Which the trustworthy Ruh [Jibril] has brought down; Upon your heart (O Muhammad) that you may be (one) of the warners, In the plain Arabic language.”* (Surah ash-Shu`ara’: 191-194)

When the Prophet ﷺ first began to receive revelation, he was eager to learn more. Allah the Exalted revealed:

*“Move not your tongue concerning (the Qur’an, O Muhammad) to make haste therewith. It is for Us to collect it and to give you the ability to recite it, And when We have recited it to you, then follow you its recital.”* (Surah al-Qiyamah: 16-18) and *“And be not in haste (O Muhammad) with the Qur’an before its revelation is completed to you, and say: “My Lord! Increase me in knowledge.””* (Surah Taha: 114)

## The mission begins

When the chapter of Al-Muddathir was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ, it was a clear command from Allah to begin calling people to Islam:

*“O you (Muhammad) enveloped (in garments)! Arise and warn! And your Lord magnify! And your garments purify! And keep away from Ar-Rujz (the idols)! And give not a thing in order to have more (or consider not your deeds of Allah’s obedience as a favour to Allah).*

*And be patient for the sake of your Lord!”* (Surah al-Muddathir: 1-7).

This task would surely require purity from physical as well as spiritual filth, for it was a divine mission. Allah had commanded Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to go forth and spread the Message of faith.

Khadijah, the Mother of the Believers, was the first person to accept Islam and believe in the Messenger ﷺ. No male came before her nor did any female. She was also the first person to pray with him, and very soon thereafter, their daughters quickly followed in their mother’s footsteps and accepted Islam.

‘Ali, the son of Abu Talib, was under the care of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ at the time, in order to lighten the burden on his uncle Abu Talib. ‘Ali accepted Islam as soon as he heard it from his cousin, even though he was younger than ten years old at the time. It was truly a blessing for ‘Ali to have lived with Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, for he was able to have a very close, unique relationship with him. Zaid bin Harithah ؓ was also blessed to have a similar relationship with the Prophet ﷺ, for he was his servant and lived with him as well. Zaid was brought to Makkah as a slave and eventually ended up in the home of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Years later, his father and uncle found him and requested his return. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ offered him the option to return to his family, but he chose to remain with him, saying: *“I have seen from this man that which makes me unwilling to part with him.”* The Prophet ﷺ freed him and the people took to referring to him as Zaid bin Muhammad (i.e., Zaid, the son of Muhammad).<sup>1</sup>

Thus everyone in the home of Muhammad ﷺ had believed in him – his wife, his children, his cousin, and his adopted son. They would all line up behind their imam, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, in prayer. It is no surprise that they all believed in him, after all, they had never known him to utter a lie. A household of faith was exactly the foundation that the Prophet ﷺ needed in the beginning of his mission, and it was indeed a mercy from Allah.

The first man to accept Islam from outside of the Prophet’s household was his close friend, Abu Bakr. They had been friends for many years, and they shared several traits such as honesty, trustworthiness, and generosity. Abu Bakr ؓ was a blessed man; as soon as he accepted Islam, he began to spread the message and call others to Islam. He made sure to speak to men of integrity and wisdom; those he knew he could trust. Most of the Ten Promised Paradise<sup>2</sup> accepted Islam

1. Ibn Abi Shaibah, Al-Maghazi:130, Ibn Hisham: 1/240-244

2. Ten well-known Companions who were given the glad tidings of Paradise by the Prophet ﷺ.

at the hands of Abu Bakr. Amongst them were `Uthman bin Affan, az-Zubair bin al-`Awwam, `Abd ar-Rahman bin `Auf, Sa`d bin Abi Waqqas, Talhah bin `Ubaidillah, Abu `Ubaidah bin al-Jarrah, and Sa`id bin Zaid – may Allah be pleased with them all.

Islam spread amongst Quraish in secret, and the Muslims increased in number. Many of them were unaware of their fellow brothers in Islam due to the secrecy, but each new Muslim was busy inviting those whom he trusts to accept this wonderful religion.

Most of the new Muslims at this point were young men; some from the nobles of Makkah, while others were from the weak and oppressed, such as Bilal bin Rabah, `Ammar bin Yasir, Khabbab bin al-Aratt, and `Abdullah bin Mas`ud. Some of the women who accepted Islam in the early days were Asma` bint Abi Bakr, Fatimah bint al-Khattab, Fukaihah bint Yasar, Ramlah bint Abi `Awf, Aminah bint Khalaf, and Sumayyah Umm `Ammar – may Allah be pleased with them all. A Muslim community was beginning to form in the pagan city of Makkah.

The Muslims would gather in secret in some of their homes, or out in the valleys, to recite Qur`an and pray together, for they understood that the followers of prophets are often persecuted by their own people.

Prophet Muhammad's primary focus was to teach his Companions about tawhid, i.e., monotheism; worshipping Allah alone without any partners. He taught them what it meant to purify one's heart, how to rely on Allah, and the true meaning of fearing Him. A Muslim yearns for the afterlife and prepares for it adequately by doing good in this world.

He showed them what it means to be sincere in dedication to Allah, and how this ties into one's role in society, amongst his family and tribe. The Companions were compassionate towards their non-Muslim society, for they wanted to help them, and the Prophet ﷺ encouraged this determination in their hearts.

The home of al-Arqam, one of the Companions, became a meeting place for the believers. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ would meet with his followers there regularly, and they would learn from him. These Companions formed the core, the nucleus, of the Muslim Ummah that would later grow and spread to every corner of the globe, and which continues to spread to this day. This core group of Muslims carried the message of Islam, the message of mercy and virtue to

mankind.

Allah the Exalted said:

*“And keep yourself patiently with those who call on their Lord morning and afternoon, seeking His Face, and let not your eyes overlook them, desiring the pomp and glitter of the life of the world; and obey not him whose heart We have made heedless of Our Remembrance, one who follows his own lusts and whose affair (deeds) has been lost.”* (Surah al-Kahf: 28)

Three years passed since revelation first descended upon Muhammad ﷺ, and there were Muslims in every sub-tribe of Quraish – although many still did not know one another due to the continued need for secrecy. Allah revealed the following verses:

*“And warn your tribe (O Muhammad) of near kindred. And be kind and humble to the believers who follow you.”* (Surah ash-Shu`ara’: 214-215)

and

*“Therefore proclaim openly that which you are commanded, and turn away from al-Mushrikun (polytheists, idolaters, and disbelievers, etc.)”* (Surah al-Hijr: 94).

In these verses, Allah commanded His Messenger ﷺ to proclaim the message of Islam to the people publicly.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ went to the Haram, climbed atop Mount Safa<sup>1</sup> and called out to the people. He used the call, ‘wa sabahah,’ which was the traditional call the Arabs used to gather people for something important. Once the people had gathered, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ called the sub-tribes of Quraish by name:

*“O Banu Fihri, O Banu `Abd Manaf, O Banu `Abd al-Muttalib...” and so on. When they had settled, he continued: “If I informed you that there was an army coming from behind this mountain [i.e., to attack you], would you believe me?” They responded: “We have never heard a lie from you.” The Prophet ﷺ then said: “I am a warner to you before the coming of a severe punishment.”*

The Prophet’s uncle, Abu Lahab, was present. When the Prophet ﷺ was done

1. One of the two mountains closest to the Ka`bah, the other being Mount Marwa. Both have significance in Islam and are part of the rites of Hajj.

speaking, Abu Lahab responded with anger and utmost disrespect. He said:

*“May you receive bad fortune for the rest of the day. Did you gather us for this?!”*<sup>1</sup>

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stepped down from the mountain, having delivered the message of his Lord to the people. The response of his own uncle, Abu Lahab, was very hard on him. Abu Lahab continued to act this way towards his nephew and attempted to sabotage Islam until his death, and his wife also took part in his evil actions. Allah revealed the following verses about them:

*“Perish the two hands of Abu Lahab, and perish he! His wealth and his children (etc.) will not benefit him! He will be burnt in a Fire of blazing flames! And his wife too, who carries wood (thorns of Sadan which she used to put on the way of the Prophet, or use to slander him). In her neck is a twisted rope of Masad (palm fibre).”* (Surah al-Masad: 1-5)

The Prophet ﷺ told his people:

*“O Quraish, ransom your own selves! I do not have the power to save you from Allah!<sup>2</sup> O `Abbas bin `Abd al-Muttalib, I do not have the power to save you from Allah! O Safiyyah, aunt of the Messenger of Allah, I do not have the power to save you from Allah! O Fatimah, daughter of Muhammad, ask me what you wish of my wealth, for I do not have the power to save you from Allah!”*<sup>3</sup>

His words were very clear and very strong: I am but a messenger. Your relationship with me is not enough to save you; only your relationship with Allah will, so seek Him, believe in Him, and follow the path of faith and worship.



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1. Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd: 1/200  
2. i.e., I cannot help you avoid the punishment of Allah if you choose to disbelieve and disobey Him. (Translator)  
3. Bukhari:6/16

## Persecution of the Prophet ﷺ

The first people to harm the Muslims were Abu Lahab and his wife Jamilah, but others followed suit soon thereafter. Some of the haughty leaders amongst Quraish were at the forefront of persecuting the believers, including another one of the Prophet's uncles: `Amr bin Hisham, whose title was Abul Hakam, i.e., the wise one. Amongst the Muslims, he later became known as Abu Jahl, i.e., the ignorant one. He received this title due to his insistence on paganism and abusing the believers whenever he could.<sup>1</sup>

Quraish's persecution of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ continued in Makkah for ten years after he began to openly call his people to Islam. Then he emigrated to Madinah, but the disbelievers of Makkah continued to harm him in any way they could – including war – for the next eight years, until the Muslims conquered Makkah.

They aimed to cause damage the Muslims in any way they could, hoping to turn them away from their religion. Besides torture and other methods of physical harm, they also incorporated psychological warfare by spreading lies about the Prophet ﷺ and those who followed him. They also attempted to hinder people from meeting the Messenger of Allah ﷺ or hearing the message of Islam, for news of this religion had spread, and the people wanted to learn more. The leaders of Quraish would gather in conferences and meetings, devising new ways to prevent people from learning about Islam.

Those at the forefront of the abuse were always the arrogant, self-important members of society. When one of them died, such as in the Battle of Badr, another would take his place. The Conquest of Makkah eventually brought about the end of their harm and a new stage for the Ummah.

The Prophet ﷺ remained patient, persevering for Allah's sake. Quraish was unable to extend their oppression to the level they wished, due to protection from the Prophet's uncle, Abu Talib. Abu Talib was still a pagan and a nobleman of Quraish, and thus they were hoping – especially early on – that he would

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Abi Shaibah:107

eventually join them against his nephew ﷺ, as his other uncle did. However, Abu Talib did not betray his nephew; he continued to protect and aid him as best he could. Arab tradition and social structure at the time dictated that Quraish simply could not cross the line with regards to harming Muhammad ﷺ while he was under the protection of one of their leaders, or they would risk major civil unrest and even warfare between their sub-tribes.<sup>1</sup>

The Qur'an continued to descend upon the Prophet ﷺ, and he relayed the Words of Allah to the people despite their arrogance and rejection. They would make arguments against Islam, and the response would come from the All-Knowing, the Wise. Because they did not have any proper responses, they resorted to simple arrogance. Allah the Exalted said: "And they say:

*"Our hearts are under coverings (screened) from that to which you invite us, and in our ears is deafness, and between us and you is a screen, so work you (on your way); verily, we are working (on our way)."*" (Surah Fussilat: 5)

Another tool they used to mask their ignorance was mockery.

*"And they say: "Why does this Messenger eat food, and walk about in the markets (like ourselves). Why is not an angel sent down to him to be a warner with him?"*" (Surah al-Furqan: 7)

The Prophet ﷺ did not respond in kind; rather, Allah instructed him to speak with wisdom and intelligence:

*"Say (O Muhammad): "I am only a human being like you. It is inspired in me that your God is One God, therefore take Straight Path to Him, and seek forgiveness of Him. And woe to al-Mushrikun (the disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah, polytheists, idolaters, etc.)"*" (Surah Fussilat: 6)

In response to their request for an angel instead of a human messenger, Allah the Exalted said:

*"And had We appointed him an angel, We indeed would have made him a man, and We would have certainly caused them confusion in a matter which they have already covered with confusion (i.e. the Message of Prophet Muhammad)." (Surah al-An'am: 9)*

The pagans of Quraish continued to make requests and challenges with the sole intention of irritating the prophet ﷺ

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Hisham:1/265,At-Tabaqat:1/201

When they realized that their arguments were being defeated, Abu Jahl and several others agreed to avoid listening to the verses that would come down. Allah the Exalted mentions their plan:

*“And those who disbelieve say: “Listen not to this Quran, and make noise in the midst of its (recitation) that you may overcome.” But surely, We shall cause those who disbelieve to taste a severe torment, and certainly, We shall requite them the worst of what they used to do.”* (Surah Fussilat: 26)

Some of their arguments against Islam were as follows:

1. They claimed their rejection of Islam was due to the messenger being a human, and they would prefer an angel
2. They claimed the Prophet ﷺ learned the Qur’an from some Christians or others.
3. They requested specific miracles, claiming that they would believe if such miracles were produced.

They also claimed that the early Muslims were from the weak and lower class, and they demanded that these Muslims disperse when the leaders of Quraish approached Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to speak to him. Allah the Exalted commanded His Prophet to reject their demand, and to continue to sit with his fellow believers, and be patient. Allah the Exalted said:

*“And turn not away those who invoke their Lord, morning and afternoon seeking His Face. You are accountable for them in nothing, and they are accountable for you in nothing, that you may turn them away, and thus become of the unjust.”* (Surah al-An`am: 52)

In this fashion the Qur’an was revealed to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ over time, offering him guidance with regards to the issues that arose over the course of his divine mission.

The pagans’ attempts at discrediting the religion and sabotaging the Prophet ﷺ were not new tactics. Allah the Exalted said:

*“And indeed (many) Messengers were mocked before you, but their scoffers were surrounded by the very thing that they used to mock.”* (Surah al-An`am: 10).

Allah taught His Messenger about those who came before him, and this helped ease the difficulty that he was going through.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Kathir:1/1077, Ibn Hisham:1/265



## The first martyrs of Islam

The pagans did not suffice with harming the Messenger of Allah ﷺ alone. They were happy to torture and oppress his Companions as well, hoping to coerce them into leaving Islam, or at least send a clear message to anyone who was considering accepting Islam that this treatment awaits you. However, this torture did not sway the believers, for they remained patient, and became heroes encoded in history for future generations of Muslims to learn from and follow in their footsteps. The true embodiment of perseverance, dedication, and conviction. Among these heroes were men and women such Yasir and his wife Sumayyah, their son `Ammar, and Bilal – may Allah be pleased with them all.

Bilal was an Abyssinian slave under the control of one of the most evil pagans in Makkah. Several other slaves also accepted Islam and were subject to torture at the hands of their masters. Among these heroes were Bilal's mother, Hamamah, Umm Unais, an-Nahdiyyah and her daughter, and others. Their owners continued to torture them but they persevered, until Abu Bakr ؓ purchased them and set them free for the sake of Allah.

Sa`d bin Abi Waqqas ؓ was one of the first believers. He loved his mother dearly and was very obedient and kind towards her before accepting Islam. After he became Muslim, he only increased in his kind treatment of his mother. When she learned that he had accepted Islam, she tried to persuade him to leave it. This, of course, caused Sa`d a lot of distress.

She gave him an ultimatum, saying, "O Sa`d, if you do not leave this religion, I will not eat or drink until I die." He pleaded with her to take back her oath, and told her that he would not leave his religion for anything. When she saw his insistence, she stopped eating and drinking. She continued for three days. During that time, she made sure he was aware of how dire her situation had become, hoping to finally convince him, but she could not. She reminded him of the importance Islam places on respecting one's parents, attempting to overcome him with guilt, but despite how much he cared for her, he knew he could not

obey her. Allah the Exalted said:

*“And We have enjoined on man (to be dutiful and good) to his parents. His mother bore him in weakness and hardship upon weakness and hardship, and his weaning is in two years. Give thanks to Me and to your parents, unto Me is the final destination. But if they (both) strive with you to make you join in worship with Me others that of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not, but behave with them in the world kindly, and follow the path of him who turns to Me in repentance and in obedience. Then to Me will be your return, and I shall tell you what you used to do.”<sup>1</sup> (Luqman, 14-15)*



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1 Ibn Kathir:2/1462 , Ibn Hisham:1/319 Siyar A`alam an-Nubala:1/109

## The First Hijrah to Abyssinia

The persecution of the Muslims worsened as time passed. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ taught his Companions to remain patient, sharing with them the stories of the Prophets of Allah and their followers, how they triumphed after persevering for Allah's sake. The Qur'an was being revealed to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ over time, informing him of the events of the past and the impending victory for him and his Ummah. The Prophet ﷺ would relay this information to his Companions and it strengthened their resolve, giving them hope for the future. They knew that Allah would indeed spread this religion far and wide, to every corner of the globe, but at this stage in the Ummah's history, their main goal was to protect their own faith and their few members, even if it meant leaving Makkah for somewhere safer.

A number of kingdoms neighbored the Arabian Peninsula. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had some knowledge of their politics, their religion, their adherence to justice, and their respect for human rights. The Prophet ﷺ relied completely on Allah, but he knew that part of properly relying on Allah is to take the proper worldly steps, as He taught us to do. This is what the Prophet ﷺ taught his Companions and his Ummah. It is due to this that the Prophet ﷺ considered finding a place where the Muslims could seek refuge from the persecution of the pagans of Makkah, whether it be a temporary settlement or a permanent relocation of the budding community.

Allah revealed:

*“Say: “O My slaves who believe (in the Oneness of Allah Islamic Monotheism), be afraid of your Lord and keep your duty to Him. Good is (the reward) for those who do good in this world, and Allah's earth is spacious (so if you cannot worship Allah at a place, then go to another)! Only those who are patient shall receive their rewards in full, without reckoning.””* (Surah az-Zumar: 10)

He also revealed:

*“O My slaves who believe! Certainly, spacious is My earth. Therefore worship Me.”* (Surah al-`Ankabut: 56)

Later verses were even clearer about the obligation of emigrating to a safer place:

*“Verily! As for those whom the angels take (in death) while they are wronging themselves (as they stayed among the disbelievers even though emigration was obligatory for them), they (angels) say: “In what (condition) were you?” They reply: “We were weak and oppressed on earth.” They (angels) say: “Was not the earth of Allah spacious enough for you to emigrate therein?” Such men will find their abode in Hell - What an evil destination!”* (Surah an-Nisa’: 97)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ told his Companions:

*“Go to the land of Abyssinia, for it is ruled by a king who does not allow anyone to be wronged, and it is a land of honesty. [Remain there] until Allah removes the difficulties you are facing.”*<sup>1</sup>

This instruction went out to all the Muslims who feared for themselves and were capable of traveling, including his own household.

Some of the first to emigrate included the Prophet’s daughter Ruqayya ﷺ and her husband `Uthman bin `Affan ﷺ amongst a company of approximately fourteen Muslims – rich and poor, young and old. They left Makkah in secret, avoiding the notice of the pagans to the best of their ability, and they eventually arrived in Abyssinia safely. They met with the Negus, i.e., the King of Abyssinia, whose name was Ashamah. He heard their case and granted them permission to settle in his lands under his protection. In fact, he accepted Islam in secret and years later, when he passed away, the Prophet ﷺ led his Companions in a funeral prayer for him.<sup>2</sup>

The Negus was a scholar in his own right, not simply a ruler, so he did not simply accept the claims of the Muslims without due diligence. He discussed with them and confirmed the validity of the Final Prophet ﷺ based on his knowledge of Christianity, and this led him to accept Islam as the truth. In his collection of hadiths, Bukhari has a chapter titled “The Death of the Negus” in which he records five hadiths that mention Ashamah’s acceptance of Islam.

The first Hijrah to Abyssinia occurred in the fifth year after revelation began.

1. Sirat Ibn Hisham:1/30

2. Extracted from a hadith recorded by Bukhari.

After a few months in Abyssinia, a rumor made its way to the Muslims there; news was spreading that the pagans of Quraish had all accepted Islam. Many Muslims were overjoyed by the news and returned to Makkah.<sup>1</sup>

## The Second Hijrah to Abyssinia

After a long, difficult journey, the group of Muslims arrived in Makkah once again, only to find that the news they had received was untrue. Quraish had not accepted Islam, and their enmity towards the Muslims was still alive and ongoing. Although the number of Muslims in Makkah had only increased during their absence – despite the persecution – it was clear that Makkah remained unsafe. A larger group of believers were encouraged by the news that their brothers and sisters brought with them, i.e., that Abyssinia was safe, and the people had welcomed them. They began to prepare for a second emigration to Abyssinia.

Ja`far bin Abi Talib, the Prophet's cousin, led the company, which contained eighty-three men and eleven women, although some reports say there were more. Upon their arrival in Abyssinia, they were welcomed like their brothers and sisters before them, and they met with the Negus several times, and he once again offered them help and protection. After some time, the pagans of Makkah sent a messenger to request that the Negus return the Muslims to Makkah. Negus Ashamah heard their request, and due to his fairness and justice, he allowed the Muslims to offer a rebuttal. After hearing from both parties, he decided to reject Quraish's request and keep the Muslims under his protection.

Back in Makkah, people continued to embrace Islam. Hamzah, the Prophet's uncle, accepted Islam, followed by `Umar bin al-Khattab. Both men were well-known for their strength and outspokenness, so once they had become Muslims, they did not hesitate to proclaim their faith and aid their fellow believers in any way they could. Their acceptance of faith was a turning point in the Muslim community, and they were quickly becoming a force to be reckoned with.

Ibn Mas`ud ؓ said: "We became strong the day `Umar accepted Islam." It is also narrated that he said: "I remember when we were unable to pray at the Ka`bah, then `Umar became Muslim and fought off the pagans till they let us pray there."<sup>2</sup>

1 Ibn Hisham:1/364, Ibn Sa`ad :1/205,206

2. At-Tabaqat Ibn Sa`d: 3/370, Ibn Hisham :1/334-338 Ibn Abi Shaibah:165-169

## The Unjust Boycott

Quraish continued to find new ways to make the lives of the Muslims as difficult as they could, and they also directed their harm towards anyone who protected or aided the believers. After years of unjust persecution, Quraish finally decided to assassinate the Prophet ﷺ. Abu Talib heard of their plot and vowed to protect his nephew, as did the tribes of Banu Hashim and Banu al-Muttalib.<sup>1</sup>

The two sub-tribes had gathered together in the valley of Banu Hashim to remain as one single defensive force. The leaders of the pagans gathered in Makkah to discuss what to do with those who chose to protect Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. They decided to boycott Banu Hashim, Banu al-Muttalib, and whoever else stood with them, and they wrote a contract to document the details of the boycott. No one was to marry anyone from the two sub-tribes, nor buy or sell to them, nor enter into any type of contract with them until they surrendered Muhammad ﷺ to the pagans.

The contract was signed by the various sub-tribes and hung inside the Ka`bah in an attempt to grant it official status amongst the tribes. Thus, the oppressive boycott began. It went on for three years and the situation only worsened as time went by. The situation became so dire that those under boycott were forced to eat leaves and animal skins due to the utter lack of resources.

Three grueling years of hunger, persecution, and difficulty – which only stood as a testament to the fortitude of those afflicted, for the kin and followers of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stood their ground in his defense. The believers stood with their Prophet – understandably so – but one may ask: What motivated his non-Muslim relatives to do the same? It was mainly out of their family loyalty, pride, and unwillingness to surrender. The only family member who chose not to stand with Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was Abu Lahab.

Outside of the two sub-tribes, a few of the members of Quraish could not

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1. i.e., the two closest subtribes to the Prophet ﷺ.

bear to see such difficulty inflicted upon their fellow man. Every now and then, they would find different ways to sneak food into the valley – usually under the cover of night.

After three years of this, some members of Quraish had enough. They were not many in number, but they were strong in their stance. They agreed to enter the Ka`bah, tear up the unjust document, and demand that Quraish rescind the boycott. At the head of these brave individuals was a nobleman by the name of Hisham bin `Amr bin Rabi`ah. His strategy was simple; he approached those whom he felt shared his opinion on the boycott. He appealed to their humanity and sympathy, and was able to convince four others to join him. The five of them made a vow to annul the boycott and destroy the document.

A short while after their meeting, Zuhair bin Umayyah and his mother `Atikah were present in a gathering of Quraish. They stood up and Zuhair said: “O people of Makkah! Are we going to eat and dress comfortably while Banu Hashim perishes, unable to buy or sell anything? I swear by Allah that I will not sit until that unjust document is torn to shreds.”

Abu Jahl was amongst the attendees of the gathering, and he did his best to prevent the people from agreeing with this idea, but to no avail. Zuhair had appealed to the hearts of those present, and Abu Jahl was forced to accept it, uttering his now infamous response: “This was certainly planned beforehand.”

Thus, the boycott came to an end after the efforts of a handful of honorable, courageous individuals willing to stand up for the rights of the oppressed. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his followers and tribesmen were relieved of their suffering. They returned to their lives and resumed their livelihoods after having been prevented from it for so long. Even though the boycott was lifted, the pagans of Quraish still attempted to harm the Muslims in whatever ways they could, by means of social and economic pressure.<sup>1</sup>

## The Death of Khadijah رضي الله عنها

Mother of the Believers, Khadijah رضي الله عنها, was a loving wife and wonderful companion to the Prophet ﷺ. She was the first to believe in him, and she offered him crucial moral and financial support during the most trying times. `Ali رضي الله عنه narrated that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said about Khadijah: “The best of women was Mariam bint `Imran, and the best of women (in this nation) is Khadijah.”<sup>2</sup>

1 Ar-Raud al-`Unf:2/127, At-Tabaqat1/2 Ibn Hisham:1/374

2 Recorded by Bukhari:4/230

Khadijah ؓ was the Prophet's only wife until she passed away, and she was the mother of all his children except for one. She was an honorable woman of noble character, and was truly Prophet Muhammad's beloved. She defended him even if it meant putting herself in harm's way, and her relatives did likewise, out of their loyalty to her and what she believed in. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ gave her the glad tidings of Paradise a number of times during her life.

Ten years after the Prophetic mission began, Khadijah bint Khuwaylid, Mother of the Believers, passed away. In the same year, the Prophet's uncle and protector, Abu Talib, died as well. This year became known as the Year of Sorrow due to the extreme difficulty that befell Prophet Muhammad ﷺ due to losing two of the closest people in his life.<sup>1</sup>

## The Death of Abu Talib

Prior to his death, Abu Talib became quite ill. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ cared for him and continued to invite him to accept Islam, as he had been doing since his Prophetic mission began. Abu Talib chose not to embrace Islam, but it never prevented him from protecting his nephew and supporting him in the face of those who wished him harm. It is narrated in Bukhari that when Abu Talib was on his deathbed, the Prophet ﷺ said to him:

*“O uncle, say ‘there is no god but Allah’ – a statement that will allow me to appeal your case before Allah.”* Abu Jahl and `Abdullah bin Abi Umayyah, who were both present, said: *“O Abu Talib, will you turn back on the religion of `Abd al-Muttalib?”* They continued to pressure him in this manner until he uttered his last words, remaining on the religion of his forefathers. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: *“I will seek forgiveness for you for as long as I am permitted to do so.”*<sup>3</sup>

Allah later revealed the following verses:

*“It is not (proper) for the Prophet and those who believe to ask Allah's Forgiveness for the Mushrikun (polytheists, idolaters, pagans, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah) even though they be of kin, after it has become clear to them that they are the dwellers of the Fire (because they died in a state of disbelief).”* (Surah at-Tawbah: 113)

1 As-Sallabi As-Seerah:1/367, At -Taqat:1/211

2. Abu Talib's father.

3. Bukhari:4/246



and

*“Verily! You guide not whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills. And He knows best those who are the guided.” (Surah al-Qasas: 56).*

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had loved his uncle dearly, and was always grateful for the kindness he showed him before and after the Prophetic mission. However, one’s fate in the afterlife is a result of his or her own relationship with Allah. Protection from Hellfire requires that one testify that there is none worthy of worship but Allah. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ tried very hard to convince his uncle to declare the testimony of faith, but constant pressure from his community ultimately prevented him from doing so. Even as he lay dying, they stood over his bed to ensure that he remained upon the religion of his forefathers.

Abu Talib’s passing hurt Prophet Muhammad ﷺ deeply. Some scholars are of the opinion that the aforementioned verse was not meant for Abu Talib. Even so, it is quite clear as a general prohibition against seeking Allah’s forgiveness for those who have passed away as disbelievers, even if they were relatives.

With Abu Talib’s death, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ not only lost a dear relative and a father figure, but a protector in the face of his enemies who wished him nothing but harm. The protection that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was afforded due to his uncle’s presence was noticeably reduced, and it was yet to be seen what the pagans would do.<sup>1</sup>



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1 Ibn Hisham As-Seerah:1/416

## Al-Isra' wal-Mi'raj (9 AH)

Al-Isra wal-Miraj was an important event in Islamic history. It was a miracle granted by Allah to His Prophet, Muhammad ﷺ. An entire chapter in the Noble Qur'an is named after it<sup>1</sup>, and there is an abundance of narrations detailing the event, which indicates its significance in the Prophet's life as well as the religion of Islam.

Al-Isra' (lit., night travel) was the miraculous night journey of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ from the Sacred Mosque in Makkah to al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, and then back in the same night.

Al-Mi'raj, (lit., ascension) was his ascension from Jerusalem through the Seven Heavens where he witnessed the signs of Allah and returned in the same night.<sup>2</sup>

Al-Isra' connected the Sacred Mosque and al-Aqsa Mosque, thereby connecting the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and the previous Prophets, for their message was one: belief in Allah and worshipping Him alone without partners. Indeed, they are all brothers, for we are all descendants from the same father, Adam ﷺ, and from his lineage was Nuh ﷺ, and so on.

Allah the Exalted said:

*“O offspring of those whom We carried (in the ship) with Nuh (Noah)! Verily, he was a grateful slave.” (Surah al-Isra': 3)*

The events began in the night, when the angel Jibreel came to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ while he was asleep in his home in Makkah, and took him to the well of Zamzam. He then proceeded to open his chest and cleanse his heart and fill it with faith and wisdom, like he had done many years prior.<sup>3</sup> Jibreel then brought Prophet Muhammad ﷺ a Buraq to ride. The Buraq is one of the creations of Allah whose details are unknown to us, except that it is very fast, and that

1. The 17<sup>th</sup> chapter in the Qur'an, i.e., Surah al-Isra'.

2. Ibn Abi Shaibah:120

3. Bukhari:4/248, Muslim:1/148

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ rode it during al-Isra' wal-Mi'raj to go from Makkah to Jerusalem.

Allah tells us about this journey in the first verse of Surah al-Isra':

Allah the Exalted said:

*“Glorified (and Exalted) be He [above all that (evil) they associate with Him] who took His slave (Muhammad) for a journey by night from al-Masjid-al-Haram (at Makkah) to the farthest mosque (in Jerusalem), the neighborhood whereof We have blessed, in order that We might show him (Muhammad) of Our Ayat (proofs, evidences, lessons, signs, etc.). Verily, He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.” (Surah al-Isra': 1)*

Upon his arrival, the Prophet ﷺ dismounted the Buraq and tied it to the ring that other Prophets used before him.<sup>1</sup> He then prayed two rak'ahs, after which Jibreel brought him two containers, one filled with milk and the other with wine. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ chose the milk. Jibreel said: “You were guided to the fitrah. Had you chosen the wine, your Ummah would have gone astray.”<sup>2</sup>

Then Allah caused His Messenger to ascend to the sky. In the hadith collection of Bukhari, he dedicated a chapter to these events.<sup>3</sup> In this chapter, he recorded a long hadith narrated by Anas bin Malik ؓ discussing al-Isra' wal-Mi'raj, with many other hadiths providing more detail.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ informed his Ummah of what he witnessed during this miraculous journey, for Allah gave him a wealth of knowledge to share with mankind so that we may be guided.

The opening verses of Surat an-Najm also describe al-Isra' wal-Mi'raj. Allah the Exalted said:

*“By the star when it goes down, (or vanishes).  
Your companion (Muhammad) has neither gone astray nor has erred.  
Nor does he speak of (his own) desire.  
It is only an Inspiration that is inspired.  
He has been taught (this Qur'an) by one mighty in power [Jibril].  
Dhu Mirrah (free from any defect in body and mind), Fastawa [then he*

1 Muslim, Ibn Abi Shaibah:120

2. Fitrah is the natural disposition of mankind. In Islam, it is understood that humans have an innate understanding of good and evil, and an inclination towards goodness deep within.

3 Bukhari:4/248

*(Jibril) rose and became stable].*  
*While he [Jibril] was in the highest part of the horizon,*  
*Then he [Jibril] approached and came closer,*  
*And was at a distance of two bows' length or (even) nearer,*  
*So did (Allah) convey the Inspiration to His slave [Muhammad through*  
*Jibril].*  
*The (Prophet's) heart lied not (in seeing) what he saw.*  
*Will you then dispute with him (Muhammad) about what he saw*  
*[during the Mi'raj]*  
*And indeed he (Muhammad) saw him [Jibril] at a second descent (i.e.*  
*another time).*  
*Near Sidrat-ul-Muntaha [lote-tree of the utmost boundary (beyond*  
*which none can pass)],*  
*Near it is the Paradise of Abode.*  
*When that covered the lote-tree which did cover it!*  
*The sight (of Prophet Muhammad) turned not aside, nor it transgressed*  
*beyond (the) limit (ordained for it).*  
*Indeed he (Muhammad) did see of the Greatest Signs, of his Lord.”*  
 (Surah an-Najm: 1-18)

Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was made to descend back to Jerusalem, and then he returned to Makkah the same night. The next morning, he relayed his story to the people of Makkah, and they had mixed reactions. The pagans were pleased because they knew they could use this opportunity to cause discord amongst the believers. They approached Abu Bakr ؓ, who had not yet heard the story, and informed him of what Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had said. They knew he was a wise man and were hoping that he would refuse to believe it.

His response was simple: “If he indeed said it, then it is true. Why are you surprised by this news? By Allah, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ informs me of that which descends upon him from the heavens at any time of the day or night. This is greater than that which has you surprised.”<sup>1</sup>

The pagans were correct in their assumption of Abu Bakr; he was indeed a wise man. His faith in Islam and Prophet ﷺ Muhammad's honesty was one of conviction. He knew that his close friend, the Prophet of Allah ﷺ spoke only the

1. Ibn Hisham:1/399, As-Seerah Ibn Kathir,2/97

truth, and therefore the matter was simple in his mind. He made his reasoning clear to them: I have already chosen to have faith in this man and his divine message. Why are you surprised that I accept that this man, the Prophet ﷺ, could ascend to the heavens by Allah's will, if I already accept that Allah sends His angel from the heavens to earth to deliver the message to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ?

Abu Bakr then went to the Prophet ﷺ and, in front of the people, asked him about his night journey. Every time the Messenger of Allah ﷺ relayed a part of the story, Abu Bakr would say, *"You have spoken the truth."* Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said to him: *"And you, O Abu Bakr, are as-Siddiq."*<sup>1</sup>

The exact date when al-Isra' wal-Mi'raj occurred is not known for sure, nor is it of particular importance. Some evidence suggests it occurred during the Hijri month of Rabi' al-Awwal, or Rajab.

Al-Isra' wal-Mi'raj was an honor for Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and a source of divine knowledge for him and the Muslim Ummah, as well as the rest of mankind.<sup>2</sup>



1. As-Siddiq is the title Prophet Muhammad ﷺ gave to Abu Bakr ؓ. It means 'a true and firm believer.
2. Al-Mustadrak:3/63, Ibn Hisham:1/399 Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:2/107

## Approaching the Tribes

Allah the Exalted prepares His chosen ones – His prophets – from before their mission begins by giving them the upbringing and tools that they will use along the way. In the case of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, his many years spent in travel and trade whilst working for Khadijah ؓ benefited him greatly. He met many people from different tribes along his travels, as well as those who came to Makkah for religious purposes, such as Hajj, or business purposes, such as the famous *Souq Okaz*<sup>1</sup> near Taif.<sup>2</sup>

It is important to note that Allah’s Messenger ﷺ is the final prophet for all of mankind, not just the people of Makkah. Allah says in the Qur’an:

*“And We have not sent you (O Muhammad) but as a mercy for the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists).”* (al-Anbiya’, 107).

Therefore, the call to Allah was meant to spread outside of Makkah as well. It had been years since the Prophetic mission began, and the pagans of Makkah fought against it since the very beginning, but the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not limit his message to the inhabitants of Makkah. From the start of his divine mission, he would also spread the call of Islam to the visitors as well. However, the epicenter of Islam and the budding Muslim community was still in Makkah, surrounded by polytheists who were doing whatever they could to impede the Muslims’ efforts. Perhaps it was time for the call to move elsewhere, to grow amidst a people who were more receptive to it.

The yearly Hajj season brought many different tribes of Arabs to Makkah. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ began to approach them and present Islam to them. He introduced himself as the Messenger of Allah and told them that Allah commands that He be worshipped alone without partners, and that they must turn away from the false gods that they worship besides Allah. He requested that they believe in him and accept his message, and take him into their community so he can spread the message of Islam.

1. The largest and most well-known open-air market in the Hijaz region in Pre-Islamic Arabia.

2. Saeed al Afghani, *Aswaq al-Arab Fee al-Jahiliyah wal-Islam*

When Abu Lahab found out that the Prophet ﷺ was speaking to the incoming tribes, he took to following him in an attempt to convince the tribes not to listen to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He would tell them that the Prophet ﷺ was crazy as well as other forms of slander, which was sufficient to convince some tribes to turn away from him or reject him in a rude manner.<sup>1</sup>

However, Muhammad bin Abdullah ﷺ was not completely unknown to the Arabs. Through his travels and interactions with people, he had a reputation for being a wise, well-spoken, honest man. Yes, most of the tribes he approached did not know him well, and indeed some were deterred by Abu Jahl's lies, but Prophet Muhammad ﷺ carried on talking to those who would listen.

Abu Bakr would accompany the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as he met with the various tribes, for he was also a man known for wisdom and intelligence. This served to strengthen their message, since it is very difficult for a sincere person to meet with two articulate men with good reputations and simply accept Abu Jahl's claims that they were mad.

During the tenth and eleventh years of the Prophetic mission, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ dedicated more time and effort to meet the incoming Arab tribes, as well as traveling to them in their own towns, such as his visit to the people of Taif.<sup>2</sup>

One of the tribes that the Prophet ﷺ spoke to was Banu `Amir bin Sa'sa'a. One of their noblemen, Bahira bin Firas, was intrigued by the offer, and said, "By Allah, if I took this young Quraishi man, I would devour the Arabs with him." He asked the Prophet ﷺ, "If we pledge to take you in, and Allah grants you victory over those who oppose you, will we take over after you?"

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ replied, "That is in the hands of Allah; He places it wherever He wills." Bahira said, "Will we risk our necks for you, and then when Allah gives you victory, someone else takes rule? We have no need for such an offer."

Another tribe heard the Prophet's offer and said, "If you wish that we protect you against the Arabs around us, we will do so." The Prophet ﷺ informed them that this religion requires full dedication, for it was not simply an affair of Arabs.

The Prophet ﷺ knew that this religion was meant to spread far and wide, therefore it was not logical to accept restricted terms. He was looking for a people who truly grasped what Islam was, and realized that they were signing up

1 Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:2/185,Ibn Hisham:1/424

2 Ibn Hisham:1/424

to be a base for it to grow and expand. They would be a shining light that will one day illuminate the rest of the world. Similarly, it was not in the Prophet's hands to give any tribe a guarantee that they would take over after him. The very fact that they requested such a thing was a clear indicator of their mindset. Islam is a religion, not a power grab. It is in Allah's hands, and His alone. It was important that the people who were to form the base of the first Islamic city accept this wholeheartedly.

Thus Prophet Muhammad ﷺ moved on and continued meeting with different peoples, until Allah destined that he meet two tribes from Yathrib – a meeting that changed the fate of mankind from that day forward.<sup>1</sup>

## The Ansar:

Al-Aws and al-Khazraj were two pagan Arab tribes who lived as neighbors in a town called Yathrib. As was the way of life back then, they would feud from time to time, which even led to battle and bloodshed, the most well-known incident being the Day of *Bu`ath*<sup>2</sup>. Both tribes were looking for another tribe or people to ally with, to strengthen them against their neighbor and give them the upper hand. This led them to their first encounter with Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Representatives from both al-Aws and al-Khazraj arrived in Makkah, hoping to perhaps ally with one of the Arab subtribes there.

A few tribes of Jews also lived with al-Aws and al-Khazraj in Yathrib. Every now and then, they would tell their pagan neighbors about 'the Prophet of the End of Days' who was soon arriving according to their Scripture. It is mentioned that the Yathrib Jews would even threaten their pagan neighbors with this prophecy when tensions and bloodshed arose. They would say, "Indeed, the time has drawn near for a Prophet to be sent to us. We will follow him and then decimate you the way that `Ad and Iram<sup>3</sup> were destroyed."

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and Abu Bakr ؓ approached a company of al-Aws and al-Khazraj. After introducing themselves, the Prophet ﷺ asked them, "Will you sit so I may speak with you?" They agreed and sat down to listen to him. He ﷺ invited them to worship Allah the Exalted, reciting some verses from the Qur'an and explaining Islam to them. As the men from al-Aws and al-Khazraj

1 Al-Bidayah wa An-Nihayah:2/167,168, Ibn Abi Shaibah:125

2. A battle that occurred between al-Aws and al-Khazraj approximately five years before the Hijrah.

3. `Ad and Iram; two ancient nations.



listened, they remembered the prophecy of the Jews. They said to one another, “By Allah, this is the Prophet that the Jews often threaten us with.”

They believed in his message and accepted Islam, and said, “Animosity and fighting exists between our tribes. We hope that through you, Allah will unite them. We will return to them and inform them of your offer. If Allah unites them through you, there will be no man more honored than you amongst us.” They then parted with the Prophet ﷺ and began their journey back to Yathrib as believers.

When they arrived, they told their people what had transpired, and informed them that they had accepted Islam. The news spread quickly, and very soon there was not a single home amongst their tribes that had not heard about the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.<sup>1</sup>



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1 Ibn Hisham:1/429, Mahdi Rizq ul-Allah As-Seerah:1/288, Ibn Kathir, As-Seerah:1/176

## The First Pledge of al-`Aqabah

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had previously told his Companions that the Muslim community would soon be migrating to a new home. As you may remember, some Companions had already migrated to Abyssinia (and were still there at this time), but this was different: The entire community – including the Prophet ﷺ himself – would be relocating. This was uplifting news for the persecuted Muslims, for it gave them hope of a safer place where they can practice their religion freely amongst their brothers and sisters. The Muslims patiently waited for Allah’s command to descend upon His Messenger.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ informed his Companions that he saw the place where they would migrate to in his dream, and the dreams of Prophets are sent from Allah. Bukhari recorded a hadith narrated by Abu Musa ؓ in which the Prophet ﷺ said:

*“I saw in my dream that I migrated from Makkah to a land that has date palms. I thought it might be al-Yamamah or Hajar, but [I discovered that] it was the town of Yathrib.”<sup>1</sup>*

A few months had passed since the men of al-Aws and al-Khazraj met the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. They spent these months telling their people about Islam and spreading news about the Prophet ﷺ, and they eventually felt it was time to arrange a second meeting with him. They were twelve men: ten from al-Khazraj and two from al-Aws.

‘Ubadah bin as-Samit ؓ narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said while surrounded by a group of his Companions:

*“Come and give me a pledge that you will not worship any besides Allah, that you will not steal, nor commit adultery or fornication, that you will not kill your children, that you will not utter slander, invented by yourself, and that you will not disobey me if I command you to do something good. Whoever of you keeps his pledge, then his reward is with Allah, and whoever*

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1. Bukhari:4/252

*breaks a part of his pledge and is punished for it in this world, then that is an expiation for him, but whoever breaks a part of the pledge and Allah conceals it for him, then his affair rests with Allah – if He wishes, He will punish him, and if He wishes, He will forgive him.” So we pledged.”<sup>1</sup>*

After the Companions had pledged, they departed back to Yathrib. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent Mus`ab bin `Umair ؓ along with them to teach them the Qur`an, lead them in prayer, and teach them about the details of Islam. Due to this, he became known as *al-Muqri`*, i.e., the Reciter, in Yathrib. The Muslims in Yathrib were very welcoming; they took him in as one of their own and honored him.

Mus`ab did not take his task lightly. He dedicated himself, along with his new brothers from Yathrib, to spread the *Deen* of Allah to the people, preaching with wisdom and kindness. He would often meet with the nobles and leaders, for he knew their influence on the rest of society. He spent the next year on this blessed mission, and by that time, many of the people of Yathrib accepted Islam through his efforts – by Allah’s permission.

Mus`ab bin `Umair ؓ was a sincere Muslim who dedicated himself to Allah sincerely. Allah said about him and others like him:

*“Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah, of them some have fulfilled their obligations (i.e. have been martyred), and some of them are still waiting, but they have never changed [i.e., they never proved treacherous to their covenant which they concluded with Allah] in the least.”<sup>2</sup> (al-Ahzab, 23)*

## The Second Pledge of al-`Aqabah

The Muslims of Yathrib had grown to a sizeable number. They coexisted peacefully with their neighbors and spent their free time learning the Qur`an and praying with Mus`ab the Reciter ؓ. In the year that Mus`ab spent with them, they had grown quite eager to meet the Prophet that they had heard so much about. Mus`ab had been communicating with the Prophet ﷺ and they arranged for the Yathrib Muslims to meet him during the next Hajj season, coinciding with year thirteen of the Prophetic mission.

The Muslims were overjoyed. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was also eager to see them, for he loved to meet a people who were so sincere in their faith as well as

1 Bukhari: 4/251

2 Tafseer at-Tabari:10/280, Tafseer Ibn Kathir:2/1488, Ibn Hisham:1/293

their everyday lives. It would be a pleasant change from much of what he was facing in Makkah. Jabir bin `Abdullah narrated that leading up to this meeting, the people of Yathrib would converse with one another, asking, “For how long will we leave the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in the mountains of Makkah living in danger and fear?”

Ibn Ishaq, the well-known historian, recorded a hadith in which Ka`b bin Malik ؓ narrates: “We set out for Hajj, and we had planned to meet with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on the second day of at-Tashriq. Among us was `Abdullah bin `Amr bin Haram, the father of Jabir. He was one of the noblemen and leaders of our people, and he was still a pagan. We did not inform the rest of the pagans from our tribe of our upcoming meeting. We spoke to `Abdullah, saying, “O Abu Jabir, you are a leader amongst us and a nobleman. We wish to help you leave the lifestyle you are upon, to avoid being fuel for Hellfire in the future.” Then we invited him to Islam, and we informed him of our meeting with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ at al-`Aqabah. He then accepted Islam and came to the meeting with us.

Ka`b continued, “We settled for the night with our tribe and slept until about one-third of the night had passed. We then set out quietly to meet the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, careful not to rouse the others, until we gathered at the valley near al-`Aqabah. We were seventy-three men and two women: Nusaibah bint Ka`b, and Asma’ bint `Amr bin `Adi.

“We awaited the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in the valley, until he arrived with his uncle al-`Abbas bin `Abd al-Muttalib, who was still upon the religion of his people at the time, but he still wished to accompany his nephew for his protection. After they sat, al-`Abbas spoke first: “O people of al-Khazraj,<sup>1</sup> You know the position Muhammad has among us. We protected him from our people, from those whom we hold in the same esteem that we hold him in. Therefore, he is honored and protected among us, in his land. However, he has decided to go to you and live amongst you, so if you believe that you will fulfill your duty towards him and will protect him from those that stand against him, then that is what you are tasked with. However, if you will surrender or abandon him after he leaves us and joins you, then it is better that you leave him now, for he is honored and protected in his own land.”

The Muslims of al-Khazraj said, “We have heard what you said. O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, speak, and take for yourself and for your Lord whatever you wish.”

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1. The Arabs used to refer to both al-Aws and al-Khazraj together as simply al-Khazraj.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ spoke, beginning with the recitation of Qur'an, then he reminded them of their duty to Allah, spoke about Islam, and said, "I give you my pledge, that you protect me as you would your women and children." Al-Bara' bin Ma'rur took his hand and said, "Yes. By the One who sent you as a Prophet with the Truth, we will protect you as we protect our own selves. Allow us to pledge to you, O Messenger of Allah, for we are, by Allah, sons of war. We are skilled in fighting, for we inherited it from our forefathers."

A man by the name of Abu al-Haitham interjected, saying, "O Messenger of Allah, we have a covenant with the Jews [of Yathrib] that would be nullified. If we pledge to you and then Allah grants you victory, will you return to your people and leave us?" The Prophet ﷺ smiled and replied, "No, our blood will be one, and our covenants one. I will be with you and you with me."


The Muslims who were pledging to the Prophet ﷺ knew that it was a weighty matter. In this modern day and age, we may not particularly understand the important role pledges played in Arab tradition at the time. It was not a simple matter of uttering the words; rather, a pledge was a serious contract that no one dared break. The Second Pledge of al-'Aqabah was more crucial than the first, for now it included allegiance and potential battle against the enemies of Allah if the situation arose. For this reason, a man amongst them named al-'Abbas bin 'Ubadah wanted them to fully grasp what they were committing to. He said, "O people of al-Khazraj, do you know what you are pledging to do?" They replied, "Yes."

He went on, "You are pledging to go to war. If you think that when your wealth is exhausted and your noblemen are killed, you will surrender the Messenger of Allah, then do not pledge, for by Allah if you were to surrender him it would be a humiliation for you in this world and in the afterlife. However, if you will be sincere and fulfill your pledge to him even if your wealth is exhausted and your noblemen are killed, then pledge, for it is, by Allah, the best of this world and the next."

They responded, "We will take him in, even it means the end of our wealth and the death of our noble men. O Messenger of Allah, what will be our recompense if we stay true to our word?" He ﷺ replied, "Paradise." They said, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched out his hand and they all gave their pledge.

They understood the commitment they were making, and it only strengthened their resolve. The Prophet ﷺ asked them to choose twelve representatives, so they

chose nine from al-Khazraj and three from al-Aws. They then returned to their camp. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ wished to teach them that Islam values structure and organization, and thus he let them choose their own representatives, for the upcoming stages would not be like the previous ones. As Islam was growing, there was certainly a need for the Muslims to become more organized.

After the days of Mina passed, Quraish heard the news of what had transpired and became furious. They attempted to grab hold of anyone from the Muslims of Yathrib who had come for Hajj, and they succeeded in arresting Sa`d bin `Ubadah .

The Muslims of Yathrib made their way back to their home. When they arrived, they began to prepare for the arrival of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, for Yathrib was to become the center of Islam and the home of its Prophet. The Second Pledge of al-`Aqaba signaled the beginning of a new stage in Islam's growth, and the believers of Makkah would soon be making *Hijrah*, i.e., migration, to Yathrib – by Allah's permission, followed by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ himself.

Unsurprisingly, when Quraish learned of this, they increased their persecution of the Muslims who were within their grasp. When the Muslims complained to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, he gave the command, saying, "Verily, Allah the Exalted has granted you a people and a home where you will be safe." <sup>1</sup>



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1 Ibn Kathir, As-Seerah:2/198, Fiqh As-Seerah:159, Ibn Hisham:1/440-446

## The Hijrah of the Companions

Linguistically, *Hijrah* refers to a migration from one land to another. As an Islamic term, it refers specifically to migrating from a land of unbelief to a land of Islam, or a land where one can be safer to practice his or her religion, as per the verse in the Qur'an:

*“He who emigrates (from his home) in the Cause of Allah, will find on earth many dwelling places and plenty to live by. And whosoever leaves his home as an emigrant unto Allah and His Messenger, and death overtakes him, his reward is then surely incumbent upon Allah. And Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”* (an-Nisa', 100)

The purpose of Hijrah is to protect one's religion, to be freer to practice one's faith without persecution. Other reasons for Hijrah include supporting one's brothers and sisters in faith, strengthening the Muslims and giving them support, and in the case of the Companions, to be with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. It was necessary to have a base from where Islam was to grow properly, and it would certainly take dedication, effort, and financial support from the believers for the sake of Allah. They were laying the groundwork to facilitate the worship of Allah for those who wished to worship Him alone in the way that pleases Him.

The Prophet ﷺ gave the command for his Companions in Makkah and elsewhere to join their brothers and sisters in Yathrib. It is to be noted that if Quraish had not insisted on persecuting the Muslims, they would not have left. They were forced out of their homeland, as depicted in the following verse:

*“For the poor emigrants, who were expelled from their homes and their property, seeking Bounty from Allah and to please Him, and supporting Allah (i.e., helping His religion) and His Messenger. Such are indeed the truthful.”* (al-Hashr, 8).

The Muslims of Yathrib earned a special rank with Allah the Exalted, for they were a people of generosity and love. The care they showed their incoming brothers and sisters is unmatched, and they earned the title 'al-Ansar,' i.e., the

Supporters, or Helpers.

Allah the Exalted tells us about the Muhajirun and Ansar:

*“And the first to embrace Islam of the Muhajirun and the Ansar and those who followed them in goodness – Allah is pleased with them as they are pleased with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success.”*(at-Tawbh, 100).

Some of the Muhajirun: `Umar bin al-Khattab, Ibn Umm Maktum, Talhah bin `Ubaidullah, `Ammar bin Yasir, Sa`d bin Abi Waqqas, `Abdulah bin Mas`ud, Bilal bin Rabah, Zaid bin Harithah, Hamzah bin `Abd al-Muttalib, `Abd ar-Rahman bin `Awf, Abu Kabshah, `Ubaidah bin al-Harith bin `Abd al-Muttalib, Zubair bin al-`Awwam, Abu Hudhaifah bin `Utbah bin Rabi`ah, `Uthman bin `Affan, `Utba bin Ghazwan, and many others – may Allah be pleased with them all.

The Ansar would compete with one another, racing to help their Muhajirun brothers and sisters in any way they could. They offered them homes, food, and even some of their wealth. Allah said about them: {And those who, before them, had homes (in Medinah) and had adopted the Faith, love those who emigrate to them, and have no jealousy in their breasts for that which they have been given, and give them (emigrants) preference over themselves, even though they were in need of that. And whosoever is saved from his own covetousness, such are they who will be the successful.} [al-Hashr, 9]

Many other verses in the Qur’an speak about the blessed Companions and their sincerity in the path of Allah.<sup>1</sup>

## The People of as-Suffah:

The People of as-Suffah were several poor, unmarried Muhajirun who lived in a room adjacent to the Masjid built in Medinah, the Masjid of the Messenger ﷺ. When *sadaqah* (charity) was sent to the Prophet ﷺ to distribute, he would send it to them without taking any of it. If a gift was sent specifically to him, he would take some of it and share the rest with them.

He ﷺ would also give them provisions every day, when he could spare it, and he asked the families of the Ansar to do the same. “Whoever has food for

1 Siyar A`alam An-Nubala:2/21, Ibn Hisham:1/329-331



two should invite a third, and whoever has food for four should invite a fifth, or sixth.” The Prophet ﷺ then proceeded to invite ten of the People of as-Suffah to eat with him, and Abu Bakr invited three.

The People of as-Suffah did not simply sit back and resolve to remain poor; they sought work by carrying things in the marketplace, or collecting firewood to sell, or buying and selling whatever items that were within their means. They did not earn too much, but whatever they did, they would share with the others from as-Suffah.<sup>1</sup>



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1 Abu Nuaim Al-Hilyah al- Awlia:1/348,2/22, As-Sauyani As-Seerah:2/32

# The Hijrah of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

Abu Bakr as-Siddiq رضي الله عنه, his family,  
and their role in the Hijrah

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was not the first Prophet to migrate for the sake of Allah. Allah the Exalted said:

*{[Ibrahim] said: "I will emigrate for the sake of my Lord. Verily, He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise."}* (al-`Ankabut, 26).

As we mentioned before, it was the persecution of Quraish that forced the Prophet ﷺ and the believers to leave Makkah. Several times they tried to imprison or assassinate Prophet Muhammad ﷺ; Allah the Exalted said:

*"And (remember) when the disbelievers plotted against you (O Muhammad) to imprison you, or to kill you, or to exile you. They were plotting and Allah too was planning, and Allah is the Best of the planners."* (al-Anfal, 30)

Similarly:

*"And Verily, they were about to frighten you so much as to drive you out from the land. But in that case they would not have stayed (therein) after you, except for a little while."* (al-Isra', 76)

The Prophet ﷺ loved Makkah dearly. It is where he was born, where he grew up, married, and had children. Furthermore, he knew that it was the Sacred Land of Allah. As he was leaving Makkah on his Hijrah, he turned back towards it and said, "By Allah, you are the most beloved of Allah's lands to me, and you are the most beloved of Allah's land to Allah, and had your people not forced me out, I would not have left you."<sup>1</sup>

1. Ibn Majah P:239

The Second Pledge of al-`Aqabah took place on the 12<sup>th</sup> of Dhul Hijjah, thirteen years after the Prophetic mission began. The Companions left Makkah in groups, and some traveled alone. Some left immediately while others lagged behind for various reasons. Abu Bakr ؓ prepared for Hijrah, following the general command of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to all the Companions, but the Prophet ﷺ asked him to wait, which Abu Bakr was more than happy to do. In the meantime, he also prepared the things Prophet Muhammad ﷺ would need for his own Hijrah, such as a riding camel, food, and other provisions. He did so even though he did not yet know that Allah had chosen him to be the Prophet's companion on this blessed journey.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ awaited a command from Allah the Exalted permitting him to set out, for Quraish knew about his anticipated travel, and were making plans to thwart his exit from Makkah. The angel Jibreel ؑ came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "Do not sleep in your bed tonight." That same night, several men from Quraish waited outside Prophet Muhammad's home. They planned to assassinate him as soon as he stepped out of the door. The Prophet ﷺ instructed `Ali ؑ to wear his cloak and sleep in his bed, and he reassured him that no harm would come to him.

The Prophet ﷺ then exited his home and took a handful of sand, and spread it on the would-be assassins while reciting the first few verses of Surat Yasin.<sup>1</sup> He walked away unharmed, and they remained in their places, waiting. A while later, a man passed by and asked them, "What are you waiting for?" They replied, "Muhammad." He informed them that Muhammad ﷺ had already left.

They refused to believe it. They rushed into the home of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and saw a figure sleeping in the bed. Certain it was the Prophet himself, they resolved to strike him as he slept. To their utter shock, it was, of course, `Ali. Since they did not have orders to kill `Ali, they had no other choice but to retreat, their mission a failure.

*"And (remember) when the disbelievers plotted against you (O*

1. {Ya-Sin. By the Quran, full of wisdom. Truly, you (O Muhammad) are one of the Messengers on a Straight Path. (This is) a Revelation sent down by the Almighty, the Most Merciful, so you may warn a people whose forefathers were not warned, so they are heedless. Indeed the Word (of punishment) has proved true against most of them, so they will not believe. Verily! We have put on their necks iron collars reaching to chins, so that their heads are forced up. And We have put a barrier before them, and a barrier behind them, and We have covered them up, so that they cannot see.} [Yasin, 1-9]

*Muhammad) to imprison you, or to kill you, or to exile you. They were plotting and Allah too was planning, and Allah is the Best of the planners.” (al-Anfal, 30)*

Abu Bakr proved to be a most worthy companion to the Prophet ﷺ during their Hijrah. Throughout the journey, Prophet Muhammad’s safety and comfort was his number one concern. When they were planning to rest in the cave of Thawr, Abu Bakr insisted on entering first to make sure it was safe. While they were both resting in the cave, he noticed a small hole and decided to block it with his foot. He said, “If a stinging or biting critter were to come out of there, it will sting me.”

They sought to rest in the cave, so they can regain their energy to continue their journey, but Abu Bakr remained concerned over the Prophet’s safety. The pagans of Quraish, having found out that the Prophet ﷺ managed to leave Makkah, offered a handsome reward for anyone who could capture or kill him. Due to this, there were several search parties seeking him. While the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr were in the cave, they heard a group of men walking by, looking for them. Abu Bakr became anxious and said, “O Prophet of Allah! If any of them were to look in this direction...” but the Prophet ﷺ calmly responded, “What can befall two who have Allah as their third?”

This incident was immortalized in the Qur’an so that we may learn from the Prophet’s trust in Allah during a most difficult time, and how he reassured his companion. Allah the Exalted said:

*“If you do not aid him, then Allah has already aided him when the disbelievers drove him out, the second of two, when they were in the cave, and he said to his companion: “Be not sad (or afraid), surely Allah is with us.” Then Allah sent down His tranquility upon him, and strengthened him with forces (angels) which you saw not, and made the word of those who disbelieved the lowermost, while it was the Word of Allah that became the uppermost, and Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.”} (at-Tawbah, 40).*

Allah had indeed sent down tranquility upon His Messenger.

The family of Abu Bakr also contributed in the Hijrah of the Prophet ﷺ. Asma’, the daughter of Abu Bakr ؓ said: “I prepared food for the Prophet ﷺ in Abu Bakr’s home when he was planning to migrate to Medinah. However, I did

not find anything to wrap his food and drink in, so I said to Abu Bakr, ‘By Allah, I do not find anything to tie these packs with except my belt.’ He said, ‘Rip your belt in two and use each piece to tie one pack.’” She did so, and that is how she received her nickname, *Dhat an-Nitaqain*<sup>1</sup>.

The pagans of Makkah also targeted Abu Bakr’s family with harassment. Asma’ narated: “After the Messenger of Allah ﷺ left, some people from Quraish, including Abu Jahl, came to the home of Abu Bakr. I opened the door and they asked, ‘Where is your father, O daughter of Abu Bakr?’ I said, ‘By Allah, I do not know where my father is.’ Abu Jahl raised his hand – foul and malicious as he was – and slapped me across my cheek with such force that my earring necklace fell off.”

‘Abdullah, the son of Abu Bakr ﷺ would travel to the cave of Thawr and deliver provisions to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and Abu Bakr, while also updating them about the latest news. ‘Aamir, the servant of Abu Bakr, would pass by with Abu Bakr’s livestock so they can drink their fill of milk, and he eventually joined them on their Hijrah.<sup>2</sup>

## The loyalty and trustworthiness of ‘Ali ﷺ

When Quraish decided to assassinate the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on the night he left Makkah, it was ‘Ali ﷺ who took his place in his bed. As we mentioned earlier, Allah granted His Messenger a miracle and allowed him to escape unseen by the assassins waiting by his door. Occasionally, one of them would look into the home and see ‘Ali sleeping in the bed, and, assuming it was Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, they would continue to wait for him to come out. This gave the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr enough time to cover quite a bit of distance before the would-be assassins discovered the truth.

This courageous action from ‘Ali ﷺ was only one amongst many, for he was the cousin of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and bravery was ingrained in his character. He was also the Prophet’s son-in-law, and one of the ten who were promised Paradise.<sup>3</sup> ‘Ali and Abu Bakr, along with his family, worked together to facilitate the Hijrah of the Prophet ﷺ and serve him as best they could. Their love and reverence for him was more than apparent in their actions.

‘Ali remained in Makkah for some time, as per the Prophet’s orders. Many

1. lit., ‘owner of the two belts.’, Bukhari:4/258, Ibn Abi Shaibah:144

2. Ibn Hisham:1/487, Ibn Abi Shaibah:105

3. In a well-known hadith, the Prophet ﷺ mentions ten of the Companions who will be in Paradise. (Translator)

of the people of Quraish, including the pagans, had left some belongings with Prophet Muhammad ﷺ for safekeeping, and he asked `Ali to stay behind to return the items to their owners. After about three days, after he had tended to all his duties in Makkah, he set out towards Yathrib.<sup>1</sup>

## The Road to Yathrib

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and Abu Bakr ؓ remained three days in the cave of Thawr. This cave is located in a mountain known by the same name, southwest of Makkah. Yathrib lies north of Makkah, but they intentionally took this southern path to avoid any detection by their pursuers.

Quraish offered a reward of one-hundred camels for anyone who could bring them the Prophet ﷺ – dead or alive.<sup>2</sup> This, as you can imagine, enticed quite a few bounty hunters to take the search seriously. During the three days at the cave of Thawr, groups of searchers passed by at different times, but Allah protected His Prophet ﷺ.

After the initial fervor had died down, the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr exited the cave at night and met with their guide, `Abdullah bin Urayqit, who brought with him their two riding camels. They continued their journey towards Yathrib, but `Abdullah led them on a very interesting journey. He used his skills and experience as a traveler to take them through valleys and paths that were not known at all to lead to Yathrib. This unorthodox trail increased the length of their travel time, no doubt, but it served its purpose of keeping them safe from almost all bounty hunters.

I say almost all because they did run into a man by the name of Suraqah bin Malik. Suraqah himself narrated the following: “The messengers of Quraish came to us and offered the equivalent of blood-money [i.e., one-hundred camels each] to kill the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and Abu Bakr, or capture them alive. Later, as I was sitting in one of the gatherings of my tribe, Banu Mudlaj, a man from amongst them came and said, ‘O Suraqah, I just saw some figures by the coast, and I think they are Muhammad and his companions.’ I realized it must be them, but I said, ‘That was not them. The people you saw were so-and-so, and so-and-so, who set out from here.’”

I remained at the gathering for a short while, then I went home and told my servant to prepare my horse for me. I collected my spear and exited from the

1 Ibn Hisham:1/482,493

2 Bukhari:4/256

back of my house, keeping my spear close to the ground until I got onto my horse and rode quickly. When I was close to them [i.e., the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr ؓ], my horse stumbled, and I fell off.

I stood up and reached for my quiver. I drew lots using my arrows as to whether I should harm them or not. I did not like the result I got, so I disobeyed it, remounted my horse, and headed in the same direction. Eventually, I was close enough to hear the recitation of Allah's Messenger ﷺ, and he did not even glance backwards towards me, although Abu Bakr glanced in my direction many times.

Suddenly, my horse's legs sank into the ground until the sand reached its knees, and I fell off. I rebuked it and stood back up, but my horse could not remove its legs from the ground. When it finally stood up straight, the movement caused a dust cloud to form around us, similar to smoke. I drew lots again using my arrows and the result was the same, but I disliked it.

I called to them, promising that no harm will come to them from me, and they stopped. I remounted my horse and went to them, and I felt within my soul that I was prevented from harming them and that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ will be granted victory. I said to him, "Your people have placed a reward of one-hundred camels for your capture," and I informed him of other news concerning him.

I then offered them some provisions and supplies for their journey, but they did not accept anything nor did they request anything else except that I do not inform others about them. I asked the Messenger ﷺ to write a declaration of security for me, so he told `Aamir bin Fuhairah who wrote it for me on a piece of parchment, then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went on his way."

In other, more detailed narrations of their encounter, Suraqah mentions that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ prophesized that the Muslims will conquer Persia, and that Suraqah will one day wear Khosrow's bangles<sup>1</sup>.

Suraqah kept his word, for as he was returning to Makkah, he met some bounty hunters searching for the Prophet ﷺ and he directed them away from where he was.

It may seem strange to hear the Messenger of Allah ﷺ making such a grand claim to Suraqah, promising him that he will one day wear the bracelets of the king of Persia, even though the Messenger ﷺ was, at the time, being exiled by the pagans of Makkah, wanted dead or alive, with a hefty reward for his capture.

1. A type of jewelry worn around the arm or wrist.  
Bukhari:4/256, Ibn Abi Shaibah:146, Al-Isabah:2/19

However, none of that mattered to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, for he was informed by Allah that the Muslims would one day conquer Persia, and that Suraqah, a simple Bedouin, would be allowed to wear the king's jewelry. At the time of Suraqah's encounter with the Prophet ﷺ, the Arabs could not even come close to the Persian Empire in terms of wealth, civilization, and military strength. It was not even conceivable for the Arab tribes to make it to the city where Khosrow lived, let alone attain his treasures.

Suraqah felt Islam in his heart but he parted with the Prophet ﷺ without declaring the testimony of faith. It was not till years later that he encountered the Messenger of Allah ﷺ again, as he was returning from Taif. Suraqah still had the parchment with him, and he showed it to Allah's Messenger ﷺ. They spoke and Suraqah embraced Islam on that day.

Of course, the prophecy of Muhammad ﷺ to Suraqah ﷺ came to pass. Years after the death of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the Muslims conquered Persia under the rule of `Umar bin al-Khattab ﷺ. The spoils of war made their way to Medinah, including the vast horde of extravagant jewelry belonging to Khosrow, the king of Persia. `Umar proudly called Suraqah to come forward in front of a gathering of Muslims in the Prophet's Masjid, placed the jewelry upon him, and proclaimed, "*Allahu Akbar!* All praise is due to Allah who removed these from Khosrow the son of Hormizd and placed them upon Suraqah bin Ju'shum, a Bedouin from the tribe of Mudlaj."<sup>1</sup>

Suraqa then mounted a riding beast and was taken around the marketplace of Medinah while he was making *takbir*<sup>2</sup> so that all the people of Medinah could witness this prophecy come to pass approximately fifteen years after Suraqa's meeting with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

Now let us return to the story of the Prophet's Hijrah. As he ﷺ, Abu Bakr, and their guide made their way to Yathrib, they ran into a group of Muslims returning from the Levant, among whom was `Abdullah bin az-Zubair ﷺ, who gifted them some white garments.<sup>3</sup>

## Arriving in Medinah

The Ansar and Muhajirun received the news that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had set out from Makkah, so they took to waiting at the outskirts of Yathrib every day until the heat of the midday sun sent them back to their homes. One day, after they

1 Al-Isabah:2/19, Al-Bidayah wa An-Nihayah:7/68, Ibn Abi Shaibah:146

2 i.e., saying 'Allahu Akbar' (Allah is Great)

3 Abu Shahbah As-Seerah:1/495, Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:2/256



had gone back to their homes, a local Jewish man was on higher ground attending to some of his affairs when he spotted the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and Abu Bakr approaching from a distance. He could not contain himself and called out at the top of his voice, “O Arabs! Here is your leader whom you have been awaiting!”

The Muslims were overjoyed, and they rushed to greet the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and welcome him. It was Monday, the eighth of Rabi` al-Awwal, corresponding to September 21<sup>st</sup>, 622 CE. The sun was striking the Prophet ﷺ so Abu Bakr ؓ got up and used his garment to provide shade for him, and thus the people knew which one of the two was Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.<sup>1</sup>

The city of Yathrib became known as *Medinaht ar-Rasul*, i.e., the City of the Prophet, or Medinah for short, and it remains known by that name until today. His arrival in Quba<sup>2</sup> marked the very first day of the Hijri calendar, a day which is mentioned in the Qur’an:

*“Verily, the mosque whose foundation was laid from the first day on piety is more worthy that you stand therein (to pray). In it are men who love to clean and to purify themselves. And Allah loves those who make themselves clean and pure.” (at-Tawbah, 108).*

When the Companions were discussing the need for a calendar, there were a few opinions regarding when to mark the first year. Ultimately, the Hijrah was chosen, as `Umar ؓ said: “Hijrah separated between truth and falsehood, so let it begin our calendar.” The verse we just mentioned (at-Tawbah, 108) played a role in their decision, as well as the fact that many of the Companions felt the Hijrah marked the start of a new stage in Islam wherein the Muslims became one nation.

Some narrations mention that the number of Ansar who greeted the Prophet ﷺ were five hundred, and the Muhajirun were approximately one hundred. They all pledged to the Prophet ﷺ upon his arrival, even though many of them had already done so previously.<sup>3</sup>

Anas bin Malik ؓ narrates: “When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ arrived in Medinah, he dismounted in the upper region amongst a tribe called Banu `Amr bin `Awf. He spent fourteen nights there, then he sent for Banu an-Najjar, who came with their weapons. It is as if I can see the Messenger of Allah ﷺ now, on his camel, with Abu Bakr beside him, and Banu an-Najjar surrounding him.”<sup>4</sup>

1 Bukhari:4/258, At-Tarmanini, Azminah At-Tareekh Al-Islami:15

2. A town outside of Yathrib, now within present-day Medinah. The Masjid of Quba’ is still present today.

3 Bukhari: 3919

4. Bukhari:3932



Prophet Muhammad ﷺ remained in Quba' for fourteen days. During his stay, the Muslims built a masjid known today as Masjid Quba' – the very first masjid built in Islam. The Prophet ﷺ participated in its construction, and when it was complete he led the Muslims in prayer. He ﷺ said about it: “Prayer in Masjid Quba' is equivalent to a `Umrah.”<sup>1</sup>

It is a masjid that is near and dear to the heart of every Muslim, for it is mentioned by their Creator as a masjid that was built upon *taqwah*<sup>2</sup>, and it was the first masjid of this great Ummah. In the aforementioned verse, Allah describes the people of the town of Quba' as *muttahirin*, or clean, pure people.

The first *Jumu`ah*, or congregational Friday prayer, in Islam was led by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in the region belonging to Banu Salim bin `Auf. A masjid was later built there, and it remains standing to this day, and it is well-known.<sup>3</sup>

The arrival of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in Medinah brought great joy to the Ansar. The people formed a large crowd around him, and each person wished that the Prophet ﷺ would stay with him. It is narrated that even the children were saying, “Allahu Akbar! The Messenger of Allah has arrived!”<sup>4</sup>

Al-Bara' bin `Azib ؓ – who was a child at the time – narrated later that he witnessed the arrival of the Prophet ﷺ in Medinah: “I have never seen the people of Medinah as happy as the day the Messenger of Allah ﷺ arrived. They were competing with one another to have him stay with them, for each person wished to have that honor. They would stop him one by one and ask him to come with them.”<sup>5</sup>

Everyone wanted to have the Prophet ﷺ as a guest and a neighbor, but of course it was impossible, and the Prophet ﷺ did not wish to disappoint the Ansar by choosing one over the other. Many of the Ansar were trying to grab hold of the reins of the Prophet's camel, to lead it to their home, but he ﷺ told them, “Leave her, for she is being directed [i.e., by Allah].” The camel walked freely for a while and then sat down. A man from the Ansar named Abu Ayyub al-Ansari ؓ rushed to remove the Prophet's belongings from its back, and he took them into his home. Thus, Abu Ayyub had the honor of housing the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as a guest while his new home was being built.<sup>6</sup>

1. Bukhari and Muslim, Ibn Kathir :1/908
2. i.e., God-consciousness
3. Ibn Hisham:1/493, Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:2/271
4. Fath Al-Bari:15/125
5. Ibn Abi Shaibah:152
6. Ibn Hisham:1/491 ,Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:2/273



## Medinah and its people

As we mentioned, Medinah used to be known as Yathrib before Islam. The Qur'an mentions it by this name once, in the following verse: {And when a party of them said: "O people of Yathrib..." } (al-Ahzab, 13). After the Prophet's arrival, he changed its name to Medinah, which is mentioned in the Qur'an four times. Some other names of the blessed city are *Taybah*, *Tabah*, *al-Mubarakah*, *al-Musharrafah*, and *Dar al-Hijrah*. Throughout the history of the Islamic nation, historians and scholars have written books about the city and its virtues.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ made *du`a*<sup>1</sup> for Medinah, including the following: "O Allah, place the love of Medinah in our hearts as much as we love Makkah, or more."<sup>2</sup>

He ﷺ also supplicated: "O Allah, bless our harvest, bless our city, bless our *sa`*, and bless our *mudd*<sup>3</sup>. O Allah, Ibrahim was Your servant, Your friend [*Khalil*], and Your Prophet; and I am Your servant and Your Prophet. He (Ibrahim) supplicated to You for Makkah, and I am supplicating to You for Medinah just as he did, and more."<sup>4</sup>

He ﷺ also informed us that Medinah is a holy sanctuary like Makkah, and he warned against doing actions that are forbidden in the sanctuary of Allah, such as hunting game animals and cutting down trees. He ﷺ said: "Medinah is a sanctuary from that place to that (i.e., he indicated the range of the sanctuary). Its trees should not be cut and no heresy should be innovated (nor any *fitna* spread in it), and whoever innovates in it an heresy (or spreads *fitna*), then he will incur the curse of Allah, the angels, and all the people."<sup>5</sup>

Medinah became the capital of the Muslim Ummah and remained as such during the reign of the Four Rightly-guided Caliphs. Over the next decade or two, this small desert city was to become one of the most influential cities in the world.

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1. i.e., supplication, prayer

2. Bukhari:2/220

3. *Sa`* and *mudd* are two traditional Arabic measuring units for buying and selling.

4. Muslim:2/10

5. Bukhari:1867

The two tribes of al-Aws and al-Khazraj lived side by side in Medinah, in a typical tribal formation, not unlike the setup in Makkah. Before Islam, they lived peacefully – for the most part – and even intermarried. A few Jewish tribes also lived in the city.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not come to Medinah to become a feared leader; that was never his demeanor. The tribes of al-Aws and al-Khazraj were brought closer together due to their newfound religion, and a leader to unite them. Those who did not accept Islam from the pagans and the Jews remained as they were, living harmoniously amongst the Muslims in Medinah, interacting, buying and selling as usual. It is true that the strength of brotherhood in Islam is tied closely to faith, but that never prevented the Muslims from being kind and compassionate with their neighbors. Shortly after the Prophet ﷺ settled in Medinah, a document known as the Charter of Medinah was drafted, which formed the basis of the state.

The Prophet ﷺ remained with Abu Ayyub until the Masjid and his home were built. It was an honor and a blessing that Allah bestowed upon Abu Ayyub – having the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in his home, where he conducted his affairs, met with the believers, and even received revelation from Allah.

Indeed, the kind welcome that the Prophet ﷺ and the Muhajirun received in Medinah was in deep contrast to the persecution they suffered in Makkah. The pagans of Makkah did whatever was in their power to harm them – even taking the Muslims’ wealth, whereas the Ansar did whatever they could to help them – even offering their newfound brothers a share of their own wealth! It was a welcome mercy from Allah, a reward for their patience during the difficult times, and a sign of greater things to come in the afterlife by Allah’s permission.<sup>1</sup>

## Building the Prophet’s Masjid

One of the first things the Prophet ﷺ did when he arrived in Medinah was choose the location for the Masjid that would become known as the Prophet’s Masjid. As you may recall, his camel, al-Qaswa’, was allowed to walk freely, for the Prophet ﷺ had understood from Allah that it was being directed to the place where the Masjid would be built. The camel sat down on a patch of land owned by two orphans named Suhail and Sahl. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “This will be my home – by Allah’s will,” and he called over the two boys and

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Sa‘ad :1/237, Al-Asabah:1/402, Siyar Aalam An-Nubala:2/402

requested to purchase the land. They say, “We gift it to you, O Messenger of Allah!” However, he refused to accept it as a gift, and insisted on buying it.<sup>1</sup>

It was the Prophet’s custom to accept gifts in general, but in this instance, he did not do so. He ﷺ wanted to build a masjid where Allah alone would be worshipped, and he wanted the previous owners of the land – whoever they may be – to receive their full right. The Prophet’s Masjid was the first *waqf* in Islam, donated by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ who set an example for his Ummah until the Last Day.

The Prophet’s Masjid was built by the hands of the Ansar and the Muhajirun, and the Prophet ﷺ, of course, participated. It was made of palm trunks and clay bricks, and the *qiblah*, or direction of prayer, faced Jerusalem. It was rebuilt and expanded approximately seven years later to strengthen the building and accommodate a greater number of worshippers.<sup>3</sup>

## Brotherhood in Medinah

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ felt it was of the utmost importance to create strong bonds of brotherhood between the Muslims. The Ansar were in need of learning the religion and the Muhajirun found themselves away from their family and homes. In Makkah, the Prophet ﷺ paired up some of the Muslims in bonds of brotherhood so they can look out for one another and support each other during the difficult times. `Ali ؓ had said, “O Messenger of Allah, you paired up your Companions as brothers, but not me?” The Prophet ﷺ replied, “I will be your brother.”<sup>4</sup>

This pairing continued in Medinah, though this time it was between the Muhajirun and Ansar, and they took it quite seriously. It was not uncommon to see the newfound brothers in faith treating one another like actual siblings, to the extent that the Ansar happily and freely shared their wealth and even included their brothers in their businesses. Such was the brotherhood of the early Muslims.<sup>5</sup>

## The Prophet’s Marriage to A’ishah رضي الله عنها

There is no doubt that Allah the Exalted chose the Prophet’s wives, for they were a mercy for the Prophet ﷺ himself as well as his Ummah. Khadijah رضي الله عنها was older than him, and she proved to be most caring, wise, and supportive at a

1 Bukhari: 4/254

2. A charitable endowment in Islamic law.

3 Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:3/345

4 Abu Shahbah, As-Seerah:2/52

5 Ibn Hisham:1/505



crucial time in the Prophet's life: when revelation first descended upon him. She believed in him and reassured him every step of the way.

The youngest woman the Prophet ﷺ married was A'ishah ؓ. She was the only one of his wives who was not previously married, and she was very intelligent. Allah gave a special task to the wives of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ due to their close relationship with him. Allah the Exalted told them: {And remember (O you the members of the Prophet's family), that which is recited in your houses of the Verses of Allah and wisdom. Verily, Allah is Ever Most Courteous, Well-Acquainted with all things.} (al-Ahzab, 34). It was their duty to relay what they learned in the house of the Messenger ﷺ to the Muslim Ummah so that we can learn our religion and follow his example.

The Prophet ﷺ was engaged to A'ishah ؓ some time after Khadijah ؓ passed away, but the marriage contract was not till the month of Shawwal in the tenth year of the Prophetic mission, and the actual wedding took place in the first year after Hijrah, although some scholars believe it was even later than that.<sup>1</sup>

Due to her young age and intelligence, A'ishah ؓ was able to learn a lot from the Prophet ﷺ and she became one of the Ummah's most knowledgeable scholars. Her memory was very strong, and her *fiqh*, or understanding, was even greater. She lived many years after the Prophet's death, teaching the Muslim Ummah – men and women – about Islam and the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

A'ishah ؓ was the most beloved person to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. It was Allah's decree that they did not have any children together. A'ishah ؓ was given the nickname Umm `Abdullah. It is traditional in Arab culture to give a *kunya*<sup>2</sup> to someone after they have children, i.e., referring to a man as Abu so-and-so (i.e., the Father of so-and-so) and a woman as Umm so-and-so (i.e., the Mother of so-and-so). It was not uncommon for people who did not have children to also receive a kunyah, sometimes with the name of a nephew or niece, such as in A'ishah's case, for her nephew was `Abdullah bin az-Zubair ؓ.

The family of Abu Bakr ؓ was indeed blessed, for not only was Abu Bakr the Prophet's closest friend, the family received the great honor of being related to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ through A'ishah ؓ, his wife in this world and in the afterlife.<sup>3</sup>

1 At-Tabari:1/340

2. A kunya is a nickname that typically refers to the person's firstborn child, although it can often be used with other references as well. E.g., Abu `Ali (The Father of `Ali) or Umm `Ali (The Mother of `Ali)

3 Siyar A`alam an-Nubala:1/135



## Medinah thrives

Islam enters communities and forms a relationship between the people and their Creator, forging a love of His worship and obedience to Him in the hearts of its followers. In the day-to-day aspects of society, Islam promotes honor and kind interaction, following law and order, treating others as one would like to be treated, being productive members of society, and protecting our environment from all types of corruption.

Medinah was the first example of these teachings coming to life. The Prophet ﷺ taught the Muslims about the Islamic way of life with regards to social interactions and business, and the Muslims rushed to implement these teachings into their daily lives. This served to increase the harmony in the city and the love and respect between its inhabitants. It was truly a blessed spectacle to behold.

### ‘Yathrib’ to ‘Medinah’

Medinah was previously known as Yathrib, a name derived from a root word meaning blame or condemnation. As you can imagine, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not like the first Muslim city to have a name with such a negative connotation, so he changed it to Medinah. The word ‘Medinah’ literally means ‘city,’ for the Muslims hoped the small town of Yathrib would become an actual city, i.e., a place of residence, culture, business, law and order.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also gave Medinah other names, such as Taybah, al-Mubarakah (the Blessed City), Dar al-Iman (Abode of Faith), and al-Hasina (the Protected City). You may have noticed a pattern; the Prophet ﷺ chose names full of positivity and optimism, as he always did.<sup>1</sup>

## The Sanctity of Medinah

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Verily, Ibrahim declared Makkah a sanctuary, and he supplicated for it. I have declared Medinah a sanctuary just as Ibrahim did for Makkah, and I prayed that Allah bless its *mudd* and *sa*<sup>2</sup> – as Ibrahim عليه السلام did for Makkah.”<sup>3</sup>

He also said: “O Allah, place the love of Medinah in our hearts as much as we love Makkah, or more.” He ﷺ taught us that it is part of one’s faith to love and

1 Salih Ar-Rifa'i, Al-Ahadith al- Waridah fee Fadail Madinah:301-305

2. The two primary units of measurement when buying and selling goods. The Prophet ﷺ prayed for Allah to bless the productivity of Medinah.

3. Bukhari:4/40

care for one's home. Medinah and Makkah are beloved to all Muslims because they are beloved to Allah. They are sanctuaries, so certain rules apply to them that do not apply elsewhere. For example, it is impermissible to hunt within their boundaries, amongst other rules. The Prophet ﷺ said: "I have declared sacred the land between the two lava plains of Medinah, so its trees should not be cut down, nor its game killed."<sup>1</sup>

He ﷺ praised the people of Medinah, saying: "Truly, *iman* (faith) returns to Medinah just as a snake retreats into its burrow."<sup>2</sup>

In a lengthy hadith, the Prophet ﷺ said: "...and Medinah is better for them, if they but knew."<sup>3</sup>

## The population grows

The Muslims celebrated the joyous occasion of the first baby born in Medinah. His name was `Abdullah, son of az-Zubair bin al-`Awwam and Asma' bint Abi Bakr, both of whom were Muhajirun. Many verses in the Qur'an teach us to protect our children, and not to worry about their provisions, for Allah is their Provider. Allah the Exalted said:

*"And kill not your children for fear of poverty. We provide for them and for you. Surely, the killing of them is a great sin."*(al-Isra', 31).

In many hadiths, the Prophet ﷺ reminds us of the importance of having children, and encourages Muslims to raise them in the proper manner. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Marry those who are loving and fertile, for I will be proud of your great numbers before the other nations on the Day of Judgment."<sup>4</sup>

The first time a census was taken in Medinah was during the time of the Prophet ﷺ. He gave the command to make a record of the Muslims, and Hudhaifa رضي الله عنه mentions that they recorded 1,500 men.<sup>5</sup> This indicates that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ wanted to be aware of their numbers and strength from the very beginning.

As we mentioned, the Prophet ﷺ had previously sent word to every able Muslim to migrate to Medinah, so that they may live amidst a Muslim community and strengthen one another. This was at a time when the Muslims were fewer in number, and found it difficult to practice their religion on their own. However,

1. Muslim:1376

2. Bukhari and Muslim

3. Bukhari:1875, Muslim: 1387

4. Bukhari:3909

5. Ahmad:3/245



as more and more people embraced Islam, he did not always give the same command. For example, when an entire tribe accepted Islam and was prepared to migrate to Medinah, he told them to remain in their homes and their land, and he sent Companions to teach them about the religion. Years later, after the conquest of Makkah, the command for individuals to migrate to Medinah was abolished.<sup>1</sup>

Even within the city of Medinah itself, it was important that the Muslims to keep a healthy balance in population density. When the Prophet's masjid was completed, many of the Ansar who lived further away wanted the blessing and reward of praying there as much as possible. The family of Salama, who lived in the outskirts, wanted to move closer to the masjid. Anas رضي الله عنه narrates: "Banu Salama wanted to move closer to the masjid but the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not wish for Medinah to be vacated, so he said, 'O Banu Salama, you will be rewarded for your footsteps [towards the Masjid],' so they remained where they were."<sup>2</sup>

## Spiritual growth

An increase in quantity without any regard for quality is certainly of little value. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught the Muslims to have value, and to feel that value within themselves – without falling into arrogance, of course. He ﷺ taught them to interact with their brothers and sisters in the best manner, while also maintaining a relationship with their Lord. In order to keep this balance, it is essential to strengthen the soul, to feed it on a regular basis just as one feeds his physical body to maintain strength.

Islam recognizes that spiritual growth does not simply mean that one reads the Qur'an. For one to become a healthy, positive member of society, it is important that the positive influence start from an early age – as soon as they are born, in fact, by choosing a good name for the child. After all, he or she will hear it constantly. Allah's Messenger ﷺ taught his Companions this, and he often insisted that positive, beautiful names be chosen, as opposed to a common tradition that existed amongst some tribes to choose harsh names for one's children.

He ﷺ advised some of his Companions with regards to their children's names, including the newborns `Abdullah bin az-Zubair, al-Hasan and al-Hussain – both children of `Ali, and many others. He advised against using negative or hurtful nicknames, and even changed the names of some of the Companions who had harsh ones.<sup>3</sup> He would sometimes give friendly nicknames to people, and taught

1 Ibn Abi Shaibah:347

2. Bukhari:1887

3 Fath-al-Bari:15/104, Ibn Abi Shaibah:153

his Ummah to show mercy to one other, and to every living being.<sup>1</sup>

Allah the Exalted said about this Ummah:

*“You [true believers in Islamic Monotheism, and real followers of Prophet Muhammad and his Sunnah] are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind...”* (Aal-`Imran, 110).

## The Pursuit of Knowledge

The first verses that descended upon the Messenger of Allah ﷺ were around the subject of knowledge. Allah the Exalted said:

*“(He) Who taught by the pen - Taught man that which he knew not.”*  
(al-`Alaq, 4-5).

This was at a time when most of the Arabs were unlearned; they instead followed stories and legends passed down from their forefathers. They were a world away from neighboring civilizations of the Jews, Christians, and Persians whose education far surpassed their Arab neighbors.

This changed when Islam came into the picture. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stressed the importance of education, and the Companions took his advice into effect immediately. They sought knowledge of their religious affairs from the Prophet ﷺ and they also sought to improve their worldly life by learning.<sup>2</sup>

Allah the Exalted said:

*“O you who believe! When you are told to make room in the assemblies, (spread out and) make room. Allah will give you (ample) room (from His Mercy). And when you are told to rise up [for prayers, Jihad, or for any other good deed], rise up. Allah will exalt in degree those of you who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge. And Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do.”* (al-Mujadilah, 11)

The Prophet ﷺ held gatherings where he taught the Qur’an and the details of Islam – not just the rituals of worship, but Islam as a whole, which includes all the aspects we mentioned, e.g., the importance of education and being a productive member of society.

Bukhari, the great hadith scholar, titled one of his chapters ‘the Chapter of Knowledge,’ which he divided into fifty subchapters. In them, he collected

1 Ibn Sa`ad:4/245

2 Al-Harakah al-Ilmiyah Fee `Asr ar-Rasool wa Khulafa ar-Rashidoon

many hadiths and commented on a number of verses all surrounding the topic of knowledge.<sup>1</sup> Some of those verses are the following:

*“Is one who is obedient to Allah, prostrating himself or standing (in prayer) during the hours of the night, fearing the Hereafter and hoping for the Mercy of his Lord (like one who disbelieves)? Say: “Are those who know equal to those who know not?” It is only men of understanding who will remember.”* (az-Zumar, 9)

*“...It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Almighty, Oft-Forgiving.”* (Fatir, 28)

The Prophet ﷺ used to advise those who have knowledge to teach it to others. A group came to him from the tribe of `Abd al-Qais, and after they had spent some time with him, he told them, “Return to your people and teach them.”<sup>2</sup>

Before Islam, writing was not common amongst the Arabs. The Jews were well-known for this skill, for they had set up schools for their children to learn how to read and write Hebrew. The Jews of Yathrib (now Medinah) were known for this, and some of al-Aws and al-Khazraj had learned from them.

Because of value Islam placed on knowledge, the Muslims strove to learn to read and write, even before Hijrah. For example, during their time in Makkah, Fatimah bint al-Khattab and her husband, Sa`id bin Zaid, were learning to read the Qur`an in secret with their teacher, Khabbab – may Allah be pleased with them all. In Medinah, `Ubadah bin as-Samit taught the People of as-Suffa how to read and write.<sup>3</sup>

Another instance is after the Battle of Badr, several pagans of Quraish were captured as war prisoners. They were permitted to pay a ransom to free themselves, so those who were wealthy did so. Others who were known to read and write were given the option to free themselves by teaching ten young Muslims. Many of the young Ansar learned these valuable skills this way.

These are just some of the examples of the emphasis the Prophet ﷺ placed on education, and it resulted in a growing number of educated people in Medinah. Additionally, several Companions ؓ were the scribes of the Prophet ﷺ, writing down Qur`an and hadiths, as well as official documents. As society grew, it became more essential that records be kept.

It may seem strange now to discuss something as basic as the benefits of

1 Bukhari , Book of Knowledge, H:59-134

2 Bukhari:87

3 Ibn Hisham:1/345, Dr. Akram Al-`Umri, Al-Mujtama Al-Madani:96

reading and writing, two skills that seem ubiquitous in today's society. However, one must remember that it was not always the case. The Arabs did not see a need for every individual, or even most people, in society to be literate. Islam changed this mindset, and this played a huge role in the success that the Islamic Ummah.

Women were not excluded in this regard. It is reported that the learned women of Medinah were teaching those who were not. It is reported that the Prophet ﷺ asked ash-Shifa' bint `Abdullah, a woman who accepted Islam and migrated to Medinah, to teach Hafsa – may Allah be pleased with them both. As evidenced from the Qur'an and Sunnah, the necessity to pursue education was not limited to a specific gender, age group, or race. It is a command for all Muslims to seek education and better themselves and their communities.<sup>1</sup>

It is estimated that the number of literate people in Medinah increased by up to three or four times in the first four years after Hijrah. This change alone was revolutionary, let alone all the other positive changes that were happening at the time. Allah the Exalted was setting in place the means that would allow the Muslim community to flourish and progress, to one day become equal to, and eventually greater than, their neighboring nations.

*“Read! In the Name of your Lord, Who has created (all that exists), created man from a clinging substance. Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous, who taught by the pen, taught man that which he knew not.”* (al-`Alaq, 1-5)

Now, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ himself could not read or write. As we mentioned before, this was normal in Arabia, but even after Islam, it was Allah's wish that he remain without those skills. Allah the Exalted said:

*“Neither did you (O Muhammad) read any book before it (this Quran), nor did you write any book (whatsoever) with your right hand. In that case, indeed, the followers of falsehood might have doubted.”* (al-`Ankabut, 48).

Allah did not give the doubters of Islam any room to accuse the Prophet ﷺ of having read the Qur'an elsewhere, or wrote it himself.

## Social progress

Before Islam, Yathrib was like most other regions in Arabia, full of tribalism, averse to any change or progress. They had no official government, nor did they keep records in any official capacity. They did not have any social system that helped those in need; instead, the tribes would simply take care of their own, and

<sup>1</sup> Zad al-Ma`ad:3/24, Abd Al-Aziz Al-Oumari, al-Hiraf wa as-Sana`at: 35

those with no tribe were left to their own devices.

However, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was like a light, shining brightly wherever he was. His settlement in Medinah was a blessing and a mercy for its people until the Last Day, for his presence and teachings brought their society forward leaps and bounds in such a short time. The Muslim community had an official leader – the Prophet ﷺ. They began to keep records of their citizens. Masjids were centers where the community met on a regular basis, and the leader, or imam, would speak to the people and hear from them. Charity and social security took form in *sadaqah* and *zakat*.

Just like the example of education, these aspects of society seem so basic to us in modern civilization, but they did not exist in that region of Arabia at the time. These changes occurred on a societal level, but they also changed the way the individual looked at his fellow man. Instead of being bound by tribal lines, they began to see themselves as a community, and began to see the rights of their fellow man upon them. Islam encourages one to think in terms of the greater good. Allah the Exalted said:

*“And those in whose wealth there is a known right for the beggar and the deprived.”* (al-Ma`arij, 24-25)

Another lesson the Prophet ﷺ taught his Ummah was to avoid profiting from evil. Islam recognizes that some things are detrimental to society as a whole, even if they benefit certain individuals, such as *riba* (interest-based loans, usury). These actions are *haram*, or prohibited, in Islam, and thus were not allowed to gain a foothold in early Muslim society. Allah warns of a severe punishment for those who engage in such actions, for their harm spreads to others and allows some members of society, usually the rich and strong, to exploit others, usually the poor and weak.

One of the biggest social ills that Islam prohibits is *zina*, i.e., fornication and adultery. It is an evil social ill that leads to many problems including the spread of diseases, and children born out of wedlock, and so on. Allah commands the believers to avoid *zina* in many verses, including:

*“And do not approach unlawful sexual intercourse. Indeed, it is ever an immorality and is evil as a way.”* (al-Isra’, 32)

As an alternative to *zina*, Islam encourages marriage and grants rights to both spouses. Allah teaches the believers to be kind to their spouses and treat each other with respect and mercy. The Prophet ﷺ was an example for the believers in this regard.

Consumption of alcohol, or *khamr*, is forbidden in Islam. Pre-Islamic Arabian culture was rife with alcohol. They consumed it often despite the negative consequences that arose from it. The prohibition of *khamr* in Islam came down in stages, until it finally became one of the major sins. Again, we see Islam reshaping the community by removing that which impedes function and whose cons outweigh its pros.<sup>1</sup>

Islam places great importance on the kind treatment of one's parents. It is considered one of the biggest sins for one to mistreat his or her parents, and Allah promises great reward for those who treat them well. Allah the Exalted said:

*“And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be dutiful to your parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect nor shout at them, but address them in terms of honor.”* (al-Isra', 23)

Similarly, Muslims are to keep close ties with their relatives, for certainly a strong family unit is essential to a healthy society. Several verses, as well as hadiths, attribute a great reward for Muslims who connect with their relatives and treat them kindly, whether the relative is Muslim or non-Muslim. Allah the Exalted said:

*“Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives, and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded. And fulfill the covenant of Allah when you have taken it, [O believers], and do not break oaths after their confirmation while you have made Allah, over you, a witness. Indeed, Allah knows what you do.”* (an-Nahl, 90-91)

Neighbors also enjoy a special position in Islam. Whether one's neighbor is Muslim or non-Muslim, it is obligatory to treat them well. Allah the Exalted said:

*“Worship Allah and join none with Him in worship, and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, the poor, the neighbor who is near of kin, the neighbor who is a stranger, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet), and those whom your right hands possess. Verily, Allah does not like such as are proud and boastful;”* (an-Nisa, 36)

In the simplest terms, a Muslim cooperates with his community in spreading good and removing evil whenever possible, and with whatever means are available to him or her.

*“...And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in*

1 Bukhari: 5575-5602

*sin and aggression. And fear Allah ; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty.”*  
(al-Ma’ida, 2)

As we can observe, Islam incorporates many teachings that help to create a harmonious society of well-meaning individuals who look towards the greater good for their community as a whole.

Regarding how to treat others, Allah the Exalted said:

*“The recompense for an evil is an evil like thereof, but whoever forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is due from Allah. Verily, He likes not the wrongdoers.”* (ash-Shura, 40)

*“And the slaves of the Most Beneficent (Allah) are those who walk on the earth in humility and sedateness, and when the foolish address them (with bad words) they reply back with mild words of gentleness.”*  
(al-Furqan, 63)

*“And those who do not witness falsehood, and if they pass by evil talk, they pass by it with dignity.”* (al-Furqan, 72)

Allah advises the believers to repel evil with a good action:

*“The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better; then verily he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend.”* (Fussilat, 34)

Respect and good conduct are goals that Muslims are encouraged to seek on both individual and societal levels. Allah the Exalted said:

*“O you who believe! Let not a group scoff at another group, it may be that the latter are better than the former; nor let (some) women scoff at other women, it may be that the latter are better than the former, nor defame one another, nor insult one another by nicknames. How bad is it, to insult one’s brother after having faith. And whosoever does not repent, then such are indeed wrongdoers. O you who believe! Avoid much suspicions, indeed some suspicions are sins. And spy not, neither backbite one another. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would hate it. And fear Allah. Verily, Allah is the One Who accepts repentance, Most Merciful.”* (al-Hujurat, 11-12)

This is because every person is born equal, not better or worse than his neighbor, for we all came from the same parents:

*“O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and*

*made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honorable of you with Allah is the one who is most righteous. Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.”* (al-Hujurat, 13)

Arrogance is indeed a grave sin in Islam:

*“And turn not your face away from men with pride, nor walk in insolence through the earth. Verily, Allah likes not each arrogant boaster.”* (Luqman, 18)

*“And do not do mischief on the earth, after it has been set in order; and invoke Him with fear and hope; Surely, Allah’s Mercy is (ever) near unto the good-doers.”* (al-A`raf, 56)

*“By time, indeed man is in loss, except for those who believe and do righteous deeds, and advise each other to truth and advise each other to patience.”* (al-`Asr, 1-3)

Acts of worship such as prayer allow a Muslim to grow closer to Allah, and that relationship acts as a barrier between the Muslim and evil deeds.

*“Recite, [O Muhammad], what has been revealed to you of the Book and establish prayer. Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater. And Allah knows that which you do.”* (al-`Ankabut, 45)

These verses shaped the way the new community in Medinah treated each other, and they became an example of an ideal Islamic society, one that was not seen before or since.

## Health and hygiene

Yathrib was known for some health problems that appeared in its population or those who visited. Every so often, a flu would go around. This was probably due to some geographical factors that were present at the time. The Prophet ﷺ supplicated for Medinah, asking Allah to bless it, and rid it of any excess sickness or disease.

Though the Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed for the betterment of Medinah, he taught the Muslims to seek cures and remedies for their illnesses, not to simply rely on prayer alone. He ﷺ said: “Allah did not create any disease except that He also has created its treatment.”<sup>1</sup> The Prophet ﷺ was human, after all, and became ill from time to time. He sought the remedies that were available in his time, such as honey, black seed, and other natural medicines. He ﷺ said: “Healing is in three

1. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:21/250



things: A drink of honey, the glass of the cupper, and cauterizing with fire, but I forbid my nation to use cauterization.”<sup>1</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ taught his Ummah to seek actual remedies and avoid things that are of no benefit, such as seeking omens and so on.

Knowing the strong effect of one’s psyche on their physical and mental well-being, the Prophet ﷺ always promoted optimism and strongly discouraged having a negative outlook.

He ﷺ also taught his Ummah to follow preventative measures when possible. He taught the believers that cleanliness was a big part of faith. This includes washing on a regular basis, including rituals such as *wudu*’ and *ghusl*, washing one’s hands before and after eating, after using the bathroom, and so on. He ﷺ taught his Companions to keep their food clean and keep their containers covered at night to prevent critters and contaminants from getting in it.

As we mentioned before, the theme of putting the benefit of the community above one’s individual interests is ever-present in the teachings of Islam. Another example is the hadith of the Prophet ﷺ: “If you hear of the outbreak of plague in a land, do not enter it; and if it breaks out in a land that you are in, do not leave.”<sup>2</sup>

With regards to nutrition, the Prophet ﷺ taught us to keep ourselves healthy by eating moderately and fasting regularly. He ﷺ said: “A human does not fill any container that is worse than his stomach. It is sufficient for the son of Adam to eat what will support his back. If this is not possible, then a third for food, a third for drink, and third for his breath.”

The Prophet ﷺ also taught his Companions some habits to keep their bodies clean. He ﷺ said: “Five practices are characteristics of the *fitra*: circumcision, shaving the pubic region, clipping the nails, plucking the underarm hair, and trimming the mustache.”<sup>3</sup>

The first hospital in Islam was during the Prophet’s time. A woman named Rufaidah ؓ set up a tent in the Prophet’s Masjid during the Battle of the Trench where she would care for the sick and injured. The Prophet ﷺ had Sa’d bin Mu`adh taken there when he was injured in battle, and visited him there.

He ﷺ also taught to seek healing with the Qur’an and supplication, which is known as *ruqyah*.

Many books surrounding the topic of Prophetic healing or “Medicine of the Prophet” have been written over the centuries, many of which derive the bulk of their

1. Bukhari: 7/20

2. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari :21/303

3. Muslim: 1/152

contents from the teachings of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ that revolved around the topic of health. It is important to seek only the books that can authentically attribute their remedies to the Prophet's hadith, for there are many books that will ascribe anything to 'Prophetic healing' even though it is simply a cultural remedy or even baseless.

The Prophet ﷺ taught his Companions over the years, though his advice was not specifically for them; rather, it is for his entire Ummah. Once again, we see how Islam came to Medinah and created positive change and health-consciousness amongst the Muslims, another aspect that helped them advance as a civilized nation.<sup>1</sup>

## Economics

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was a productive member of his society ever since a young age. His first job was shepherding in Makkah when he was a young man, and as you may recall, he used his earnings to help his uncle support the household.

When he grew older, he began to work for Khadijah ؓ as a tradesman, travelling on a regular basis. He ﷺ taught his Ummah to be productive, saying: "Nobody has ever eaten a better meal than that which he earned by working with his own hands. The Prophet of Allah, Dawud, used to eat from the earnings of his manual labor."<sup>2</sup> He ﷺ encouraged the Companions when he informed them that even the Prophets worked with their hands, such as when he said: "(Prophet) Zakariyya was a carpenter."<sup>3</sup> These are, of course, only a few hadiths out of many, for the scholars of hadith have dedicated entire chapters to this topic, such as Bukhari's chapter titled, "Earning from one's own handiwork," Ibn Majah's "The Importance of Working," and ad-Darimi's "Work and earning from one's own labor" – all three are titles of chapters in their respective compilations.

The Prophet ﷺ did not look down on those who worked physical labor. On the contrary, he treated them with respect and encouragement, and did not avoid mingling with them. He did not perpetuate the wrong notion amongst people (which, unfortunately, survives to this day) that such work is to be looked down upon. For example, he hired the wife of a blacksmith to take care of his infant son, Ibrahim, and he would not turn down an invitation even if it were from someone who small-minded people would consider 'lower class.'<sup>4</sup> Considering the Prophet's position as not only the Messenger of Allah, but the leader of the nation, his actions had an impact on the community externally and internally.<sup>5</sup>

1 Monis Hussain, At-Tareekh as-Sahhi Lir-Rasool, Ibn Qayyim, At-Tibb An- Nabavi:229

2 Bukhari:2072

3 Ibn Majah: 2/773

4 Al-Isabah:4/98

5 Abdul Aziz Al-Oumari, Al-Hiraf wa as-Sana□at, P:43

# War

As we know, the Prophet ﷺ would receive commands from his Lord, and his duty as the Messenger was to deliver them to the people. From the early days of his mission, the Muslims suffered persecution at the hands of the disbelievers in Makkah. They were insulted, tortured, imprisoned, had their wealth stolen, and their blood spilt – but still they persevered in Allah’s path even if it meant leaving their homes and wealth behind, making Hijrah to Abyssinia and finally Medinah.

Despite all these difficulties, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ would advise his Companions to remain patient, and he did not give them permission to retaliate. He reminded them of the previous nations, the followers of the Prophets, believers who persevered through more difficult conditions and were even killed for their faith, but they refused to give it up, and they became triumphant in the end. He ﷺ gave his Companions hope for the future, telling them about the victory that would one day come to them by Allah’s permission, and that Allah would cause Islam to spread far and wide, and overcome paganism and injustice. Islam would one day reach every home as per the hadith<sup>1</sup>. He ﷺ also said: “By Allah! This religion will be completed (and triumph) till a rider (traveler) goes from Sana’a’ (the capital of Yemen) to Hadhramaut fearing nobody except Allah.”<sup>2</sup>

Allah the Exalted will indeed grant victory to the religion of Islam:

*“It is He Who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, to make it superior over all religions even though the polytheists hate (it).”* (at-Tawbah, 33)

After the Prophet’s Hijrah to Medinah, the pagans of Makkah continued to threaten him and his Companions, as well as harm any Muslims that were forced to remain in Makkah or passed through it. However, the Hijrah to Medinah marked a new era for the Muslims. They had grown in number and strength, and they no longer lived in fear of persecution. After all, the Ansar pledged at

1. Referring to the hadith, “This matter will certainly reach every place touched by night and day. Allah will not leave a house or residence except that Allah will cause this religion to enter it...” (Musnad Ahmad)
2. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:7/198, Ahmad:5/110

al-`Aqaba to protect the Prophet ﷺ as they protect their own families. As you may recall, As`ad bin Zurarah warned them at the time that their pledge may cost them their lives, but they knew what they were signing up for, and their faith could not be shaken.

The Muhajirun and Ansar were ready to sacrifice for the sake of their Lord, and fully prepared to face the consequences. It began to dawn on the pagans of Quraish that the Muslims they caused so much harm in Makkah were no longer an easy target and were now prepared to defend themselves. Was it worth it to attack the Muslims now that there was a clear risk of casualties? This is perhaps why they were so insistent on preventing the Prophet ﷺ from making Hijrah – they knew that the religion they tried to quell was entering a new stage that would soon be out of their power. However, their plots in Makkah failed, and their plotting now was doomed to fail as well, for the Exalted said:

*“And (remember) when the disbelievers plotted against you (O Muhammad) to imprison you, or to kill you, or to exile you. They were plotting and Allah too was planning, and Allah is the Best of the planners.”* (al-Anfal, 30)

Fighting to protect oneself falls under the concept of *jihad* in Islam, for one of its main goals is to defend the oppressed. In Makkah, the Prophet ﷺ commanded his Companions to stay their hands, for *jihad* had not yet been prescribed by Allah. The pagans became aware of this and felt empowered to persecute the Muslims, for they preyed on the weak.

Allah the Exalted said:

*“Those who believe fight in the Cause of Allah, and those who disbelieve fight in the cause of Taghut (Satan, etc.). So fight you against the allies of Satan; ever feeble indeed is the plot of Satan.”* (an-Nisa’, 76)

Years passed in Medinah, then Allah revealed the following verse to His Prophet:

*“Permission [to fight] has been given to those who are being fought, because they were wronged. And indeed, Allah is most powerful for their aid.”* (al-Hajj, 39)<sup>1</sup>

This verse signified that Allah had granted permission to those believers who were being persecuted to defend themselves, it did not mean that it was *wajib*, i.e., obligatory on them to do so. Allah tells the believers that the reason He

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Hisham:2/590

permitted this is because they have been oppressed, and He gives them a clear guarantee that He will grant them victory, for He is surely capable of that.

Allah tells us about some of the oppression that the believers faced in the following verse:

*“Those who have been expelled from their homes unjustly only because they said: “Our Lord is Allah.” - For had it not been that Allah checks one set of people by means of another, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, wherein the Name of Allah is mentioned much would surely have been pulled down. Verily, Allah will help those who help His (Cause). Truly, Allah is Powerful and Exalted in might.”* (al-Hajj, 40)

*Such is the reality of this world.*

*{And if Allah did not check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief. But Allah is full of Bounty to the worlds.}* (al-Baqarah, 251)

Surviving as a community and eventually a nation requires strength. Evil will always exist in this imperfect world, and as such, those who stand for good need to be prepared to combat evil. The Prophet ﷺ knew that the Muslims needed to be prepared in terms of physical strength, training, and provisions.

In Islam, jihad is permitted to combat oppression and transgression, and the Muslims must be careful not to, themselves, transgress. Allah the Exalted said:

*“And fight in the way of Allah those who fight you but do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors.”* (al-Baqarah, 190)

In another verse, He said:

*“And what is wrong with you that you fight not in the Cause of Allah, and for those weak, ill-treated and oppressed among men, women, and children, whose cry is: “Our Lord! Rescue us from this town whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from You one who will protect, and raise for us from You one who will help.””* (an-Nisa’, 75)

The Prophet ﷺ spent his life opposing polytheism, performing *jihad* in its general sense, i.e., struggling, but also in the specific sense, for he did engage in battle with the pagans after Allah commanded him to do so.

Allah the Exalted granted victory to those who believed in Him over those

who wished to spread *fasad*, or evil, in the land. One of the main goals of this jihad was to stop the oppression of the tyrants who wished to extinguish the light of Allah and prevent the spread of Islam.<sup>1</sup>

Allah the Exalted said:

*“And We wanted to confer favor upon those who were oppressed in the land and make them leaders and make them inheritors.”* (al-Qasas, 5)

There is no doubt that the concept of jihad in Islam needs to be understood properly. It is intellectually dishonest to take one or two verses out of context and attempt to label it as terrorism, or equate it to the senseless killing that occurs at the hands of extremists in this day and age. The rules surrounding jihad are derived from the Qur’an and Sunnah, and have been studied and codified in the books of law and jurisprudence throughout this Ummah’s long history, like the rules of war for any other nation.<sup>2</sup>

Many of the modern-day critics of Islam use the term *jihad* to refer to the acts of terrorism that occur at the hands of foolish, misguided people, even though Islam expressly forbids such heinous acts of senseless violence. This often intentional misuse of the word *jihad* serves to muddy the waters and create a false narrative to portray Islam and Muslims in a negative light, but it would be folly for us to allow them to overwrite what jihad truly is. Logic dictates that every nation has the right to defend itself if need be, otherwise it will be an easy target for those who wish to oppress and transgress. The unfortunate effect of the misinformation campaign is that many Muslims begin to misunderstand their own religion and feel ashamed of it.

Allah the Exalted said:

*“Those who have been expelled from their homes unjustly only because they said: “Our Lord is Allah.” - For had it not been that Allah checks one set of people by means of another, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, wherein the Name of Allah is mentioned much would surely have been pulled down. Verily, Allah will help those who help His (Cause). Truly, Allah is Powerful and Exalted in might.”* (al-Hajj, 40)

1 Tafseer Ibn Kathir:1/321

2 Golan Fath-ul-Allah Ar-Rasool Qaid,P:11 Khattab Mahmood Sheeth, Ar-Rasool Al-Qaid,P:6

# The Fast of Ramadan

The concept of fasting was not invented by Islam; it existed in its various forms amongst many nations throughout history, including the People of the Book, who still observe fasting as a religious rite today, however, the details of fasting differ from one religion or culture to the next.

In Sha`ban of the second year after Hijrah (2 AH), Allah the Exalted decreed the obligation of fasting on the Muslims.

Allah revealed:

*“O you who believe, fasting is decreed upon you as it was decreed upon those before you that you may attain piety. [Observing fasting] for a fixed number of days, but if any of you is ill or on a journey, the same number (should be made up) from other days. And as for those who can fast with difficulty, (e.g. an old man, etc.), they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a poor person (for every day). But whoever does good of his own accord, it is better for him. And that you fast, it is better for you if only you know. The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Qur`an, a guidance for mankind, and clear proofs of the guidance, and the Criterion (of right and wrong). And whosoever of you is present, let him fast the month, and whosoever of you is sick or on a journey, (let him fast the same) number of other days. Allah desires for you ease; He does not desire hardship for you; and (He desires) that you should complete the period, and that you should magnify Allah for having guided you, and perhaps you will be grateful.”* (al-Baqarah, 183-185).

Thus the fast of Ramadan became the fourth of the five pillars of Islam.

Ramadan is the ninth month in the Islamic calendar, and it is a sacred month. Healthy adult Muslims are obligated to fast from dawn till dusk as an act of worship to Allah. The whole month is enshrouded in an aura of spirituality and closeness to Allah the Exalted. Families are brought closer together, and the community as well, for there is the daily *iftar*, or breaking the fast, after sundown, and the nightly communal prayers in the mosques around the world.

Muslims are encouraged to seek closeness to Allah during this blessed month by doing more acts of worship, reciting Qur'an, giving charity, and doing more good deeds in general.

Another blessing of Ramadan is the Night of Power, the night during which Allah revealed the Noble Qur'an. Allah the Exalted said:

{Indeed, We sent the Qur'an down during the Night of Decree.} (al-Qadr, 1).

On this night, Muslims spend their time in worship and supplication and *i'tikaf*.<sup>2</sup>

Ramadan is a month of spirituality and community. One only has to observe the Muslim Ummah during Ramadan to see the blessings that it brings.



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1. I'tikaf is the Islamic practice of staying at the mosque for a prolonged period of time, usually a day or longer, but typically no longer than a week or two, to devote oneself to worship such as prayer, fasting, reciting Qur'an, seeking Islamic knowledge, and making *dhikr*.
  2. Tafseer Ibn Kathir:2/2013



# The Qiblah changes

The *qiblah* is the direction of prayer. Every Muslim everywhere in the world faces the same direction – Makkah – when they pray their five daily prayers. However, the qiblah was not always towards the Ka`ba in Makkah. In the early days of Islam, it was in the direction of Bait al-Maqdis, i.e., al-Aqsa Masjid in Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup>

During Sha`ban of the year 2 AH, Allah commanded His Prophet to change the qiblah to the Ka`ba. Allah the Exalted said:

*“...so turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid- al-Haram (at Makkah)...} (al-Baqarah, 144). When some of the Jews in Medinah heard of this, they attempted to stir up trouble with the Muslims, as Allah mentioned in the Qur’an: {The foolish among the people will say, “What has turned them (Muslims) from their Qiblah which they were used to face in prayer?” Say, (O Muhammad) “To Allah belong the east and the west. He guides whom He wills to a Straight Way.” (al-Baqarah, 142)*

The qiblah unifies the Muslims, for wherever you go in the world, and wherever you look in history, every Muslim country, community, neighborhood faces the same direction for prayer, following the command of their Lord:

*“And from wheresoever you start forth (for prayers), turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid-al-Haram (at Makkah), and wheresoever you are, turn your faces towards, it (when you pray) so that men may have no argument against you except those of them that are wrongdoers, so fear them not, but fear Me! - And so that I may complete My Blessings on you and that you may be guided.” (al-Baqarah, 150).*

Even today, if you travel to countries where there are a lot of Muslims, you may notice signs in the hotels or airports indicating the direction of the qiblah.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Hisham:2/606, Tafseer Ibn Kathir:2/606

## The first expeditions

As we mentioned, Quraish did not stop harassing the Muslims even after they moved hundreds of miles away. Their cruelty and hatred continued to manifest itself whenever it could. They threatened the Muslims and prevented them from entering Makkah, and if they happened to catch a Muslim traveling unprotected near their borders, they would capture him and possibly imprison or torture him. They even went as far as pursuing and capturing some of the muhajirun from Medinah!

Clearly, their enmity and transgression was not going to fade away – as one might have expected after the Hijrah, rather, they continued to transgress and harass. It is under these circumstances that Allah gave permission to the Muslims to fight back, along with a command from Him to be physically prepared for battle in case the need arose. This includes physical fitness, training, preparing war steeds and weaponry, and strategizing. In other words, the first army of the Muslim nation was born.

The military might of the Muslims began to strengthen rapidly, and the Muslims were given permission to retaliate in a structured manner. This took place in the form of expeditions to damage Quraish's economy. Quraish was a wealthy tribe with well-known merchants, whose trade routes sometimes passed close to Medinah. The Muslims began to monitor the travel routes near Medinah to prevent Quraish's caravans from passing through, in order to show them that they were no longer welcome, and that their harm would be met with retaliation.

These expeditions served as good training for the budding Muslim army, as they learned to strategize and execute plans, and how to be patient during the long hours necessary when guarding, which is an essential part of warfare.

The first few expeditions after Allah's command came down were experimental in nature, for the Muslims were still finding their strength. Some of the notable ones:

## The Expedition of Hamzah bin `Abd al-Muttalib:

This expedition took place in Shawwal of year 1 AH, seven months after the Prophet's Hijrah. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ established the first brigade of the Muslim army, under the command of Hamzah bin `Abd al-Muttalib ؓ. It was the first expedition of the Muslim army. The goal of the expedition was to intercept a caravan belonging to Quraish that was returning from the Levant to Makkah. Approximately three hundred men from Quraish accompanied the caravan, including Abu Jahl.

Hamzah set out northwest, in the direction of a town called al-Ais, where the tribe of Juhaina lived. No fighting occurred between the Muslims and Quraish due to the intervention of the leaders of the local tribes, and perhaps it was for the best.<sup>1</sup>

## The Expedition of `Ubaidah bin al-Harith ؓ:

`Ubaidah, the cousin of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ led this expedition, which also took place in Shawwal of the year 1 AH. The party set out in the direction of Rabigh, west of Medinah, to intercept another caravan of Quraish led by Abu Sufyan bin Harb and `Ikrimah bin Abi Jahl. The two parties had a skirmish and shot each other with arrows, but no one was immediately killed, although many were injured. Sa`d bin Abi Waqqas was particularly skilled at archery, and managed to hit a number of the Quraishi pagans, and thus he was the first person to strike an enemy in the history of the Muslim army.

Accompanying the caravan of Quraish were two Muslim men who subsequently left them and joined the Companions.<sup>2</sup>

## The Expedition of `Abdullah bin Jahsh to Nakhlah:

The Prophet ﷺ sent `Abdullah out with a company of men, mostly from the Muhajirun. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ told him which direction to take and gave him a letter, instructing him not to open it until two days had passed on their journey. After two days, `Abdullah opened the letter and read: "When you read this letter of mine, continue until you reach Nakhlah<sup>3</sup>, between Makkah and Taif. There you will be able to surveil Quraish and gather news about them."

1 Ibn Hisham:2/595

2 Ibn Hisham:2/591

3. A town near Makkah.

Upon reading the letter, he said: “I hear and obey, O Messenger of Allah.” He then informed his companions of the instructions, and told them that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ prohibited him from forcing any of them to go along with him. He told them, “Whoever of you wishes for martyrdom, then come along, and whoever does not wish for that may return. As for me, I will continue the path upon which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent me.” He then pressed forward, and they all did the same. Not a single one of them turned back.

When they arrived at the place that the Prophet ﷺ specified, they spotted a caravan of Quraish on its way back from Taif, carrying some trading goods. It was the last day of the month of Rajab, which is one of the sacred months in Arab tradition, i.e., a month wherein fighting is forbidden. `Abdullah and his companions discussed whether or not they should attack the caravan, due to the prohibition, knowing that if they waited one more day for the month to end, the caravan might reach the sacred bounds of Makkah, wherein fighting is also prohibited. Delaying would also risk a chance for Quraish to realize their caravan was being pursued, and gather their forces to defend or retaliate.

Eventually they concluded that it would be best to strike right away, and they did so, killing a man named `Abdullah bin al-Hadrami and capturing two men. They led the caravan, along with their two prisoners, back to Medinah. When they reached the Prophet ﷺ, he said, “I did not command you to fight during a sacred month.”<sup>1</sup>

`Abdullah bin Jahsh and his company felt that they had committed a grave error, the other Companions rebuked them for their actions. The hypocrites and pagans became aware of this controversy and they tried to fuel the fire, pleased that a problem had arisen amongst the Muslims.

Allah then revealed:

*“They ask you concerning fighting in the Sacred Months. Say, “Fighting therein is a great (transgression) but a greater (transgression) with Allah is to prevent mankind from following the Way of Allah, to disbelieve in Him, to prevent access to Al-Masjid-al-Haram (at Makkah), and to drive out its inhabitants, and Fitnah is worse than killing. And they will never cease fighting you until they turn you back from your religion if they can. And whosoever of you turns back from his religion and dies as a disbeliever, then his deeds will be lost in this life and in the Hereafter, and they will be the dwellers of the Fire. They*

1 Ibn Hisham:2/603, Abu Shahbah, As-Seerah:2/119

*will abide therein forever.” (al-Baqarah, 217).*

The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions were relieved. The spoils from the caravan were distributed according to the laws, and the Muslims accepted a ransom from Quraish for the two prisoners, who were then released.<sup>1</sup>

We may notice that these early expeditions were mainly comprised of Muhajirun, most of whom were from Quraish themselves, even close friends or family of the Prophet ﷺ. He sent them to retaliate against Quraish by hurting their economy, for the pagans of Quraish were the very same people that tormented them for years, stole their property, and expelled them from their homes.

It is also important to note that the participants in these expeditions all volunteered to do so. Perhaps another reason why these early groups were mostly Muhajirun was due to the fact that the Ansar were busy running the day-to-day affairs in the city, working on their farms, and caring for their families, whereas many Muhajirun did not have as much tying them down in Medinah, relatively speaking. Furthermore, the pledge that the Ansar gave to the Prophet ﷺ was to protect him, and they were fulfilling that pledge in Medinah.

These expeditions took weeks and months of travel and hardship, serving as much needed training for the Companions, as well as teaching them the roads, which would certainly prove invaluable in the future. They also succeeded in their main objectives which were to retaliate against Quraish and show them the strength of the Muslims. Quraish was now realizing that their years of oppressing others were coming back to haunt them. Their primary source of income was now in jeopardy, for they could no longer rely on the safety of their usual trade routes, even the ones that did not pass near Medinah, as we observed in the expedition of `Abdullah bin Jahsh.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Kathir Tafseer:1/271, Al-Isaba: 2/286

# The first battles

The first major battle in Islam was the Battle of Badr. It signified a new stage in the Prophetic mission, in Islamic history, and even the history of the world. However, before we get into that, let us take a look at some of the smaller battles, skirmishes, and patrols that occurred before Badr. These smaller battles were often led by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ himself, and their goal was the same as the expeditions he would send out: to interrupt Quraish's trade routes and show them the might of the Muslims whom Quraish had robbed of their wealth and homes.

## The Patrol of Abwa':

Also known as the Patrol of Buwat, it took place in Safar, 2 AH, approximately twelve months after the Prophet's Hijrah. The Prophet ﷺ himself led the Muslims, and Hamzah ؓ carried the banner. They set out to intercept a caravan belonging to Quraish that was headed in the direction of Radwa Mount, near the lands of Juhainah.

The leader of the caravan was Umayyah bin Khalaf, one of the Makkan pagans who had consistently shown the most hatred towards the Muslims. No battle occurred, however, possibly due to Umayyah taking a different route. Along the trails, the Muslims met the tribe of Banu Damurah and they agreed to a covenant of peace with the Muslims.<sup>1</sup>

## `Ashira:

`Ashira is found near Yanbu, west of Medinah, and it was inhabited by the tribe of Mudlaj. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ set out in the month of Jumada al-Ula, 2 AH with two-hundred of his Companions. Everyone in attendance had volunteered to participate, and Hamzah ؓ was, once again, the flagbearer. They set out in pursuit of a large caravan of Quraish that was transporting quite a large amount of the wealth to the Levant. However, by the time the Muslims arrived, the caravan had passed into the lands of Banu Mudlaj, allies of Banu Damurah, with whom the Prophet ﷺ had made a covenant of peace. The Muslims let the caravan pass unharmed.<sup>2</sup>

1 Ibn Hisham:2/591-598, Ibn Kathir, As-Seerah:2/356

2 Ibn Hisham:2/591

## Safawan (The First Expedition to Badr):

After the return from `Ashira by only a few days, a man named Kurz bin Jabir al-Fihri raided Muslim territory and stole some of the camels that used to pasture just outside of Medinah. The Prophet ﷺ and a group of Muslims set out swiftly in pursuit of the thief, but he managed to escape. The Muslim army reached Safawan, near Badr, before they decided to turn back.

Kurz bin Jabir al-Fihri later embraced Islam and joined the Muslim army, performing *jihad* alongside the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He was martyred many years later in the Conquest of Makkah.<sup>1</sup>

## The Battle of Badr:

This well-known battle took place on the 17<sup>th</sup> of Ramadan, 2 AH. It is the most famous battle in Islamic history, and Allah the Exalted called it ‘the Day of Criterion’ in the following verse:

“...*the Day of Criterion (between right and wrong), the Day when the two forces met...*” (al-Anfal, 41)

The Prophet ﷺ continued to seek news about Quraish and their movements. He was informed that a caravan belonging to them had left the Levant and was on its way to Makkah, passing near Medinah. The Prophet ﷺ told those present to prepare at once and set out with him. Approximately three-hundred and thirteen men prepared hurriedly and set out, most of them on foot, for there were only two horses and seventy camels present.<sup>2</sup> They were not expecting a battle; they simply intended to intercept the caravan, and due to the urgency of the matter, they were not able to fully prepare for battle.

Abu Sufyan bin Harb was leading Quraish’s caravan. He proceeded with caution, aware that their trade routes were no longer safe, and there was a possibility that the Muslims would intercept them. He learned of the news that the Prophet ﷺ and a group of Muslims had set out seeking his caravan, so he switched routes and headed for the coast, following a path the Muslims did not expect. He also sent word to Makkah, asking for reinforcements.

As soon as the pagans of Makkah received word from Abu Sufyan, they set out in a hurry, led by Abu Jahl. Many of the leaders in Quraish were present in the army.<sup>3</sup> However, Abu Sufyan successfully evaded the Muslims and sent word

1 Ibn Hajar, Al-Isabah:3/290

2 Ibn saqad:2/12 Al- Waqdi, Al-Maghazi:1/27

3 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:15/147

to Quraish that he was close to Makkah, and that it was safe for them to return.

Abu Jahl was not pleased with the news. He was hoping for a confrontation with the Muslims, for he was an arrogant man who did not like to be challenged. He knew Quraish had greater numbers, more experience, and better provisions, and he wished to deal the Muslims a killing blow. He announced that he would not be returning to Makkah until he reached the well of Badr and slaughtered some camels for a feast, wherein he would drink alcohol and listen to the playing of musical instruments, and the story of this event reaches all the Arabs. He wanted it to become a thing of legend, for Arabs to tell and retell this story of Quraish's might. Allah mentions this in the Qur'an:

*“And be not like those who come out of their homes boastfully and to be seen by people, and hinder from the Path of Allah. and Allah is encompassing of what they do.”* (al-Anfal, 47)<sup>1</sup>

Some of Abu Jahl's men told him, “You are heading to a battle with Muhammad. Do you not know that he is a prophet?” Abu Jahl replied, “Yes, I do, but I refuse to be a follower of `Abd Manaf.”<sup>2</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ learned about the movements of Quraish, so he gathered his Companions and consulted them. He ﷺ would often consult them in important matters, for it served many purposes, most importantly:

- This action from a leader communicates to the followers that their opinions are heard
- It helps them come to a collective decision, so the course of action becomes clear, and confusion is removed
- A decision reached by the group will likely be the wiser and better choice

In this instance, it was particularly important to consult, as there were Ansar present, and it was important to let them know that their input was taken into consideration.

The Prophet ﷺ said to his Companions: “Give me your opinions, O people.” Al-Miqdad bin `Amr spoke on behalf of the Muhajirun, saying “O Messenger of Allah, we will not say to you what Banu Isra'il said to Musa,

*““So go you and your Lord and fight you two, we are sitting here.”*  
[al-Ma'idah, 24].<sup>3</sup>

1 Ibn Sa'ad At-Tabaqat:2/13, Al- Waqdi, Al-Maghazi:1/42

2. He is referring to the subtribe that the Prophet ﷺ belongs to. In Abu Jahl's arrogance, he considered his bloodline to be stronger or more noble, and refused to be a follower of someone from another subtribe. (Translator)

3 Ibn Abi Shaibah:199



Rather, go you and your Lord and fight, and we will fight with you, for I swear by the One who sent you with the truth, if you set out for Bark al-Ghamad, we would go there with you.”<sup>1</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ supplicated for al-Miqdad and then said, “Give me your opinions, O people.” He wanted the Ansar to speak, for they were the majority of those present, and he wanted them to be heard. This was going to be the first battle between the Muslim army and the army of Quraish – the head of the antagonists against Islam. Injury and death were a very real, very imminent possibility. Sa’d bin Mu’adh, the leader of the Ansar, said: “It seems as though you want to hear from us, O Messenger of Allah?” The Prophet ﷺ replied, “Yes.” Sa’d said, “O Messenger of Allah, go forth as you wish, for by the One who sent you with the truth, if you crossed the sea we would cross it with you – not a single man among us would stay back. We do not fear meeting the enemy with you tomorrow, for we are steadfast in war. We hope that Allah will show you from us what pleases your eye, so go forth with the blessing of Allah!”<sup>2</sup>

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was very pleased with what Sa’d had said. He supplicated for him, and for all the Ansar and Muhajirun. Thus, the Muslim army had come to a decision.

The Prophet ﷺ led the march to Badr, giving the Muslims the glad tidings that Allah had promised them victory. This is recorded in the following verse in the Qur’an:

*“And (remember) when Allah promised you (Muslims) one of the two parties (of the enemy i.e., either the army or the caravan) that it should be yours, you wished that the one not armed (the caravan) should be yours, but Allah willed to justify the truth by His Words and to cut off the roots of the disbelievers (i.e., in the battle of Badr).” (al-Anfal, 7).*

*This strengthened their resolve as they approached the battle.*

When they arrived at Badr, some of the Companions set out to find out what they could about Quraish’s army, which was approximately nine-hundred to a thousand men, including the main leaders of Quraish. When he learned of this, the Prophet ﷺ said: “Makkah has sent to you its best men.” The Muslims realized that this was no longer about a caravan; Quraish had sent out its best men, and they wanted to finish the Muslims once and for all.

The Muslim army had settled near the first well of Badr. Al-Hubab bin Munthir

1 Fath al-Bari:15/151

2 Ibn Hisham:2/615, Ibn Abi Shaibah:177

approached the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and asked if the choice of location was a command from Allah, or if it was simply a strategic decision. The Prophet ﷺ confirmed that it was not a command from Allah. Al-Hubab recommended that they move forward until all the wells were behind them, so as to have access to all the water, and prevent the enemy from reaching it. The Prophet ﷺ liked his idea and supplicated for him, and the Muslims changed their location.<sup>1</sup>

This incident was a timeless lesson for leaders in the Ummah in how to listen to their constituents and be willing to change the plan if a better idea is proposed. It also teaches us that it is important to take the proper worldly means for success, even if you are seeking the blessing and aid of Allah. Relying on Allah is essential, but one should do so while taking the necessary steps, as the Prophet ﷺ always did.

The Prophet ﷺ then informed his Companions of what Allah had revealed to him: that many of the leaders of Quraish would meet their demise in the coming battle. He even showed them where some of them will fall. This news served to further reassure the Muslims of their imminent victory from Allah.<sup>2</sup>

The Companions set up a tent for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, where he remained secluded for a time, praying and supplicating to Allah.

Quraish approached, and the battle neared. The Prophet ﷺ supplicated to Allah, saying, “O Allah, Quraish has come in arrogance and boastfulness, challenging You and belying Your Messenger. I ask You for Your victory that you have promised me. O Allah, destroy them.”<sup>3</sup>

Some of the wiser men amongst Quraish tried to convince their people to avoid battle, to head back home to Makkah in safety. Abu Jahl and some of the others who carried a strong hatred towards the Muslims and were deeply entrenched in their own arrogance, refused this opinion and managed to convince the rest of the men to follow their lead. They did not know it at the time, but they were leading their people to destruction, and it was the decree of Allah coming to pass.

Night fell, and the Muslims were awake in prayer and supplication. Allah sent down tranquility upon their hearts, and a calm befell them, and they fell asleep.

*“(Remember) when He covered you with a slumber as a security from Him, and He caused water (rain) to descend on you from the sky, to clean you thereby and to remove from you the rijz (whispering, evil-*

1 Ibn Hisham:2/620, Ibn Abi Shaibah:2/620

2 Al-Waqdi:1/49, Ibn Abi Shaibah:206

3 Ibn Abi Shaibah,P :18

*suggestions, etc.) of Shaitan, and to strengthen your hearts, and make your feet firm thereby.” (al-Anfal, 11).*

The Prophet ﷺ was deep in prayer to Allah, weeping and invoking Him and seeking His help. Abu Bakr then took his hand gently to stop him, and said, “O Messenger of Allah, you have asked your Lord sufficiently.”<sup>1</sup>

As for the Quraishi pagans, they spent the night eating, drinking alcohol, listening to women sing and play instruments, and lavishing proudly in their strength and wealth and provisions. Their arrogance knew no bounds, for Abu Jahl even supplicated to Allah, asking Him to destroy His own Prophet. Allah the Exalted revealed:

*“(O disbelievers) if you ask for a judgement, now has the judgement come unto you and if you cease (to do wrong), it will be better for you, and if you return (to the attack), so shall We return, and your forces will be of no avail to you, however numerous it be, and verily, Allah is with the believers.”(al-Anfal, 19)<sup>2</sup>*

Dawn came, and the Muslims lined up to pray behind the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. After the prayer, he spoke to them, advising them to be patient and exhorting them to fight for the sake of Allah. The Muslims began to arrange themselves for battle, and the Prophet ﷺ walked amongst the troops, strengthening their resolve, encouraging them, and advising them with regard to strategy.

As the Prophet ﷺ was organizing the troops, a Companion named Sawad had stepped out of the line, so as the Prophet ﷺ was arranging the rows, he lightly nudged him back into the line with an arrow that was in his hand. Sawad remarked, “You hurt me, O Messenger of Allah, so allow me to receive retribution from you.” The Prophet ﷺ calmly lifted his shirt and permitted Sawad to hit him. Instead, Sawad kissed the Prophet ﷺ, who then asked him, “What caused you to do that, O Sawad?” Sawad replied, “O Messenger of Allah, you see what has approached us, so I wished that my final moments in this world be that my skin should touch yours!”<sup>3</sup>

The Companions waited patiently for the command from Allah’s Messenger, who had stepped aside once again to supplicate to Allah, saying, “O Allah, if this group is killed today, You will no longer be worshiped. O Allah, grant me what You promised me.”<sup>4</sup> He continued to supplicate, until Abu Bakr gently stopped

1 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:18/254

2 Ibn Abi Shaibah P:184

3 Al-Isabah:2/95, Al- Waqdi:1/56,57

4 Fath al-Bari:18/254

him once again, saying, “Allah will grant you what He promised you.”

The Prophet ﷺ told Abu Bakr, “Rejoice, O Abu Bakr! The support of Allah has come. Jibril now approaches, grabbing on to the reins of his steed.”<sup>1</sup> The Muslims were relieved to hear it. The Prophet ﷺ recited:

*“[Their] assembly will be defeated, and they will turn their backs [in retreat]. But the Hour is their appointed time (for their full recompense), and the Hour will be more grievous and more bitter.”*[al-Qamar, 45-46].

*He reminded the Companions to seek Paradise, and reassured them that the Angels were amongst them, aiding them.*

Allah the Exalted described them to us in the following verses:

*“(Remember) when you sought help of your Lord and He answered you (saying): “I will help you with a thousand of the angels each behind the other (following one another) in succession.”* (al-Anfal, 9)

*and*

*“(Remember) when your Lord inspired the angels, “Verily, I am with you, so keep firm those who have believed. I will cast terror into the hearts of those who have disbelieved, so strike them over the necks, and smite over all their fingers and toes.” This is because they defied and disobeyed Allah and His Messenger. And whoever defies and disobeys Allah and His Messenger, then verily, Allah is Severe in punishment.”*(al-Anfal, 12-13).

At the same time, Quraish was also preparing for battle. `Utbah bin Rabi`a was amongst them, sitting atop a red camel, still attempting to convince them to head back to Makkah and avoid fighting, to no avail. A man from the pagans of Quraish made his way to the Muslim army stealthily, but he was caught by Hamzah and promptly killed.

As per Arab tradition, the battle began with duels. Quraish sent out Shaybah bin Rabi`ah, `Utba bin Rabi`ah, and al-Walid bin `Utbah. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent Hamzah bin `Abd al-Muttalib, `Ali bin Abi Talib, and `Ubaidah bin al-Harith, all of whom were relatives of the Prophet ﷺ.

The duels ended with all three of Quraish’s men dead, for the Muslims won all three duels. `Ubaidah bin al-Harith was injured during his duel, and later

1 Ibn Abi Shaibah:180

passed away from his injuries. The noble family of the Prophet ﷺ were the first to fight and they were blessed to have one of the first martyrs in the battle.<sup>1</sup>

The battle began, and the two armies clashed. The Prophet ﷺ took a handful of sand and threw it in the direction of Quraish, saying: “May their faces be disgraced.” Allah revealed:

*“You killed them not, but Allah killed them. And you (Muhammad) threw not when you did throw but Allah threw, that He might test the believers by a fair trial from Him. Verily, Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.”* (al-Anfal, 17)

As the battle raged on, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was fighting in the front lines, and the Companions ﷺ fought bravely and fiercely. It became increasingly clear that victory was on the side of the Muslim army. Many of the leaders of Quraish had been killed, including Abu Jahl, `Utbah bin Rabi`ah, and Umayyah bin Khalaf. Approximately seventy men of Quraish had died before the rest of them decided to flee.<sup>2</sup>

The Muslims had lost fourteen men, martyrs in the path of Allah. They remained at Badr for three nights, where they buried their fallen. The pagans returned to Makkah, defeated and disgraced.

The Prophet ﷺ sent Zaid bin Harithah on his own camel to give glad tidings to the people of Medinah. When he arrived and shared the news, the Muslims were overjoyed, while the hypocrites and some amongst the Jews were annoyed and refused to believe it.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the soldiers of Badr returned to Medinah safely, grateful for the victory of Allah. They were greeted by the jubilant citizens of Medinah, who were overjoyed to see the Prophet ﷺ safe and sound, and delighted by the news of the decisive victory over Quraish.

The Muslim army had captured seventy of Quraish’s men, so the Prophet ﷺ consulted his Companions, and they came to the decision that the Muslims would accept a ransom for the release of the prisoners. In the meantime, the Muslims treated their prisoners well, giving them the same food that they would eat, and clothing them with the same garments they would wear. Some time later, relatives of the prisoners came and freed them.

A number of the prisoners were greatly affected by what they witnessed

1 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:15/161

2 Ibn Hisham :2/642,631,638,634 Al-Waqidi:1/88,85,82,92,100

during their time in Medinah, for they were treated well, even though they treated their own prisoners horribly. They also witnessed firsthand the community in Medinah, the honesty and brotherhood amongst the Muslims. Most of these very same prisoners embraced Islam in later years.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the verses revealed about the Battle of Badr can be found in the beginning of Surat al-Anfal.

Allah the Exalted said:

*“As your Lord caused you (O Muhammad) to go out from your home with the truth, and verily, a party among the believers disliked it; Disputing with you concerning the truth after it was made manifest, as if they were being driven to death, while they were looking (at it). And (remember) when Allah promised you (Muslims) one of the two parties (of the enemy i.e., either the army or the caravan) that it should be yours, you wished that the one not armed (the caravan) should be yours, but Allah willed to justify the truth by His Words and to cut off the roots of the disbelievers (i.e., in the battle of Badr). That He should establish the truth and abolish falsehood, even if the criminals disliked it. (Remember) when you sought help of your Lord and He answered you (saying): “I will help you with a thousand of the angels each behind the other (following one another) in succession.” Allah made it only as glad tidings, and that your hearts be at rest therewith. And there is no victory except from Allah. Verily, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise. (Remember) when He covered you with a slumber as a security from Him, and He caused rain to descend on you from the sky, to clean you thereby and to remove from you the Rijz (whispering, evil-suggestions, etc.) of Shaitan, and to strengthen your hearts, and make your feet firm thereby. (Remember) when your Lord inspired the angels, “Verily, I am with you, so keep firm those who have believed. I will cast terror into the hearts of those who have disbelieved, so strike them over the necks, and smite over all their fingers and toes.” This is because they defied and disobeyed Allah and His Messenger. And whoever defies and disobeys Allah and His Messenger, then verily, Allah is Severe in punishment. This is the torment, so taste it, and surely for the disbelievers is the torment of the Fire. O you who believe! When you meet those who disbelieve, in a battle-field, never*

1 Ibn Abi Shaibah,P:216

*turn your backs to them. And whoever turns his back to them on such a day - unless it be a stratagem of war, or to retreat to a troop (of his own), - he indeed has drawn upon himself wrath from Allah. And his abode is Hell, and worst indeed is that destination! You killed them not, but Allah killed them. And you (Muhammad) threw not when you did throw but Allah threw, that He might test the believers by a fair trial from Him. Verily, Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower. That (is so) and surely, Allah weakens the deceitful plots of the disbelievers. (O disbelievers) if you ask for a judgement, now has the judgement come unto you and if you cease (to do wrong), it will be better for you, and if you return (to the attack), so shall We return, and your forces will be of no avail to you, however numerous it be, and verily, Allah is with the believers.” (al-Anfal, 5-19)*

The Battle of Badr marked the first military victory of the Muslims over the pagans of Makkah, and news spread to the rest of the Arabs that the Muslims were a force to be reckoned with.

## Between Badr and Uhud

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ prioritized the safety of Medinah and its people, and he always took it into consideration when making any plans, especially in the ongoing conflict between Quraish and the Muslims. He ﷺ knew that there would be consequences for Quraish's defeat at Badr, for their anger would only increase, and they had many allies in the region. Quraish would never simply move on after losing so many of their men; they would certainly seek revenge.

For that reason, the Muslims were on high alert, and the defense of Medinah was fortified. The Muslim army continued to train and plan. In the meantime, some skirmishes and small battles took place, including:

### Banu Qainuqah:

Banu Qainuqah was a Jewish tribe living in Medinah. After the Messenger of Allah ﷺ moved there, he granted them peace and security, along with the other non-Muslim tribes of Medinah, in the document known as the Charter of Medinah. Part of the agreement was not to cause harm to the people of Medinah, and to collectively defend Medinah against any external attackers.

The Jews of Medinah knew that Muhammad ﷺ was indeed a Prophet of

Allah, for he fit the description given in their books. Several verses in the Qur'an mention their knowledge of his prophethood, and he ﷺ would often visit their scholars and discuss theology and religion with them, calling them towards the truth. Only a few of them embraced Islam, however, including the well-known Companion, `Abdullah bin Salam ؓ.

The Prophet ﷺ was merciful towards his Jewish neighbors, and he was always hopeful that they would one day come to the truth. After the victory at Badr, tension arose between the Jews in Medinah and the Muslims. The Prophet ﷺ spoke to the tribe of Qainuqah and told them to accept Islam but they responded unfavorably.

Some time later, an incident occurred that sparked enmity between Banu Qainuqah and the Muslims. A Muslim woman was at a goldsmith's shop in the marketplace of Banu Qainuqah. While she was seated, a Jewish man tied the bottom of her garment to the midsection from the back without her noticing. When she got up from her seat, her body became uncovered, and those present laughed at her. She screamed, and a nearby Muslim man attacked the culprit, killing him. The other Jewish men retaliated by killing the Muslim. News reached both Banu Qainuqah and the Muslims of Medinah, and both parties were furious.

It is said that the following verse was revealed about Banu Qainuqah:

*"If you (O Muhammad) fear treachery from any people throw back (their covenant) to them (so as to be) on equal terms (that there will be no more covenant between you and them). Certainly Allah likes not the treacherous."* (al-Anfal, 58)

The Prophet ﷺ and the Muslim army surrounded the fortress of Banu Qainuqah for fifteen days. Allah sent down fear in the hearts of Banu Qainuqah, and they surrendered. They turned to some of their allies from amongst the Muslims, including `Ubadah bin as-Samit, but they did not avail them. The hypocrites, or *munafiqun*, who hid amongst the Muslims in Medinah were dismayed by the surrender, for they were often aided by many amongst the Jews.

The leader of the hypocrites in Medinah, `Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul, asked the Prophet ﷺ to treat Banu Qainuqa` well, for they were his allies. He insisted multiple times, and even became rough with the Prophet ﷺ, who finally said, "They are yours." The Prophet ﷺ spared the Jewish tribe of Banu Qainuqah, but they were expelled from Medinah, for they were plotting against the Muslims



for a long time, and they were certain to continue to do so if left within the walls of Medinah.

Allah revealed about `Abdullah bin Ubayy:

*“O you who have believed, do not take the Jews and the Christians as allies. They are [in fact] allies of one another. And whoever is an ally to them among you - then indeed, he is [one] of them. Indeed, Allah guides not the wrongdoing people. And you see those in whose hearts there is a disease (of hypocrisy), they hurry to their friendship, saying: “We fear lest some misfortune of a disaster may befall us.” Perhaps Allah may bring a victory or a decision according to His Will. Then they will become regretful for what they have been keeping as a secret in themselves. And those who believe will say: “Are these the men (hypocrites) who swore their strongest oaths by Allah that they were with you (Muslims)?” All that they did has been in vain (because of their hypocrisy), and they have become the losers. O you who believe! Whoever from among you turns back from his religion, Allah will bring a people whom He will love and they will love Him; humble towards the believers, stern towards the disbelievers, fighting in the Way of Allah, and never afraid of the blame of the blamers. That is the Grace of Allah which He bestows on whom He wills. And Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures’ needs, All-Knower. Verily, your Wali (Protector or Helper) is Allah, His Messenger, and the believers, - those who perform prayer, and give Zakat, and they bow down (submit themselves with obedience to Allah in prayer). And whosoever takes Allah, His Messenger, and those who have believed, as Protectors, then the party of Allah will be the victorious. O you who believe! Take not for Auliya’ (protectors and helpers) those who take your religion for a mockery and fun from among those who received the Scripture (Jews and Christians) before you, nor from among the disbelievers; and fear Allah if you indeed are true believers.” (al-Ma’ida, 51-57)*

The expulsion of Banu Qainuqah from Medinah greatly angered the *munafiqun*, for they had lost a strong ally.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Hisham:3/49, Tafseer Ibn Kathir:1/628, Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:3/7, Tabaqat:2/29

# The Marriage of `Ali رضي الله عنه and Fatimah رضي الله عنها

Fatimah bint Muhammad, daughter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ who said about her: “Fatimah is the leader of the women of Paradise.”<sup>1</sup> He ﷺ also said, “Fatimah is a part of me, so whoever angers her has angered me.”<sup>2</sup>

She was the youngest of his children, and the most beloved of them to him – and he loved them all greatly, may Allah be pleased with them. The Prophet’s children all passed away before him, except for Fatima, who died six months after he ﷺ left this world. It is perhaps for this reason that she is the most well-known of the Prophet’s children. She is also the only one of his children whose bloodline continues to this day.

Fatimah رضي الله عنها was born approximately two years before the Prophetic mission. When she was a young girl, she witnessed some of the pagans of Quraish throw filth on her father ﷺ as he prayed. She rushed to remove it from him, defending her father according to her ability.<sup>3</sup>

There are many hadiths and narrations about Fatimah رضي الله عنها. `Aishah used to say, “I have never seen anyone better than Fatimah, except for her father.”<sup>4</sup>

`Aishah رضي الله عنها narrated that Fatimah came by, walking in a manner very similar the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. When he saw her, he said, “Welcome, my daughter!” Then he sat her down on his right side and spoke to her quietly, and she wept. Then he spoke to her quietly again and she smiled. I said, “I have never seen happiness so soon after sadness before today.” I asked her what he said. She replied, “I will not disclose the secret of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.”

After the Prophet ﷺ passed away, I asked her again, and she said that he said: “Every year, Jibril used to recite the Qur’an to me once, but this year he did so twice, and I believe this indicates that my time is near. You will be the first of my family to follow me.” I then wept, and he said, “Would it not please you to be the

1. Bukhari:5/209

2. Bukhari:4/209

3. Siyar Aalam An-Nubala:2/118

4. Al-Isabah:4/378

leader of all the women in Paradise?” So I laughed.”<sup>1</sup>

Fatimah was a young woman when she made *Hijrah* to Madinah. `Ali ؑ was also a young man, and he was the dearest of Prophet Muhammad’s relatives to his heart. He was the first young man to believe and accept Islam, for he knew the honesty of Muhammad ﷺ. He put his life at risk to help the Prophet ﷺ on the night he left for *Hijrah*. `Ali ؑ had a place in the heart of Allah’s Messenger ﷺ that was not for anyone but him.

In Muharram of the year 2 AH, `Ali wished to ask for Fatimah’s hand in marriage, but he was too shy to ask the Prophet ﷺ, and he did not have any experience in such matters. Some of the Companions had previously asked for Fatimah’s hand in marriage, but the Prophet ﷺ politely declined, perhaps awaiting `Ali ؑ.

`Ali ؑ narrates: “When I sat with the Prophet ﷺ [to ask for Fatimah’s hand] I was so nervous that I was unable to speak. He said, ‘What brings you?’ but I did not respond. He said, ‘Perhaps you came to request Fatimah’s hand in marriage?’ I replied, ‘Yes.’ He asked, ‘do you have anything to give for dowry?’ I responded, ‘No, by Allah, O Messenger of Allah.’ He asked, ‘What did you do with the armor that I gave you?’ I said, ‘It remains with me.’ He said, ‘Give that to her [as dowry].”<sup>2</sup>

It is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ informed Fatimah of `Ali’s request for her hand in marriage, and she remained silent, indicating her approval according to the custom of the Arabs.<sup>3</sup>

Their marriage ceremony was very simple; `Ali ؑ spent according to his means. He narrates: “When I was preparing to marry Fatimah, the daughter of Allah’s Messenger ﷺ, I arranged with a goldsmith from Banu Qainuqah to accompany me to gather some lemongrass to sell to the goldsmiths in order to earn some money to pay for my wedding feast.” Once he did so, he invited the Ansar and Muhajirun to his humble celebration.

The Prophet ﷺ wanted `Ali and Fatimah to live near him. When an Ansari Companion named Harithah bin an-Nu`man ؑ heard this, he vacated his home that was very close to the Prophet’s, and he offered it to `Ali. Harithah said, “By Allah, the one who is receiving this home is more beloved to me than the one

1 Bukhari:7/14

2 At-Tabaqat:8/21, Ibn Kathir, As-Seerah:2/543

3. According to custom, a previously-unmarried woman would be too shy to announce her approval, so her silence after the request was an indication of it. If she was unwilling to marry the individual, she would not be too shy to announce her denial of his request.

who is leaving it.” Thus, `Ali and Fatimah moved into the home near the Prophet ﷺ due to Harithah’s generosity.<sup>1</sup>

Their home was truly a blessed one, for they had several pious children, including al-Hasan, al-Hussain, Umm Kulthum, and Zainab – may Allah be pleased with them all. However, that did not mean they lived an easy life, for *dunya*, or this worldly life, was not their main concern. They worked hard, toiling in different forms of physical labor, to maintain their household.

Like any other couple, they would occasionally have their differences, for they were human after all. The Prophet ﷺ would help them overcome Shaitan, such as the following incident recorded by Ibn Hajar, who wrote: “One day, `Ali and Fatimah – may Allah be pleased with them – had an argument. Allah’s Messenger visited them and spoke with them until they reconciled, and then he left. Someone told him, “You were distressed as you entered but now that you return, we see joy in your face.” The Prophet ﷺ replied, “And why would I not be joyful, when I have reconciled between the two people I hold most dear?”<sup>2</sup>

Umm Salamah ؓ narrates: “The following noble verse was revealed in my home:

*“And stay in your houses, and do not display yourselves like that of the times of ignorance, and establish prayer, and give Zakat, and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah wishes only to remove ar-rijs (evil deeds and sins, etc.) from you, O members of the family (of the Prophet), and to purify you with a thorough purification.”* (Surah al-Ahzab, 33)

“The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent for Fatimah, `Ali, al-Hasan, and al-Hussain, and said, “They are my family.”<sup>3</sup>

This verse is about the family of the Prophet ﷺ, which includes his closest of kin via blood, and his wives, the Mothers of the Believers, who are mentioned in the beginning of the verse. It would not make sense to be only about those related by blood, for the Prophet’s wives were very close to him and were undoubtedly part of his family. Perhaps the Prophet’s action in the narration of Umm Salamah was to indicate that his relatives and progeny are also from ‘ahl al-bait’ which literally translates into ‘the people of his household,’ and that might indicate only the actual people in his household, i.e., wives and young children, but the Prophet’s action clearly shows that `Ali ؑ and his household are also included.

1 Siyar A`alam an-Nubala:2/380

2 Al-Isabah:4/379, Ibn Sa`ad:8/26

3 Ibn Kathir, Tafseer:2/1497

# The Battle of Uhud

## Shawwal, Year 3 AH

As you can imagine, the Quraish did not simply accept their defeat at Badr. They wished for revenge against the Muslims, and plotted an attack on Madinah. Those who had lost a father, brother, or relative at Badr incited the people against the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions. Some Jews who had traveled to Makkah employed a similar tactic, for they, too, wished to see the Muslims destroyed, and the munafiqun of Madinah were no different, promising the Quraish that they would aid them against the Muslims. Allah the Exalted revealed:

*“Verily, those who disbelieve spend their wealth to hinder (men) from the Path of Allah, and so will they continue to spend it; but in the end it will become an anguish for them. Then they will be overcome. And those who disbelieve will be gathered unto Hell.”* (Surah al-Anfal, 36) <sup>1</sup>

The Quraish and their allies prepared for war, and they set out towards Madinah with their men, slaves, and even some of their women. Their fighters totaled over three thousand. The Prophet ﷺ received news of their preparation and movements from some of his spies in Makkah, so he gathered the Muslims to seek their counsel, as he often did. The Companions offered different opinions; most of them felt it was better to go forth and meet the enemy outside of Madinah, while others felt it was wiser to remain in Madinah and defend it from within once the pagan army arrived. The Prophet ﷺ leaned towards the second opinion, i.e., to defend Madinah from within, however, those among the Companions who wished to go forth to meet the enemy outside of Madinah insisted, so the Prophet ﷺ accepted their opinion and began to prepare for battle.<sup>2</sup>

The Quraish had reached a valley close to Madinah when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ set out with one thousand of his Companions. On their way, the leader of the munafiqun, `Abdullah bin Ubayy, turned back towards Madinah, followed by one-third of the Muslim army – betraying the Prophet ﷺ. `Abdullah bin Ubayy claimed he did this because he felt they should fight in Madinah as opposed to outside of it. The Prophet ﷺ and the rest of the believers carried on towards the pagan army.

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Hisham: 3/60

<sup>2</sup> Musnad Ahmad:3/351

The Prophet ﷺ chose the mountain of Uhud for the Muslim army, and he took to arrange their rows, placing the bulk of the fighters in the valley, with the mountain behind them. He then sent a few archers to a small hill, under the command of `Abdullah bin Jubair ؓ. The Prophet ﷺ instructed them to remain on guard in their positions until they receive instruction from him, and to protect the main body of the Muslim army from their elevated position, to ensure that they are not taken by surprise. He ﷺ insisted that they remain in their positions no matter the outcome of the battle. Al-Bara' bin `Azib ؓ narrated: “We faced the pagans on that day, and the Prophet ﷺ chose the location for a group of archers, appointing `Abdullah as their leader. The Prophet ﷺ told them, “Do not leave this place, even if you see us defeating them. Do not leave this place, even if you see them defeating us, do not come to our aid.”<sup>1</sup>

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ chose Mus`ab bin `Umair ؓ as the flagbearer for the Muslim army, and then he arranged the rows, admonishing and extolling his Companions as he walked between them, reminding them of Allah’s promise of Paradise, and advising them to be patient and strong when facing the enemy. He ﷺ noticed some of the Companions who came out were too young for battle, so he sent them back to Madinah.<sup>2</sup>

Abu Sufyan was the leader of the pagans that day, so he was also mobilizing his troops, whose numbers reached approximately 3,000 fighters – more than four times the size of the Muslim army. Abu Sufyan divided his army and put Khalid bin al-Walid in charge of the right squadron. A few men of the Quraish with loud voices went around the army inciting their fighters for war, reminding them of their relatives who were killed at Badr the year before.<sup>3</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ took out a sword and asked his Companions, “Who will take this and fulfill its rights?” Abu Dujanah ؓ asked, “O Messenger of Allah, what are its rights?” The Prophet ﷺ replied, “That you strike the heads of the polytheists with it until it becomes bent.” Abu Dujanah took the sword, and then he brought out a red cloth from his pocket and tied it around his head, and he walked proudly, facing the enemy. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ commented: “This is a walk hated by Allah and His Messenger except in this context.”<sup>4</sup>

The two armies clashed and the battle began. Abu Dujanah ؓ fought bravely and fiercely with the sword, as did the other Companions – fearing none but Allah.

1. Bukhari:5/31, Ibn Ishaq As-Seerah,P:305

2. Ibn Ishaq, As-Seerah:203,208

3. At-Tabaqat:2/41

4. Ibn Abi Shaibah,P:236

As the battle raged on, it was quickly becoming clear that the Muslims were overtaking the Quraish's army, and victory was on their side. The pagans began to flee the battlefield and the Muslim army pursued them. Some of the Muslim soldiers saw this as the end of the battle, so they started collecting the booty of war. The Muslim archers atop the hill witnessed this victorious scene and hurried down from their posts, assuming the battle was over. Their leader, `Abdullah bin Jubair ؓ, tried to prevent them, reminding them of the Prophet's command to remain at their posts regardless of the outcome, but they did not listen to `Abdullah, and only he and a few others – less than ten in total – remained on the hill.<sup>1</sup>

Khalid bin al-Walid along with a group of riders of the Quraish were observing the situation from nearby, and as soon as Khalid saw the archers depart, leaving only a handful who would be no match for him and his riders, he and his men charged them and killed them all. They then descended the hill and rushed into the now unprotected Muslim army from behind. When the fleeing soldiers of the Quraish saw this, they turned back towards the battlefield to help their riders, and the Muslim army was attacked from both sides, turning the tides of battle against the Muslims.<sup>2</sup>

The pagan army tried to reach the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to kill him, and to show their ferocity, but he, along with a number of his Companions, stood their ground and fought fiercely. The Prophet ﷺ killed the evil man Umayyah bin Khalaf, who was, himself, trying to kill the Prophet ﷺ specifically, while chanting a war cry: "Muhammad! May I be destroyed if I do not destroy him!" The Prophet ﷺ faced this challenger himself and struck him with a spear in his neck, which led to his death. The Prophet ﷺ was human and thus was not immune to injury. During the battle, he ﷺ sustained a head injury, a broken tooth, and a cut lip. A group of Companions surrounded him during battle, attempting to protect him with their own lives, defending him however they could. Among them was Abu Talhah al-Ansari, Sahl bin Hunaif, Mus`ab bin `Umair the flagbearer – who was later martyred, `Ali, Abu Dujanah, and Sa`d bin Abi Waqqas – may Allah be pleased with them all. Umm `Ammarah ؓ, a female Companion, was also present in the battle and she defended the Prophet ﷺ with courage and strength.<sup>3</sup>

The pagans of the Quraish announced – falsely – that they had killed the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and it quickly spread to the Muslim soldiers, weakening the resolve of many of them, causing them to lose hope in fighting. Anas bin an-

1 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:15/225

2 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:15/225

3 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:15/225, Ibn Abi Shaibah,P:238

Nadr ﷺ asked them, “What has caused you to stop?” They replied, “Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, was killed.” He replied, “What will you do with life after his passing? Get up and die upon what Allah’s Messenger died upon!” He then turned to face the enemy and fought until he was killed. His body was later found with seventy different strikes, causing him to be unrecognizable, until his sister identified him by his fingers.<sup>1</sup>

Approximately seventy of the Companions ﷺ were martyred in the battle of Uhud, including the Prophet’s uncle, Hamzah ﷺ, who was killed by Wahshi, an Ethiopian slave. Among those martyred were Sa’d bin ar-Rabi’, Mus’ab bin `Umair, `Abdullah bin Jahsh, and Hanzalah – may Allah be pleased with them. The Prophet ﷺ and those with him headed towards the valley, and Abu Sufyan climbed the mountain along with some of the men of Quraish.

`Umar bin al-Khattab and some of the Companions then attacked Abu Sufyan and the pagans until they retreated from the mountain. Abu Sufyan asked loudly, “Is Muhammad with you?” The Prophet ﷺ instructed his Companions, “Do not reply to him.”

Abu Sufyan then asked, “Is Ibn Abi Quhafah [i.e., Abu Bakr] with you?” No response. “Is `Umar bin al-Khattab with you?” No response. Then he said, “They were all killed, for if they were alive, they would have answered.” `Umar could not restrain himself any further, and said, “You have lied, O enemy of Allah! Allah has spared those who will disgrace you!”

Abu Sufyan then said, “Hubal is supreme.” The Prophet ﷺ told his Companions, “Respond to him.” They asked, “What should we say?” He responded, “Say: Allah is Higher and More Exalted.”

Abu Sufyan said, “We have `Uzzah<sup>2</sup>, and you have no `Uzzah.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Respond to him.” The Companions asked, “What should we say?” He replied, “Say: Allah is our Protector, and you have no Protector.”

Abu Sufyan said, “Today for yesterday at Badr.” The Muslims responded, “They are not the same. Our dead are in Paradise, but your dead are in Hellfire.” Abu Sufyan said, “We will meet again at Badr next year.”<sup>3</sup>

The Muslim women had also participated in the Battle of Uhud, fighting when they could, but also bringing water to the soldiers and attending to the injured.<sup>4</sup>

1 Ibn Ishaq, As-Seerah:309

2. An idol that the pagans of Quraish worshipped.

3 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:15/227, Ibn Ishaq, As-Seerah,P:313

4 Ibn Abi Shaibah, P:232



The Quraish left the battlefield, having lost twenty-four men, and the Muslims remained, tending to their injured and burying their dead. Then they returned to Madinah, and the women wept for the martyrs, and the atmosphere of sadness affected even the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. However, he remained vigilant and cautious lest the enemy be planning an attack on Madinah to finish the Muslims off. The next day, he ﷺ set out with his Companions to pursue the Quraish and ensure that they had not doubled back towards Madinah. He instructed his Companions that only those who were present at Uhud should set out with him.

The Muslim army traveled approximately ten miles from Madinah and remained there for more than three days. News of their travel reached the Quraish – who had indeed been considering a return to Madinah to attack the city itself – but were convinced not to do so when they heard about their pursuers. They hastened their return to Makkah instead.<sup>1</sup>

Allah revealed several verses in the Qur'an about the Battle of Uhud:

*“And Allah did indeed fulfil His Promise to you when you were killing them (your enemy) with His Permission; until (the moment) you lost your courage and fell to disputing about the order, and disobeyed after He showed you (of the booty) which you love. Among you are some that desire this world and some that desire the Hereafter. Then He made you flee from them (your enemy), that He might test you. But surely, He forgave you, and Allah is Most Gracious to the believers.*

*(And remember) when you ran away (dreadfully) without even casting a side glance at anyone, and the Messenger was in your rear calling you back. There did Allah give you one distress after another by way of requital to teach you not to grieve for that which had escaped you, nor for that which had befallen you. And Allah is Well-Aware of all that you do.*

*Then after the distress, He sent down security for you. Slumber overtook a party of you, while another party was thinking about themselves (as how to save their own selves, ignoring the others and the Prophet) and thought wrongly of Allah - the thought of ignorance. They said, “Have we any part in the affair?” Say you (O Muhammad): “Indeed the affair belongs wholly to Allah.” They hide within themselves what they dare not reveal to you, saying: “If we had anything to do with the affair, none of us would have been killed here.” Say: “Even if you had*

1 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:15/253 At-Tabaqat:3/104

remained in your homes, those for whom death was decreed would certainly have gone forth to the place of their death,” but that Allah might test what is in your breasts; and to purify that which was in your hearts (sins), and Allah is All-Knower of what is in (your) breasts.

Those of you who turned back on the day the two hosts met (i.e. the battle of Uhud), it was Satan who caused them to backslide (run away from the battlefield) because of some (sins) they had earned. But Allah, indeed, has forgiven them. Surely, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Forbearing.” (Surah Aal `Imran, 152-155)

In the same Surah, Allah also revealed:

“(What is the matter with you?) When a single disaster smites you, although you smote (your enemies) with one twice as great, you say: “From where does this come to us?” Say (to them), “It is from yourselves (because of your evil deeds).” And Allah has power over all things. And what you suffered (of the disaster) on the day (of the battle of Uhud when) the two armies met, was by the leave of Allah, in order that He might test the believers. And that He might test the hypocrites, it was said to them: “Come, fight in the Way of Allah or (at least) defend yourselves.” They said: “Had we known that fighting will take place, we would certainly have followed you.” They were that day, nearer to disbelief than to Faith, saying with their mouths what was not in their hearts. And Allah has full knowledge of what they conceal. (They are) the ones who said about their killed brethren while they themselves sat (at home): “If only they had listened to us, they would not have been killed.” Say: “Avert death from your own selves, if you speak the truth.”

Think not of those who are killed in the Way of Allah as dead. Nay, they are alive, with their Lord, and they have provision. They rejoice in what Allah has bestowed upon them of His Bounty, rejoicing for the sake of those who have not yet joined them, but are left behind (not yet martyred) that on them no fear shall come, nor shall they grieve. They rejoice in a Grace and a Bounty from Allah, and that Allah will not waste the reward of the believers.

Those who answered (the Call of) Allah and the Messenger after being wounded; for those of them who did good deeds and feared Allah,

*there is a great reward. Those (i.e. believers) unto whom the people (hypocrites) said, "Verily, the people (pagans) have gathered against you (a great army), therefore, fear them." But it (only) increased them in Faith, and they said: "Allah (Alone) is Sufficient for us, and He is the Best Disposer of affairs (for us)." So they returned with Grace and Bounty from Allah. No harm touched them; and they followed the good Pleasure of Allah. And Allah is the Owner of Great Bounty." (Surah Aal `Imran, 165-174)*

Thus, this battle was a test from Allah by which He purified the believers' hearts, exposed the munafiqun, and accepted some of the Companions as martyrs in His Path. Uhud was certainly one of the most important battles that the Prophet ﷺ had, and it was one of the most difficult situations that the believers faced, but would only grow stronger from. It was the most casualties the Muslims sustained in battle up to that point.

## The massacre at ar-Raji`

Ar-Raji` is the name of an area in the land of the tribe of Huthail, between Makkah and `Usfan. In the month of Safar, 4 AH, a group of men from Adal and al-Qara came to Allah's Messenger ﷺ in Madinah. They said, "O Messenger of Allah, we have accepted Islam, so send us some of your Companions to teach us about the religion." The Prophet ﷺ sent with them a group of Companions and appointed `Asim bin Thabit as their leader.

The Companions traveled with their new group, but by the time they had reached the well of ar-Raji`, the treachery of the men of `Adal and al-Qara became clear: they had intentionally led the Companions into an ambush. Approximately 100 archers and warriors began to attack the ten or so Companions, and they realized the betrayal and sought shelter at a nearby hill.

The warriors surrounded the Companions and said, "You have our word that if you come down to us, we will not kill any of you." `Asim ؓ said, "As for me, I will not go down to them based on the word of a disbeliever. O Allah, inform Your Prophet [of our fate]." The two parties fought until `Asim and six others were killed, and only three remained: Khubaib, Zaid, and a third man. Multiple parties, including the Quraish, had wanted `Asim killed, and one woman even offered a bounty of 100 camels for his skull. Before his death, `Asim supplicated to Allah to protect his body after he is killed, and Allah did so, and none of the disbelievers were able to claim his body to mutilate it or obtain any bounty.

The surrounding army repeated their promise of safety to the three remaining Companions, and they accepted it and came down from the hill.

No sooner had they descended than the army took their weapons and tied them up. The third Companion said, "This is the first sign of your treachery," and refused to go along with them. They attempted to convince or force him but he resisted them, so they killed him. They took Khubaib and Zaid to Makkah and sold them to the Quraish. Banu al-Harith bin `Amir purchased Khubaib, for he had killed al-Harith at Badr, and they wished to enact revenge.

Banu al-Harith held Khubaib as a prisoner until they decided his fate amongst themselves, finally agreeing to execute him. When Khubaib learned of their decision, he requested a shaving knife to shave his body, and a chance to perform *ghusl* before his death. They allowed him to do so, and as he was sitting with the knife in his hand, a small child of Banu al-Harith walked towards him and sat on his lap. The mother herself narrated, “When I saw that, I shrieked loudly, and he understood my fear and said, ‘Do you fear that I will kill him? I would never do such a thing – by the will of Allah the Exalted.’” She would later say, “I have never seen a prisoner more virtuous than Khubaib. I once saw him eating a handful of grapes, though there were no fruits in Makkah at the time [i.e., it was not harvest season, nor were there any fresh grapes anywhere in the city], and he was, at the time, shackled in iron chains. It was certainly a provision that Allah granted him.”

They took Khubaib out to the Haram to execute him, and he said, “Allow me to pray two rak`ahs.” He prayed quickly and returned to them, saying, “I would have prayed longer, except that you might say I was prolonging it out of fear of death.” Thus, Khubaib ؓ became the first one to begin the sunnah of praying two rak`as before death. He then supplicated to Allah to destroy these evil men, and recited a stanza of poetry:

“I do not care as long as I die as a Muslim,  
 However I am killed, it will be in the path of Allah.  
 It is for the sake of Allah, so if He wills  
 He will bestow His blessings upon the torn pieces of my body.”

Uqbah bin al-Harith then executed him. All of these brave Companions ؓ died with integrity and sincerity in the Path of Allah, sacrificing everything they had, including their lives, for Islam. Abu Sufyan, who was still a pagan at the time, asked Zaid before his execution, “O Zaid, would you prefer that Muhammad was here, so that we strike his neck instead of yours, while you are safe among your family?” Zaid ؓ replied, “By Allah, I would not prefer that Muhammad even feel the pain of a thorn prick while he is where he is now, even if it meant I would be safe among my family!” Abu Sufyan remarked, “I have never seen anyone love anyone as much as Muhammad’s Companions love him.”

The incident with the child and Khubaib was also a clear proof that the Companions were not treacherous or evil; they had no desire whatsoever to shed

the blood of the innocent, even in retaliation or when they were, themselves, being oppressed. Khubaib assured the boy's mother that he would never do such a lowly thing as kill an innocent child, and his honorable demeanor had a huge impact on her, such that she continued to relay the story to people thereafter.

The sad news of the betrayal and massacre of ar-Raji` reached Madinah, and it was a difficult chapter in the history of Islam, but the Muslims knew that their martyred brothers were in Paradise with their Lord – may Allah be pleased with them all.<sup>1</sup>



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1 Ibn Hisham:3/248, Al-Bidayah wa An-Nihayah:8/76, Al-Isabah:1/418, Abu Shahbah, As-Seerah:2/238

## The massacre at Bi'r Ma'unah (the Well of Ma'unah)

In the same month, a similar incident occurred. In fact, both happened within a short while of each other, such that news of ar-Raji' had not yet reached Madinah before the group had already been en route to Bi'r Ma'unah. A group of people from Banu `Amir came to Madinah, led by a man named Abu al-Bara' bin Malik, a senior chief in the region of Najd. The Prophet ﷺ explained Islam to them but they did not choose to accept it yet, and instead requested that some Companions accompany them to Najd to invite the people to Islam and teach them about it.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was wary of sending the Companions, but Abu al-Bara' gave him his word that they would be under his *jiwar*<sup>1</sup>, and the Prophet ﷺ accepted it. He ﷺ sent Haram bin Milhan with a letter for `Amir bin Tufail, one of the chiefs in the region, in a group of seventy of the Companions, including both Ansar and Muhajirun. When they had reached the well of Ma'unah, Haram gave the Prophet's letter to `Amir, but before he even read it, he made a gesture to one of his men, who approached Haram from behind and stabbed him with a spear in his back, fatally wounding him. Haram said, "I have succeeded, by the Lord of the Ka'bah!" and passed away.

`Amir called for the rest of his men to attack the other Companions, refusing to accept the *jiwar* of Abu al-Bara', though he was a chief of the same tribe. `Amir's men did not want to violate the *jiwar* of their relative and fellow tribesman, so they abstained. `Amir sought help from allying tribes, but a number of them also refused to violate *jiwar*, until three subtribes heeded his call: `Asiya, Ra'l, and Dhakwan. Armed for battle and outnumbering the Companions, they surrounded them and massacred them, leaving none alive except Ka'b bin Zaid who had been injured and, due to being concealed by the bodies of other Companions, the treacherous attackers thought him dead.

1. *Jiwar* or *mujawara* means 'protection.' It was a very strictly followed system wherein a person, usually a leader, may grant protection to another person or group. His tribe and allied tribes were obliged to abstain from harming those granted protection by an ally or risk severe repercussions.

Two of the Companions, `Amr bin Umayyah and al-Munthir bin `Uqbah, were not killed, for they had been away at the time of the attack, perhaps running an errand. Al-Munthir was killed shortly afterwards, and `Amr was taken captive. When the chief, `Amir bin Tufail, learned that the captive was from the tribe of Mudar, he released him. `Amr, the sole surviving Companion, made his way back to Madinah, and along the journey, he ran into two men from the very same tribe that attacked him, Banu `Amir. They had a covenant of security from the Prophet ﷺ, but `Amr was unaware of it. He killed both men.

When `Amr arrived in Madinah, he told the Prophet ﷺ what had happened at the Well of Ma'unah, and he informed him of the two men he killed on the way back. The Prophet ﷺ said about the two men, "I will pay blood money for the two men you killed." As for Abu al-Bara', who had given the Prophet ﷺ his word that the Companions were under his *jiwar*, he had nothing to do with the massacre at Ma'unah, and it caused him great distress. His son, Rabi'ah, went to take revenge from the murderer, `Amir bin Tufail, who had rejected his *jiwar* against strict Arab custom. Rabi'ah struck `Amir with a spear but was unable to kill him, and was killed instead.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was deeply saddened by this treachery, and the sadness was only increased due to receiving news of this massacre and the previous one at ar-Raji' within the same span of time – one narration indicates that the news arrived during the same day. He supplicated against these treacherous people for an entire month, as Anas ؓ narrates: "The Prophet ﷺ supplicated against the people who killed [the Companions] at Bi'r Ma'unh for thirty mornings. He would supplicate against Ra'l, Lihyan, and `Asiya who went against Allah and His Messenger ﷺ."<sup>1</sup>

He ﷺ also supplicated against `Amir bin Tufail, who eventually became ill and died in the desert, and it is narrated that the vultures and predators of the desert ate his body. The Prophet ﷺ told the Companions, "Your companions were killed, and they requested of their Lord, 'Our Lord, tell our brothers that we are pleased with You, and You with us.'"

It was indeed a trying time for the Muslims, for they had never lost so many of their brothers even in the battlefield! They were killed via betrayal and treachery, after having set out in the Path of Allah, to teach His Word and His religion to the people. They sacrificed everything for Allah's sake, and He will never


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1. Bukhari



let that go to waste. Indeed, we should reflect upon their efforts and sacrifices. We should also reflect upon the statement of Haram bin Milhan when he was fatally stabbed. When he saw the spear exit from his chest, he exclaimed, “I have succeeded, by the Lord of the Ka`bah!” Allah the Exalted said:

*“Say: “Do you wait for us (anything) except one of the two best things (martyrdom or victory); while we await for you either that Allah will afflict you with a punishment from Himself or at our hands. So wait, we too are waiting with you.” (Surah at-Tawbah, 52)*

Haram bin Milhan  understood the true meaning of martyrdom, and thus he said what he said. He knew he was leaving this world and going to a better life, a better existence. His statement had a strong effect on the hearts of those who heard it, for it was certainly a very strange thing to hear from someone who has just been betrayed and murdered. What success could he have possibly meant? Indeed, those who reflect and seek the truth will find it.<sup>1</sup>



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1 Bukhari, Fath-al-Bari:4/44, 5/64 Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:3/140

## The Expedition of Banu Nadir (Rabi` al-Awwal, 4 AH)

Banu Nadir was one of the Jewish tribes that lived in Madinah before the migration of the Prophet ﷺ. They were included in the covenant the Messenger ﷺ made with the rest of the Jews of Madinah when the Charter of Madinah was written. It guaranteed, among other things, mutual coexistence, cooperation in the defense of Madinah and its protection, and cooperation in paying blood money.

After `Amr bin Umayyah ad-Damari killed two innocent men while escaping from the events of Bi`r Ma`unah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went to Banu Nadir on the outskirts of Madinah, seeking their aid in paying the blood money, as outlined in the Charter. As he was sitting against one of their walls, they decided to take advantage of the situation and plotted to assassinate him by dropping a large boulder on top of him from over the wall. The angel Jibril ؑ notified the Messenger of Allah ﷺ of their intent, and so he got up and left while they climbed the wall, as if he had some matter to attend to. Some Companions were waiting for the Prophet ﷺ to return, but due to the incident and his abrupt exit, he did not notify them, so they continued to wait. After some time, the Companions got up to look for the Prophet ﷺ and caught up with him in Madinah, where he informed them of the treacherous assassination attempt by Banu Nadir.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ then sent a Companion named Muhammad bin Maslamah ؓ to Banu Nadir to inform them that the Muslim army was marching against them in response to their treachery, and the Prophet ﷺ commanded that they must vacate Madinah within 10 days or face warfare and destruction. Banu Nadir's reaction was one of confusion and astonishment, and they realized Allah the Exalted had exposed their treachery. They sent word to their contacts among the hypocrites of Madinah, the head of whom was `Abdullah bin Ubayy, hoping to find a solution, or some aid. The hypocrites reassured them, requesting that they be patient and not leave Madinah, and promised them that they would fight

on their side if the matter came to it. Allah the Exalted revealed regarding them:

*“Have you (O Muhammad) not observed the hypocrites who say to their friends among the people of the Scripture who disbelieve: “(By Allah) If you are expelled, we (too) indeed will go out with you, and we shall never obey any one against you, and if you are attacked (in fight), we shall indeed help you.” But Allah is Witness, that they verily, are liars. Surely, if they (the Jews) are expelled, never will they (hypocrites) go out with them, and if they are attacked, they will never help them. And if they do help them, they (hypocrites) will turn their backs, so they will not be victorious.” (Surah al-Hashr, 11-12)*

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sensed their stubbornness and understood that they were preparing for war, and saw that the munafiqun of Madinah had pledged their support for their Jewish allies, he ﷺ instructed the Companions to prepare to march. He ﷺ left `Abdullah bin Umm Maktum ؓ in charge as his deputy in Madinah, and then set out, with `Ali ؓ as his flagbearer.<sup>1</sup> The Muslims besieged Banu Nadir for two to three weeks, with some fighting occurring. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then requested from his Lord to permit the Muslims to cut Banu Nadir’s palm trees, in order to incite fear and regret in their hearts, lower their morale, and give them incentive to submit. In response, Banu Nadir said, “Muhammad forbids destruction, yet, here he is cutting and burning our palm fields!” Allah then revealed:

*“What you (O Muslims) cut down of the palm-trees (of the enemy), or you left them standing on their stems, it was by leave of Allah, and in order that He might disgrace the fasiqun (rebellious, disobedient to Allah).” (Surah al-Hashr, 5)<sup>2</sup>*

As the Prophet ﷺ tightened the siege on them, and the hypocrites’ lies manifested in their lack of aid, Banu Nadir realized the result of their treachery. The Prophet ﷺ was harsh with them and Allah cast terror into their hearts, despite their fortifications and preparation. Thus, they requested from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that he spare their lives and allow them to vacate their homes, and to allow each of them to take whatever he could load of his wealth onto a single camel, excluding weapons. The Prophet ﷺ agreed, and they surrendered with these conditions, and were given a number of days to leave.<sup>3</sup>

Allah the Exalted revealed regarding them:

1 At-Tabaqat:2/52

2 Ibn Hisham:2/283

3 Ibn Hisham:3/190

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*“He it is Who drove out the disbelievers among the people of the Scripture (i.e., the Jews of the tribe of Banu Nadir) from their homes at the first gathering. You did not think that they would get out. And they thought that their fortresses would defend them from Allah! But Allah’s (torment) reached them from a place whereof they expected it not, and He cast terror into their hearts, so that they destroyed their own dwellings with their own hands and the hands of the believers. Then take admonition, O you with eyes (to see).” (Surah al-Hashr, 2]*

They exited their homes in a huge procession showing off their wealth, in a very robust manner, trying to give the impression that they were unconcerned and unharmed. Their procession included their women and children, whatever of their wealth they could carry, and drums and horns that their women played. It is interesting to note that amidst all the turmoil, two men of Banu Nadir accepted Islam.

With their exile, Allah put an end to the evils of Banu Nadir and brought comfort and rest to the Muslims from their harm. Surah al-Hashr in its entirety was revealed regarding them, its beginning is specifically about the Jews, where Allah says:

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*“Whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is on the earth glorifies Allah. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. He it is Who drove out the disbelievers among the people of the Scripture (i.e., the Jews of the tribe of Banu Nadir) from their homes at the first gathering. You did not think that they would get out. And they thought that their fortresses would defend them from Allah! But Allah’s (torment) reached them from a place whereof they expected it not, and He cast terror into their hearts, so that they destroyed their own dwellings with their own hands and the hands of the believers.*

*Then take admonition, O you with eyes (to see). And had it not been that Allah had decreed exile for them, He would certainly have punished them in this world, and in the Hereafter theirs shall be the torment of the Fire. That is because they opposed Allah and His Messenger. And whosoever opposes Allah, then verily, Allah is Severe in punishment. What you (O Muslims) cut down of the palm-trees (of the enemy), or you left them standing on their stems, it was by leave of Allah, and in order that He might disgrace the fasiqun (rebellious, disobedient to Allah).*

*And what Allah gave as booty (fai’) to His Messenger from them, for*

*which you made no expedition with either cavalry or camelry. But Allah gives power to His Messengers over whomsoever He wills. And Allah is Able to do all things.” (Surah al-Hashr, 1-6)<sup>1</sup>*

The next portion of the Surah deals with the conquered lands in war (*fai'*) and the rulings regarding it, how it became part of the economic system with its own religious legislation, and how to properly deal with whatever is gained from the enemy without fighting taking place. This is found in the words of Allah:

*“What Allah gave as booty (fai') to His Messenger from the people of the townships, - it is for Allah, His Messenger, the kindred (of Messenger Muhammad), the orphans, the poor, and the wayfarer; in order that it may not become a fortune used by the rich among you. And whatsoever the Messenger gives you, take it, and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it), and fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Severe in punishment.*

*(And there is also a share in this booty) for the poor emigrants, who were expelled from their homes and their property, seeking Bounties from Allah and to please Him. And helping Allah (i.e., helping His religion) and His Messenger. Such are indeed the truthful (to what they say); And those who, before them, had homes (in Madinah) and had adopted the Faith, love those who emigrate to them, and have no jealousy in their breasts for that which they have been given (from the booty of Bani An-Nadir), and give them (emigrants) preference over themselves, even though they were in need of that.*

*And whosoever is saved from his own covetousness, such are they who will be the successful. And those who came after them say: “Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in Faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful.” (Surah al-Hashr, 7-10)*

In these verses Allah praises the Muhajirun as well as the Ansar, and He mentions the poverty of the Muhajirun and how the Ansar preferred them over themselves. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ told them, “If you would like, I will split the spoils of Banu Nadir that Allah granted me between you [i.e., the Ansar] and the Muhajirun, while the Muhajirun remain as they are in your homes and [using]

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Kathir Tafseer:2/1844

your wealth. And if you like, I will give them all of it, and they will leave your homes.”

Sa`d bin Mu`adh, one of the leaders of the Ansar, said, “O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, rather split it between the Muhajirun and they will remain in our homes as they are.” The rest of the Ansar said, “We agree, and we concede, O Messenger of Allah.” The Prophet ﷺ responded, “O Allah, have mercy on the Ansar and the children of the Ansar<sup>1</sup>.” Thus, the Ansar’s actions confirmed that they were exactly as Allah described them when He said:

*“And those who, before them, had homes (in Madinah) and had adopted the Faith, love those who emigrate to them, and have no jealousy in their breasts for that which they have been given, and give them (emigrants) preference over themselves, even though they were in need of that. And whosoever is saved from his own covetousness, such are they who will be the successful.”* (Surah al-Hashr, 9)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ split the wealth and the homes of Banu Nadir among the Muhajirun along with two of the poor men from the Ansar. He also gave out the proceeds from seven farms belonging to Mukhayriq, a rich Jewish man from Banu Nadir who accepted Islam before the Battle of Uhud. He fought alongside the Muslims in the siege of Banu Nadir and said, “If I am killed, my wealth is for Muhammad to do with as he pleases.”

Based on this, during the rule of `Umar bin al-Khattab, he kept a registry of the proceeds from conquered lands and placed a tax on them that would go to the general Muslim population. He then gathered the wisest Companions and consulted them on whether the lands should be divided among the army that conquered them, or left as is, only taking a percentage of it for the Muslim population, who would benefit by way of the registries that kept track of all proceeds. `Umar felt that the events at Banu Nadir in conjunction with the verses revealed about them were generally applicable to the generations of Muslims who came thereafter, based on the verse:

*“And those who came after them say: “Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in Faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful.”* (Surah al-Hashr, 10)<sup>2</sup>

1 Al-Isabah:3/394, Al-Waqidi:3/378

2. Bukhari Fath al-Bari:6/58

In his book *al-Kharaj*, Abu Yusuf narrates: “When Iraq was conquered, `Umar bin al-Khattab consulted the people [regarding its lands], and it was their opinion that it should be divided [among the conquering army]. Bilal bin Rabah was among the most vocal of them regarding this opinion. However, `Umar opined that it should not be divided, so he said, “O Allah, suffice me regarding Bilal and his companions.” They went back and forth for two to three days or so and then `Umar said, “I have found evidence [regarding my position]. Allah the Exalted says in His Book:

*“And what Allah gave as booty (Fai’) to His Messenger (Muhammad) from them, for which you made no expedition with either cavalry or camelry. But Allah gives power to His Messengers over whomsoever He wills. And Allah is Able to do all things.”* (al-Hashr, 6).

`Umar continued, “This was regarding the events of Banu Nadir, as for these next verses, they are regarding all conquered lands, Allah says:

*“What Allah gave as booty (Fai’) to His Messenger (Muhammad) from the people of the townships, - it is for Allah, His Messenger, the kindred (of Messenger), the orphans, the poor, and the wayfarer, in order that it may not become a fortune used by the rich among you. And whatsoever the Messenger gives you, take it, and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it), and fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Severe in punishment. (And there is also a share in this booty) for the poor emigrants, who were expelled from their homes and their property, seeking Bounties from Allah and to please Him. And helping Allah (i.e., helping His religion) and His Messenger. Such are indeed the truthful (to what they say).”* (Surah al-Hashr, 7-8)

He did not stop with them [the muhajirun], He also added:

*“And those who, before them, had homes (in Madinah) and had adopted the Faith, love those who emigrate to them, and have no jealousy in their breasts for that which they have been given (from the booty of Banu Nadir), and give them (emigrants) preference over themselves, even though they were in need of that. And whosoever is saved from his own covetousness, such are they who will be the successful.”* (Surah al-Hashr, 9)

And this verse is, according to our knowledge – and Allah knows best –, regarding

the Ansar specifically. But Allah did not stop with them either, He also added:

*“And those who came after them say: “Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in Faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful.” (Surah al-Hashr, 10)*

This last verse is general for all those who come after, so these conquered lands are for all of them, how then can we divide it amongst the conquerors and leave everyone else without a portion?” So it was decided to leave the lands as they were, collecting only the proceeds.”

Abu Yusuf continues: “Umar believed it was better not to divide the lands among the soldiers because Allah inspired him with the verses found in His Book, as a blessing and guidance from Allah. This decision benefitted the general population of the Muslims. Had he decided to do so, there would not have been enough sustenance for everyone, economic growth would lag, and the armies would weaken.”<sup>1</sup>

The end of Surah al-Hashr addresses the hypocrites and their relationship with the Jews. Allah the Exalted said:

*“Have you (O Muhammad) not observed the hypocrites who say to their friends among the people of the Scripture who disbelieve: {(By Allah) If you are expelled, we (too) indeed will go out with you, and we shall never obey any one against you, and if you are attacked (in fight), we shall indeed help you.” But Allah is Witness, that they verily, are liars. Surely, if they (the Jews) are expelled, never will they (hypocrites) go out with them, and if they are attacked, they will never help them. And if they do help them, they (hypocrites) will turn their backs, so they will not be victorious.” (Surah al-Hashr, 11-12)*

Allah the Exalted further said about Banu Nadir:

*“They fight not against you even together, except in fortified townships, or from behind walls. Their enmity among themselves is very great. You would think they were united, but their hearts are divided, that is because they are a people who understand not.” (Surah al-Hashr, 14)*

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1. Al-Kharaj. Abu Yusuf P: 23, Abu Ya'qub, Al- Ahkam As-Sultaniyah, P:166



## The Battle of the Confederates (also known as the Battle of the Trench)(Shawwal 5 AH)

Not long after the expedition of Banu Nadir, some of the leaders of the Jews of Madinah traveled to Makkah to incite the Quraish to fight the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in Madinah. The Jews promised that they would aid the Quraish until Muhammad ﷺ and his followers were wiped out. They also claimed that the religion of the Quraish was superior to that of Muhammad ﷺ. Regarding their statement, Allah the Exalted said:

*“Have you not seen those who were given a portion of the Scripture? They believe in Jibt and Taghut and say to the disbelievers that they are better guided as regards the way than the believers (Muslims).”*  
(Surah an-Nisa’, 51)

The Quraish agreed and appointed Abu Sufyan as the leader of the campaign. The Jews then headed to some of the various tribes in Najd, such as Ghatafan and others, inviting them to join the campaign against the Muslims in Madinah, inciting them and promising to support them, just as they had done with the Quraish. Thus, the Jews successfully rallied a large confederacy to wage war against the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his followers.<sup>1</sup>

As was his custom, the Prophet ﷺ had been following the news of his enemies, the Quraish and the aforementioned tribes, and thus word had reached him of their preparations. He gathered the Companions and consulted them. What course of action should they take in the face of the pending attack, particularly in the face of such large numbers that they had not faced before, and that Madinah likely could not defend against?

As people voiced their opinions, Salman al-Farisi ؓ suggested that they dig a trench around Madinah, preventing cavalry and foot soldiers from breaching the city and at the same time allowing the Muslims to defend, especially considering Madinah’s geographical position was well suited for this idea. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ liked the idea and began planning the location of the trench. He ﷺ divided the work among his Companions, with each group of ten Companions being

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Hisham:3/215, Fath al-Bari:15/275

responsible for 40 cubits<sup>1</sup>. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was also in the trench, digging alongside them, striking with his pick-ax and carrying dirt with own blessed hands.

The Prophet ﷺ worked on the Day of the Trench until his stomach became caked with dirt, as he repeated the poetry of the Companions:

“By Allah, if it was not for Allah, we would have never been guided,  
Nor would we have given charity nor prayed,  
So send down tranquility upon us,  
And make firm our feet when the enemy meets us,  
Surely these groups are acting against us in transgression,  
If they wish to subject us to trial, we refuse submission.”<sup>2</sup>

As the Prophet ﷺ and the Companions worked, a group of munafiqun slipped away, trying to escape the responsibilities allotted to them. Allah the Exalted mentioned them saying:

*“Make not the calling of the Messenger (Muhammad) among you as your calling of one another. Allah knows those of you who slip away under shelter (of some excuse without taking the permission to leave, from the Messenger). And let those who oppose the Messenger’s (Muhammad) commandment (i.e., his Sunnah legal ways, orders, acts of worship, statements, etc.) (among the sects) beware, lest some Fitnah (disbelief, trials, afflictions, earthquakes, killing, overpowered by a tyrant, etc.) befall them or a painful torment be inflicted on them.”*  
(Surah an-Nur, 63)<sup>3</sup>

As for the true believers, whenever one of them needed to leave for any reason, he would only do so after being permitted by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and so Allah the Exalted praised them saying:

*“The true believers are only those, who believe in (the Oneness of) Allah and His Messenger, and when they are with him on some common matter, they go not away until they have asked his permission. Verily! Those who ask your permission, those are they who (really) believe in Allah and His Messenger. So if they ask your permission for some affairs of theirs, give permission to whom you will of them, and ask Allah for their forgiveness. Truly, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”* (Surah an-Nur, 62)

While they were digging the trench, the Muslims came across a large boulder

1. 1 cubit = approximately 18 in or 44cm

2. Ibn Abi Shaibah, P:257

3. Tafseer Ibn Kathir:2/248

that no one was able to break. The Companions sent for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and he came to demolish it. With his first strike, a spark flew from it and he made *takbir* [i.e., he said *Allahu Akbar*] and the Muslims echoed him. Then he said, “Allah is the Greatest! I have been given the keys of *ash-Sham*<sup>1</sup>. By Allah, I can see its red palace right now.” He struck it a second time, another spark flew, and he made *takbir*, as did the Muslims, and he said, “Allah is the Greatest! I have been given the keys of Persia. By Allah, I can see the White Palace of Ctesiphon.” Finally, he struck it a third time, another spark flew, he made *takbir*, and the Muslims repeated after him. Then he said, “Allah is the Greatest! I have been given the keys of Yemen. I can see the gates of Sanaa right now from my very place.” With these glad tidings, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the Muslims were booming with optimism and certainty, knowing that they would be victorious over all these kings and would soon conquer all these lands. Therefore, the Muslims were able to remain true to what they promised Allah and His Messenger.

As for the hypocrites, they scoffed at the promise of Allah which He had just revealed to His Messenger ﷺ:

*“And when the hypocrites and those in whose hearts is a disease (of doubts) said: ‘Allah and His Messenger promised us nothing but delusions!’”* (Surah al-Ahzab, 12)<sup>2</sup>

When the Quraish and the confederates arrived, they totaled 10,000 fighters strong. They made camp around Madinah but were surprised to find the trench, as such tactics were completely foreign to the Arabs. After gathering the women and children in the fortresses of the Ansar, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, along with approximately 3,000 fighters, made camp on the other side of the trench.

It was an extremely difficult and trying time, for the Muslims had no security and they feared for their lives day and night. Furthermore, the Muslims were worried about the Jewish tribe of Banu Quraizah, who lived in Madinah and thus were inside the city, on the Muslims’ side of the trench. Despite the pact they made with the Muslims that all would cooperate in defense of the city, there was certainly a possibility that they would breach their contract. The Muslims felt danger surrounding them from all sides. Allah described their state saying:

*“When they came upon you from above you and from below you, and*

1. The Levant. Greater Syria and some of the surrounding countries such as Palestine, Lebanon, etc.

2 Ibn Hisham:3/219

*when the eyes grew wild and the hearts reached to the throats, and you were harboring doubts about Allah. There, the believers were tried and shaken with a mighty shaking.” (Surah al-Ahzab, 10-11)<sup>1</sup>*

The confederates sent their scouting forces to observe the trench, hoping to find a breach from where they could cross over. A group of their cavalry did indeed find an opportunity and crossed the trench at one point, but Muslim soldiers, with `Ali ؑ leading them, prevented the enemy from advancing further, killing some of them.

The Muslims spent the next few days in the trench, vigilantly guarding it against attack day and night, and preventing any breach by the enemy. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself stayed with the Muslim army, protecting the weaker points of the trench. The Confederates realized they needed to find a different method to break the Muslim defenses, and they turned to Huyayy bin Akhtab, a leader among the Jews who was a part of the Confederate army. He headed to the Jews of Banu Quraizah in their fortresses within Madinah, and attempted to persuade them with much effort and guile to join the Confederates' plot. Eventually, he was able to convince their leader to break the treaty between them and the Muslims. News of Huyayy's visit to Banu Quraizah and their agreement to betray the Muslims reached the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He ﷺ was greatly distressed and wished to verify the news for himself, but at the same time, he was careful not to let any of the Muslims know of this evil news, lest their courage falter and their strength waiver. He ﷺ sent four of the Ansar who had previous dealings and connections with the Jews of Banu Quraizah to the fortresses in order to confirm the news. Among them was Sa'd bin `Ubadah, the leader of al-Aws and al-Khazraj. The Prophet ﷺ commanded them to keep the matter a secret and to be very discreet in how they notify him if the news of the betrayal was true.

The group headed towards Banu Quraizah and investigated the matter. Upon meeting the Jews, they were met with insults and open animosity. “Who is this ‘Messenger of Allah’?” The Jews asked mockingly. “There is no pact nor treaty between us and Muhammad!”

Sa'd advised them that their actions were foolish, and he reminded them about the harsh penalty that follows treachery, for he had been their ally even before Islam, and he did not wish them harm. They responded with obscenities and insults. Sa'd and the group returned to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and, upon reaching him, simply said, “Adal and Qarah.” These were the two tribes who

<sup>1</sup> Bukhari, Fath al- Bari:15/283, Ibn Abi Shaibah, P:255

betrayed the delegation of the Prophet ﷺ at ar-Raji'<sup>1</sup>, so the Prophet understood that Banu Quraizah had in fact broken their treaty.

The difficulty had increased greatly upon the Muslims. With the news of Banu Quraizah's betrayal, the munafiqun also revealed their hypocrisy and treachery with full force.

*“And when a party of them said: “O people of Yathrib! There is no stand (possible) for you (against the enemy attack!) Therefore go back!” And a band of them ask for permission of the Prophet saying: “Truly, our homes lie open (to the enemy).” And they lay not open. They but wished to flee.” (Surah al-Ahzab, 13)*

The betrayal of the Jews increased the difficulty for the Muslims, for now Banu Quraizah had joined the Confederate forces and attempted an attack on the Muslim women who were in their own fortresses. With Safiyyah bint `Abd al-Muttalib, the aunt of the Prophet ﷺ, at their lead, and with utmost courage and valor, the Muslim women defended themselves against the Jews' attack.<sup>2</sup>

Under these unimaginably difficult conditions, relief came in the form of Nu`aim bin Mas`ud al-Ashja`i ؓ, a Companion from the tribe of Ghatafan. He came to the Prophet ﷺ from the camps of the Confederates and said, “O Messenger of Allah, I have accepted Islam without my tribe's knowledge, so command me as you wish.” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ wished to benefit from this new soldier as much as possible, so he replied, “If you join us, you are but one [additional] man, so [instead, remain with them, and] weaken them however you can, for indeed, war is deception.”

As soon as Nu`aim ؓ received these commands from the Prophet ﷺ, he rushed towards the fortresses of Banu Quraizah. Because of their friendship during the days of Jahiliyyah, they welcomed him warmly.

Nu`aim told them, “You have allied Quraish and Ghatafan in war against Muhammad, but they are not in the same position as you. This land is your land; in it is your wealth, your children, and your women. You will not be able to escape from it. As for the Quraish and Ghatafan, if they see opportunities for spoils, they will take it. If they do not see any chance for victory, they will depart for their homes, leaving you to Muhammad – and you have no chance against him.” He continued, “My opinion is that you do not fight until you take some of their nobles as a security. That way, before you fight Muhammad, you can be

1. See “The Massacre at ar-Raji'” in this book

2 Ibn Hisham:3/228 Al-Waqdi:2/460,462

sure they will not leave you to yourselves.”

Nu`aim then went to the Quraish with a similar tactic. He approached their leader, Abu Sufyan bin Harb, and said, “News has reached me that Quraizah regret their betrayal of Muhammad, and have sent him a message asking ‘Would it please you if we kidnapped the nobles of the Quraish and Ghatafan and handed them over to you so that you may strike their necks? Then we shall join you against the rest of them?’ And he agreed.”

Nu`aim continued, “Therefore, if they request that you send a group of your nobles as a security for them, do not give them a single man.” He then went to Ghatafan and told them what he told the Quraish.

Ghatafan, the Quraish, and Banu Quraizah had already agreed upon beginning their offensive the next day, which happened to be a Saturday. The Quraish then sent a message to Banu Quraizah, calling them to join in on the offensive. “Today is Saturday,” they replied. “We will not fight alongside you until you give us a security, for we are worried that you will return to your lands and abandon us and this man [i.e., the Prophet ﷺ].”

The Quraish and Ghatafan then said, “Nu`aim bin Mas`ud was truthful regarding you. By Allah, we shall not hand you a single man!”

Banu Quraizah replied, “Nu`aim bin Mas`ud was truthful regarding you!”<sup>1</sup>

And in this way, the pact between the groups fell apart and they began to assume ill of one another. Evening came without an attack against the Muslims. Allah the Exalted sent a strong, cold, wind against the Confederates, who were camped outside of Madinah. Their pots were all overturned and their tents were thrown around violently. Allah the Exalted referred to it in the Quran when He said:

*“O you who believe! Remember Allah’s Favor to you, when there came against you hosts, and We sent against them a wind and forces that you saw not. And Allah is Ever All-Seer of what you do.”* (Surah al-Ahzab, 9)

The disbelievers spent that night in great turmoil and a loud clamor could be heard from them.<sup>2</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ sent Hudhaifah bin al-Yaman ؓ to investigate the commotion. He gave him specific instructions not to do anything except investigate, even if any opportunity arose. Hudhaifah entered Quraish’s camp and quietly settled among them without raising any alarms. It was a bitterly cold night, and the wind

1 At-Tabaqat:2/69, Ibn Hisham 3/229-231

2 Ibn Hisahm:3/231

was causing them great difficulty. Abu Sufyan was aware that there could be some spies among them, so he stood and said, “Before we begin any discussion, let each of you make sure of the identity of the one next to you.”

Thinking quickly, Hudhaifah turned to the man sitting to his right and asked, “Who are you?” Then before anyone could ask him, he turned also to the man on his left and asked the same question. This way, the question skipped over him and his presence continued unnoticed.

With his suspicions quelled for the time being, Abu Sufyan continued, “O Quraish, by Allah, it looks like you no longer have any footing to stand on. The camels and the cattle are finished, Banu Quraizah has betrayed us, and we are suffering from the wind as you see; no pot remains upright, no fire can be kindled, and no structure remains firm. Therefore, return to your homes, for that is what I shall do.”

Abu Sufyan then mounted his camel intending to depart, but his tribe requested that he wait so they may leave together. Thus, the Quraish retreated, except for some of its cavalry who remained behind to guard the retreat. Shortly afterwards, the rest of the tribes who made up the Confederates followed suit.

It had been approximately 25 days of Madinah’s besiegement when Hudhaifah brought the great news of the Confederates’ retreat to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.<sup>1</sup> After Madinah was free of the Confederates, the Prophet ﷺ said to his Companions, “From this day forward, we shall wage war on them and they will not wage war on us. We shall go to them.”<sup>2</sup> And it was exactly as he said. He then commanded the Muslim soldiers manning their posts around the trench to return home.

Allah the Exalted said:

*“And Allah drove back those who disbelieved in their rage, they gained no advantage. Allah sufficed for the believers in the fighting (by sending against the disbelievers a severe wind and troops of angels). And Allah is Ever Powerful and Exalted in Might.”* (Surah al-Ahzab, 25)

Six Muslims were martyred during the early skirmishes, and the polytheist army lost three men.

Surah al-Ahzab was revealed regarding the events of this battle and named after it (al-Ahzab i.e., the Confederates). Allah the Exalted said:

*“O you who believe! Remember Allah’s Favor to you, when there came*

1 Fath al-Bari:15/284, Ibn Hisham3/231, At-Tabaqat:2/69

2. Bukhari

against you hosts, and We sent against them a wind and forces that you saw not. And Allah is Ever All-Seer of what you do. [Remember] when they came at you from above you and from below you, and when eyes shifted [in fear], and hearts reached the throats and you assumed about Allah [various] assumptions. There, the believers were tried and shaken with a mighty shaking.

And [remember] when the hypocrites and those in whose hearts is disease said, “Allah and His Messenger did not promise us except delusion,” And when a party of them said: “O people of Yathrib! There is no stand (possible) for you (against the enemy attack!) Therefore go back!” And a band of them ask for permission of the Prophet saying: “Truly, our homes lie open (to the enemy).” And they lay not open. They but wished to flee. And if they had been entered upon from all its [surrounding] regions and fitnah had been demanded of them, they would have done it and not hesitated over it except briefly. And indeed they had already made a covenant with Allah not to turn their backs, and a covenant with Allah must be answered for.

Say, [O Muhammad], “Never will fleeing benefit you if you should flee from death or killing; and then [if you did], you would not be given enjoyment [of life] except for a little.”

Say: “Who is he who can protect you from Allah if He intends to harm you, or intends mercy on you?” And they will not find, besides Allah, for themselves any Wali (protector, supporter, etc.) or any helper.

Allah already knows those among you who keep back (men) from fighting in Allah’s Cause, and those who say to their brethren “Come here towards us,” while they (themselves) come not to the battle except a little. Being miserly towards you (as regards help and aid in Allah’s Cause). Then when fear comes, you will see them looking to you, their eyes revolving like (those of) one over whom hovers death, but when the fear departs, they will smite you with sharp tongues, miserly towards (spending anything in any) good (and only covetous of booty and wealth). Such have not believed. Therefore Allah makes their deeds fruitless, and that is ever easy for Allah.

They think that the Confederates have not yet withdrawn, and if the Confederates should come (again), they would wish they were in the



*deserts (wandering) among the bedouins, seeking news about you (from a far place); and if they (happen) to be among you, they would not fight but little.*

*There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often. And when the believers saw the companies, they said, "This is what Allah and His Messenger had promised us, and Allah and His Messenger spoke the truth." And it increased them only in faith and acceptance.*

*Among the believers are men true to what they promised Allah. Among them is he who has fulfilled his vow [to the death], and among them is he who awaits [his chance]. And they did not alter [the terms of their commitment] by any alteration - That Allah may reward the truthful for their truth and punish the hypocrites if He wills or accept their repentance. Indeed, Allah is ever Forgiving and Merciful. And Allah repelled those who disbelieved, in their rage, not having obtained any good. And sufficient was Allah for the believers in battle, and ever is Allah Powerful and Exalted in Might." (Surah al-Ahzab 9-25)*

Though the Confederates retreated, the battle was not yet over. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ had hardly returned to his home and set down his weapons when Jibril ﷺ came to him and said, "You have set down your weapons! By Allah, we (i.e., the Angels) have not! March against them!"

Through this revelation from Jibril ﷺ, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ knew that fighting the traitors from among the Jews of Banu Quraizah was a command from Allah. He placed his banner under the command of `Ali ؑ and ordered that a caller be sent out relaying his command to the Muslim army that "none of you should pray `Asr except at Banu Quraizah."<sup>1</sup>

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his Companions reached the fortresses of Banu Quraizah and camped around them, forming a siege for ten and some odd nights. During this time, Allah the Exalted incited fear and terror in the hearts of Banu Quraizah, such that they were immensely worried and shaken by their predicament. They began to call upon some of their allies from the al-Aws, but to no avail; for news of their betrayal had spread, as well as their insults and taunts towards the Prophet ﷺ.

As the siege intensified, it became clear to Banu Quraizah that no escape was

1 Bukhari , Fath al-Bari:15/294, Ibn Hisham:3/234

possible from their fate at the hands of the Messenger of Allah and his followers. Finally, they announced their surrender to the judgment of Allah's Messenger ﷺ. Some members of the Aws tribe came to the Messenger of Allah, trying to intercede on behalf of their former allies. The Prophet ﷺ delegated the judgment to Sa'd bin Mu'adh, who was respected by all, and was accepted by the Jews to be the final judge, especially since he was one of their allies before Islam. Sa'd asked if both parties would pledge to uphold his judgment once passed, and everyone agreed. He then passed his judgement, which came as a surprise to some: "My judgment is that all men of fighting age should be killed, and the rest taken into bonds."<sup>1</sup>

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "You have passed the judgment of Allah."<sup>2</sup>

It was Sa'd who came to them during the siege of the Confederates, and saw firsthand their treachery and betrayal. He attempted to warn them, to reason with them, but they paid him no heed. Not only did they betray the Messenger of Allah, but the Believers and their land as well, at the most difficult and crucial time in Madinah's history. The only people to be saved from this judgment was one of their leaders, along with a handful of others, who berated the rest of Banu Quraizah for their treachery and denounced their betrayal of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. During the Battle of the Confederates, they made their stance very clear, announcing that they refuse to break the peace treaty with Muhammad, and will not take part in any treachery towards him and the Muslims. Their honorable actions saved them from the repercussions that the rest of their tribe faced.

The Battle of al-Ahzab and the Expedition of Banu Quraizah were great victories for the Muslims. Allah vanquished the Confederates, for they retreated in misery, unable to harm the believers. He exposed the true nature of Banu Quraizah, purified Madinah of their treacherous presence, and granted the Muslims their land. Regarding them, Allah the Exalted revealed:

*"And those of the people of the Scripture who backed them (the disbelievers) Allah brought them down from their forts and cast terror into their hearts, (so that) a group (of them) you killed, and a group (of them) you made captives. And He caused you to inherit their lands, and their houses, and their riches, and a land which you had not trodden (before). And Allah is Able to do all things."* (Surah al-Ahzab, 26-27)

1. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:15/300, Ibn Abi Shaibah,P:266

2. Bukhari ,Fath al-Bari:15/298

## The Expedition of Banu Mustaliq (or al-Muraysi`) (Sha`ban 6 AH)

The subtribe of Banu Mustaliq was an offshoot of the tribe of Khuza`ah al-Qahtaniyyah. The expedition took place against them and was thus named after them. It was also known as the Expedition of al-Muraysi`, as this was the name of the area and the waters between Makkah and Madinah where Banu Mustaliq lived.

Because Banu Mustaliq lived near the decisive land of Makkah and the Quraish, they revered the Quraish and had a strong bond with them. They did not have a clear position towards Islam initially. When the rest of their tribe of Khuza`ah allied itself with the Prophet ﷺ, Banu Mustaliq decided to diverge from their tribesmen and ally themselves with the Quraish a short while before the Battle of Uhud.

They began preparations to attack Madinah after the Battle of al-Ahزاب, so the Prophet ﷺ monitored them closely and kept track of their movements. When he became sure that the attack was imminent in Sha`ban of the year 6 AH, he left Madinah under the command of Abu Dharr al-Ghifari ؓ and set out with an army of 700 fighters to al-Muraysi`. The army consisted of Muhajirun and Ansar, with their banners being held by Abu Bakr as-Siddiq ؓ and Sa`d bin `Ubadah ؓ respectively.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ reached their lands and commanded that `Umar bin al-Khattab announce to them: “Say ‘La ilaha ila Allah’ [there is no god but Allah] and you protect yourselves and your wealth.” The response was a shower of arrows from Banu Mustaliq. The Prophet ﷺ led the Muslims, and they surged forward in a single motion. Banu Mustaliq panicked and proceeded to flee, and some of them were killed. In this quick manner, Allah vanquished them. The Muslims took many captives in this battle, among whom was Juwayriyyah

bint al Harith ؓ. Many of the Companions showed their exceptional valor on the battlefield in this expedition, among them `Ali bin Abi Talib and `Abd ar-Rahman bin `Awf, may Allah be pleased with them.

The Prophet ﷺ succeeded in quelling this subtribe of Khuza'ah and disciplining them against further aggression against Madinah, causing it to fall in line with the rest of its branches, all of whom had allied with the Muslims. This strike served another purpose, for it would certainly cause others to think twice before considering a similar offensive, or allying with the Quraish against the Muslims.<sup>1</sup>



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1 Ibn Hisham:3/291-294, At-Tabaqat:2/63, Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:3/297

## The Slander of `Aishah رضي الله عنها

The most important event pertaining to the Expedition of Banu Mustaliq was the Event of the Slander. This event was an attack on the purest honor, that of the Messenger ﷺ, and an attack on the most beloved of people to him, and to the Ummah.

Perhaps the best method of portraying this incident is to hear the story from the central character herself, our Mother `Aishah رضي الله عنها, who is the most reliable narrator of its most intricate details. She narrates the story in one of the longest and most detailed hadiths in Sahih Bukhari as relayed by her nephew, `Urwah bin az-Zubayr رضي الله عنه. I have made sure to relay the hadith in its entirety but before doing so, one must consider the definition and meaning of ‘ifk:

*Ifk* (Slander) is similar to the word *al-afak* which is the same as filth and filthy people. And it is also said: *ifkuhum*, *afkuhum*, and *afakuhum*. If it is said *afakahum*, it means ‘he turned them away from faith and belied them’ just as Allah says

*“Turned aside therefrom (i.e., from Muhammad and the Quran) is he who is turned aside (by the Decree and Preordainment of Allah).”*  
(Surah ad-Dhariyat, 9)

meaning turned away will be the one who turns away.<sup>1</sup>

Ibn Shihab narrates: “The story was relayed to me by `Urwah bin az-Zubayr, Sa`id bin al-Musayyib, `Alqamah bin Waqqas, `Ubaidullah bin `Abdullah bin `Utbah bin Mas`ud, all of who narrated the story from `Aishah رضي الله عنها, the wife of the Prophet ﷺ. I heard portions of it from some of them, and the rest from others. Some of them had memorized the story more precisely than others. I memorized the portion each one told me of the whole story, and each of their stories corroborates and confirms the others, even though some of them had memorized it better.

1. Translator’s note: This is Bukhari’s introduction before the actual hadith which is narrated by `Aishah رضي الله عنها.

ʿAishah said: “When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ intended to go on a journey, he would draw lots between his wives, taking with him the wife whose lot was drawn. During one such expedition, he cast lots and my lot was drawn, so I went out with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. This was after the verse commanding *hijab* was revealed, so I used to ride in my howdah<sup>1</sup> on the back of the camel and was carried down in it whenever we stopped.

We continued the expedition until the Messenger of Allah ﷺ completed it and began the return journey. One night, as we were near Madinah, the order was given to depart. I left to answer the call of nature and went a distance away from the army. When I had finished and made my return, I touched my chest to find that my necklace of Zafar stones had fallen, so I retraced my steps, searching for it in the dark with my hands, and thus I was delayed by my search.

The men assigned to lift my howdah back onto its camel came and lifted it, assuming I was inside, for we women were light back then and were not yet fattened by meat. We only ate bits of the little that was available at the time. Thus, the men did not find any issue with the howdah’s light weight when they lifted it and carried it onto the camel. Furthermore, I was a young girl at the time. They sent the camel on its way and the army left.

I found my necklace after the army had departed and I returned to find their places empty; not a soul remained. I returned to where I was previously, assuming that they would notice my absence and come back for me. As I waited in my spot, my eyes were overcome, and I fell asleep.

Safwan bin al-Mu`attal as-Sulami ad-Dhakwani, the army’s rearguard, came to my spot and found the black silhouette of a person sleeping on the ground, and recognized me as he came closer and saw me, for he had seen me before *hijab* was revealed. I woke up to his *istirja*<sup>2</sup> after he recognized me, so I covered my face with my clothing. By Allah, he did not speak a single word, nor did I hear anything from him besides his *istirja*. He dismounted his camel and then made it kneel, placing his legs on its front legs, and I got up and mounted it. He then led it until we overtook the army at the height of noon, entering their camp as they rested. It was here that some individuals brought destruction upon themselves [i.e., they began to slander], and ʿAbdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul was the one who had the greatest share of spreading the slander.”

1. A canopied seat or platform for one or more persons placed on the back of a riding beast.

2. Saying *inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un* – Indeed we belong to Allah and indeed to Him we shall return. Said in the event of calamities, catastrophes, or generally unfavorable situations.

Urwah said: “I was told that rumors of the slander would be said in his presence, and he would listen, then affirm and spread them. The only others mentioned with taking part in the slander were: Hassan bin Thabit, Mistah bin Uthathah, Hamnah bint Jahsh, and a few others that I do not know. We know that it was a group of people, as Allah the Exalted said, and that the head of them was `Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul.”

Urwah also said: “Aishah would hate that Hassan be cursed in front of her, for he is the one who recited the lines of poetry:

Surely, my father and his father, and my honor

For the honor of Muhammad, are all a shield and a protector.

Aishah continues the story:

“We returned to Madinah and I fell ill for a month. Meanwhile, the people were spreading the rumors started by the slanderers, and I was unaware. It was strange to me that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not show me the tender loving care that I was accustomed to from him during times of illness. He would only enter, say *salam*, ask how I was. This caused doubt in my mind, but did not realize the extent of the evil until after fully recuperating.

After my illness, I went out with Umm Mistah to al-Manasi`, where people would go to answer the call of nature. We used to go exclusively at night, before we had latrines near our homes. We were upon the custom of the old Arabs, who answered the call of nature in this manner and disliked having latrines near their homes. I went with Umm Mistah, who was the daughter of Abu Ruhm bin al-Muttalib bin `Abd Manaf and Bint Sakhr bin `Amir, who was the maternal aunt of Abu Bakr as-Siddiq. Her son was Mistah bin Uthathah bin `Abbad bin al-Muttalib. After we finished, we headed towards my house, and Umm Mistah became entangled in her sheet and stumbled, exclaiming: “May Mistah be ruined!”

“What an evil thing you said!” I told her.

“Are you cursing a man who participated in the Battle of Badr?”

“Simple woman! Have you not heard what he has said?” She responded.

“What did he say?” I asked. And she informed me what was being spread by the slanderers, and I became even more ill on top of my illness.

After I returned home, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ visited me and greeted me as always. “How is the lady?” he asked. I then said, “O Messenger of Allah, do you permit me to go to my parents’ home?” I went to my mother and asked her, “Dear Mother, what are the people talking about?”

She said, “My daughter, take it easy on yourself. Rarely is there a charming woman beloved by her husband who has other wives except that they will be against her.”

“Subhan Allah!” I said. “Are the people really saying this [i.e., the slander]?”

And so I wept that night until I no longer had any tears left and no sleep overcame me, and the morning came upon me as I still wept.

When the revelation was delayed [regarding the issue], the Messenger of Allah ﷺ called `Ali bin Abi Talib and Usamah bin Zaid, consulting them on whether he should divorce his wife. As for Usamah, he voiced only what he knew to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, regarding the innocence of his wife [i.e. `Aishah] and the good that he himself knew firsthand.

Usamah said, “She is your wife, and we do not know other than good about her.”

As for `Ali, he said, “O Messenger of Allah, Allah has not restricted you here, and the women besides her are many. Ask her maidservant and she will tell you the truth.”

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ called Barirah the maidservant and said, “Barirah, have you seen anything that raised your suspicions?”

“By the One who has sent you with the Truth, I have not seen anything worth concealing.” Barirah said. “Except that she is a young girl that sometimes sleeps without covering the dough of her family, and so the goats come and eat it.”

That day, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ascended the pulpit and complained of `Abdullah bin Ubayy saying, “O Muslims! Who will relieve me of a man who has harmed me regarding my family? By Allah, I do not know anything but good about my family, and the person whom the people have mentioned in this connection [i.e., Safwan bin Mu`attal] is, according to my knowledge, a pious person, and he did never go into my house but along with me.”

Sa`d bin Mu`adh of Banu `Abd al-Ash-hal [i.e., al-Aws] stood up and said, “I will relieve you, O Messenger of Allah. If the man is from the tribe of al-Aws, I will strike his neck. If he is from among our brothers of the tribe of al-Khazraj,



command us and we will do as you command.”

Sa`d bin `Ubadah, who was the leader of al-Khazraj and also happened to be the cousin and fellow tribesman of Umm Hassan [ibn Thabit], then stood – he was a righteous man before this, but he was moved by the tribal fervor of the Days of Ignorance – and said, “You have lied! By Allah, you will not kill him, nor are you capable of killing him. If he was from your tribe, you would not like for him to be killed.”

On this, Usaid bin Hudayr, the cousin of Sa`d bin Mu`adh, stood and said, “It is you who have lied! By Allah, we will certainly kill him. You are a hypocrite arguing on behalf of hypocrites!” Both al-Aws and al-Khazraj stood, and a fight was imminent, all while the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was on the pulpit. He kept trying to calm them until they finally became silent and then he fell silent as well.

`Aishah continued:

“I cried that entire day non-stop, and no sleep overcame me. My parents were with me, and I had cried for two nights and a day consecutively, never ceasing nor sleeping, until I thought the weeping would sunder my liver. As I sat with my parents and wept, a woman from the Ansar sought permission to enter, so I permitted her, and she sat and wept with me.

As we sat and wept, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ entered upon us. He said *salam*, and then sat, and he had not sat with me since the rumors began. No revelation had come to him regarding me for an entire month. He sat and recited the *tashahhud*, then said, “To proceed, O `Aishah, such-and-such regarding you has reached me. So if you are innocent, Allah will reveal your innocence, and if you have committed a sin, seek forgiveness of Allah and repent to Him. Surely, if the servant acknowledges his sin then repents, Allah repents upon him.”

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ finished what he had to say, my tears ceased until I no longer felt a single drop. I said to my father, “Respond to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on my behalf regarding what he just said.”

My father said, “By Allah, I do not know what to say to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.”

I said to my mother, “Respond to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on my behalf regarding what he just said.”

She said, “By Allah, I do not know what to say to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.”

I was still a young girl who had not read much of the Qur'an, so I responded, "By Allah, I know for sure that you have heard what is being said and it has now settled inside you and you have believed it. So, if I were to tell you that I am surely innocent, you would not believe me. But if I were to confess to you something – and Allah knows that I am innocent of it! – you would believe me.

By Allah, I do not find an appropriate example for me and you except that of the father of Yusuf, who said:

*'So (for me) patience is most fitting. And it is Allah (Alone) Whose help can be sought against that which you assert. ''1''*

I then turned away and laid down on my bed.

Allah knew at that moment that I was innocent, and I knew that He would declare my innocence in full. However, I swear by Allah, I did not think that Allah would reveal anything about me in His Revelation to be recited by people, because I considered myself too insignificant for Allah to speak about me at all. Rather, I hoped that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would see a dream in his sleep wherein Allah would declare my innocence. By Allah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had not risen from his seat, and no one in the house had left before the revelation came down upon him. He was overtaken by the difficulty that would overcome him during revelation and sweat began to come down from him like pearls, even though it was a winter day, and this was due to the weightiness of the speech being revealed upon him.

When this state passed over the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he was smiling and the first thing he said was, "O `Aishah, Allah has declared your innocence!"

My mother said, "Get up and go to him."

I said, "By Allah, I will not go to him. I will not praise anyone but Allah, the Mighty the Exalted."

Allah the Exalted revealed:

*"Verily! Those who brought forth the slander..."* (Surah an-Nur, 11) and the following ten verses. Allah revealed them to declare my innocence."

Abu Bakr as-Siddiq used to spend on Mistah bin Uthathah, for he was a poor relative of his, so he said, "By Allah, I will not spend on Mistah anything after what he said about `Aishah." Then Allah revealed:

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1. (Yusuf, 18)

*“And let not those among you who are blessed with graces and wealth swear not to give (any sort of help) to their kinsmen, the poor, and those who left their homes for Allah’s Cause. Let them pardon and forgive. Do you not love that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”* (Surah an-Nur, 22).

Abu Bakr then said, “By Allah, of course I would definitely love that Allah forgive me,” and he went back to spending on Mistah as he used to, and said, “By Allah, I will never take it away from him.”

‘Aishah continues:

“The Messenger of Allah ﷺ had asked Zainab bint Jahsh about my issue. He had asked her, “What do you know and what have you seen?”

She said, “O Messenger of Allah, I protect my hearing and my sight [from falsehood]. By Allah, I do not know [anything about ‘Aishah] except good.”

(She defended my honor despite the fact that) she used to be my competitor among the wives of the Prophet ﷺ, but Allah saved her [from falling into the sin of slandering me] due to her cautious piety and fear of Allah. However, her sister Hamnah did so for her sister’s sake, and so she was undone along with the others.”

Ibn Shihab said, “This is what has reached me regarding this group [i.e., the slanderers].”

‘Urwah then said that ‘Aishah said:

*“By Allah, the man that they spread rumors about [i.e., Safwan bin Mu`attal] would say, ‘Subhan Allah! I swear by the One in whose Hands is my soul, I have never ever lifted the veil of a female!’ He later died in the path of Allah [i.e., Jihad]”*<sup>1</sup>

This narration from the person around whom the incident revolved is certainly the most comprehensive narration regarding this event. Verses were revealed about this situation that will continue to be recited until the Day of Judgment. In these verses are essential lessons for the Ummah. Allah the Exalted says:

*“Verily! Those who brought forth the slander are a group among you. Consider it not a bad thing for you. Nay, it is good for you. Unto every man among them will be paid that which he had earned of the sin, and as for him among them who had the greater share therein, his will be*

1. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/555-560, Ibn Hisham:3/297-307

*a great torment.*

*Why then, did not the believers, men and women, when you heard it (the slander) think good of their own people and say: "This (charge) is an obvious lie?"*

*Why did they not produce four witnesses? Since they (the slanderers) have not produced witnesses! Then with Allah they are the liars.*

*Had it not been for the Grace of Allah and His Mercy unto you in this world and in the Hereafter, a great torment would have touched you for that whereof you had spoken.*

*When you were propagating it with your tongues, and uttering with your mouths that whereof you had no knowledge, you counted it a little thing, while with Allah it was very great.*

*And why did you not, when you heard it, say? "It is not right for us to speak of this. Glory be to You (O Allah) this is a great lie."*

*Allah forbids you from it and warns you not to repeat the like of it forever, if you are believers.*

*And Allah makes the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) plain to you, and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.*

*Verily, those who like that (the crime of) illegal sexual intercourse should be propagated among those who believe, they will have a painful torment in this world and in the Hereafter. And Allah knows and you know not.*

*And had it not been for the Grace of Allah and His Mercy on you, (Allah would have hastened the punishment upon you). And that Allah is full of kindness, Most Merciful.*

*O you who believe! Follow not the footsteps of Satan. And whosoever follows the footsteps of Satan, then, verily he commands al-Fahsha' [i.e., to commit indecency (illegal sexual intercourse, etc.)], and al-Munkar [disbelief and polytheism (i.e., to do evil and wicked deeds; to speak or to do what is forbidden in Islam, etc.)]. And had it not been for the Grace of Allah and His Mercy on you, not one of you would ever have been pure from sins. But Allah purifies (guides to Islam) whom He wills, and Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.*

*And let not those among you who are blessed with graces and wealth swear not to give (any sort of help) to their kinsmen, the poor, and those who left their homes for Allah's Cause. Let them pardon and forgive. Do you not love that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.*

*Verily, those who accuse chaste women, who never even think of anything touching their chastity and are good believers, are cursed in this life and in the Hereafter; and for them will be a great torment.”*  
(Surah an-Nur, 11-23)

These verses address not only the Companions, but the entire Ummah of believers until the Last Day. If the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself and his family were accused regarding their manners, then none of the households of this Ummah are safe from accusation. This is why the Holy Quran clearly states that this was one of the slanderer's intentions. Allah says about them:

*“Verily, those who like that (the crime of) illegal sexual intercourse should be propagated among those who believe, they will have a painful torment in this world and in the Hereafter. And Allah knows and you know not.”* (Surah an-Nur, 19)

Allah also warned us regarding those who try to drag people towards the footsteps of Satan, and forbid us from following them:

*“O you who believe! Follow not the footsteps of Satan. And whosoever follows the footsteps of Satan, then, verily he commands al-Fahsha' [i.e., to commit indecency (illegal sexual intercourse, etc.)], and al-Munkar [disbelief and polytheism (i.e., to do evil and wicked deeds; to speak or to do what is forbidden in Islam, etc.)]. And had it not been for the Grace of Allah and His Mercy on you, not one of you would ever have been pure from sins. But Allah purifies (guides to Islam) whom He wills, and Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.”* (Surah an-Nur, 21)

There is no doubt that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is the leader of all the pure, and that the Mothers of the Believers are the purest of the pure women referenced in the following verse:

*“Bad statements are for bad people (or bad women for bad men) and bad people for bad statements (or bad men for bad women). Good statements are for good people (or good women for good men) and*

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*good people for good statements (or good men for good women), such (good people) are innocent of (each and every) bad statement which they say, for them is Forgiveness, and generous provision.” (Surah an-Nur, 26)*

He is the purest of the pure, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and Allah chose for him the purest women, among whom is `Aishah رضي الله عنها.

Sadly, there are some people who pretend to be righteous and yet say evil things about `Aishah, the pure, the wife of the purest of the pure ﷺ. May Allah be pleased with her and all his Companions, and those who follow in his footsteps.

Glorified is Allah! The emphasis on lowering the gaze is repeated in the same Surah to the men and the women as a continuation of the lessons on chastity to the Ummah of purity, the Ummah of Muhammad ﷺ, those who followed his example, and the example of his wife, the Mothers of the Believers. Allah the Exalted said:

*“Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.). That is purer for them. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what they do.*

*And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.) and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent, and to draw their veils all over Juyubihinna (i.e., their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms, etc.) and not to reveal their adornment except to their husbands, their fathers, their husband’s fathers, their sons, their husband’s sons, their brothers or their brother’s sons, or their sister’s sons, or their (Muslim) women (i.e., their sisters in Islam), or the (female) slaves whom their right hands possess, or old male servants who lack vigour, or small children who have no sense of the shame of sex. And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment. And all of you beg Allah to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful.” (Surah an-Nur, 30-31)*

It is clear that the hypocrites who started and spread the rumors aimed to target the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as well as Abu Bakr as-Siddiq رضي الله عنه and his family with this slander which occurred against `Aishah, the Mother of the Believers رضي الله عنها. Abu Bakr was harmed from the people’s rumors in the issue at a time when he was showing them the best treatment and spending on them from his own money. For this reason, he was greatly upset by their actions and their ungrateful attitude

towards his kindness, and wanted to stop spending on Mistah bin Uthathah in particular, who was a relative of his, the son of his maternal aunt.

However, when the words of Allah were revealed:

*“And let not those among you who are blessed with graces and wealth swear not to give (any sort of help) to their kinsmen, the poor, and those who left their homes for Allah’s Cause. Let them pardon and forgive. Do you not love that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”* (Surah an-Nur, 22),

Abu Bakr said, “By Allah, of course I would certainly love that Allah forgive me,” and went back to spending on Mistah as he used to, and said, “By Allah, I will never take it away from him.”<sup>1</sup>

One of the most important benefits of the Expedition of Banu Mustaliq was the exposure of the hypocrites, especially `Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul and those like him during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ. No doubt, their followers exist in every age, and the Quranic verses revealed about the hypocrites apply to them in any time and place.

One incident that showed the hypocrites’ true colors occurred when two men fought at a well. One of them was from the tribe of Ghifar and under the protection of `Umar bin al-Khattab, and the other was allied with the Ansar. The man from Ghifar called out, “O Muhajirun!” and the other called, “O Ansar!” So the two groups answered the call, and the tension rose to the extent that a fight was imminent. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ heard of this, he said, “You call one another with the calls of the Days of Ignorance, while I am still among you? Leave it [i.e., tribalism] for it is rotten.”<sup>2</sup>

News of this reached `Abdullah bin Ubayy as he was with a group of the Ansar, and among them was a young Companion named Zaid bin Arqam ؓ. In an attempt to rile people up, `Abdullah bin Ubayy said, “Did they really do that? They have increased in number and become a nuisance in our land. By Allah, these exiles from the Quraish are just as it is said ‘Feed your dog and he will end up eating you.’ I swear by Allah, when we return to Madinah, the more honorable ones [i.e., himself] will drive out the lowlier ones [i.e., the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions].” He then took to blaming the Ansar around him telling them, “By Allah, if you held back from giving them, they would have been forced to find other than your land [i.e., Madinah].”

1 Ibn Kathir Tafseer:2/1322

2. Bukhari:4907

The young companion Zaid bin Arqam ؓ went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and informed him of what `Abdullah bin Ubayy had just said. `Umar bin al-Khattab, who was present, said, “O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, command me and I will kill him.”

The Prophet ﷺ said, “How then, O `Umar, will it be if people say ‘Muhammad kills his companions’?”<sup>1</sup>

`Abdullah bin Ubayy came to the Prophet ﷺ and swore that he never said such a thing, and denied Zaid’s report until some of those who had not witnessed the event began thinking perhaps he was telling the truth. They started to blame Zaid, especially since he was a young boy.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ commanded the army to move at a different time than they were accustomed to, so Usaid bin Hudayr ؓ came to him seeking an explanation for this change in schedule.

“Has it not reached you what your companion has said?” the Prophet ﷺ asked Usaid.

“Which companion?” asked Usaid.

The Prophet ﷺ replied, “`Abdullah bin Ubayy.”

“What did he say?” asked Usaid.

“He claimed that when he returns to Madinah, the more honorable ones will drive out the lowly ones,” the Prophet ﷺ told him.

Usaid said, “You, by Allah, are the honorable one, and he is the lowly one. We will drive him out of Madinah if you wish.”

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ traveled throughout that day and continued at night, and even the next morning he continued until everyone was exhausted. They stopped their animals and fell fast asleep from the extent of their weariness, and so there was no opportunity to discuss what had just happened.

Surah al-Munafiqun was revealed onto the Messenger of Allah ﷺ under these circumstances. In this revelation, Allah confirmed Zaid bin Arqam’s story. Because he was a young boy, the Prophet ﷺ would take him by the ear playfully and say, “This is the one whose ears Allah has vouched for.”<sup>2</sup> Several verses were revealed regarding `Abdullah bin Ubayy and the other hypocrites.

Allah the Exalted said:

*“It is equal to them whether you (Muhammad) ask forgiveness or ask*

1. Bukhari

2. Ibn Hisham:3/292, Al-Isabah:1/560, Siyar A`alam an-Nubala:3/165



*not forgiveness for them. Verily, Allah guides not the people who are the Fasiqin (rebellious, disobedient to Allah). They are the ones who say: "Spend not on those who are with Allah's Messenger, until they desert him." And to Allah belong the treasures of the heavens and the earth, but the hypocrites comprehend not.*" (Surah al-Munafiqun, 6-7)

`Abdullah bin Ubayy had a righteous son who was also named `Abdullah, and he was one of the pious Companions of the Prophet ﷺ. When he heard what had happened with his father, he came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "It has reached me that you want my father to be executed. If you must do so, then give me the command and I will bring you his head. By Allah, all of al-Khazraj knows that there is no son more dutiful and obedient to his father than I am to mine, so I am afraid that you command someone other than me to kill him, and I will not be able to bear seeing my father's killer walking around among the people, and I will kill him and enter the Fire for having killed a believer in retribution of a disbeliever [i.e., his father]."

The Prophet ﷺ replied, "Rather, we will show him compassion and good companionship as long as he is with us."<sup>1</sup>

This situation shows us the danger presented by the hypocrites, and how they take advantage of circumstances to sow discord and difficulties between the Muslims, deny them their rights, and weaken their unity. They often accomplish these things by utilizing the evils of nationalism and tribalism. `Abdullah bin Ubayy threatened to exile the Messenger of Allah and his Companions from Madinah though he had no power to do so, it was simply an example of the munafiqun taking any opportunity to create doubt in the hearts of the Muslims and harm the Prophet of Allah ﷺ. However, `Abdullah quickly denied having made the statement, and this shows the true weakness of the hypocrites. Allah exposed him in the Qur'an, and his humiliation will be recited until the Day of Judgment.

His own son, `Abdullah, was a pious, sincere man of devotion to Allah, and he showed his absolute readiness to sacrifice everything for the Prophet ﷺ, even his own father, though he was a most dutiful and obedient son. In the reply of the Messenger ﷺ, and his soothing and reassuring answer to this righteous son, we see wisdom, compassion, sympathy, and excellent manners in a difficult situation. Additionally, the Prophet ﷺ busied the army with the return journey and tired them through continuous travel without rest, and thus prevented them from

1 Ibn Hisham:3/292

argumentation and division. What a truly great leader he was ﷺ, showing deep wisdom in situations that needed to be handled very wisely and with utmost care.

Another outcome of the Expedition of Banu Mustaliq was the Prophet's marriage to Juwayriyyah bint al-Harith. She was the daughter of al-Harith bin Abi Dirar, the chief of Banu Mustaliq. He was killed along with her husband in the battle between Banu Mustaliq and the Muslims, after which she was captured along with the rest of the women and children of her tribe. She was given to Thabit bin Qays bin Shammās al-Ansari ؓ and she made a contract with him for her manumission<sup>1</sup>.

However, Juwayriyyah knew of the Prophet's compassion and excellence towards all people, so she came to him and said, "O Messenger of Allah, I am Juwayriyyah bint al-Harith bin Abi Dirar, the chief of his tribe. It is not unknown to you the difficulties that have befallen me [i.e., the death of her father and husband]. I have been given to Thabit bin Qays bin Shammās and agreed with him upon my manumission, so I have come to you to seek aid in fulfilling my contract." The Prophet ﷺ felt sorry for her and offered to pay the price for her manumission, then marry her to not only restore, but increase her honor and prestige more than what she previously enjoyed in her tribe. She agreed and the Prophet ﷺ married her.

This union proved to be not only a benefit for her, but for the entire tribe as well, for it was an honor for them as well as an end for their plight. As soon as the Prophet ﷺ married her, all the Muslims freed their captives from Banu Mustaliq saying, "These are the in-laws of the Messenger of Allah." Thus, Juwayriyyah was a source of immense blessings for her tribe. `Aishah ؓ would say, "Through her, Allah freed one-hundred families of Banu Mustaliq. I do not know of a woman who brought her people more blessings than her." She learned much at the hands of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and became a devout worshipper. She used to fast a lot, and she narrated many hadiths. Juwayriyyah, Mother of the Believers, passed away in the year 50 AH – may Allah be pleased with her.

Her marriage to the Prophet ﷺ greatly improved the relationship between the Muslims and Banu Mustaliq. They were the only offshoot of Khuza`a that declared war against the Messenger of Allah ﷺ while the rest of the tribe were his allies. This marriage established good relations between them and the Muslims and led to their alliance with the Prophet ﷺ against the Quraish.<sup>2</sup>

1. Manumission, or *kitabah*, was a contract between the slave and the master wherein they both agree on a certain price that the slave would pay to free themselves.

2. Ibn Hajar, *Al-Isabah*:4/265,266

# The Treaty of Hdaybiyyah (Shawwal 6 AH)

The Prophet ﷺ announced that he would make a peaceful journey to Makkah to perform `Umrah [the lesser pilgrimage]. He called the people to join him and left with a group of the Muhajirun and the Ansar, along with some individuals from the other tribes that had joined the Muslims. In total, they exceeded 1400 in number. When they had reached a place called Dhul-Hulaifah, the Prophet ﷺ put on the ritual garments of *ihram*, proclaimed his intention for `Umrah, and appointed the sacrificial animals. His Companions followed suit. It was very clear that they intended no harm to the people of Makkah, rather their only intention was to perform the sacred ritual of `Umrah and sanctify the Sacred House in a peaceful manner.

When the Muslims reached `Usfan, a man from the tribe of Banu Ka`b met the Prophet ﷺ and informed him that the Quraish had heard the news of his journey, and they intended to prevent him and the Muslims access to the Sacred house. The Muslims continued on their way to Makkah, and when they arrived at a place called `Usfan, they saw Khalid bin al-Walid leading the cavalry of Quraish that had set out specifically to meet them.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ led the Muslims down a different path, then he stopped at al-Ghamim<sup>1</sup>. There, he spoke to his company, beginning with the praise of Allah, and then he asked the Companions their opinions.

Abu Bakr said, “O Messenger of Allah, let us go straight for Makkah, for Allah will aid you, grant you support, and Allah will make you victorious.”

Al-Miqdad bin al-Aswad said as he was on his riding beast, “By Allah, O Messenger of Allah, we will not say to you as the Children of Israel said to their Prophet:

*‘They said: “O Musa! We shall never enter it as long as they are there. So go you and your Lord and fight you two, we are sitting right here.”’*

1. A place north of Makkah and south of `Usfan

(Surah al-Ma'idah, 24),

instead we say: Go forth, you and your Lord and fight you two, we are fighting alongside you.”

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then continued until he entered the boundaries of the Haram, after which his camel refused to advance further. Some people said, “She is being obstinate,” i.e., refusing commands, as some riding beasts were prone to doing.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “She is not being obstinate, nor is that her nature. Rather, she is being prevented by the One who prevented the elephant from entering Makkah. The Quraish will not let me glorify the sanctities [of the Sacred House] and they are trying to reach there before me. Come!” So they headed to the right into a valley called Dhat al-Hanthal until they descended into Hudaybiyyah. When they descended, the people sought water from a well, but the water would drain and they were not able to draw from it. They complained to the Prophet ﷺ and he gave them an arrow from his quiver and told them to throw it into the well. They threw it in and the water gushed forth until they drank their fill, and their animals drank as well.

When the Quraish heard of this, they sent a messenger from Banu Hulis. Because they were a tribe who revered sacrificial animals, the Prophet ﷺ told the Muslims, “Send out the sacrificial animals.” When the messenger saw the animals, he did not say word and instead returned to the Quraish saying, “O people of sacrificial wreaths, cattle, and camels!” and he warned them not to prevent the Muslim pilgrims and reminded them of the sanctities. In response, they turned against him and cursed him saying, “You are an uncivilized Bedouin. We are not surprised at your reaction, rather we are surprised at ourselves for even sending you.”

They then sent `Urwah bin Mas`ud, who approached the Muslims and spoke to the Prophet ﷺ, insisting that the pagans were ready to fight them, and would not allow them to enter Makkah.

The Prophet ﷺ replied, “We have not come for battle; we come intending to fulfill the pilgrimage and to sacrifice our animals. So go back to your people, for they are quick-tempered, and warfare has caused them to be fearful, and it is no good for warfare to continue to eat away at them more than what it has already eaten. Instead, let them vacate the way between me and the House, and we will

perform our pilgrimage and sacrifice our animals. Then we can draw up a treaty between us, during which their women can move about freely and they can feel secure regarding their flocks, and they will not come between me and the people. For I swear by Allah, I will fight any people who attempt to prevent me regarding this religion until Allah grants me victory or I die trying.”

ʿUrwah returned to the Quraish and spoke: “You know, by Allah, that there are none on this earth more beloved to me than you. You are my brothers and the dearest of people to my heart.” He continued to praise them, and then said, “That man has proposed a truce, so accept it. You know that I have dealt with kings and great leaders, but I swear by Allah I have not seen a king or leader greater in the eyes of his people than him. Not a single one of them speaks until he seeks his permission; if he grants it, they speak, and if not, they remain silent. When he performs wudu’, they rush to catch the water that drips from his body and place it on their own heads, seeking blessing from that.”

ʿUrwah was able to convince the Quraish, so they sent Suhail bin ʿAmr to treat with the Prophet ﷺ, saying, “Treat with him on the condition that he return back this year, and that he not visit the House, so that the Arabs hear about his journey and know that we refused him entry.”

Suhail went to the Prophet ﷺ and told him the Quraish’s condition, which he accepted. The Prophet ﷺ dictated the text of the treaty to ʿAli, saying: “Write: (In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful).” Suhail objected on the basis that the Quraish does not recognize the names ‘the Most Gracious’ or ‘the Most Merciful,’ and instead wished that they write (In the name of Allah) only. The Prophet ﷺ allowed it, then he told ʿAli: “Write, “This is a treaty between Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah and Suhail bin ʿAmr.”

Suhail objected, saying, “By Allah, our entire disagreement revolves around that!” (i.e., whether or not he is truly a Messenger of Allah.)

The Prophet ﷺ then told ʿAli to write “Muhammad bin ʿAbdullah” instead.

The Treaty of Hudaibiyyah contained the following stipulations, among others:

- The Truce will last ten years
- Any tribe who wished to join the Muslims could do so, and likewise for the Quraish. The tribe would be subject to the conditions in the treaty

- If any among the Quraish joined the Muslims without the Quraish's permission, he was to be returned to the Quraish, but if any Muslims left to join the Quraish, they did not have to be returned
- The Muslims must return to Madinah that year without performing `Umrah, and they may come back the next year to perform it

The events at the Treaty of Hdaybiyyah are very significant and contain many lessons for the Ummah.

The Pledge of Ridwan occurred during the events at Hdaybiyyah, and it is mentioned by Allah in the Qur'an. The situation played out as follows: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent `Uthman bin `Affan ؓ to the people of Makkah as an ambassador, to inform them that the Prophet ﷺ had come to Makkah as a visitor of the Sacred House, and not for war. `Uthman entered Makkah under the protection of Sa`id bin al-`As and relayed the Prophet's ﷺ message to the leaders of the Quraish. They offered him the opportunity to perform *tawaf* around the Ka`bah, but he refused unless they allow the Messenger of Allah ﷺ the same opportunity. They then tried to keep him with them, and thus a rumor reached the Prophet ﷺ that `Uthman had been killed.

The Prophet ﷺ called the Muslims under a tree to pledge vengeance for `Uthman. The Muslims discussed the oath they were to give the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and Salamah bin al-Akwa' even gave the oath more than once, eager to have his hand touch the hand of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ repeatedly. Not a single one of the Muslims avoided the pledge except al-Jadd bin Qays, one of the hypocrites, who hid under his camel.

Allah the Exalted praised the believers who gave their oaths to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in His words:

*“Indeed, Allah was pleased with the believers when they gave their Bai'a (pledge) to you (O Muhammad) under the tree, He knew what was in their hearts, and He sent down As-Sakinah (calmness and tranquillity) upon them, and He rewarded them with a near victory.”*  
(Surah al-Fath, 18)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also praised them saying, “Today, you are the best people on the face of the Earth.”<sup>1</sup> Due to `Uthman's absence from the pledge, the Prophet ﷺ took the oath on `Uthman's behalf, clasping one hand with the other

1. Bukhari, Muslim, Fath al-Bari:5/63 Ibn Abi Shaibah,P:283

in his name.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was so flexible and compromising in his negotiations with the Quraish and in drawing up the treaty that `Umar bin al-Khattab became extremely distressed over it. He was completely bewildered and asked, “O Messenger of Allah, are you not truly the Prophet of Allah?”

The Prophet ﷺ replied, “Of course.”

`Umar said, “Are we not upon the Truth, and they are upon falsehood?” The Prophet ﷺ again affirmed.

`Umar then asked, “So why are we giving them the upper hand over our religion?”

The Prophet ﷺ said, “I am truly the Messenger of Allah, and I am not to disobey Him.”

`Umar said, “Did you not tell us that we will come to the House and perform *tawaf* around it?”

The Prophet ﷺ replied, “Indeed, but did I inform you that it would be this year?”

`Umar said, “No.”

The Prophet ﷺ then said, “Then indeed you will come to it and make *tawaf* around it.”

Still adamant, `Umar then went to Abu Bakr and had the same conversation, asking, “Why are we giving them the upper hand over our religion?”

Abu Bakr replied with the answer of a man with deep wisdom and understanding, saying, “O `Umar, he is indeed the Messenger of Allah, and he is not to disobey his Lord, and He will grant him victory. So hold tightly to his path, for by Allah, he is upon the Truth.”

After `Uthman was found to be alive and well, and the Treaty was completed, the Prophet ﷺ told the Companions to slaughter their sacrificial animals and shave their heads. The Companions – may Allah be pleased with them – were having a difficult time coping with the notion that they were to accept the pagans’ arrogant denial of their entry into Makkah, after such a long journey. Many of them still yearned to make `Umrah, and they could not bring themselves to sacrifice their animals and shave their heads without even having performed the `Umrah.

The Prophet ﷺ repeated his command to them, but they still could not do it. This greatly saddened him, and he ﷺ returned to his tent and mentioned it to his wife, Umm Salamah ؓ. A wise and understanding woman, she said, “Go out to them and do not speak to any of them until you sacrifice your camel and shave your own head.” The Prophet ﷺ listened to her advice, and when the Companions saw this, they rushed to sacrifice their animals and shave their heads.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the company of 1400 Muslims turned back, and began their return journey to Madinah. It was on the path back to Madinah that Surah al-Fath was revealed unto him, and it brought the believers much joy. Zaid bin Aslam narrates, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was traveling along with `Umar bin al-Khattab, at night on one of his journeys, when `Umar asked him about something, but he did not answer. `Umar asked again but again he did not answer. `Umar asked a third time but the Prophet ﷺ still did not answer. So `Umar said, “May your mother lose you, O `Umar! You asked the Prophet ﷺ three times and not once did he answer you.”

`Umar said, “So I pushed my camel onwards, ahead of the rest of the Muslims. I was afraid that some Qur’an would be revealed regarding me, but I barely moved ahead before I heard a loud yell calling me, so my fears of Qur’an being revealed about me increased. I came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and greeted him, and he said, “A Surah has been revealed upon me this night that is more beloved to me than everything the sun rises over.” Then he recited:

*“Verily, We have given you (O Muhammad) a manifest victory.” (Surah al-Fath, 1)<sup>2</sup>*

It is apparent from the verses and the hadiths that the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah was a clear victory for the Ummah, rather than a defeat. Through it, Allah opened many avenues for the call to Islam to grow and flourish in the Arab lands and beyond. Soon after the treaty was finalized, many tribes freely entered into an alliance with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, fearing no retaliation due to the truce that became known far and wide. The Prophet ﷺ also began sending letters to the kings of the major nations, inviting them to Islam. Because of these reasons and more, Allah called the treaty a manifest victory, through which Allah facilitated for His call to be heard by His slaves on this earth.

It was narrated that Abu Bakr said, “There was no victory in Islam greater than the victory of Hudaibiyyah, but some people did not see the magnitude of

1 Ibn Hisham :3/319, Ibn Abi Shaibah,P:278

2. Bukhari: 5/62, Ibn Abi Shaibah, P:278



the understanding between Muhammad and his Lord. The servants are hasty, but Allah does not hasten in response to their hastiness, planning the course of things until they reach what He intends.”

The treaty also resulted in large financial gains for the Muslims beyond measure. It was the first official recognition of the Muslims, their state, and their leader ﷺ, allowing them to freely call others to join them. It also allowed them to officially return the following year to fulfill their pilgrimage, as the treaty stipulated. All these results and effects were well known to Allah, and thus He called it “a manifest victory.”

As for the condition that stipulated that the Muslims must return whoever comes to them from the Quraish without permission from his leader or superior, at first glance it looks like a very difficult and negative clause within the treaty, but it became clear that it was another clause in favor of the Muslims from the first time it was implemented. A group of Muslims did indeed come to Madinah from Makkah without permission from their families, among whom was Abu Basir at-Thaqafi ؓ. The Quraish sent the Messenger of Allah ﷺ a message demanding their return and, according to the rules of the Treaty, they were to return with the two messengers from the Quraish. However, his faith was unshaken, and he said, “O Abu Basir, we have given these people our word, and it is not allowed in our religion to betray our word. Allah will grant you and those with you – those who are oppressed – a relief and a way out of your predicament.”

Abu Basir left with the two men as their prisoner, and they made their way back to Makkah. Along the way, he was able to overpower one of them, seize his sword, and kill him. The other man ran for his life in fear back to Madinah. He informed the Prophet ﷺ of what had transpired, and the Prophet granted him safety. Abu Basir came and said, “O Messenger of Allah, Allah has cleared you of responsibility or blame – you returned me to them, and then Allah saved me from them.”

The Prophet ﷺ said, not speaking to Abu Basir directly, “Woe to his mother, this man stirring up war! If only he had others with him.”

Abu Basir left Madinah and settled in a place called al-‘Is<sup>1</sup>, which was on the Quraish’s trade route along the coast. He was joined shortly by other Muslims like him who were escaping the Quraish, until eventually their numbers reached about 70 strong fighting men. They took to cutting off the Quraish’s trade routes

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1. A place with clusters of evergreen sidr trees close to the shore on the Makkan trade route to ash-Sham. It was a known spot for refugees due to its dense thickets and the ease with which people could find hiding places.

and attacking their caravans. According to the stipulation that the pagans insisted on, these men did not officially belong to the Prophet ﷺ; rather, they still belonged to the Quraish and thus were their problem to deal with.

Finally, after much anguish, the Quraish sent a message to the Prophet ﷺ begging him to take these people in with him, formally announcing that they wished for the clause concerning these people to be nullified from the treaty. Any person who wished to leave the Quraish and join Muhammad ﷺ would be free to do so. Again, we see another clause become a victory for the Muslims, and Allah indeed granted a way out for Abu Basir and those like him without the Muslims violating the treaty, just as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had promised.<sup>1</sup>



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1 Ibn Kathir, As-Seerah:3/323, Ibn Hisham As-Seerah:3/324, Ibn Abi Shaibah,P:290

# The Prophet's Letters to World Leaders

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was sent by Allah as a Prophet to the entire world. Allah the Exalted said:

*“And We have sent you (O Muhammad) not but as a mercy for the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists).” (Surah Al-Anbiya’, 107)*

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was sent to call the creation to the worship of the Creator, to lead them out of the darkness towards the Light by the permission of their Lord, and to guide them to the Straight Path.

Allah the Exalted says:

*“Say (O Muhammad): “O mankind! Verily, I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allah – to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. None has the right to be worshipped but He; It is He Who gives life and causes death. So believe in Allah and His Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e., Muhammad) who believes in Allah and His Words [(this Qur’an), the Torah and the Gospel, and follow him so that you may be guided.” (Surah Al-A`raf, 158)*

Allah the Exalted further said:

*“O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honorable of you with Allah is that (believer) who has taqwah [i.e., piety and Allah-consciousness]. Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.” (Surah Al-Hujurat, 13).*

Islam leads the people to Allah, and unifies them under His servitude while ridding them of the matters that will divide them and cause rifts between them.

There is no preference for a lighter-skinned person over a darker-skinned

person or vice versa, as the Arabic expression states, “people are as equal as the teeth of a comb.” This sheds light on some of the actions the Prophet ﷺ took throughout his life. He was aware of the world around him, its different kingdoms, governments, tribes, and nations – each with their respective situations. This explains, for example, why he chose Abyssinia as a refuge for his Companions, despite it being across the sea and in another continent. He knew that it was the ideal place for them due to the freedom they would find there, for it was ruled by a just king. The Prophet ﷺ had said, “In it [Abyssinia] is a king in whose court none are oppressed.”

After the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ began sending letters to several kings and leaders of the world. Since each letter was to travel to a different nation, Allah’s Messenger ﷺ chose a specific Companion for each journey, one who knew each land and culture best. He gave them instructions and advised them concerning their task, and conveyed to them the responsibility they now shouldered. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then dispatched his ambassadors and had a letter written for each of them to deliver to the leaders of the world, calling them to Islam.<sup>1</sup>

## The Letter to the King of the Eastern Roman Empire

The Roman Empire was considered the strongest nation at the time of the Prophet ﷺ. The Qur’an mentions Rome in Surah ar-Rum [i.e., the Romans], which was revealed in Makkah. Allah says:

*“Alif-Lam-Mim. The Romans have been defeated in the nearer land (Syria, Iraq, Jordan, and Palestine), and they, after their defeat, will be victorious within three to nine years. The decision of the matter, before and after (these events) is only with Allah. And on that Day, the believers (i.e., Muslims) will rejoice, with the help of Allah. He helps whom He wills, and He is the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful.”* (Surah ar-Rum, 1-5)

During this time period, the Eastern Roman Empire and the Persian Empire were constantly at war with one another in the lands of modern-day Palestine and Jordan. Egypt, the Levant, and the nations of North Africa were under the sovereignty of the Roman Empire, and even though they were comprised of

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Hisham As-Seerah:4/606-607

individual nations, the true authority in these lands belonged to the Roman Emperor, who governed them from his capital in Constantinople.

During this period in history, oppression was very widespread. One form of oppression was the system of tribute, wherein many of the nations under Roman authority would pay tribute to the Empire as a sign of fealty and in return for protection. This led many nations to increase taxes on their populations, in order to be able to afford the tributes and still keep large amounts of wealth for themselves.

The Roman Emperor during the time of the Prophet ﷺ was Heraclius (reigned 610-641 CE). He was of Greek origin, born in Cartagena, in modern-day Tunisia. His father was a Greek governor over the region. Heraclius was sent to Constantinople, the capital, and later became Emperor during the conflicts with Persia. As Emperor, he succeeded in defeating the Persians and returning to Rome its strength and reputation of greatness. The first four verses of Surah ar-Rum (mentioned above) refer to the events of the year 616 CE.

Most Rome's leaders and subjects were Christians. However, within the religion there were numerous sects and different interpretations of the faith and even the nature of God. This led to many schisms and animosity between various churches, which further isolated certain regions and their populations. The Emperor at the time was trying to enforce a particular theology, one that was observed in Constantinople, on some of the other regions, particularly in Egypt, which led to conflict with the Copts.

Of Heraclius' greatest milestones was the recovery of the True Cross, which is claimed to be the original cross Jesus was crucified on, leading to massive celebrations all over the Empire, particularly in Jerusalem. It was during this very time that the Prophet's ﷺ letter reached Heraclius.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ entrusted Dihyah bin Khalifah al-Kalbi ؓ to take the letter to Heraclius, for he was from the tribe of Kalb, who lived on the southern borders of the Roman Empire in the Levant.

As quoted in Bukhari and Muslim, the text of the letter was as follows:

“In the Name of Allah the Most Merciful, the Grantor of Mercy

From Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah to Heraclius, the Leader of the Roman Empire.

Peace be upon whomever follows the Guidance.

To proceed, I invite you to Islam. Accept Islam and you will be saved, and Allah will grant you double the reward. However, if you turn away, then upon you will be the sin of the commoners.

*“Say (O Muhammad): “O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allah. Then, if they turn away, say: “Bear witness that we are Muslims.” (Surah Aal-`Imran, 64).”<sup>1</sup>”*

‘The commoners’ here refers to the employees, the farmers, and workers of the Empire, as well as the general public and all those under its authority and power. After all, who else but their ruler, Heraclius, stands between them and receiving the message of Islam?

When the Prophet’s ﷺ letter was read to Heraclius, he was shocked. He was a devout Christian and amongst the most knowledgeable of emperors. He took great interest in the letter and sought to learn as much as he could about it. He commanded his court to bring forth any Arabs in the area who were from the Prophet’s ﷺ tribe, or knew of him.

Abu Sufyan bin Harb, who was not yet a Muslim, happened to be near Jerusalem in the Quraish’s trade caravan. He was summoned along with his companions to Heraclius’ court to be questioned about the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. When they arrived, a translator facilitated the conversation between Heraclius and Abu Sufyan, which is recorded in Bukhari as follows:

“During the treaty between the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and Abu Sufyan and the disbelievers of the Quraish, Abu Sufyan was in one of the Quraish’s trade caravans in ash-Sham when Heraclius sent for him. He was brought to the court of Heraclius and the Roman nobility in Iliyya’. Once there, Heraclius summoned a translator and said, “Which of you is the closest in lineage to this man who claims to be a Prophet?”

Abu Sufyan said, “I said: I am the closest to him in lineage.”

Heraclius said, “Bring him closer to me, and bring his companions close as well, and place them behind him.” He then said to his translator, “Tell his companions that I will ask him about this man [i.e., the Prophet], and if he lies, they must tell me.”

1 Bukhari:7, Zad al-Ma’ad,3/681

Abu Sufyan later says, “I swear by Allah, had I not been ashamed that my companions would brand me a liar, I would have lied about him. The first thing Heraclius asked me was, ‘What is his lineage among your people?’

I replied, ‘He has an honorable lineage among us.’

Heraclius then asked, ‘Has anyone before him made this claim [i.e. Prophethood]?’

I replied, ‘No.’

He then asked, ‘Were there any kings among his forefathers?’

I said, ‘No.’

He asked, ‘Do the nobles follow him or the downtrodden?’

I said, ‘The downtrodden.’

He asked, ‘Are his followers increasing or decreasing?’

I answered, ‘They are increasing.’

He asked, ‘Do any of his followers abandon his religion out of dissatisfaction with it after they join it?’

I said, ‘No.’

He asked, ‘Have you ever accused him of lying before he began his claim?’

I said, ‘No.’

He asked, ‘Does he break his oaths?’

I replied, ‘No, but we are now in a treaty with him, we do not yet know what he will do.’ I could not find opportunity to say anything against him except that.

He then asked, ‘Have you fought him?’

I said, ‘Yes.’

He asked, ‘What was the result of your warfare with him?’

I replied, ‘War between us has been in turns; sometimes he was victorious and sometimes we.’

He asked, ‘What does he command you with?’

I said, ‘He says to worship Allah alone, and not associate anything with Him [in His worship], to leave what our forefathers used to say. He commands us

with prayer, honesty, chastity, and keeping the ties of kinship.”

Heraclius turned to the translator and said, “Tell him: I asked you about his lineage, and you said that he has an honorable lineage among you, thus are the Messengers; they come from the nobility of their people.

I asked you if any of your people preceded him with this claim, and you said no. I said to myself, ‘If anyone had preceded him with this claim, then he would simply be copying the words of a predecessor.’

I asked you if any of his forefathers was a king and you said no. I said to myself, ‘If any of his forefathers was a king, he would simply be a man trying to reclaim his father’s kingdom.’

I asked you if you ever accused him of lying before he began his claim, and you said no. I am certain that he would not abandon lying to the people only to lie about Allah.

I asked you whether it was the nobility who follow him or the downtrodden, and you said it was the downtrodden. Thus are the followers of the Messengers.

I asked you whether his followers increase or decrease, and you said they increase. Thus is faith until it reaches completion.

I asked you whether any of his followers abandon the faith out of dissatisfaction after entering it, and you said no. Thus is faith when it permeates the hearts.

I asked you whether he breaks his oaths, and you said no. Thus are they Messengers, they never do so.

I asked you about what he commands you with, and you said he commands you to worship Allah and not associate any partners with Him, that he forbids you from worshipping idols, that he commands you with prayer, honesty, and chastity.

If all what you have said is true, then he shall rule the very place between my two feet. I knew for sure that he would come, but I did not think it would be from among you people. If I knew I could make it to him, I would have rushed to meet him, and if I were with him, I would certainly wash his feet.”

Heraclius then called for the Prophet’s ﷺ letter, delivered by Dihyah to the ruler of Busra, to be brought to him. He was presented with the letter.”

Abu Sufyan says, “After he finished his speech, and had read the letter, there



was a loud uproar, voices were raised, and we were ushered out. I turned to my companions as we left and said, ‘The matter of Ibn Abi Kabshah<sup>1</sup> has grown prominent indeed. Now the king of Banu al-Asfar<sup>2</sup> fears him!’ From then on, I became certain that he would be victorious, until Allah allowed Islam into my heart.<sup>3</sup>”

Other narrations indicate that there was another private conversation between Heraclius and Dihyah al-Kalbi about Islam and its view of Jesus Christ and those who pray to him, wherein Dihyah reminded Heraclius to be conscious of Allah, and reminded him of the evil end that would come to him and his kingdom, and ultimately in the Hereafter should he reject Islam.

Heraclius returned a letter falsely hinting his acceptance to the Prophet ﷺ with Dihyah along with a gift, which the Prophet ﷺ divided among the Muslims. It is worth noting that scholars of later generations doubt the authenticity of this particular narration regarding Heraclius sitting privately with Dihyah and his apparent acceptance of the Prophet’s ﷺ message, due to it being transmitted without a clear chain of narration. Despite this, it is not far-fetched that he conversed privately with Dihyah, and Bukhari’s narration clearly shows he was greatly interested in the Prophet ﷺ and believed in his truthfulness, even if he did not show any acceptance of the actual message.

Heraclius clearly knew that the Prophet ﷺ was truthful in his message, and was a sincere caller to the Truth. He knew that this was the Prophet to the circumcised people [i.e., Jews and Christians] and the Prophet of the end of times. He was certain that Allah would aid the Prophet ﷺ and grant him victory, fulfilling His promise by manifesting His Religion and granting it widespread superiority. This is the explanation of the speech Abu Sufyan heard from Heraclius, at a time when Abu Sufyan was still a polytheist and the leader of the Quraish, leading the war effort against the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Seeing this reaction from Heraclius struck fear of the Prophet ﷺ in Abu Sufyan’s heart, and a small recognition of the truth as well, for he said in awe, “Now the king of Banu al-Asfar is afraid of him [the Prophet ﷺ]!” He realized that he was an enemy to a man feared by the greatest ruler on earth of his time!

1. Abu Kabshah was an ancestor of the Prophet ﷺ from his mother’s side who left the pagan ways of Quraish. They used to call the Prophet ‘Ibn Abi Kabsha,’ i.e., the son of Abu Kabsha, as a derogatory name.
2. Banu al-Asfar means ‘the yellow-skinned ones.’ It is not derogatory in any sense, rather it simply denotes their lighter skin tone. It is no longer used in modern Arabic.
3. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:1/4

As for Heraclius, he was indeed distressed and uncertain regarding his predicament. On the one hand, he could believe in the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and follow the command of Jesus by believing in the Final Prophet, earning a double reward as the Prophet informed him, due to his faith in Christianity, followed by Islam. On the other hand, he could refuse to believe in the Prophet ﷺ, and in doing so disobey Allah and His Messenger, prefer this worldly life over the Hereafter, appease the nobility of Rome, remain in the favor, and therefore remain in his position of authority. Because of his predicament, Heraclius decided to test the leaders of his court to see if they would follow him in believing in the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

Heraclius wrote to one of his close friends and advisers, consulting him regarding the emergence of the Prophet. Heraclius then set out for Hims and had hardly reached it when his advisor's response came to him, agreeing that this was, indeed, the Prophet of God. Heraclius summoned the Roman nobility and his councilors to his court in Hims and, after they entered, commanded the doors be shut behind them. Then, he said, "O Romans! Are you interested in success, guidance, and establishing your kingdom by pledging allegiance to this Prophet?"

They descended into chaos like wild braying donkeys, rushing towards the doors, only to find them locked. When Heraclius saw their strong opposition and despair from the possibility of faith, he said, "Bring them all back to me. I only said what I said just now to test your resolve upon your faith, and I have seen it." They prostrated to him and were content<sup>1</sup>.

Thus, the words of Allah the Exalted rang true, as always, regarding Heraclius and those like him:

*"Nay, but those who do wrong follow their own lusts without knowledge, Then who will guide him whom Allah has sent astray? And for such there will be no helpers. So direct your face toward the religion, inclining to truth. [Adhere to] the fitrah of Allah upon which He has created [all] people. No change should there be in the creation of Allah. That is the correct religion, but most of the people do not know." (Surah Ar-Rum, 29-30)*

Allah the Exalted also said:

*"So verily, you (O Muhammad) cannot make the dead to hear (i.e., the*

1. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:1/4, Muslim:5/164

*disbelievers, etc.), nor can you make the deaf to hear the call, when they show their backs, turning away. And you (O Muhammad) cannot guide the blind from their straying; you can make to hear only those who believe in Our Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), and have submitted to Allah in Islam (as Muslims).”*  
(Surah Ar-Rum, 52-53)

And:

*“So on that Day no excuse of theirs will avail those who did wrong (by associating partners in worship with Allah, and by denying the Day of Resurrection), nor will they be allowed (then) to return to seek Allah’s Pleasure (by having Islamic Faith with righteous deeds and by giving up polytheism, sins and crimes with repentance).”* (Surah Ar-Rum, 57)

If one were to consider and truly reflect on the meaning of these verses, and how they were revealed specifically in Surat Ar-Rum (i.e., the Romans), it is almost as if they are referring to the leaders of the Roman Empire and their stance regarding the revelation, and in this is an immense lesson and sign for those who take heed. Heraclius had stated quite clearly that victory was at hand for the Muslims in the near future, such that their lands would extend to the land beneath his feet at that moment, meaning Palestine and the rest of ash-Sham – and despite this, he did not find it in himself to follow the Prophet ﷺ, for he feared losing what was his grasp of wealth and power.

The first military encounter between the Romans and the Muslims was the Battle of Mu’tah, which was led by Zaid bin Haritha ؓ, the freed slave of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, his close companion, and one of the most beloved individuals to him. The result of this first battle was the martyrdom of several of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, including Zaid bin Harithah, Ja’far bin Abi Talib, and `Abdullah bin Rawahah. Yet, Heraclius still feared having his army pursue the Muslim army for further engagements, even though he had regularly done so when facing the Persians in battle, going so far as to attack them in their own lands. However, he took special care not to engage the Messenger of Allah ﷺ or his armies in battle.

Perhaps the Qur’an referred to this and warned the oppressive powers in general, the Romans included, in the Surah named after them:

*“Do they not travel in the land, and see what was the end of those before them? They were superior to them in strength, and they tilled the earth*

*and populated it in greater numbers than these (pagans) have done, and there came to them their Messengers with clear proofs. Surely, Allah wronged them not, but they used to wrong themselves. Then evil was the end of those who did evil, because they belied the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, Messengers, etc.) of Allah and made mock of them.” (Surah Ar-Rum, 9-10)*

It feels as if these verses in particular are directed at the Romans, the first and the last of them, who flourished on the earth, but when they denied the verses of Allah, they suffered an evil end. Due to their oppression of themselves, Allah caused the Muslims to inherit their lands.

When the Muslim army returned to Madinah from the Battle of Mu'tah, some of the boys of Madinah referred to them as 'those who ran away from battle,' but the Messenger of Allah ﷺ defended them saying, "But they will engage them again, when Allah wills."<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, Khalid bin al-Walid did return years later, leading the Muslims in their largest battle ever against the Romans, the Battle of Yarmuk. He was as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ described him<sup>2</sup>, a sword of the Swords of Allah. The Prophet predicted their return against the Romans in the Battle of Yarmuk and other battles, and this is but one of the many prophecies and miracles of the Prophet ﷺ – and they are many.

The second military engagement against the Romans during the lifetime of the Messenger ﷺ was the Expedition of Tabuk, which was led by the Messenger himself. This expedition saw the biggest army the Muslims organized in his time. It was aimed at the Romans and the southern border of their lands, the border of ash-Sham. After arriving, the Muslims set up camp for approximately 15 days, and the Prophet ﷺ sent a number of smaller contingents to the surrounding areas to sign treaties with the local tribes and villages, as well as create alliances with the local leaders. Because the Roman army never came, and the alliances and treaties were all made within eyesight and earshot of Heraclius, Tabuk was considered a huge moral defeat for the Romans. Despite their military prowess and readiness to face the Muslims, they did nothing.

It was also narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ wrote to Heraclius when he was at Tabuk and offered him one of three options: He could accept Islam and keep his kingdom, pay a tax, or war would be declared on him. Heraclius

1. Ibn Hisham:3/382, Al-Waqidi:2/765

2. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:16/100

gathered his priests and bishops in his palace. Closing the door behind them, he said, “Muhammad has sent to me these three options. I accept Islam and I keep the kingdom I stand on now, I send a tax to him, or war is declared upon me. You know well in your books that he will own the lands of my kingdom from beneath my feet.”

In a commotion, they scoffed arrogantly at the options and said, “We send a man from the Arabs, coming with his rags and shoes, a tax?!”

Heraclius said, “Be quiet! I only wished to gauge your steadfastness upon your religion and your confidence in it.”<sup>1</sup>”

This is possibly the second test Heraclius administered to his leaders, in order to gauge their response to the Prophet ﷺ. After seeing their response twice, he decided to prefer the worldly life and his kingdom over the command of Allah and His religion.

Narrations also mention that because of Heraclius’ council, he sent a messenger to the Prophet ﷺ while he was camped at Tabuk. A long narration in the hadith collection of Imam Ahmad states that a Christian Arab was sent by Heraclius to the Prophet ﷺ at Tabuk. The narrator says:

“I found at-Tanukhi, the messenger of Heraclius to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, in Hims. He was one of my neighbors, a very feeble, old man. I told him, “Can you inform me of Heraclius’ messages to the Prophet ﷺ and the Prophet’s message to Heraclius?”

At-Tanukhi said, “I shall do so. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ came to Tabuk and sent Dihyah al-Kalbi to Heraclius. When the letter arrived, he summoned the priests and bishops, closed the doors behind them, and said, “This man has come to our land, as you have seen, and he has given me these three options: he has called me to accept his religion, or that I give him from our wealth on our land and it will remain ours, or that we meet him in battle. By Allah, you know from the Scriptures you read that he will surely take the land under my feet, so let us accept his religion and follow him, or give him from our wealth and keep our land.”

They stood up in a commotion, yelling like one man, “You call us to leave our Christian ways or to be slaves of a Bedouin from the desert?!”

When Heraclius realized that if he allowed them to leave in this state they

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1 Al-Muḥjam al -Kabeer:8/14-16

would turn the Roman population against him, he placated them, and he was barely able to do it.

He said, "I only said this to see your steadfastness upon your way of life." He then called upon a Christian man from the Arabs of Tojib and said, "Bring me a man who memorizes well and speaks Arabic, so that I may send him to this man [i.e., the Prophet ﷺ] with my response to his letter."

I [Tanukhi] was brought before Heraclius and he gave me a letter and said, "Go with my letter to this man and look at his response. Memorize three things from him: See if he mentions the letter he sent me. After he reads my response, see if he mentions the night. And look at his back, see if there is something there that intrigues you."

I left with his letter until I reached Tabuk and found him sitting among his companions with resting over some water. I said, "Where is your companion [i.e., the Prophet]?"

They said, "Here he is."

I proceeded until I sat in front of him and handed him the letter. He placed it in his lap and said, "What tribe are you from?"

I said, "I am from Tanukh."

The Prophet ﷺ said, "Would you be interested in Islam, the pure way of life, the religion of your forefather Abraham?" I said, "I am only a messenger, upon the religion of my people that I cannot deviate from until I return to them."

He smiled and said,

*"Verily! You (O Muhammad) guide not whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills. And He knows best those who are the guided."*  
(Surah Al-Qasas, 56).

O brother of Tanukh, I had a letter written to Khosrow and he tore it apart, and so Allah will tear him and his kingdom apart. I had a letter written to the Negus on a scroll and he tore it, and so Allah will tear him<sup>1</sup> and his kingdom apart. And I had a scroll written to your companion [i.e Heraclius], and he held on to it, so the people will continue to see might in him as long as there is good in life."

I said to myself, this is one of the three signs my companion advised me to look

1 .This is not the same Negus who had accepted Islam. There was more than one Negus during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ. The first one clearly accepted Islam and when he passed away, the Prophet ﷺ prayed over him in absentia. See "The Emigration to Abyssinia" in this book.

out for, so I took an arrow from my quiver and made a mark on my scabbard. The Prophet ﷺ then handed the letter to a man on his left. I said, “Who is your scribe who shall read for you?”

They said, “Mu`awiyah.” And in my companion’s [Heraclius] letter was: “You invite me to a Paradise whose width is that of the heavens and the earth which was prepared for the pious. Where, then, is the hellfire?” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Glory and perfection be to Allah! Where is the night when the day comes?” I then took an arrow out of my quiver and made another mark on my scabbard.

When he finished reading the letter, he said, “You have a right upon us since you are a messenger, so if we can find a gift for you we will gift you, for we are travelers who are traveling lightly.” A man then called out from the people, “I will gift him.”<sup>1</sup>

It is clear then that the Prophet ﷺ and Heraclius corresponded several times. Dihyah al-Kalbi ؓ was the Prophet’s ambassador, delivering his messages to Heraclius. It is also mentioned that Dihyah al-Kalbi carried a letter to Heraclius towards the end of the Prophet’s ﷺ life, and that Heraclius was hesitant regarding his response until news reached him of the Prophet’s death.

Heraclius lived on after that until he saw with his own eyes huge swathes of his kingdom – the Levant, Palestine, and Jerusalem in particular – fall into Muslim hands. His own words rang true, that “they [the Muslims] shall own the very land beneath my feet.” This began in the rule of Abu Bakr ؓ and continued in the time of `Umar ؓ after him. Heraclius left these lands with immense regret, turning as he exited to bid them farewell saying, “Farewell land of Syria, a final farewell. Never again shall we meet, after today.”<sup>2</sup>

## The Letter to Khosrow of Persia

Like the Roman Empire, Persia was a mighty nation. It bordered the Arab lands and thus enforced its authority over many areas in the Arabian Peninsula, specifically in Yemen and Bahrain.

Persian civilization went through many different stages, the most relevant being the period immediately before its exposure to Islam through proselytization and warfare. The Persian Empire controlled modern-day Iran, Iraq, and some of the areas in the southern and eastern Arabian Peninsula. The primary religion

1. Ahmad,p: 411,442

2 Ar-Raud al-Unf:4/249

in Persia and the areas under its authority was Zoroastrianism. Judaism, Christianity, and some other religions were also present, especially amongst the Arabs subservient to Persian authority in Iraq, Bahrain, and other areas.

The Persian Empire was ruled by tyrannical leaders, and the people followed a harsh caste system which ruled over every aspect of their lives. They were divided into various social classes which determined their worth, rights, and duties.

The Persian Emperor who received the Prophet's letter, was Khosrow Aparvez, which means 'The Victorious One', son of Hormizd IV, and grandson of Khosrow I. Khosrow was able to achieve much expansion and establishment for the empire that his predecessors had not, as well as victories over their long-standing rival – the Byzantine Empire. He reached the height of his power and authority in 615 CE.

After the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah, the Prophet ﷺ sent him a letter as he did with the other world leaders. The letter to Khosrow was carried by `Abdullah bin Huthafah as-Sahmi ؓ. `Abdullah was instructed to present the letter to the ruler of Bahrain, who then forwarded it to Khosrow. The letter read as follows:

“In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Grantor of Mercy

From Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah to Khosrow, the Leader of Persia.

Peace be upon whomever follows the Guidance, believes in Allah and His Messenger, bears witness that nothing is worthy of worship except Allah – alone without any partners, and that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger.

I invite you to the religion of Allah, for indeed, I am the Messenger of Allah to all people, to give admonition to any (who are) alive, and that the charge may be proven against those who reject (Truth). Accept Islam and you will be saved. However, if you turn away, then upon you will be the sin of the Zoroastrians.”

When the Prophet's ﷺ letter was read to Khosrow, pride and arrogance seized him. He became very angry at the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and tore apart the letter in his rage. Thus, the supplication the Messenger of Allah ﷺ made against him was, “O Allah, tear apart his kingdom.”<sup>1</sup>

Khosrow's arrogance continued to fuel his actions, for he immediately wrote to Bathan, his deputy in Yemen, which the Persian controlled since 575 CE, commanding him, “Send two of your men to this man in the Peninsula.”

1 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/136



The purpose was to arrest the Prophet ﷺ and bring him to Khosrow himself for punishment. Bathan obeyed his master and sent two strong men from Yemen to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. When they arrived, the Prophet ﷺ told them, “Come back to me tomorrow.” Then, Allah informed the Messenger ﷺ via revelation that Khosrow’s son killed his father and took power over him. The Prophet ﷺ then summoned the two men and informed them of this revelation. They told him,<sup>1</sup> “Do you know what you are saying? We have come to seize you for less than this. Would you like that we write this down and inform our ruler?”

The Prophet ﷺ replied, “Yes, and tell him that my religion and authority will overtake the realm that Khosrow ruled over, and every place that feet or hooves can reach.”

He ﷺ further instructed them to tell their ruler: “If you accept Islam, you may keep your wealth, and you will remain the ruler of your people.” He then gave the messengers a gift and sent them on their way.

The two men left and returned to Bathan, informing him of what had transpired. Bathan said, “By Allah, these are not the words of a king. I think the man is a prophet as he says, and all that he said will come to pass. If it is true, then he is indeed a prophet sent by God. If not, then we shall see what we shall do with him.”

Not long after, Bathan received a letter from the son of Khosrow saying: “I have killed Khosrow, and I have only done so out of anger for Persia, because he granted permission for its nobles to be slaughtered in their cities. When this letter reaches you, have your subjects pledge their allegiance to me, and go to the man whom Khosrow had sent regarding him [the Prophet] and do not release him until my decision regarding him reaches you.”

When he finished hearing the message, Bathan said, “This man is indeed the Messenger of Allah.” Thus, the Persians of Yemen accepted Islam. One of the messengers said to Bathan, “I have never spoken to anyone more enthralling than him [the Prophet].” Bathan asked him, “Did he have any security guards?” He replied, “No.”<sup>2</sup>

## The Year 9 AH

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “When Khosrow dies, there will be no Khosrow after him, and when Caesar dies, there will be no Caesar

1 Ibn Abi Shaibah, P:155

2 Ibn Kathir As-Seerh:3/509,510

after him. By the One in whose Hand is my soul, their treasures will be spent for the sake of Allah.” Similarly, he referred to the fall of Ctesiphon, the capital of the Persians, to the Muslims. He ﷺ said, “A group of the Muslims will conquer the treasures of Khosrow in the White Palace.”<sup>1</sup>

The news of Khosrow’s death came to Bathan and the Persians in Yemen on the very night which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ informed of the event. It was also narrated that Bathan accepted Islam saying, “Surely, this is a Messenger.” He also said, “If this is the Truth, then I will not be preceded to faith in him by any of the other rulers.” Thus he accepted Islam, and his subjects of Persian Yemen followed suit.

Narrations also mention that he sent delegations to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in Madinah at the end of his life<sup>2</sup>. Bathan, along with his subjects, played a large role in the spread of Islam in Yemen via the ambassadors sent by the Messenger ﷺ such as Mu`adh bin Jabal ؓ and others. They also aided in the wars against al-Aswad al-`Ansi, the liar who claimed prophethood during the rule of Abu Bakr ؓ. They rose up against him, and even their women joined in the fight against him until he was killed. Bathan was at the head of his people in this effort.<sup>3</sup>

The Muslims began their conquest of Persia during the rule of Abu Bakr as Siddiq ؓ, leading up to the greatest battle against the Empire, the Battle of Qadisiyyah, which occurred later, under the rule of `Umar bin al-Khattab ؓ. Before the battle took place, the Persian general Rustam requested a delegation from the Muslims for discussion and negotiations. He wanted to hear for himself, directly from the Muslims, what it was that they sought. Rustam had prepared for hosting the delegates by aggrandizing his tent and decorating it with gold and silk. Rubies and embroidery were everywhere, and even the carpets were threaded with gold and silver patterns. Rustam sat amidst all of this on a recliner of gold, intending to receive the Muslims surrounded by this splendor.

One of the delegates sent to him was Rib`i bin `Amir. Rib`i walked into Rustam’s palace of a tent wearing simple, torn rags, riding a small horse and carrying himself with an air of humility. When he reached the tent, he entered with his horse, not caring for – or perhaps not even noticing – the carpets beneath his feet. He then attempted to entered upon Rustam with his weapons still by his side. The Persian guards prevented him and demanded he leave his weapons outside. Rib`i said simply, “I have only come to you upon your request. So,

1 Ibn Abi Shaibah, P:142, Ibn Kathir, As-Seerah:3/512,513

2. Tabari.

3 Futooh al-Buldan,P: 114 Ibn Kathir, As-Seerah:3/510 Al-Isabah:1/170

either you leave me as I am, or I shall return.”

Rustam commanded them to leave him as he was. Rib`i came to Rustam, poking holes in the carpet along the way with his spear and leaning on it as he walked, damaging some of the precious cloths.

Finally, Rustam said, “What brought you people here?!”

Rib`i responded, “Allah has sent us to lead whom He wills from servitude of fellow servants to the servitude of Allah, and to lead them from the constraints of this worldly life to its expanses, and from the oppression of all religions to the justice of Islam. He has sent us with His Religion to His creation to call them to Him. Whoever accepts this, we accept him and leave them be. Whoever refuses, we shall not cease to fight them until we reach the promise of Allah.”

Rustam said, “And what is the promise of Allah?”

Rib`i answered, “Paradise for whoever dies in the battle against those who refuse, and victory for whoever remains.”

Rustam said, “Is it possible for you to delay battle until we discuss among ourselves?”

Rib`i said, “Yes, we shall grant you three days.” Rustam requested more but Rib`i said, “It was not the practice of the Messenger of Allah to give the enemy more than three days after meeting them on the battlefield.”

Rustam asked, “Are you their leader?”

Rib`i answered, “No, but the Muslims are like a single body, the lowest of them can grant the protection of the highest.”

Rib`i left, and Rustam gathered his commanders to deliberate. They considered the situation and eventually decided to reject the options of Islam or the jizyah tax, and instead opted to fight the Muslims. The two sides engaged in a bitter battle which ended with the Muslims’ victory , followed shortly by the fall of the Persian capital.

The events came to pass exactly as foretold by the Prophet ﷺ – the fall of Khosrow and his Empire, his treasures, and the final fate of his arrogance – all within approximately nine years after Khosrow’s rejection of the Prophet’s letter and his ill-advised decision to tear it apart. It is also worth noting that Salman al-Farisi ؓ, a Companion of Persian descent, was the first governor

over Ctesiphon after its conquest during the reign of `Umar bin al-Khattab ؓ. He was an exemplary leader for his own people, the Persians, with his humility, asceticism, and excellence in dealing with the population. His example, along with the rest of the Companions who lived there, was extremely influential in the spread of Islam among the Persian population.<sup>1</sup>

## The Letter to al-Muqawqis (Coptic Patriarch of Egypt)

Since ancient times, Egypt was well known for its advanced civilization. It was mentioned in the Holy Qur'an more than once. In Surat Yusuf, for example, Allah the Exalted says:

*“And he (the man) from Egypt who bought him, said to his wife: “Make his stay comfortable, maybe he will profit us or we shall adopt him as a son.” Thus did We establish Yusuf (Joseph) in the land, that We might teach him the interpretation of events. And Allah has full power and control over His Affairs, but most of men know not.”* (Surah Yusuf, 21)

Allah also mentioned Egypt in the verse:

*“Then, when they entered unto Yusuf (Joseph), he betook his parents to himself and said: “Enter Egypt, if Allah wills, in security.””* (Surah Yusuf, 99)

Egypt is also mentioned in the Qur'an in Surah Az-Zukhruf, 51 and Surah Yunus, 87. It is also mentioned in many verses indirectly, without being named explicitly.<sup>2</sup>

Egypt is also mentioned in a lengthy hadith about Moses ؑ and his story with Pharaoh. The Prophet ﷺ stated more than once that it would be conquered by the Muslims. For example, he said, “You shall conquer Egypt;( and it is a land in which the currency is the Qirat) so treat its people well, for they have the right of kinship over you<sup>3</sup>.”

Egypt was a vassal of Rome and was ruled by Cyrus, al-Muqawqis being his title in Arabic. Cyrus was a Greek Orthodox Christian who ruled Egypt before Heraclius came to power, while simultaneously serving as the Bishop of Alexandria.

During the time of the Prophet ﷺ, Egypt was inhabited by Copts, the native

1 Futooh al-Buldan, P:126,131, At-tabari:4/106

2 Husn al-Muhadarah Fee Tareekh al-Misr wa al-Qahirah,P:7-10

3. Muslim:2543

people of the land, and a large population of Romans, like al-Muqawqis. The Romans and the Copts were both Christians, but they differed theologically over the nature of Jesus Christ, God, and divine will. The Romans were Monothelites, while the Copts were Monophysites. This difference in theology led to some friction between the two groups, and resulted in repression of the Coptic clergy by the Romans.

When the Prophet ﷺ returned to Madinah after the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah, he sent a letter to the Coptic ruler al-Muqawqis stating:

“In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Grantor of Mercy

From Muhammad, the Servant of Allah and His Messenger to al-Muqawqis, the Leader of the Copts. Peace be upon whomever follows the Guidance.

To proceed, I invite you to Islam. Accept Islam and you will be saved, and Allah will grant you double the reward. But if you turn away, then upon you will be the sin of the Copts.

*“Say (O Muhammad): “O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allah. Then, if they turn away, say: “Bear witness that we are Muslims.” (Surah Aal-`Imran, 64)”*

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ chose Hatib bin Abi Balta`a to deliver this letter. Hatib traveled to Egypt and handed the letter to al-Muqawqis as ordered. Al-Muqawqis honored Hatib and treated him well. He then summoned the priests and clergymen to discuss and debate with Hatib. One of the questions al-Muqawqis raised was: “If he is truly a prophet, why did he not supplicate against his people when they exiled him from his land?”

Hatib answered, “Before his ascension to the heavens of this world, why did Jesus not supplicate to Allah for the destruction of his people, when they wanted to crucify him?”

Al-Muqawqis responded, “You are a wise man sent by a wise man.” He then wrote a letter responding to the Prophet ﷺ without mentioning his decision regarding Islam, even though he knew what the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was calling him to do. His letter was as follows:

“To Muhammad, the son of `Abdullah, from al-Muqawqis, the Ruler of the Copts.

Peace be upon you. To proceed, I have read your letter and understood what you mentioned in it and what you are calling to. I knew there was a Prophet to be sent, and I assumed he would come from ash-Sham. I have honored your messenger [Hatib] and have sent with him two maidservants of honorable status among us Copts. I have also sent clothes and gift you a mule to ride upon. Peace to you.”

Other narrations indicate that he had more than one discussion with Hatib, that he was convinced of the prophethood of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and that his companions would mention it throughout Egypt.

Of the gifts sent to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ by al-Muqawqis was Mariyah al-Qibtiyyah (Mary the Copt), who would later become mother of Ibrahim, the son of the Prophet ﷺ. He also sent some leather socks, and shoes.<sup>1</sup>

It is also clear from his letter that al-Muqawqis greatly respected the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and had previous knowledge of the eventual coming of the Final Prophet. He did not mention anything that would indicate his acceptance of Islam despite his acknowledgment of the truth. Perhaps he preferred the worldly life, his positions of authority, and his kingdom over faith and the Hereafter, following the path of Heraclius who recognized the truth but turned away from it.

Like Heraclius, al-Muqawqis was certain of the Muslims' eventual conquest and seizure of Egypt, just as the Muslims themselves were certain of it, and it indeed came to be within his own lifetime. A little over ten years later, in the year 20 AH, the Companion, `Amr bin al-`As, conquered Egypt. `Amr asked al-Muqawqis about the Muslims' character and he said, “If these people took on the mountains, they would move them.” He recognized the strength of the Muslims and the victory that Allah had granted them, so he accepted their authority and paid the jizyah.<sup>2</sup>

1 Ibn Hajar al-Isabah:3/531, Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:3/515

2 Futhooh al-Buldan, P:214, Al -Oumari Abdul Aziz, Al-Futooh al-Islamiyah,P:103

# Letters to the Kings of Abyssinia

The Kingdom of Abyssinia was located in East Africa, directly across from the shores of Yemen, covering varying areas of the region during its lengthy history. During the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ, it most likely included the modern-day countries Somalia, Sudan, and the surrounding nations. Abyssinia is now known as Ethiopia. Abyssinia was an ancient kingdom from the time of the Prophet Solomon ﷺ and was a majority Christian nation from the 4th century CE onwards. The capital city of Abyssinia was Axum.<sup>1</sup> For generations, long before the mission of the Prophet ﷺ began, the people of Makkah had a positive relationship with Abyssinia. It was a commercial hub for the Quraish, who used to import and export various goods from there.

Abyssinia established control over Yemen in the year 525 CE and continued to reign over it for approximately 50 years. Control of Yemen often traded hands between Abyssinia and Persia. The Abyssinians had occupied Yemen until a short while before the birth of the Prophet ﷺ. This was when Abrahah, the most famous Abyssinian governor of Yemen, led the Expedition of the Elephant against the Ka`bah. It was regarding Abrahah and his army that Allah the Exalted revealed:

*“Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with the Owners of the Elephant? Did He not make their plot go astray? And sent against them birds, in flocks, striking them with stones of Sijjil, and made them like an empty field of stalks (of which the corn has been eaten up by cattle).” (Surah Al-Fil, 1-5)<sup>2</sup>*

When the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions were persecuted in Makkah, he advised some of them to emigrate to Abyssinia<sup>3</sup>, for it had a just king. The Arabs titled the kings of Abyssinia an-Najashi [the Negus]. One of the first emigrants to Abyssinia was Ja`far bin Abi Talib ؑ, who carried with the first letter from the Prophet ﷺ to the Abyssinian King, As-Hamah. The letter read:

“In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Grantor of Mercy

1 Abul-Hasan an-Nadawi, As-Seerah:300 Ibn Kathir :2/2031

2 Ibn Kathir Tafseer:2/2031

3. See “The Emigration to Abyssinia” in this book

From Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, to the Negus Ashamah, the King of Abyssinia.

Peace be upon you.

I praise The Sovereign, The Pure, The Perfect, The Bestower of Faith, The Superior, and I bear witness that Jesus was the Son of Mary, and the Spirit of Allah and His Word, which He bestowed upon Mary the Virgin, the Pure, the Righteous, and the Chaste, and so she bore him. Allah created him from His Spirit and blew life into him, just as He created Adam with His Hand and blew life into him.

I invite you to Allah along without any partners, to pledge obedience, to follow me and believe in what has come to me, for I am the Messenger of Allah. I have sent to you my cousin, Ja`far, along with a group of Muslims. When they come to you, treat them well and do not oppress them.

I invite you and your soldiers to Allah, the Mighty and the Exalted. I have relayed the Message, and advised accordingly, so accept my advice. Peace be upon all those who follow the Guidance.”<sup>1</sup>

The content of the letter to Ashamah clearly shows a stark difference in style and wording from the letters sent by the Prophet ﷺ to the other leaders. This letter indicates that it was a special message to a man who already had some background and faith in the Prophet’s message.

It is understood that Ashamah discussed matters with Ja`far bin Abi Talib ؓ on several occasions. For example, when a group from Quraish was dispatched to Abyssinia to demand that the Muslim refugees be handed over and returned to Makkah, Ashamah arranged a gathering to discuss the matter and hear from both parties. The result of this discussion was the Negus’ preference of the Truth and his leaning towards Islam. He was prepared to defend the Companions who emigrated to his land. Ashamah eventually accepted Islam at the hands of Ja`far and sent his reply to the Prophet ﷺ. Some of what he said in his letter is as follows:

“In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, The Grantor of Mercy,

To Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, from the Negus Ashamah.

Peace be upon you from Allah, O Prophet of Allah, along with His Mercy and His Blessings – Allah, the One Whom there is no other god but He.

1 Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:2/15, Zad al Ma`ad:3/689



To proceed, your letter has reached me, O Messenger of Allah, in which you wrote about Jesus. I swear by the Lord of the Heavens and the Earth, that Jesus is exactly as you described, he does not exceed your description by a *thafruq*.<sup>1</sup> We recognize what you have been sent with to us, and we have welcomed your cousin and those with him.

I bear witness that you are indeed the Messenger of Allah, sent in Truth and confirming the Truth. I pledge my allegiance to you and your cousin, and announce my submission to Allah the Lord of the Worlds, at his hands.”<sup>2</sup>

There are multiple narrations that further confirm his acceptance of Islam. Under the King of Abyssinia, the Companions were treated with honor and respect. He had several meetings and dealings with them, in which they saw from him much good.

It is also narrated that the Prophet ﷺ sent another letter with `Amr bin Umayyah ad-Damari, perhaps to another Negus with the same name of Ashamah, in the year 6 AH, inviting him to Islam. Upon reading the letter, the second Negus also discussed it with his messenger, `Amr bin Umayyah, asking about Jesus ﷺ and the message of the Prophet ﷺ. They spoke at length and many narrations indicate that this Negus also accepted Islam at the hands of `Amr bin Umayyah.

The correct position held by many scholars is that this Negus was different from the first one who received Ja`far and the Muslim emigrants with him. The narrations also mention that this was the Negus whom the Prophet ﷺ wrote to requesting that he officiate the marriage between the Prophet and Umm Habibah, the daughter of Abu Sufyan, while she was in Abyssinia. Her husband had died after abandoning Islam, so the Negus married her to Prophet ﷺ and officiated the marriage on his behalf in Abyssinia. There are also narrations that this Negus sent a group of Abyssinians as ambassadors to the Prophet ﷺ in the year 8 AH, but their boat sank, and they never reached Madinah.<sup>3</sup>

`Amr bin Umayyah later took Ja`far bin Abi Talib along with the rest of the Muslims in Abyssinia back to the Prophet ﷺ in Madinah on two ships in the year 6 AH, at the same time of the Battle of Khaybar. Upon receiving them, the Prophet ﷺ said, “I do not know which makes me happier: the Conquest of Khaybar or Ja`far’s arrival!” Undoubtedly, the Muslims departure and their travel arrangements were managed by the Negus.

1. The thin thread between the fruit and the seed of a date.

2. Zad al-Ma`ad: 689,690

3. Al-Isabah:1/102, Ibn Ishaq As-Seerah,P:219

Ibn Hisham lists all the Muslims who had emigrated to Abyssinia, dedicating a separate chapter detailing their information titled “The Arrival of Ja`far bin Abi Talib from Abyssinia, and the Emigrants to Abyssinia.”<sup>1</sup>

There are different narrations of the exact timing of Ashamah’s death, however, authentic narrations in Bukhari and Muslim mention the Prophet ﷺ praying the funeral prayer over the Negus in absentia after his passing<sup>2</sup>. Many scholars hold that he kept his Islam a secret from his people, and believe that the narrations about the Prophet holding the funeral prayer are regarding the first Negus Ashamah, who received Ja`far and the first emigrants to Abyssinia.

Finally, some historians mention that Heraclius heard of the Negus’ conversion to Islam. He used to send Abyssinia yearly financial support, as it was also a Christian nation. However, upon hearing of the Negus’ conversion, Heraclius cut off this support.

## Letter to Hawthah bin `Ali of al-Yamamah

Al-Yamamah is an area within Najd, west of Bahrain. It is also called al-`Urud and has a rough, rocky landscape. It had many well-known tribes and villages within the valley of Hanifah and the surrounding area – which consists of modern-day Riyadh and neighboring cities. Al-Yamamah was an agriculturally-developed area, with many rivers and palm trees. From the time of the Prophet ﷺ, it was known for exporting wheat to Makkah and many other cities. It was occupied by several independent tribes, with their own leaders, cultures, and societies.<sup>3</sup>

The most famous tribe of Al-Yamamah was Banu Hanifa, primarily located in Hijr and `Aqraba’. Their leader, Thumamah bin Uthal, had previously accepted Islam<sup>4</sup> and subsequently cut off the Quraish’s wheat supply. The people of Makkah begged for the Prophet’s ﷺ intercession to reinstate the wheat trade, which he requested from Thumamah on their behalf.

Another famous leader was Hawthah bin `Ali al-Hanafi, to whom the Prophet ﷺ sent a letter to in the year 6 AH. Hawthah ruled over Banu Hanifah in the area near al-Khadarim. The text of the letter was as follows:

“In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Grantor of Mercy  
From Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, to the Hawthah bin `Ali.  
Peace be upon whomever follows the Guidance.

1 Ibn Hisham:3/359

2 Bukhari:4/246

3 Mu`jam al-buldan:5/442

4. Bukhari

Know that my Religion shall spread to wherever boot and hoof can reach, so accept Islam and you will be saved, and I will allow to keep that which you already have.”

Sulait bin `Amr ؓ was chosen to carry the letter. He was one of the earlier Muslims who migrated to Abyssinia along with his family. He read the Prophet’s ﷺ letter to Hawthah, who replied with a generic answer. Hawthah happened to be hosting one of the leaders of the Christian Arabs of Damascus at the time, so he discussed the matter with him. The Christian man said, “If you follow him, he will make you a king. The choice is yours. He is the Arab Prophet whom Jesus spoke about, and his advent is written in our Gospel; Muhammad is the Messenger of God.”

Hawthah then wrote a response to the Prophet ﷺ stating, “What a beautiful thing you are calling me to! I am the poet and orator of my people, and the Arabs respect my authority, so grant me a share of your mission and I will follow you.” Hawthah then presented Sulait with a gift and some clothes of the best grade, and sent him back to the Prophet ﷺ.

Upon Sulait’s return, the letter was read to the Prophet ﷺ and he responded, “If he were to ask me for a twig from the ground I would not give it to him.”

Hawthah had agreed to accept Islam on the condition that he get a share of prophethood, which clearly shows his lack of interest in the actual faith, nor any desire to follow Allah’s command. His true motive lie in simply obtaining more power. His insulting reply even led to the Prophet ﷺ to supplicate for his destruction, and indeed, it came to pass after the Conquest of Makkah. As the Prophet ﷺ was beginning to leave the city after its conquest, Jibril ؑ came to him with the news of Hawthah’s death, to which he ﷺ replied, “After me [i.e., my death], there shall come from Al-Yamamah a liar who will be killed.”

Someone said, “O Messenger of Allah, who will kill him?”

The Prophet ﷺ replied, “You and your companions.”<sup>1</sup>

In the year 9 AH, a group of ambassadors came from Banu Hanifah, and among them was Musaylimah the Liar, who said, “If Muhammad gives me ownership over this matter [i.e., Prophethood] after him, I will follow him.” The Prophet ﷺ was with the Companion Thabit bin Qays ؓ when he met Musaylimah, and he ﷺ said with a leaf in his hand, “If you were to ask me for this leaf I would not give it to you. You will not escape Allah’s decree against you. If you turn away

1 Zad al-Ma’ad:3/696,697

[from Islam], Allah will destroy you. I am sure you are the one whom I have seen in my dream. Here is Thabit; he will answer you on my behalf.” Then he turned and left.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Musaylimah and those with him eventually abandoned Islam at the end of the Prophet’s lifetime, and Musaylimah claimed to be a prophet himself. He began to fabricate a message of his own, mumbling incoherent rhymes and tricking the feeble-minded with words of no benefit. Some of them followed him out of blind loyalty to the tribe saying, “A liar from Rabi`ah is better than the truthful one of Mudar.”<sup>3</sup>

Musaylimah claimed he too had been chosen as a prophet to aid the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and he even wrote a letter to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ which read:

“From Musaylimah the Messenger of Allah to Muhammad the Messenger of Allah:

Peace be upon you.

To proceed, I have been chosen to share in this matter [the Message] with you. For us [Banu Hanifah] is half the earth and for the Quraish half, but the Quraish are a proud people.”

The Prophet ﷺ wrote back:

“In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Grantor of all Mercy

From Muhammad the Messenger of Allah to Musaylimah the Liar:

Peace be upon whomever follows the Guidance.

To proceed, the earth belongs to Allah, He causes to inherit it whomever He wills among His servants, and the final resolution will be in favor of the pious.”

After the death of the Prophet ﷺ, many of the Arab tribes abandoned Islam, and Musaylimah seized the opportunity to prepare a large following and lead them in battle against Madinah. One of the first battalions Abu Bakr sent was under the leadership of `Ikrimah ؓ, the son of Abu Jahl, but he was not able to

1. The dream referred to here is also narrated by Bukhari. In it the Prophet ﷺ saw two golden bracelets on his arm which distressed him. He was then instructed to blow them off his arms and they flew off. He interpreted them to mean two liars that would come after him. Abu Hurairah ؓ said, “And they were Musaylimah the Liar, and al-Aswad al-`Ansi.”
2. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/118
3. Tabari. Rabi`ah and Mudar are tribes from which Banu Hanifah and Quraish are offshoots, respectively.

successfully quell the rebellion led by Musaylimah. Abu Bakr then sent Shurahbil bin Hasanah ؓ to lead the offensive against the apostate army, and then finally Khalid bin al-Walid ؓ.

Shurahbil was instructed to join his forces with Khalid's, which was made up of a core consisting of the Muhajirun and the Ansar. The Muhajirun were led by Abu Hudhaifah ؓ and Zaid bin al-Khattab ؓ, and their banner was carried by Salim, the freed slave of Abu Hudhaifah ؓ. The Ansar were led by Thabit bin Qays bin Shammās ؓ.

Upon hearing of their advance, Musaylimah gathered his forces and set up camp at 'Aqraba'. The Muslim army first encountered a small group of Musaylimah's vanguard before advancing and meeting the full army for battle. The first encounter was in Banu Hanifah's favor, but the tide of the battle bounced back and forth between them and the Muslims. A huge defeat was almost imminent, but the Muslims mustered their forces and held the line against the apostates, until they were on the brink of victory. Musaylimah's followers turned to him and asked, "Where is that which you promised us?"

He responded, "Fight for yourselves."

He was later killed by Wahshi ؓ, the man who killed Hamzah ؓ in the battle of Uhud but later accepted Islam, along with a man from the Ansar.<sup>1</sup>

## Letter to al-Munthir bin Sawa al-'Abdi of Bahrain

Bahrain was a general name for the coastal area between Oman and Basrah. It was ruled by al-Munthir bin Sawa al-'Abdi who was a vassal of Persia.

It was narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ also sent him a letter which he read to some of his subjects in Bahrain and they accepted Islam. The Prophet sent him another letter which read:

"In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Grantor of Mercy,  
From Muhammad the Messenger of Allah to al-Munthir bin Sawa  
Peace be upon you.

I praise Allah, the One besides whom there is no other god. I bear witness that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

<sup>1</sup> At-Tabari:3/243-246

To proceed, I remind you of Allah, the Majestic the Exalted, for whoever advises should first advise himself. Whoever follows my messenger and obeys them has obeyed me, and whoever is sincere to them is sincere to me. My messengers have praised you and so I am requesting that you leave the Muslims to practice their faith, and you will be forgiven for the sinners. Accept them, and as long as you are upright we will not force you from your position. As for whoever remains upon Judaism or Zoroastrianism, then jizyah is due from them.”

The letter was delivered by al-`Ala' bin al-Hadrami ؓ in the year 8 AH. Islam spread quickly in Bahrain. Towards the end of the Prophet's life, Bahrain was fully incorporated into the Islamic State and the Prophet ﷺ sent a group of Companions to govern and educate the population. The most famous companions among those he sent was Abu Hurairah ؓ, and the original messenger who carried the Prophet's ﷺ first letter to the land, al-`Ala' bin al-Hadrami ؓ.<sup>1</sup>

## Letter to Farwah bin `Amr al-Juthami

Farwah bin `Amr was a Roman vassal who ruled over parts of the Levant and Jordan. He accepted Islam and sent the Messenger of Allah ﷺ a letter to inform him of such, along with some gifts. The Prophet ﷺ wrote back to him saying:

“From Muhammad the Messenger of Allah to Farwah bin `Amr.

To proceed, your messenger has reached us and informed us of your acceptance of Islam. Truly, it is Allah that has guided you to this: that you are upright, you obey Allah and His Messenger, establish the prayer, and pay the zakat.”

News of Farwah's acceptance of Islam reached the Emperor so he summoned Farwah to his court. He commanded him to renounce his new faith in order to keep his kingdom. Farwah replied, “I will not leave the religion of Muhammad. You know well that Jesus informed of him, but you are too attached to your kingdom.” He was imprisoned and eventually crucified. Despite the attempt to turn him back from Islam, Farwah remained steadfast and died a martyr. Before his execution, he recited some verses of poetry which indicated his steadfastness upon Islam. It is possible that his execution was one of the underlying reasons behind the Battle of Mu'tah.

It was also narrated that his soldiers protected the caravan of Dihyah al-Kalbi ؓ when it was transgressed upon by some of the tribes in the area, and that he gifted the Prophet ﷺ a horse some time before his death at the hands of

1 Khalifah bin Khayyat, at-Tareekh, P:123, Siyar Aalam an-Nubala:1/262,Zad al-Ma'ad:3/292

the Romans.<sup>1</sup>

## Letter to the Kings of Oman

Oman is located in the southeast region of the Arabian Peninsula along the Gulf Coast. Its current geographical location and borders have not changed much since the time of the Prophet ﷺ. It was connected to Hadhramaut from the west and Bahrain to the North. Its land was rich in palm trees exported many animal products, resulting in a strong trade route between it and India via the Arabian Sea. Oman was ruled by the Al-Jalandi family from the tribe of Azd. Its capital was Suhar.

Idolatry was the primary religion in Oman at the time, not unlike the rest of Arabia. It also had small populations of Zoroastrians and Christians, though their numbers were not very significant. Oman had early exposure to Islam due to its numerous dealings with the other Arabs of the Peninsula in Yemen and elsewhere.

After the Prophet ﷺ returned from his compensatory `Umrah in the year 7 AH, he wrote a letter to Juwayfar and `Abbad, the sons of Al-Jalandi who ruled Oman together, calling them to Islam. The letter was carried by `Amr bin al-`As. The letter read:

“In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Grantor of Mercy.

From Muhammad bin `Abdullah to Juwayfar and `Abbad the sons of Jalandi.

Peace be upon whomever follows the Guidance.

To proceed, I call you to Islam. Accept Islam and you will be saved, for indeed, I am the Messenger of Allah to all people, to give admonition to any (who are) alive, and that the charge may be proven against those who reject (Truth). If you acknowledge and accept Islam, I will place you as governors. If you refuse to acknowledge Islam, then your kingdom will cease, my knights will enter your lands, and my Prophethood will prevail over your dominion.”<sup>2</sup>

`Amr bin al-`As tells of his arrival to Oman and his experience with the two kings:

“When I arrived in Oman, I went to `Abbad as he was the more forbearing of the two men and easier to deal with. I said, “I am the messenger of the Messenger

1 Tabaqat:1/490, Ibn Hisham As-Seerah:4/612

2 Zad al-Ma`ad :3/693

of Allah ﷺ to you and your brother.”

`Abbad replied, “My brother is superior to me in age and kingship. I will connect you with him so that he may read your letter.” I remained for days at his door until he finally granted me entry. I entered upon him and presented the sealed letter. He unsealed it and read it until the end, then passed it onto his brother [ `Abbad] who also read it, and I noticed that the latter was softer towards it than the former.

Juwayfar then said, “Leave me for today and come back tomorrow.”

The following day, I returned to him and he said, “I have pondered over that which you call me to, and I will be the weakest of all the Arabs if I allow a man dominion over my property.”

I said, “Then I shall depart tomorrow.” When he was certain that I would truly depart, he sent for me the following morning, so I went to him, and he and his brother both accepted Islam, and acknowledged the truthfulness of the Prophet ﷺ. They permitted me to collect the zakat, to implement and judge with the rules of Islam over them, and aided me against anyone who objected. I took charity from their wealthy and distributed among their impoverished.”<sup>1</sup>

The narrations indicate a long conversation between `Amr bin al-`As and the two kings, likely centering on the response of the previous kings to the Prophet’s letters and their attitude towards his Message. He most likely described to them the events between the Prophet ﷺ and Quraish in detail, the Negus’ acceptance of the Message, Heraclius’ reactions to the Negus’ acceptance, as well as a summary of the Prophet’s ﷺ message, and the obligations of charity and how they are to be distributed. Naturally, both kings were convinced by Islam and thus permitted `Amr to implement the system of zakat, taking it from the rich and distributing it among the poor for the remainder of the Prophet’s life ﷺ. Aiding `Amr in this duty was Abu Zaid al-Ansari, who began teaching the Omani population the Qur’an and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and al-`Ala’ bin al-Hadrami, since Oman had a previous relationship with Bahrain, which al-`Ala’ now governed. As for `Abbad and Juwafar, they were permitted to remain as kings of Bahrain for the rest of the Prophet’s lifetime.

After his death ﷺ, there was a wave of apostasy in Oman, like in much of the Arabian Peninsula. Abu Bakr himself met with a group from Oman in the beginning of his Caliphate, taking their oath to remain upon Islam and aid him. He praised them and their steadfastness in this difficult time after the Prophet’s

1 Tabaqat Ibn Sa’d:1/262,263



ﷺ death, and they aided him in resisting the apostates. Abu Bakr ﷺ found strong allies in Juwayfar and `Abbad, who both helped him stem the tide of the apostates before they engulfed the nation. Hudhaifah bin Mihsan ﷺ and `Ikrimah bin Abi Jahl ﷺ led the offensive in the area of Duba. Later, during the era of the Rashidun Caliphate, the Omani tribes played significant roles in many conquests, particularly those in Iraq and Persia.<sup>1</sup>

## Letter to al-Harith bin Abi Shimar al-Ghassani

Al-Harith was a staunch Christian who ruled parts of Syria and Jordan as a Roman vassal. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent him a letter stating:

“In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Grantor of Mercy.

From Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, to al-Harith bin Abi Shimar.

Peace be upon whomever follows the Guidance, and truly believes in Allah.

I call you to believe in Allah alone without any partners, and you will keep your kingdom.”

Upon reading the letter, al-Harith became enraged and threw it to the ground. He began warning and threatening the messenger sent by the Prophet ﷺ, Shuja`a bin Wahb al-Asadi ﷺ, and sent a letter to Caesar requesting permission to attack Madinah. To his dismay, the Caesar denied his request and forbid him from going to war against the Prophet ﷺ.<sup>2</sup>

## Letter to Jabalah bin al-Ayham al-Ghassani

Jabalah bin al-Ayham was the last of the famous Ghassanid kings of ash-Sham before Islam became dominant in the area. His people were famous poets and were widely respected by all the Arabs. They had a shared lineage with al-Aws, al-Khazraj, and Sha`ij tribes. Before Islam, poets from Yathrib like Hassan bin Thabit ﷺ and others, would visit them often, praising them and earning their favors and gifts.

Like other Ghassanids before them, they were vassals of Rome, and they held a strong authority over the Christians Arabs. As he did with many other kings and rulers, the Prophet ﷺ sent Jabalah bin al-Ayham a letter inviting him to Islam.

The carrier of this letter was again ash-Shuja`a bin Wahb al-Asadi ﷺ, for he

1 At-Tabari:3/262,263- Khalifah bin Khayyat, At-Tareekh,P:97

2 Ibn Hisham:4/607, As-Seerah al Halbiyyah:3/306

had close family ties to both the Ansar and the Ghassanids. Shuja'a had a long conversation with Jabalah concerning Islam and the Prophet ﷺ.

Shuja'a told him, "O Jabalah, your people [the Ansar] have brought the Prophet from his land to their land [Madinah]. They have aided, protected, and supported him. This religion that you are upon [Christianity] is not the religion of your forefathers, you merely adopted it because you were granted rule over ash-Sham and are a neighbor of Rome. If you happened to neighbor Persia, you would have taken their religion.

If you accept Islam, all of ash-Sham will obey you, and Rome will respect and fear you. Even if they do not, for them will be this worldly life while you have the Hereafter. You will have masjid instead of churches, the athan instead of bells, and Friday prayer instead of being disheveled<sup>1</sup> - and that which Allah has [of reward] is better for you and more lasting than all of this."

Jabalah answered, "I swear by Allah, I would love that all people gathered in agreement over this Prophet the way they are in agreement regarding the creation of the heavens and the earth, and I would be happy for my people to agree on him. Caesar summoned me to fight the Prophet's companions at the Battle of Mu'tah and I refused. But I see neither truth nor falsehood yet, so I will consider."<sup>2</sup>

It is unclear if he accepted Islam during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ, however, it is clear that he fully understood Islam and was convinced by the Prophet's Message. It is narrated that he took part in the Battle of Yarmouk, fighting alongside the Romans. In the Caliphate of 'Umar ؓ, he accepted Islam and came to Madinah with a group of his knights. They entered in a mighty procession and with grandeur that turned many heads. Later, however, he renounced Islam and fled back to Rome.<sup>3</sup>

## Letter to Yuhanna bin Ru'bah and the Leaders of Ayla

Ayla is a port city near Palestine, west of the Gulf of Aqaba. It is now located in Jordan, but the old city was in modern-day Palestine. It was an advanced, bustling city of Jews and Christians, ruled by the Christian leader Yuhanna bin Ru'bah.

1. Since the Muslims bathe before the Friday prayers

2 . Seerah al-Halbiyyah: 3/306

3 Al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah:8/63

During the Battle of Tabuk, the Prophet ﷺ sent a group of Companions to Ayla with a letter to their leader.

Yuhanna feared the consequences of rejecting the letter, so he went with a group of his traders and associates from ash-Sham and Yemen to meet with the Prophet ﷺ while he was still camped at Tabuk. He was wearing clothes specific to the Christians, clearly marked with two golden crosses. The Prophet ﷺ greeted him and his entourage, and they agreed on a treaty which included a guarantee of safety for Ayla's marine trade. This event showed the Prophet's awareness of movement beyond his lands, the trade between nations, and the importance of safety for their economies.<sup>1</sup>

The Prophet's ﷺ letters show the importance and focus he gave to relaying his Message. He always prioritized peace and inviting others in the best manner, making it the primary foundation for calling others to Islam.

These letters to world leaders and the subsequent events are also vital in revealing to us the positions of the Christian rulers, with Heraclius at their lead, regarding the Message of the Prophet ﷺ. They recognized his Prophethood and truthfulness, the prophesized Islamic conquests over their very lands and expected the dominance of Islam over their own religions. Certainly, all these events did take place in their very own lifetimes, and they witnessed them firsthand – whether it was Heraclius, al-Muqawqis, Khosrow, or the others.

The letters also show us the unshakable faith of the Prophet ﷺ in the victory that Allah promised to grant this religion, even though at the time, the Muslims had very little ability to fulfill any of it, and the Ummah appeared to be weak, if one were to look through the lens of this worldly life.

For each letter, the Prophet ﷺ chose the person most capable of fulfilling its purpose and delivering the message to its recipient properly as he intended. Each messenger was able to discuss with the recipient the matter at hand, knew the nature and beliefs of the people he was sent to, and acted with wisdom, bravery, and patience.

The Prophet's letters were all concise and direct. Clear in their tone and fulfilling the purpose of accurately relaying the Message. He cited verses from the Qur'an directed to him and to all people, particularly when addressing the Christian leaders. He always began the letters in the Name of Allah, and emphasized worshipping Allah alone without any partners.

1 Ibn Sa'ad:1/277,278,290- Al Waqidi:3/1031

He ﷺ also knew that no king would except a letter without an official seal, so he had one made that would fulfill the purpose while also maintaining proper etiquette with Allah; it was forged with Allah's Name occupying the first line, followed by the word 'Messenger' in the second line, and finally came his name, 'Muhammad', in the third line, as shown:

Anas bin Malik رضي الله عنه narrates that when the Prophet ﷺ wished to have a letter written to the Romans, he was informed that they do not accept any letter without a seal. He had a ring made for his hand, with the following etched onto it: "Muhammad the Messenger of Allah."<sup>1</sup>

With these letters, Islam journeyed out of the Arab lands and reached the nations outside the Peninsula. These first correspondences emphasize for us the global nature of this Message, and are significant milestones in the development of the Islamic nation in the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ.

Research suggests that some of the original letters of the Prophet ﷺ that were written on parchment have survived, such as the letters to al-Muqawqis of Egypt, al-Munthir bin Sawa al-'Abdi of Bahrain, the Negus of Abyssinia, Khosrow of Persia, and the Caesar of Rome. Despite the abundance of orientalist works and the research already done on these originals, they must continue and experts must continue analyzing and verifying them for the benefit of all.

There were many more letters and messages sent by the Prophet ﷺ in his lifetime, but perhaps these are the most significant. He exchanged several letters with the numerous tribes of the Arabian Peninsula, but it would be difficult to gather them all here. Many academic works have been published which gathered them all and discussed them in more detail.

There is no doubt that there is a special importance and connection linking the events of the Prophet's lifetime, particularly the letters he sent to the kings and rulers of the world, the events at the time of the Rashidun Caliphate, and the subsequent interactions between the Islamic nation and the surrounding nations. There is a reason why many of these nations accepted Islam and a majority, if not all, of their populations remain Muslim until our present day. Every historian can benefit from studying how these nations chose to follow Muhammad ﷺ and join his Ummah, and their status as members of his religion, leading up to their modern history.

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1. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:3/235 Futooh al-Buldan,P:447

# The Conquest of Khaybar

## (Rabi` al-Awwal 7 AH)

Khaybar was home to some of the Jews who had taken part in inciting the Arab tribes against the Prophet ﷺ in the Battle of the Confederates. On a later occasion, the Jews of Khaybar once again planned to attack Madinah, and had begun contacting some tribes to join them, such as the Jews of Wadi al-Qura, Tayma', Ghatafan, and the tribes in the surrounding lands.

Shortly after the Muslims' returned from the Treaty of Hdaybiyyah, news of these plans reached them. Realizing Khaybar was the new headquarters of many who harbored animosity towards them, the Muslims began preparing to deal with this impending threat. At the same time, the Jews of Khaybar began spreading rumors about their strength, claiming to have prepared 10,000 soldiers to fight the Muslims, and that their fortresses were well fortified. They also began threatening the Muslims directly and indirectly, utilizing the small population of Jews that remained in Madinah and the hypocrites as mouthpieces.

The Muslims' current situation with the Quraish was beneficial in this case, for they had agreed within the Treaty of Hdaybiyyah to an armistice lasting ten years. For this reason, the Prophet ﷺ chose to preemptively strike Khaybar instead of defending against their offensive. He gathered 1,400 fighters and led them himself against Khaybar.<sup>1</sup>

As the Muslims headed to Khaybar, forces from Ghatafan set out to aid their allies. In a wise move, the Muslims sent out misinformation that they had sent a regiment to attack Ghatafan in their own villages. In fear, Ghatafan believed these rumors and returned home, leaving the Jews of Khaybar to their own fate. In case they changed their mind, the Prophet ﷺ made his decision to attack Khaybar from the direction of ash-Sham, to be between Ghatafan and Khaybar. This way, if Ghatafan or any Jewish tribes from the North wished to aid Khaybar or join them in their fortresses, they would have to pass the Muslim army first.

The Muslim army camped close to Khaybar at night. The tribes of Khaybar woke up the next morning and headed to their fields, going about their business

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Sa'ad At-Tabaqat:2/107, Al-Waqidi:2/634

as usual, only to be utterly surprised to find the Muslim army camping in front of their city. They hurried back past the city walls and into their fortresses screaming, “Muhammad and his army!”<sup>1</sup>

Khaybar was made up of several individual fortresses such that the Muslims had to divide the army to besiege each one separately. The two sides began to exchange arrow fire, resulting in a few injuries on the Muslims’ side.<sup>2</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ sought any useful information on the fortresses that would help the Muslim army break the siege. He found their opportunity with the fortress of Natat, for it only had a small number of defenders inside of it, and it was stockpiled with many weapons and supplies, as well as a catapult and a battering ram. If the Muslims were able to enter it, they would gain many tools that would enable them to conquer the remaining fortresses. The Muslims army concentrated its offensive on Natat until the fortress fell, resulting in a significant gain for them. The fortresses then began falling to the Muslim army one by one<sup>3</sup>.

The Muslims found difficulty in the fortress of al-Qamus. As narrated by Sahl bin Sa`d, the Prophet ﷺ told the Muslims not to worry and gave them glad tidings of its imminent fall. He ﷺ said to the army, “Tomorrow, I will give the banner to a man on whose hands Allah will grant victory; he loves Allah and His Messenger, and Allah and His Messenger love him.” The Muslims spent that night wondering who would be given the banner on the following day.

The next morning, the Companions all rushed towards the Messenger of Allah, each one hoping he would be given the banner. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Where is `Ali bin Abi Talib?”

The Muslims responded, “O Messenger of Allah, he has a problem with his eyes.”

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Send him to me.”

`Ali ؑ was brought before the Messenger of Allah ﷺ who put some of his blessed saliva in `Ali’s eye. The Prophet ﷺ supplicated for him and he was instantly healed, as if he had never complained of an ailment. The Prophet then gave him the banner. `Ali ؑ asked, “O Messenger of Allah, shall I fight them until they are like us [i.e Muslims]?”

The Prophet ﷺ replied, “Go to them calmly with patience until you enter their

1 Bukhari:4197,4200

2 Ibn Hisham:3/334

3 Ibn Hisham:3/331,332

territory, then invite them to Islam, and inform them of Allah's rights over them. For by Allah, if Allah guides a single man through you, that would be better for you than the red camels.<sup>1</sup>”

Indeed, Allah granted the Muslims victory at the hands of `Ali ؑ, just as the Prophet ﷺ had informed them. The remaining fortresses of Khaybar fell one by one until none remained. After their last stand, the Jews pleaded with the Messenger of Allah for clemency, surrendering to the Muslims with the condition that their lives be spared, and that they be granted permission to leave Khaybar safely. After their surrender, the Muslims instead struck an agreement with the Jews of Khaybar: they would be allowed to remain in their lands, living as they had done previously, working the fields and the farms, with the condition that they split the proceeds of their harvest between them and the State.

At the end of this expedition, a total of twenty Companions of the Prophet ﷺ were martyred, and the enemy lost ninety-three fighters. The siege of Khaybar lasted approximately two weeks.<sup>2</sup>

After the Conquest of Khaybar, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ directed the Muslim army towards Wadi al-Qura, where the Jews greeted them with raining arrows, injuring one of the Prophet's ﷺ servants. In response, the Muslims engaged them in battle and conquered their lands by force. Despite their hostility, the Prophet ﷺ struck with them the same deal that he had made with the Jews of Khaybar: that they would be allowed to remain in their lands with the condition of splitting the yearly harvest.

When news of the events of Khaybar and Wadi al-Qura reached the northern region of the Arabian Peninsula, its occupants, such as Ayla, Tayma', and Fadak, rushed to sign agreements with the Prophet ﷺ.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:16/57,58. Ibn Abi Shaibah,P:315 Red camels are the best quality and the most expensive
  2. Ibn Hisham:2/343, Fath al-Bari:16/57
  3. Ibn Hisham:3/338

## The Second `Umrah

It was known as `Umrah al-Qada', i.e., the Substituted `Umrah as well as `Umrah as-Sulh, i.e., `Umrah after the Armistice. One of the clauses in the Treaty of Hdaybiyyah was that the Muslims would return to Madinah that year without entering Makkah or performing `Umrah. The clause stated, "And next year we [the Makkans] will leave you be, and you will enter it [i.e. Makkah] with your companions and stay for three days. You may be lightly armed as a rider goes, with swords in their sheaths, but no other weapons."

The Prophet ﷺ had promised his Companions that they would enter Makkah based on a vision he had. The following verses of the Qur'an mention this:

*"Indeed Allah shall fulfil the vision which He showed to His Messenger in truth. Certainly, you shall enter al-Masjid-al-Haram; if Allah wills, secure, (some) having your heads shaved, and (some) having your head hair cut short, having no fear. He knew what you knew not, and He granted besides that a near victory."* (al-Fath, 27).

It was in Allah's infinite knowledge and decree that there would soon be a conquest, i.e., the conquest of Khaybar, before the Prophet ﷺ would enter Makkah for `Umrah.

It was the month of Sha`ban in the year 7 AH, and a year had passed since the Treaty of Hdaybiyyah. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ ordered the Companions who witnessed Hdaybiyyah to set out with him for `Umrah, and others chose to come along as well. Approximately two-thousand Companions – men, women, and children – began the journey for `Umrah. The men carried only light weaponry as agreed upon in the treaty, and they brought their sacrificial animals along with them. As a precaution, one-hundred horsemen were present in the company, but they did not display any intention for fighting. Rather, they went out peacefully, dressed in the garments ihram, reciting the talbiyah and takbir.<sup>1</sup>

1. Ibn Hisham 3/370. Ihram: The garments worn to perform `Umrah or Hajj. Talbiya: Reciting 'labbaik Allahumma labbaik,' i.e., 'Here I am at your service, O Lord, here I am!' The full prayer is recited by pilgrims, proclaiming that their pilgrimage is entirely for the sake of Allah alone. Takbir: Saying 'Allahu Akbar,' i.e., Allah is the Greatest.



The Prophet ﷺ sent Muhammad bin Maslamah ؓ ahead of the group so that when the Quraish saw him they knew that Muslims were on their way. Before the Muslims entered Makkah, they left their weapons in a valley near Tan`im. The Quraish emptied from Makkah as per the agreement, but they remained nearby to observe the Muslims. `Abdullah bin Rawahah ؓ took hold of the reins of the Prophet's camel and walked into Makkah displaying the respect, honor, and protection the Muslims had for the Prophet ﷺ. He recited some lines of poetry that reflected the Muslims' sincerity to Allah and their reverence for His Prophet ﷺ.<sup>1</sup>

The Quraish had previously spread rumors that the Muslims became weak after moving to Madinah. The Prophet ﷺ was determined to disprove this falsehood and allow the people to witness the truth: that the Muslims were healthy and stronger than ever.

Ibn `Abbas ؓ said, "They [the Makkans] lined up at Dar an-Nadwa to watch him ﷺ and his Companions. When the Prophet ﷺ entered the Masjid [al-Haram], he exposed his right shoulder and wrapped his cloak over his other shoulder. He then said, 'May Allah have mercy on a man who is seen to be strong on this day.' He then touched the corner of the Ka`bah and began to walk briskly, and his Companions did likewise until they came around. He then touched the Yemeni corner and walked until he touched the corner of the Black Stone, after which he resumed the brisk walk until he had completed three circuits (around the Ka`bah), walking [normally] for the remaining ones." Ibn `Abbas would say, "People thought that they did not need to continue following this manner [of circumambulation] and that the Prophet ﷺ only did this to prove a point to the Quraish, until he ﷺ performed the farewell pilgrimage in the same manner, and so it became an established sunnah from that point on."<sup>2</sup>

After the Prophet ﷺ completed the `Umrah, he married Maymunah bint al-Harith ؓ, and the Muslims remained in Makkah for three days, after which the Prophet ﷺ was approached by Huwaytib bin Abd al-`Uzza who asked him to leave at the request of the leaders of Makkah. The Prophet ﷺ offered to remain in Makkah and have his wedding feast, and he extended an invitation to the pagans of Makkah. However, they replied, "We have no need for your food so leave us." He ﷺ exited Makkah as per their request.<sup>3</sup>

As the Prophet ﷺ was leaving Makkah, the daughter of his uncle Hamzah ؓ

1 Ibn Hisham:3/371

2. Bukhari: Fath al-Bari:5/86

3 Ibn Hisham:3/372

went to meet him. Since she was an orphan, `Ali ؑ took her by her hand and brought her to Fatimah ؑ, and said to her, “Here is the daughter of your uncle so take care of her.” Ja`far bin Abi Talib ؑ and Zaid bin Harithah ؑ also wished to care for her, and so an argument broke out between the three companions. They took their dispute to the Prophet ﷺ, each of them eager for the divine reward that would come with caring for and raising her. Ultimately, the Prophet ﷺ ruled in the favor of Ja`far who was married to her maternal aunt, and he ﷺ said, “The maternal aunt is like the mother.”<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps within this statement is an indication that the affection of the maternal aunt is close to that of a mother and that the little girl would feel safer and more at ease with her own aunt.



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1. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/85

# Battle of Mu'tah

## (Jumada al-Ula, 8 AH)

After the conquest of Khaybar, the Prophet ﷺ wrote letters to the kings and governors around the world conveying to them the religion of Allah. One of these letters was addressed to al-Harith bin Abi Shimr al-Ghassani, who was appointed by Heraclius as the ruler of Busra in the Levant. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ sent the letter with one of the Companions, al-Harith bin Abi `Umayr al-Azdi ؓ, who was intercepted by one of the Ghassanid governors, Shurahbil bin Amr, and arrested. Once it was discovered that al-Harith bin `Umayr ؓ was carrying the letter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he was killed, which went against the well-known custom of doing no harm to messengers.<sup>1</sup>

When the Prophet ﷺ received the news about al-Harith ؓ, he ﷺ mobilized an army of 3,000 Muslims and appointed Zaid bin Harithah ؓ as their leader. Next in command in the event of Zaid's death was Ja'far bin Abi Talib ؓ, and if he were to be killed, then `Abdullah bin Rawahah ؓ. If they were all killed, then the Prophet ﷺ instructed the Muslims to agree upon someone from among them and make him the leader.

Among the Muslim soldiers was Khalid bin al-Walid ؓ, who had just recently accepted Islam and joined the army. The Prophet ﷺ ordered the army to make their way to the outskirts of the Levant in order to discipline and reprimand the Christian Arab tribes for the murder of the Muslims' messenger. This expedition would further serve to display the strength of the Muslims. Before the army deployed, the Prophet ﷺ met with them and commanded them to fear Allah and remain conscious of Him. He reminded them of the conduct of warfare in Islam, and then handed the banner to Zaid bin Harithah ؓ, escorted them, and bid them farewell.<sup>2</sup>

The army began to march towards their destination in the first direct invasion into the Byzantine empire. The Byzantines and Ghassanids became aware of the mobilization of the Muslim army and so they prepared an army to meet

1 Ibn Sa'ad, At-Tabaqat:2/128, Al-Waqidi:2/575,576

2 Ibn Hisham:3/373

them. Additionally, they were joined by the Christian Arabs from the tribes of Lakhmid, Bahra', Judhaam, and Baliy. The Byzantine army, made up of over 100,000 fighters, stationed at Balqa' in modern day Jordan. Once the Muslims heard of this massive mobilization they wished to write to the Prophet ﷺ asking for reinforcements, but there was not enough time, for the enemy was close.

The Companions ؓ prepared themselves for battle as best they could, and the two armies clashed at a place known as Mu'tah. After some time, Zaid, the Muslim army's flagbearer, was killed. Ja'far picked up the flag and carried it valiantly until he, too, was killed. Then `Abdullah bin Rawahah carried it until he was killed, and then one of the Ansar picked up the banner and called the Muslims to gather. They handed the banner to Khalid bin al-Walid ؓ, who, by the blessing of Allah and then his military experience, was able to successfully rally the Muslims and lead them in battle until Allah granted them victory. Although there was a substantial difference between the size of the Muslim army and that of the enemy, the Muslims were able to avoid huge casualties, with only fifteen martyrs amongst the Companions. In my opinion, this feat itself was a great victory for the Muslims. The Prophet ﷺ would praise those martyrs who died in Mu'tah and say: It would not please me (or them) for them to be among us now.<sup>12</sup>

Under the leadership of the Sword of Allah, Khalid bin al-Walid ؓ, the Muslim army returned to Madinah. It was the first battle that he participated in after accepting Islam. Before the army arrived, the Prophet ﷺ had already informed the people of Madinah about what had taken place in the battle. Anas bin Malik ؓ said: "The Prophet ﷺ informed the people of the death of Zaid, Ja'far, and Ibn Rawaha before the news of their deaths had reached them. His eyes were flowing with tears as he said, 'Zaid took the banner and was struck down, then Ja'far took it and was struck down, then Ibn Rawahah took it and was struck down. Finally, the banner was taken up by a sword from the swords of Allah, and Allah gave them victory.'"<sup>3</sup>

He ﷺ was saddened by the death of Ja'far and the others, and he prayed for them, saying: "O Allah compensate the family of Ja'far for their loss with the best compensation You have given to Your righteous slaves." Afterwards, Abu Bakr ؓ married Asma' bint Umays ؓ, the wife of Ja'far, and cared for his children. When Abu Bakr ؓ passed away, `Ali ؓ married her and took care of

1. Bukhari, Fath-al-Bari:16/97

2. i.e., they are enjoying Paradise as a result of their deeds and their sacrifice; they are in a better place.

3. Bukhari, Fath-al-Bari:16/101

her children from both Ja`far and Abu Bakr.

As the army approached Madinah, the people went out to receive them. During this time, the Prophet ﷺ heard some people referring to them as ‘those who ran away from battle,’ but he ﷺ defended them saying, “But they will engage them again, when Allah wills.”<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, they did return as the Prophet ﷺ said, and this occurred during the Battle of Yarmouk at the hands of Khalid bin al-Walid ؓ and the Muslim army. They defeated the Byzantine Empire and liberated Damascus and Jerusalem, as well as other lands from the blessed lands of the Levant.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ spoke about the virtue of the martyrs of Mu`tah, and when he would see Usamah bin Zaid ؓ after the death of his father Zaid, he ﷺ felt sympathy towards him and his eyes would fill with tears. He felt the same when he saw the children of Ja`far bin Abi Talib ؓ. He ﷺ informed us that they were from the martyrs and that they were inhabitants of Paradise, and he ﷺ said that Ja`far had two wings in Paradise<sup>2</sup> and from then on, that is how he was known to the Ummah.

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1 . Ibn Hisham: 3/382, Al-Waqdi: 2/765

2. Ja`far lost both his arms during the Battle of Mu`tah and so Allah rewarded him with wings in Paradise.

# The Conquest of Makkah

## (20<sup>th</sup> of Ramadan, 8 AH)

One of the stipulations of the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah was: (Whosoever wished to enter into an alliance with Muhammad may do so, and whosoever wished to enter into an alliance with the Quraish may do so). Sometime after the treaty, the tribe of Banu Khuza`ah allied with the Prophet ﷺ, and the tribe of Bakr allied with the Quraish. When Banu Bakr began hostilities against Banu Khuza`ah with the assistance of the Quraish, there was a clear violation of the treaty. One of the leaders of Khuza`ah, `Amr bin Salim, went to the Prophet ﷺ and requested the Muslims' aid as per their alliance.

From what `Amr bin Salim al-Khuza`i said was:

O, my Lord! I implore Muhammad,  
The pledge of our father and his father of old,  
So aid us, may Allah guide you!

And call the servants of Allah to come in droves!

The Prophet ﷺ replied, "You will be aided, O `Amr bin Salim."<sup>1</sup> When yet another delegation arrived from Khuza`ah seeking the assistance of the Prophet ﷺ, he reassured them as well. The Quraish realized how critical the situation had become, so Abu Sufyan traveled to Madinah to renew the treaty. Upon his arrival, he entered the home of his daughter, the Mother of the Believers, Umm Habibah رضي الله عنها. She was married to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, which made Abu Sufyan his father-in-law. When Abu Sufyan entered, he tried to sit on the Prophet ﷺ's *firash* (seating, or cushion for sitting), Umm Habibah removed it. He turned to her and said, "O my daughter, I do not know whether you think the *firash* is too good for me or you think I am too good for it."<sup>2</sup>

She replied, "This is the seating of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and you are an impure polytheist, so I did not want you to sit on the seating of the Messenger of

1 Ib Kathir As-Seerah:3/527,Ibn Hisham 4/394

2 .As-Seerah, Ibn Hisham: 4/397

Allah ﷺ.” He responded, “By Allah, evil has overtaken you since you left me.” Abu Sufyan then went to the Prophet ﷺ and spoke to him [about reinstating the treaty] but did not receive a response.<sup>1</sup> He went to Abu Bakr ؓ and asked him to speak on his behalf to the Prophet ﷺ but he refused.

Abu Sufyan then approached Umar bin al-Khattab ؓ who replied, “You want me to intercede with the Prophet ﷺ on your behalf? By Allah, had I found nothing but a speck of dust I would use it to fight against you all [i.e. the Quraish].” Then he went to `Ali and Fatimah ؓ, who were with their young son, al-Hasan. `Ali ؓ said, “By Allah, the Prophet ﷺ has decided on the matter, and we cannot speak to him about it.” Abu Sufyan looked to Fatimah ؓ and said, “O daughter of Muhammad, will you not tell this son of yours to intercede on behalf of the people and by doing so he shall become of great stature amongst the Arabs?” She replied, “This son of mine has not reached the point where he can properly intercede for the people.”

Once Abu Sufyan realized the severity of the situation he turned to `Ali ؓ and said, “Advise me.” `Ali ؓ said, “You are the chief of Kinanah, so announce your desire to keep the treaty. Then, go back to the land of your people.” Abu Sufyan said, “Do you think this will help me in any way?” `Ali responded, “No, but I do not know what else you could do besides this.” Abu Sufyan then went to the masjid and said what `Ali had suggested, then he left.

The Prophet ﷺ began to prepare the Muslims for battle, but he was keen on not letting the Quraish find out about his mobilization of the army. He sent one of his battalions in the opposite direction of Makkah so it would be assumed that he was headed towards that territory. At the same time, he informed his close Companions that he was in fact heading towards Makkah, and requested that they keep the information concealed. He prayed, “O Allah, seize the spies and informers of the Quraish so that we may take them by surprise.”<sup>2</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ set out for Makkah in Ramadan with 5,000 of the Muhajirun and Ansar. They were joined by droves of Muslims from the tribes of Muzainah, Sulaim, Ghifar, Juhainah, Tamim, and Asad. By the time the Muslim army neared Makkah, their number had reached a staggering 10,000 soldiers.

Al-`Abbas bin `Abd al-Muttalib ؓ met with the Prophet ﷺ on his way to Makkah and accepted Islam. It is said that al-`Abbas had been concealing his acceptance

1 As-Seerah, Ibn Hisham: 4/397

2 Ibn Hisham 4/396

of Islam for a long time before this, and there are numerous incidents between him and the Prophet ﷺ since the Second Pledge of Al-'Aqabah that indicate this. Al-'Abbas wished for his people to also embrace Islam, so he ﷺ mounted the donkey of the Prophet ﷺ and began looking for someone who would be fit to send to the Quraish. He wished to find someone who could persuade them to come to the Prophet ﷺ and accept Islam. At nightfall, the Prophet ﷺ ordered the massive army to light many campfires to frighten the Makkans with their sheer numbers and have them surrender without a fight. When the Quraish saw this, Abu Sufyan went out to inquire about it. As he got closer, he saw al-'Abbas ﷺ and was granted a guarantee of safety by him. Al-'Abbas ﷺ took Abu Sufyan to the Prophet ﷺ who upheld al-'Abbas's promise of safety, and none of the Muslims harmed him. In the morning, al-'Abbas ﷺ returned with him to the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Sufyan announced his acceptance of Islam. Al-'Abbas ﷺ said to Prophet ﷺ, "Indeed Abu Sufyan loves to have status among his people, so perhaps you could insure the safety of anyone who enters his home."<sup>1</sup>

It was important to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that the Muslims enter Makkah as peacefully as possible. Accordingly, he split his army into four groups and directed each of them to enter Makkah from one of its four sides, displaying their strength and clear advantage over the Quraish in order to convince them to avoid bloodshed. He ﷺ hoped that the Makkans would understand the reality of the matter and surrender in peace. Additionally, the Prophet ﷺ announced: "He who enters the home of Abu Sufyan is safe, he who shuts the door of his own home is safe, and he who enters the mosque [al-Masjid al-Haram] is safe."<sup>2</sup> Thus, every opportunity of safety had become available for the people, and so the Prophet ﷺ entered Makkah in peace, and his banner was planted at al-Hujun.

The battalion of Khalid bin al-Walid ﷺ faced some resistance from a few of the pagan fighters of the Quraish, but it was soon quelled, and the remaining polytheists fled into their homes or out of Makkah. The entry of the Prophet ﷺ into Makkah was that of a person who is humble in the presence of Allah, bowing his head in complete submission to Allah, the Most High, while reciting Surah al-Fath. He made way towards the Ka`bah and performed seven circuits of tawaf after which he ﷺ said, "There is no god except Allah alone without any partners. He has fulfilled His promise and made His slave victorious, and He Alone defeated all the clans [of nonbelievers]. Every claim for blood or custom

1 Ibn Hisham : 3/403, As-Seerah, Ibn Kathir: 3/548

2 Bukhari



[from the days of ignorance] is beneath these two feet of mine (i.e., abolished), except for the custodianship of the Ka`bah and the provision of water for the pilgrims.” He then said, “O people of Quraish, what do you think I will do with you?” “Only goodness,” they replied, “Noble brother, son of a noble brother.”

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Go, for you are all free.” Then the gatekeeper of the Ka`bah was called, the keys were attained from him, and the Ka`bah was opened for the Prophet ﷺ. There were drawings found within the Ka`bah which were ordered to be destroyed, and he ﷺ made his way around the idols, which were 360 in number, close to the number of days in the year. He ﷺ recited: “And say: Truth has come and falsehood has vanished. Surely, falsehood is ever bound to vanish.” (al-Isra’, 81). He threw them to the ground and ordered that they be destroyed. The Prophet ﷺ did not leave a single idol except that it was shattered or a single picture except that it was removed.<sup>1</sup>

When the Prophet ﷺ entered Makkah, he was wearing a black cloak. He ﷺ performed tawaf around the Ka`bah on his camel *al-Qaswa*’ and in his hand was a crooked stick that he used to touch the corners of the Ka`bah. After performing the rites, he exited the Masjid and had his camel sit. He ﷺ then addressed the people, beginning with the praise of Allah and exalting Him, and then he continued, “O people, indeed Allah has removed the blemish of ignorance from you, along with its boasting about lineage. There are two types of people: the pious, righteous ones, who are honorable to Allah; and the disbelieving, wicked people, who are disgraced to Allah. O people, indeed Allah says,

*“O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honorable of you with Allah is the most righteous of you. Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware. The bedouins say: “We believe.” Say: “You believe not but say [instead], ‘We have surrendered (in Islam),’ for Faith has not yet entered your hearts. But if you obey Allah and His Messenger, He will not decrease anything in reward for your deeds. Verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”* (al-Hujurat, 13-14).

With this I end, and I seek the forgiveness of Allah for myself and you.”

Then he went near the Masjid, and some *zamzam* water was brought to him. As he washed his blessed face ﷺ, and not a drop trickled down except that it fell into the hands of the people. The pagans of Makkah watched in awe, saying:

1 . Ibn Abi Shaibah, Al-Mag haz:P:334,335,341



“We have not seen a greater king than today, nor a more foolish people than these people.” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then ordered Bilal ؓ to climb the Ka`bah and call the adhan. The Muslims washed the Ka`bah from inside and out; they did not leave behind a trace of the polytheists except that they erased it or washed it off.<sup>1</sup>

Those who wished to pledge their allegiance to the Prophet ﷺ did so, both men and women. When the time for Dhuhr prayer came, Bilal ؓ once again announced the Truth from atop the Ka`bah, proclaiming: “Allah is the Greatest. I bear witness there is no god but Allah. I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.” Some of the members of the Quraish who had just accepted Islam were displeased by this sight, but once Islam had settled and rooted itself in their hearts, they regretted the remarks they had made that day. In this manner, Makkah was purified from polytheism and its era of being the stronghold of resistance against Islam finally ended. Makkah became one of the Muslim cities, in fact the most important one of them all. The Prophet ﷺ appointed `Attab bin Aseed as its governor.<sup>2</sup>

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ placed great importance on teaching the people of Makkah about Islam. He remained among them for nineteen days, and then departed to confront Thaqif and Hawazin, two tribes who had prepared to fight the Prophet ﷺ. The Conquest of Makkah was a major event in the history of Islam, and as news of it spread across Arabia, it greatly reduced the boldness of the rest of the Arabs to make any moves against the Muslims, and people began to enter the religion of Allah in droves.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, Allah spoke the Truth:

*“When comes the Help of Allah (to you, O Muhammad, against your enemies) and the conquest (of Makkah), And you see that the people enter Allah’s religion in crowds, then glorify the Praises of your Lord, and ask for His Forgiveness. Verily, He is the One Who accepts the repentance and forgives.”* (an-Nasr, 1-3).



1 Ibn Abi Shaibah,P:341

2 Ibn Sa`ad:5/446, Al-Isabah:2/452, At-Tabari:3/162

3 Bukhari Fath al-Bari:16/132-134



# The Battle of Hunain and Taif

## (Shawwal 8 AH)

After the Conquest of Makkah, both the tribes of Hawazin and Thaqif equipped themselves to confront the Muslims in battle, and they were joined by the tribe of Ghatafan and some others. They went out to battle with their wives and children in tow as a motivation to fight fiercely against the Muslims. The Muslim army was comprised of the 10,000 soldiers that were present during the Conquest, along with a further 10,000 of those who had just accepted Islam in Makkah. This magnificent force caused some of the men to grow overconfident, and they began to say, “We will not be defeated today due to a lack of numbers.”<sup>1</sup>

The tribe of Hawazin had gathered at Hunain and was led by Malik bin Awf. He had ordered his people to come to the battle with their women and their wealth so that it would motivate them to remain steadfast during battle. Durayd bin as-Summa, however, reproached Malik for doing so. Durayd was an old man who came with the Hawazin army, and although he was not a person of leadership among them, he was a wise man. He said to Malik, “If you are victorious today, then it would only be due to the men who have come with their swords and spears, and if you are defeated, then you will be shamed with the loss of your families and your wealth.”<sup>2</sup>

The Muslims entered the valley of Hunain at daybreak, unaware that the enemy was hidden, lying in wait for them. The Muslim army was massive, but within their ranks were many different tribes and those who had just accepted Islam after the conquest of Makkah. The number of the soldiers from these various tribes and these new Muslims surpassed the number of the Muhajirun and Ansar [i.e., the more senior Companions]. The Muslim army was taken by surprise when they were suddenly attacked by the Hawazin army. The frontlines disbanded and dispersed, especially those from Banu Tamim and the new Muslims of Makkah.

1 Rizqullah Mahdi, *As-Seerah*, P:583

2 Ibn Hisham: 3/438

The lines of the Muslims were broken, but the Prophet ﷺ remained steadfast along with some of the Muhajirun and Ansar. From those who remained with him were his uncle al-`Abbas, Abu Bakr, `Umar, and `Ali – may Allah be pleased with them. The Prophet ﷺ turned to his right and called out, “O people of al-Ansar!” They replied, “At your service, O Messenger of Allah! Rejoice for we are with you!” Then he turned to his left and said, “O people of al-Ansar!” They said, “At your service! O Messenger of Allah! Rejoice for we are with you!” The Prophet ﷺ, who was riding on a white mule at the time, dismounted and said, “I am the Slave of Allah and His Messenger.” Since the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ al-`Abbas ؓ had a loud and booming voice, he ﷺ ordered him to call out in the words, “O community of Ansar, O People of *Samrah*.”<sup>1</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ chanted, “I am the Prophet and that is the truth, I am the son of `Abd al-Muttalib (*Anan Nabiyyu la kadhib, ana ibnu Abdil Muttalib*).” When the Muhajirun and Ansar heard the calls they quickly responded, saying “At your service! At your service!” They assembled under the Prophet ﷺ and with them, he ﷺ faced the enemy. The fight between the Muslims and Hawazin intensified until the Prophet ﷺ said, “Now, the oven has become heated [i.e.the battle has intensified]”<sup>2</sup> and he was the first ever to use this phrase. The Muslims fought alongside him courageously. Amidst the battle, he ﷺ took a handful of dust and threw it towards the enemy saying, “May the faced become deformed,” after which the army of Hawazin began to flee. Shortly after, defeat befell the enemy lines and the Muslims returned with prisoners and the spoils of war. There were more than seventy casualties on the side of the enemies, and a group of Muslims was also martyred in this battle.

The Prophet ﷺ sent squadrons to pursue the fleeing enemy in order to finish them off or further break up their ranks. They were successful in achieving their tasks, and the spoils of war along with the prisoners were gathered at al-Ji`rranah. Once things had calmed down, the Prophet ﷺ continued his march towards Taif, the headquarters of Banu Thaqif, where the rest of Hawazin had gathered to fight the Muslims.

Taif was fortified with walls that encircled (*tatifu*) it and that is how its name came to be. For this reason, the Muslims were unable to breach its walls even after besieging it for twenty nights. They set up a catapult, which was suggested by Salman al-Farisi ؓ, but it did not prove fruitful. The soldiers of Taif shot at the Muslims with their arrows and other ranged weaponry resulting in the

1 *Samrah* was the name of the tree under which the Companions renewed their pledge to the Prophet ﷺ at the Treaty of Hdaybiyah.

2 Ibn Hisham: 4/445

martyrdom of some Companions ﷺ.

A group of Muslims also tried to breach the walls using a battering ram that they constructed out of wood and hide. They took protection under the ram and approached the walls, however the people of Taif poured a cauldron of molten iron onto it. The hide and wood began to burn, causing the fighters within the battering ram to exit to safety, and a few of them were injured. As soon as they exited, they were assaulted with arrows by the archers on the walls which led to several casualties. During the siege, some of the slaves belonging to the people of Taif fled to the Muslim side and accepted Islam, and the Prophet ﷺ set them free.<sup>1</sup>

The siege had continued for a long time, after which Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was informed by Allah that he would not be able to conquer Taif. He ﷺ left Taif, not out of despair but in hope that they would voluntarily come to him as Muslims on their own accord. He supplicated for them saying, “O Allah, guide the people of Thaif,” and headed for Makkah, stopping at al-Ji`rranah where the spoils and captives of Hawazin and their allies were stationed. Once the Prophet ﷺ reached al-Ji`rranah, he waited for any correspondence from Hawazin or repentance for the conflict they had started with Muslims. After a few days with no correspondence from the tribe, the Prophet ﷺ split the spoils and captives of war among the Muslims. Thereafter, a delegation from Hawazin arrived declaring their Islam and their repentance for their actions that infringed on the rights of the Prophet ﷺ and those who were with him from the Muslims. They requested the return of their wealth and the captives. This was a difficult decision to make, for these were a people who had just recently warred with the Muslims and killed some among them, and the Prophet ﷺ even allowed them time to repent with no consequences, but they only came after the spoils of war had been distributed. Furthermore, much of the wealth was distributed to the new tribes that had accepted Islam. After some discussion, the Prophet ﷺ allowed Hawazin to take their captives, but the wealth that was already distributed amongst the Muslims remained as such.<sup>2</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ then advised Hawazin, and he said to them, “Inform Malik bin `Awf (the chief of Hawazin) that if he comes to me as a Muslim, I will return to him his family, wealth, and one hundred camels.” When Malik was informed, he secretly left Taif and came to the Prophet ﷺ proclaiming his Islam, and he became a good Muslim thereafter. The Prophet ﷺ appointed him as the leader of

1 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:16/161, Ibn Hisham:4/485

2 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:16/145-147

all the tribes that accepted Islam around Taif. Over time, the landscape around the pagans of Taif began to change until they eventually found themselves surrounded by believers.<sup>1</sup>

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ distributed the spoils of war, he gave to the different tribes as well as the new Muslims whose hearts he ﷺ wished to bring closer to Islam, i.e., those who had accepted Islam very recently, during the Conquest of Makkah and other recent events. He, however, did not distribute anything to the *Ansar*, and some of them were taken aback by this. The Prophet ﷺ gathered them by themselves and addressed them. He spoke to them at length, which included the following: “Are you not pleased to see that the people go back with sheep and camels while you go back to your homes with the Prophet? Had it not been for the Hijrah, I would have been one of the Ansar. Had the people taken their way through a valley or mountain pass, and the Ansar took another, I would select the valley and mountain pass of the Ansar. The Ansar are the inner garments [i.e., closer to me] and the (other) people are the outer garments.”

Upon hearing this, the Ansar wept until their beards were drenched in tears, and they said, “We are pleased with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as our share and stake.”<sup>2</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ then entered the state of *ihram* for ‘Umrah from al-Ji`rannah. He ﷺ entered Makkah, where he performed ‘Umrah and remained for a few days, and then returned to Madinah. As the months passed, Islam spread the areas surrounding Taif and it was not long before a delegation from them came to the Prophet ﷺ. They spoke at length, and their negotiations ended with them accepting Islam and agreeing to destroy the idols within Taif.<sup>3</sup>

With Taif’s acceptance of Islam, all the cities of the *Hijaz* region of Arabia (the Western region) had now become subservient to the Prophetic government and they were run by governors assigned by the Prophet ﷺ.

Some verses were revealed speaking about the Battle of Hunain. Among them:

*“Truly Allah has given you victory on many battle fields, and on the Day of Hunain when you rejoiced at your great number, but it availed you naught and the earth, vast as it is, was straitened for you, then you turned back in flight.”* (at-Tawbah, 25).

1 Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:3/683, Ibn Hisham:4/491

2 Bukhari, Fathul Bari:16/163-196, Ibn Abi Shaibah,P:387

3 Ibn Hisham As-Seerah:3/537,541

# The Battle of Tabuk

## (Rajab 9 AH)

The events of the Battle of Mu'tah took place between the Muslims and the Byzantines and their allies from the Christian Arabs in the 8<sup>th</sup> year of the Hijri calendar. It was the first time any friction had occurred between the Muslims and Byzantines, and the events remained clear in the minds of the Muslims since a number of the Companions ﷺ were martyred in that battle. In Rajab of the following year, the Muslims prepared to attack the Byzantine Empire. The Prophet ﷺ gave the Companions ﷺ advanced notice of the details of the expedition in order to give them time to prepare, for the journey was going to be quite long and the weather was extremely hot. He ﷺ was aware that the Byzantines had spies among the munafiqun of Madinah, but he ﷺ also knew that his soldiers required preparation, and thus he made the announcement. Additionally, the lands had been barren, and the people were going through a difficult time. At the time, fruits such as dates and grapes had just ripened, and the people had been waiting for them the entire year. Therefore, it was clear that the journey to Tabuk would be difficult on the hearts and minds.<sup>1</sup>

It was then that the hypocrites fell into swamps of lies as they began to make false excuses for not joining the expedition. Allah the Exalted said:

*“And among them is he who says: “Grant me leave (to be exempted from Jihad) and put me not into trial.” Surely, they have fallen into trial. And verily, Hell is surrounding the disbelievers.” (at-Tawbah, 49).*

*The hypocrites began to call on another to stay back and not go out along with the Prophet ﷺ in this time of heat. Allah the Exalted said about them:*

*“Those who stayed away (from Tabuk expedition) rejoiced in their staying behind the Messenger of Allah; they hated to strive and fight with their properties and their lives in the Cause of Allah, and they said: “March not forth in the heat.” Say: “The Fire of Hell is more intense in heat”,*

1 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:16/237,242

*if only they could understand! So let them laugh a little and [then] weep much as recompense for what they used to earn.<sup>1</sup>*” (at-Tawbah, 81-82).

The Prophet ﷺ urged his Companions to donate and spend their wealth in preparation for this battle. The wealthy among them rushed to contribute, at the head of them Abu Bakr, `Umar, and others – may Allah be pleased with them. `Uthman ؓ contributed with an enormous donation of three hundred camels and one thousand dinars, and the Prophet ﷺ remarked, “Nothing `Uthman does from this day onward will harm him.” Furthermore, he ﷺ said, “He who prepares the Army [for the Expedition] of Hardship will be granted Paradise.”<sup>2</sup> He ﷺ also said, “O Allah be pleased with `Uthman for I am pleased with him.” There were some poor Muslims who came to the Prophet ﷺ wishing to go out with him on the expedition but were unable to due to their poverty and lack of riding beasts for the long journey. They mentioned their situation to the Prophet ﷺ who ﷺ responded, “I cannot find anything for you to ride upon.” They returned with their eyes filled with tears out of sorrow, for they had truly wanted to serve but could not find the means. There were also Bedouins who came to the Prophet ﷺ and excused themselves from the expedition.<sup>3</sup>

Three of the Companions ؓ stayed behind without a proper excuse, although they intended to catch up with the Prophet ﷺ later. After realizing their error, they became full of shame and sorrow for their lapse in judgment, and they were truthful in mentioning their situation and what really kept them back, and so Allah forgave them.<sup>4</sup>

Allah the Exalted said:

*“Allah has forgiven the Prophet, the Muhajirun and the Ansar who followed him in the time of distress after the hearts of a party of them had nearly deviated (from the Right Path), but He accepted their repentance. Certainly, He is unto them full of Kindness, Most Merciful. And (He did forgive also) the three [who did not join the Tabuk expedition (whom the Prophet)] left (i.e. he did not give his judgement in their case, and their case was suspended for Allah’s Decision) till for them the earth, vast as it is, was straitened and their own selves were straitened to them, and they perceived that there is no fleeing from Allah, and no refuge but with Him. Then, He accepted their repentance, that they might repent (unto Him). Verily, Allah is the*

1 Ibn Kathir at-Tafseer:2/898

2 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:14/195, Ibn Hisham:3/518

3 Ibn Kathir at-Tafseer:1/902

4 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:16/241



*One Who accepts repentance, Most Merciful.” (at-Tawbah, 117-118)*

This expedition was a test for the entire Muslim community: the wealthy, the poor, the faithful, and the weak in faith from among them. The hypocrites and some of the Jews of Madinah played a role in demoralizing the people. This was also the last expedition of the Prophet ﷺ, for at the time he ﷺ had passed sixty years of age. Despite this, he led the army himself and did not simply issue commands from afar as other leaders tend to do. The advancement of the Muslims into the lands of the Byzantines marked the launch of Islam to the rest of the world.

The Muslim army reached thirty thousand soldiers, including ten thousand cavalrymen. It was the biggest Muslim army assembled during the life of the Prophet ﷺ.<sup>1</sup> On their way to Tabuk, the Muslims passed the remnants of Mada'in Salih<sup>2</sup>, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ commanded them to pass them swiftly. He ﷺ ordered that no one should enter the homes of the People of Salih ؑ except to reflect on their fate and weep.<sup>3</sup>

The Muslims continued their march until they reached Tabuk, where they set up camp and remained for approximately ten nights. The Prophet ﷺ sent some groups of soldiers out to bring back news about the Byzantines, and he also sent some to neighboring towns. The chiefs of neighboring tribes and villages came to visit the Prophet ﷺ during this time, some of whom agreed on terms of alliance or peace between their people and the Muslims. Khalid bin al-Walid ؓ, who was sent out by the Prophet ﷺ, returned with a captive, Ukaidir bin `Abd al-Malik, a Christian leader in a region known as Dumat al-Jandal. He agreed to pay *jizyah*<sup>4</sup> in exchange for the security of his people. He was released, and returned to his people.<sup>5</sup>

It appears that the Byzantines were aware of the Muslim army's movements, including their arrival to Tabuk and their show of strength across the borders of the Byzantine lands. Some of the Muslim forces were even considered to have passed the borders into Byzantine territory. Despite this, the Byzantine forces did not confront the Muslims even though they had the ability to do so. Perhaps what further confirms that the Byzantines were diligently following the events taking place is that the King of Ghassan sent for Ka'b bin Malik ؓ in Madinah requesting him to join him in the Levant. Ka'b ؓ was one of the three

1 Ibn Hajar, Fath al-Bari:16/242

2 The remains of the city wherein the people of the Prophet Salih ؑ lived.

3 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:16/255

4 A per capita yearly tax historically levied by Islamic states on certain non-Muslim subjects permanently residing in Muslim lands under Islamic law.

5 Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:4/30, Ibn Hisham:4/225,226

Companions who stayed behind from the expedition and was later forgiven by Allah. If information regarding the situation of individual Muslims had reached the Ghassanid King, and he is one of the governors of the Byzantine Empire, then indeed it is even more likely that they were cognizant of the preparation and deployment the Prophet's army from Madinah to Tabuk. This is especially true since as you may remember, the course of the army was announced in advance, and the spies of the Byzantines were certainly present in Madinah.

It is possible that the ruler of the Byzantine Empire was certain of the truthfulness of the Prophet ﷺ and so he chose not to confront the Muslim army out of fear, due to his realization that the Muslims would be granted victory from Allah. It is narrated that Heraclius said, "By Allah, if only you believed me when I said he will come to own what lies beneath my two feet..." Indeed, Heraclius lived to witness the day the Muslims owned that which lied beneath his two feet<sup>1</sup>.

Once the Prophet ﷺ had consolidated the strength of the Muslims throughout the different regions of the Arabian Peninsula, he ﷺ returned to Madinah. While returning, he ﷺ faced trouble with some of the hypocrites, about fourteen of them, who tried to assassinate him ﷺ. They waited for the Prophet ﷺ to be away from the majority of his soldiers, accompanied only by Hudhaifah bin al-Yaman ؓ and `Ammar bin Yasir ؓ. The hypocrites saw their chance to strike, so they approached on their mounts, with their faces wrapped in cloth except for their eyes, so as to conceal their identities. Their attempt failed quite quickly, and they abandoned their plan and dispersed. The Prophet ﷺ asked `Ammar if he had recognized them, but he said that he did not, due to their concealed faces.

The Prophet ﷺ returned to Madinah and when he approached the city, he said, "This is Tabah (i.e., Madinah), and this is Mount Uhud, a mountain that loves us and we love it."<sup>2</sup> The women and children of the city came out to welcome the Muslims back while children sang:

"The full moon rose over us  
From the valley of Wada`  
And we are obliged to show gratefulness  
For as long as there remains anyone calling out [to Allah]."<sup>3</sup>

The Expedition of Tabuk was a lesson for the Muslim community at the time, as well as the entire Ummah to be farsighted and have high ambitions like the

1 At-Tabari:4/38, Futooh Ash-Sham,P:236

2. Bukhari

3 Fathul Bari: 16/259, Rizq-ul-Allah Mahdi, As-Seerah: P:631

Prophet ﷺ right before he bid farewell to his Ummah. Even after returning to Madinah, the issues that came with this expedition were far from over. Those who had stayed behind came to the Prophet ﷺ apologizing after his return, among them were the hypocrites who provided false and dishonest excuses, and their lies were exposed by Allah. There were also others who stayed behind but were truthful in their apology to Prophet ﷺ, as we mentioned, and they are the three referenced in the Qur'an, including Ka'b bin Malik ؓ. In response to their actions, the community ostracized them for some time until Allah accepted their repentance through verses of the Qur'an that were revealed then, and continue to be recited now as a lesson for all of us, until the Day of Judgment.<sup>1</sup>

The following verses from the Qur'an speak about the Expedition of Tabuk:

*“O you who believe! What is the matter with you, that when you are asked to march forth in the Cause of Allah you cling heavily to the earth? Are you pleased with the life of this world rather than the Hereafter? But little is the enjoyment of the life of this world as compared with the Hereafter. If you march not forth, He will punish you with a painful torment and will replace you by another people, and you cannot harm Him at all, and Allah is Able to do all things. If you help him (i.e., the Prophet) not (it does not matter), for Allah did indeed help him when the disbelievers drove him out, the second of two, when they (Muhammad and Abu Bakr) were in the cave, and he said to his companion (Abu Bakr): “Be not sad (or afraid), surely Allah is with us.” Then Allah sent down His Sakinah (calmness, tranquillity, peace, etc.) upon him, and strengthened him with forces which you saw not, and made the word of those who disbelieved the lowermost, while it was the Word of Allah that became the uppermost, and Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.”*

“March forth, whether you are light (being healthy, young and wealthy) or heavy (being ill, old and poor), strive hard with your wealth and your lives in the Cause of Allah. This is better for you, if you but knew. Had it been a near gain (booty in front of them) and an easy journey, they would have followed you, but the distance (Tabuk expedition) was long for them, and they would swear by Allah, “If we only could, we would certainly have come forth with you.” They destroy their own selves, and Allah knows that they are liars. May Allah forgive you (O Muhammad). Why did you grant them leave (for remaining behind, you should

<sup>1</sup> Fath al-Bari:16/242, Ibn Abi Shaibah,P:398

have persisted as regards your order to them to proceed), until those who told the truth were seen by you in a clear light, and you had known the liars? Those who believe in Allah and the Last Day would not ask your leave to be exempted from fighting with their properties and their lives, and Allah is the All-Knower of the pious. It is only those who believe not in Allah and the Last Day and whose hearts are in doubt that ask your leave (to be exempted from Jihad). So in their doubts they waver. And if they had intended to march out, certainly, they would have made some preparation for it, but Allah was averse to their being sent forth, so He made them lag behind, and it was said (to them), "Sit you among those who sit (at home)." Had they marched out with you, they would have added to you nothing except disorder, and they would have hurried about in your midst (spreading corruption) and sowing sedition among you, and there are some among you who would have listened to them. And Allah is the All-Knower of the wrong-doers."

*"Verily, they had plotted sedition before, and had upset matters for you, - until the truth (victory) came and the Decree of Allah (His Religion, Islam) became manifest though they hated it. And among them is he who says: "Grant me leave (to be exempted from Jihad) and put me not into trial." Surely, they have fallen into trial. And verily, Hell is surrounding the disbelievers. If good befalls you (O Muhammad), it grieves them, but if a calamity overtakes you, they say: "We took our precaution beforehand," and they turn away rejoicing. Say: "Nothing shall ever happen to us except what Allah has ordained for us. He is our Maula (Lord, Helper and Protector)." And in Allah let the believers put their trust. Say: "Do you wait for us (anything) except one of the two best things (martyrdom or victory); while we await for you either that Allah will afflict you with a punishment from Himself or at our hands. So wait, we too are waiting with you." (at-Tawbah, 38-52).*

Allah the Exalted also speaks about this expedition in another segment of the same chapter:

*"Whether you (O Muhammad) ask forgiveness for them (hypocrites) or ask not forgiveness for them (and even) if you ask seventy times for their forgiveness Allah will not forgive them, because they have disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger. And Allah guides not those people who are Fasiqun (rebellious, disobedient to Allah). Those who stayed away*

(from Tabuk expedition) rejoiced in their staying behind the Messenger of Allah; they hated to strive and fight with their properties and their lives in the Cause of Allah, and they said: "March not forth in the heat." Say: "The Fire of Hell is more intense in heat", if only they could understand! So let them laugh a little and (they will) cry much as a recompense of what they used to earn (by committing sins). If Allah brings you back to a party of them (the hypocrites), and they ask your permission to go out (to fight), say: "Never shall you go out with me, nor fight an enemy with me; you agreed to sit inactive on the first occasion, then you sit (now) with those who lag behind." And never (O Muhammad) pray (funeral prayer) for any of them (hypocrites) who dies, nor stand at his grave. Certainly they disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger, and died while they were Fasiqun (rebellious, - disobedient to Allah and His Messenger)."

"And let not their wealth or their children amaze you. Allah's Plan is to punish them with these things in this world, and that their souls shall depart (die) while they are disbelievers. And when a Surah (chapter from the Qur'an) is revealed, enjoining them to believe in Allah and to strive hard and fight along with His Messenger, the wealthy among them ask your leave to exempt them (from Jihad) and say, «Leave us (behind), we would be with those who sit (at home).» They are content to be with those (the women) who sit behind (at home). Their hearts are sealed up (from all kinds of goodness and right guidance), so they understand not. But the Messenger and those who believed with him strove hard and fought with their wealth and their lives (in Allah's Cause). Such are they for whom are the good things, and it is they who will be successful. For them Allah has got ready Gardens (Paradise) under which rivers flow, to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success."

"And those who made excuses from the bedouins came (to you, O Prophet) asking your permission to exempt them (from the battle), and those who had lied to Allah and His Messenger sat at home (without asking the permission for it); a painful torment will seize those of them who disbelieve. There is no blame on those who are weak or ill or who find no resources to spend if they are sincere and true (in duty) to Allah and His Messenger. No ground (of complaint) can there be against the Muhsinun (good-doers), and Allah is Oft-Forgiving,

*Most Merciful. Nor (is there blame) on those who came to you to be provided with mounts, and when you said: "I can find no mounts for you," they turned back, while their eyes overflowing with tears of grief that they could not find anything to spend (for Jihad). The ground (of complaint) is only against those who are rich, and yet ask exemption. They are content to be with (the women) who sit behind (at home) and Allah has sealed up their hearts (from all kinds of goodness and right guidance) so that they know not (what they are losing)."*

*"They (the hypocrites) will present their excuses to you (Muslims), when you return to them. Say (O Muhammad) "Present no excuses, we shall not believe you. Allah has already informed us of the news concerning you. Allah and His Messenger will observe your deeds. In the end you will be brought back to the All-Knower of the unseen and the seen, then He (Allah) will inform you of what you used to do." They will swear by Allah to you (Muslims) when you return to them, that you may turn away from them. So turn away from them. Surely, they are Rijs [i.e., impure because of their evil deeds], and Hell is their dwelling place, - a recompense for that which they used to earn. They (the hypocrites) swear to you (Muslims) that you may be pleased with them, but if you are pleased with them, certainly Allah is not pleased with the people who are al-Fasiqun (rebellious, disobedient to Allah)." (at-Tawbah, 80-96)*

Allah the Exalted is pleased with the believers who followed His Prophet ﷺ in this expedition, as He tells us in the Qur'an:

*"Allah has forgiven the Prophet, the Muhajirun, and the Ansar who followed him in the time of distress (Tabuk expedition, etc.), after the hearts of a party of them had nearly deviated (from the Right Path), but He accepted their repentance. Certainly, He is unto them full of Kindness, Most Merciful. And (He did forgive also) the three [who did not join the Tabuk expedition (whom the Prophet)] left (i.e. he did not give his judgement in their case, and their case was suspended for Allah's Decision) till for them the earth, vast as it is, was straitened and their own selves were straitened to them, and they perceived that there is no fleeing from Allah, and no refuge but with Him. Then, He accepted their repentance, that they might repent (unto Him). Verily,*



*Allah is the One Who accepts repentance, Most Merciful.”*

*“O you who believe! Be afraid of Allah, and be with those who are true (in words and deeds). It was not becoming of the people of Madinah and the bedouins of the neighborhood to remain behind Allah’s Messenger and (it was not becoming of them) to prefer their own lives to his life. That is because they suffer neither thirst nor fatigue, nor hunger in the Cause of Allah, nor they take any step to raise the anger of disbelievers nor inflict any injury upon an enemy but is written to their credit as a deed of righteousness. Surely, Allah wastes not the reward of the Muhsinun. Nor do they spend anything (in Allah’s Cause) - small or great - nor cross a valley, but is written to their credit, that Allah may recompense them with the best of what they used to do (i.e. Allah will reward their good deeds according to the reward of their best deeds which they did in the most perfect manner). And it is not (proper) for the believers to go out to fight (Jihad) all together. Of every troop of them, a party only should go forth, that they (who are left behind) may get instructions in (Islamic) religion, and that they may warn their people when they return to them, so that they may beware (of evil). O you who believe! Fight those of the disbelievers who are close to you, and let them find harshness in you, and know that Allah is with the righteous.” (at-Tawbah, 117-123)*



## Abu Bakr leads the people in Hajj (9 AH)

The Muslims retook Makkah in Ramadan 8 AH, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ performed `Umrah that year, but he did not perform Hajj nor did he command the people to do so. In the subsequent months, he became occupied with receiving different delegations of Arabs and the various battles and expeditions such as the Expedition of Tabuk. The following Hajj season arrived (9 AH), but he ﷺ disliked attending due to the presence of pagan Arabs who were also coming for their usual pilgrimage. He ﷺ said, “It will be attended by the pagans who circumambulate the House while they are nude. I would not like to perform the Hajj until that is no longer done.”<sup>1</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ appointed Abu Bakr ؓ to lead the Hajj that year in his stead. Once Abu Bakr ؓ set out, the Prophet ﷺ tasked `Ali bin Abu Talib ؓ with the responsibility of conveying Surah Bara`ah (i.e., Surah at-Tawbah) to the people in Hajj that year. Within this Surah was an announcement to the polytheists that they could no longer come near al-Masjid al-Haram after this year. Because the announcement also renounced all the treaties that were in place with the polytheists living around al-Haram, the Prophet ﷺ sent someone from his own family for this important task. He ﷺ said to `Ali ؓ, “It would not be proper for anyone to convey this message except for someone from my family.”<sup>2</sup>

`Ali ؓ left Madinah riding the camel of the Prophet ﷺ, named al-`Adba`, and met with Abu Bakr ؓ and his company at an area outside of Madinah known as Dhul Hulaifah. When Abu Bakr ؓ saw `Ali ؓ he politely asked him, “Are you coming as a leader or someone who is led?” to which `Ali ؓ politely answered, “Someone who is led.”<sup>3</sup> Abu Bakr ؓ was a humble man, and he immediately understood that `Ali ؓ had been sent with an important task. It was entirely

- 1 Abu Shahbah As-Seerah:2/536. During the pre-Islamic era, a pagan ritual existed wherein some people would remove all their clothes before performing tawaf. Islam put an end to this ritual as well as other misguided ones.
2. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/202, Ahmad:3/283
3. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/202, Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:4/69



possible that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ instructed `Ali ؑ to take over Abu Bakr's position, and Abu Bakr was ready to relinquish it if so.

`Ali ؑ joined the company of pilgrims and they made their way to Makkah together led by Abu Bakr ؓ who taught the people and led them in prayers, while `Ali ؑ taught them the verses of Surah Bara`ah.

Allah the Exalted said:

*“Freedom from (all) obligations (is declared) from Allah and His Messenger to those of the Mushrikun (polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah), with whom you made a treaty. So travel freely (O Mushrikun) for four months (as you will) throughout the land, but know that you cannot escape (from the Punishment of) Allah, and Allah will disgrace the disbelievers. And a declaration from Allah and His Messenger to mankind on the greatest day (the 10th of Dhul-Hijjah - the 12th month of Islamic calendar) that Allah is free from (all) obligations to the Mushrikun and so is His Messenger. So if you (Mushrikun) repent, it is better for you, but if you turn away, then know that you cannot escape (from the Punishment of) Allah. And give tidings (O Muhammad) of a painful torment to those who disbelieve. Except those of the Mushrikun with whom you have a treaty, and who have not subsequently failed you in aught, nor have supported anyone against you. So fulfill their treaty to them to the end of their term. Surely Allah loves the pious. Then when the Sacred Months (the 1st, 7th, 11th, and 12th months of the Islamic calendar) have passed, then kill the Mushrikun wherever you find them, and capture them and besiege them, and prepare for them each and every ambush. But if they repent, establish prayer, and give Zakat, then leave their way free. Verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. And if anyone of the Mushrikun seeks your protection then grant him protection, so that he may hear the Word of Allah (the Qur'an), and then escort him to where he can be secure, that is because they are men who know not. How can there be a covenant with Allah and with His Messenger for the Mushrikun except those with whom you made a covenant near al-Masjid al-Haram? So long as they are true to you, stand you true to them. Verily, Allah loves the pious.”*

*“How (can there be such a covenant with them) that when you are*

overpowered by them, they regard not the ties, either of kinship or of covenant with you? With (good words from) their mouths they please you, but their hearts are averse to you, and most of them are Fasiqun (rebellious, disobedient to Allah). They have purchased with the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of Allah a little gain, and they hindered men from His Way; evil indeed is that which they used to do. With regard to a believer, they respect not the ties, either of kinship or of covenant! It is they who are the transgressors. But if they repent, establish prayer, and give Zakat, then they are your brothers in religion. (In this way) We explain the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) in detail for a people who know. But if they violate their oaths after their covenant, and attack your religion with disapproval and criticism then fight (you) the leaders of disbelief (chiefs of Quraish - pagans of Makkah) - for surely their oaths are nothing to them - so that they may stop (evil actions). Will you not fight a people who have violated their oaths and intended to expel the Messenger, while they did attack you first? Do you fear them? Allah has more right that you should fear Him, if you are believers. Fight against them so that Allah will punish them by your hands and disgrace them and give you victory over them and heal the breasts of a believing people, and remove the anger of their (believers') hearts. Allah accepts the repentance of whom He wills. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.”

“Do you think that you shall be left alone while Allah has not yet tested those among you who have striven hard and fought and have not taken Walijah [helpers, advisors and consultants from disbelievers, pagans, etc. giving openly to them their secrets] besides Allah and His Messenger, and the believers? Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do. It is not for the Mushrikun to maintain the Mosques of Allah (i.e. to pray and worship Allah therein, to look after their cleanliness and their building, etc.), while they witness against their own selves of disbelief. The works of such are in vain and in Fire shall they abide. The Mosques of Allah shall be maintained only by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day; establish prayer, give Zakat, and fear none but Allah. It is they who are expected to be on true guidance. Do you consider the providing of drinking water to the pilgrims and

*the maintenance of al-Masjid al-Haram (at Makkah) as equal to the worth of those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and strive hard and fight in the Cause of Allah? They are not equal before Allah. And Allah guides not those people who are the Zalimun (polytheists and wrong-doers). Those who believed (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) and emigrated and strove hard and fought in Allah's Cause with their wealth and their lives are far higher in degree with Allah. They are the successful. Their Lord gives them glad tidings of a Mercy from Him, and that He is pleased (with them), and of Gardens (Paradise) for them wherein are everlasting delights. They will dwell therein forever. Verily, with Allah is a great reward."*

*"O you who believe! Take not for Auliya' (supporters and helpers) your fathers and your brothers if they prefer disbelief to Belief. And whoever of you does so, then he is one of the Zalimun (wrong-doers, etc.). Say: If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your kindred, the wealth that you have gained, the commerce in which you fear a decline, and the dwellings in which you delight are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger, and striving hard and fighting in His Cause, then wait until Allah brings about His Decision (torment). And Allah guides not the people who are al-fasiqun (the rebellious, disobedient to Allah). Truly Allah has given you victory on many battle fields, and on the Day of Hunain when you rejoiced at your great number but it availed you naught and the earth, vast as it is, was straitened for you, then you turned back in flight. Then Allah did send down His calmness, tranquility and reassurance on the Messenger and on the believers, and sent down forces (angels) which you saw not, and punished the disbelievers. Such is the recompense of disbelievers. Then after that Allah will accept the repentance of whom He will, and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. O you who believe! Verily, the Mushrikun are impure. So let them not come near al-Masjid al-Haram after this year, and if you fear poverty, Allah will enrich you if He wills, out of His Bounty. Surely, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise."*  
(at-Tawbah, 1-28)

Some of the other Companions aided `Ali in conveying these verses to the people. They ensured that the message was clear: that no polytheist would be allowed to perform their pilgrimage in the future, and the practice of tawaf around Ka`bah

while nude will be forever abolished and no longer permitted. Abu Hurairah ؓ narrated that Abu Bakr tasked him and some others on the Day of Nahr to announce: “No pagan will be permitted to perform Hajj after this year, nor will anyone be permitted to perform tawaf around the House naked.”<sup>1</sup>

Due to `Ali ؓ being a relative of the Prophet ﷺ, the people would certainly trust his position as a representative of the Prophet’s wishes, especially those who had a treaty with the Muslims, for `Ali’s closeness to the Prophet ﷺ was well known. It was also from the customs of the Arabs that (No one should contract a treaty or nullify it except the leader of the tribe or someone from his family) and therefore `Ali’s fulfillment of this important task was a confirmation to all that this is what Allah and His Messenger ﷺ wanted. `Ali ؓ was asked, “What task were you sent with during the Hajj?” He replied, “I was sent to announce four matters: that no one will enter Jannah except a Muslim, the House should not be circumambulated by the nude, the Muslims and disbelievers are to not gather in the Sacred House after this year, and whoever had a treaty with the Prophet ﷺ then that treaty will last until its designated term. As for he who has no treaty with the Prophet ﷺ, then his term is for four months.”<sup>2</sup>

As for those who exploit this incident to insinuate a rivalry of some sort between Abu Bakr and `Ali – may Allah be pleased with them both – then they are clearly mistaken. Each of them had their own distinct status in this Ummah, and they were each clearly assigned unique and important tasks by the Prophet ﷺ. They performed their duties faithfully while offering one another nothing but the utmost respect, love, and loyalty. They had no problem helping each other, whether that had to do with managing the affairs of Hajj or teaching the verses of Surat Bara’a to the people at Hajj. The Companions ؓ all complemented one another because they shared one goal: to spread the message of “There is no god but Allah” during Hajj and after it.

This warning and Hajj were a preparation for the Hajj of the Prophet ﷺ the following year, which became known as the Farewell Hajj, for the region would then be purified and free of paganism. The hearts of the pilgrims would all upon the same creed, and they indeed happily welcomed the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to the pilgrimage of the monotheists. It was the Prophet’s farewell to all people, and

those present would convey to the absent.

1. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/115

2 . Zad al-Ma’ad, P:655, Tirmidhi:91, Ahmad:1/79

## The Delegations of the Tribes (Wufud al-Qaba'il)

*Wufud* is the plural of *wafd*, which is a group of selected people from a tribe or nation that represent their people in the presence of political elites and leaders.

The call of the Prophet ﷺ was universal, i.e., for all people, so he was keen on corresponding with all the different tribes, individually and collectively, from the very beginning. This was especially true during the time when the Quraish had placed restrictions and made matters difficult for the Muslims. As we mentioned in earlier chapters, the Prophet ﷺ would go to the different tribes, present Islam to them, and request their support. During most of these trips, he was accompanied by Abu Bakr ؓ, who was well versed in the names and lineages of tribes.

The responses from the tribes were varied, but the news of Islam spread among the different communities nonetheless. Eventually, it could be safely said that there were scarcely any Arabs that had not heard about the Prophet ﷺ and his Message. After the Hijrah to Madinah, the news of the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims spread even more, particularly after the Battle of Badr.<sup>1</sup>

The Treaty of Hudaibiyyah stipulated that (whosoever wished to enter into an alliance with Muhammad may do so, and whosoever wished to enter into an alliance with Quraish may do so). It was therefore up to the tribes of Arabia to choose which side to ally with, if any at all. The tribe of Khuza'ah allied with the Prophet ﷺ, and Banu Bakr with the Quraish. It was the aggression of Banu Bakr against Khuza'ah, with the help of the Quraish, that marked the Quraish's violation of their treaty with the Prophet ﷺ and ultimately led to the Conquest of Makkah and the end of pagan control over it.

After the Conquest of Makkah, it was clear to all the Arab tribes that the only sovereignty in the Arabian Peninsula belonged to Islam and its Prophet ﷺ.

More and more delegations came to meet the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in the ninth year of Hijrah, to the extent that it was named "The Year of Delegations." Some tribes had already pledged years earlier, during the fifth year of Hijrah, but returned in 9 AH once more. Each tribe sought to establish its position and honor,

<sup>1</sup> As-Sallabi, As-Seerah:2/387, Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/115-123

whereby their orators gave speeches and their poets recited poems. The Prophet ﷺ would direct the Companions skilled in oration and poetry to speak as well. The goal of the Prophet ﷺ was to invite the people to the religion of Allah and spread His Words to the people. He ﷺ further wished to spread virtuous values and justice so that they overcome tribalism and other simplistic worldviews.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ would honor the delegations and teach them, and he instructed the Companions ﷺ to teach them as well. Upon their departure, he ﷺ would also appoint someone to manage their affairs, organize their *zakat* and assist their poor, and to be a leader and teacher.

Similarly, the Prophet ﷺ would answer the various questions the different tribes had, and whatever specific issues that concerned them. Certain events occurred amidst their meetings with the Prophet ﷺ that resulted in the revelation of some verses in the Qur'an. For example, this occurred with the delegation of Banu Tamim and the revelation of Surah al-Hujurat.

Ibn Hisham<sup>1</sup> associated the coming of the various delegations with the revelation of Surah an-Nasr. He states: "Crowds came to him from every direction; Allah the Exalted says to His Prophet,

*"When comes the Help of Allah (to you, O Muhammad, against your enemies) and the conquest (of Makkah). And you see that the people enter Allah's religion (Islam) in crowds. So glorify the Praises of your Lord, and ask for His Forgiveness. Verily, He is the One Who accepts the repentance and forgives."* (an-Nasr, 1-3).<sup>2</sup>

## The representative from Daws (at-Tufail bin `Amr)

Daws is a Yemeni tribe that shares the same lineage as the tribe of al-Azd. They are traced back to the progeny of Zahran bin Ka`b and have now become known by the name Zahran. Originating from South Taif, now known as the district of al-Baha, they were famous for their fortress which was well known among the Arabs of their time.<sup>3</sup>

Before the Hijrah, the Quraish worked diligently to prevent those who came

1. Referring to the famous biographer of the Prophet's life and author of *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, Abu Muhammad Abdul Malik bin Hisham.

2. Ibn Hisham, *as-Seerah an-Nabawiyyah*

3. As-Sam'ani, *Al-Ansab*:5/361

to Makkah from listening to the Prophet ﷺ. At-Tufail arrived in Makkah during the early stages of Islam, and the following narration tells his story: “Some men from the Quraish approached him, and since at-Tufail was an honorable, intelligent poet, they said to him, “O Tufail you have come to our land, and this man among us has caused problems for us. He has split our ranks, fragmented our affairs, and indeed his speech is like magic. It separates between a man and his father, a man and his brother, and a man and his wife. We fear for you and your people that perhaps you will be afflicted by that which has afflicted us. Therefore, do not speak to him or listen to anything from him.”

He (Tufail) said, “By Allah, they continued to insist until I decided that I would not listen to anything from him or speak to him. I plugged my ears with cotton when I went to the Ka`bah, fearful that something from his speech would reach me while I did not want to listen.”

He continued, “I went to the Masjid and there I found the Messenger of Allah ﷺ standing, praying by the Ka`bah. I stood close to him ﷺ and it was Allah’s will that He would make me hear some of his speech. I heard beautiful speech and I said to myself, ‘May my mother lose me, By Allah I am an intelligent and sensible man, a poet who can distinguish between the beautiful and ugly. Therefore, what prevents me from listening to what this man is saying? If what he says is good, then I will accept it, and if it is ugly then I shall leave it.’”

He continued, “So I remained there until the Messenger of Allah ﷺ began to make his way home and then I followed. When he entered his house, I entered upon him and said, ‘O Muhammad, indeed your people have said and such-and-such about you. Because of what they said, by Allah, they scared me regarding you until I plugged my ears with cotton so that I would not hear you. Then, it was Allah’s will that He make me hear what you were saying. I found it to be beautiful speech, so explain to me this matter of yours.’”

“So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ presented Islam to me and recited some Qur’an to me. By Allah, I had not ever heard speech that was better than it or a matter that was more upright than it. I accepted Islam and testified to the proclamation of faith (*shahadah*) and said, ‘O Prophet of Allah, I am a man that is obeyed among my people. I am returning to them and will call them to Islam. Ask Allah that He grant me a sign that will assist me in calling them to Him.’” He ﷺ supplicated, “O Allah, grant him a sign!”

“I headed back to my people, and when I reached a mountain pass that was

close and visible to them, a light that looked like a lamp appeared between my eyes. I said, ‘O Allah, make it appear somewhere other than my face. Indeed, I fear that my people will think it is a blemish that has come upon my face due to me leaving their religion.’ The light then moved and appeared on the top of my whip. The people began to look at this light on my whip that appeared like a hanging lantern as I approached them from the mountain pass. Once I reached them and dismounted, my father, who was an old man, approached me. I said to him, ‘O my beloved father, stay away from me, for I am not from you and you are not from me.’ He said, ‘Why is that my son?’ I replied, ‘I have accepted Islam and followed the religion of Muhammad ﷺ.’ He responded, ‘Then my religion is your religion O my son?’ I said to him, ‘Then go bathe and purify your clothes. Then come so that I may teach you what I was taught.’ He went and bathed and purified his clothes. He returned to me and I presented Islam to him and he accepted.”

Tufail ؓ continued, “Then my wife approached me and I said to her, ‘Stay away from me, for I am not from you and you are not from me’. She responded, ‘Why is that?’ I said, ‘Islam has separated between you and me and I have followed the religion of Muhammad ﷺ.’ She replied, ‘Then my religion is your religion’. I then said to her, ‘Then go to Hana Dhus-Shira and purify yourself from it’. Dhus-Shira was an idol that belonged to the tribe of Daws, and it had a sanctuary that the people erected to protect it. Within it, there was water that would trickle down from the mountain. She said, ‘May my father and mother be sacrificed for you, do you fear that Dhus-Shira may harm me in any way?’ to which I responded, ‘No, I guarantee it will not happen.’ She then went and bathed and when she returned I presented Islam to her and she accepted.

“I then invited Daws to Islam but they were slow and delayed their response. I came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in Makkah and said to him, ‘O Messenger of Allah, adultery and fornication (*zina*) has defeated me with regards to Daws so invoke Allah against them’. He ﷺ responded, ‘O Allah guide Daws. Return to your people and invite them gently.’” Tufail said, “I continued to call the people of Daws until the Messenger of Allah ﷺ emigrated to Madinah. After the Battle of Badr, Uhud, and Khandaq passed, I went to meet the Messenger of Allah ﷺ with those who had accepted Islam with me and that time he ﷺ was in Khaybar. I came to Madinah with seventy to eighty families from Daws and we met with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in Khaybar where he ﷺ gave us a share [of the spoils] along with the rest of the Muslims.”<sup>1</sup>

1 Ibn Hisham As-Seerah:1/385



Tufail ؓ accepted Islam in the early days in Makkah, and he returned to his people calling them to Islam. Only a few accepted while the rest of the tribe rejected him, and so he returned once more to the Prophet ﷺ and explained to him the situation. He requested the Prophet ﷺ to supplicate against them, but he ﷺ prayed for them instead. As narrated in al-Bukhari, when Tufail said, “Indeed Daws has perished and been rebellious. They have refused (to accept Islam) so supplicate to Allah against them,” the Prophet ﷺ said, “O Allah, guide Daws and bring them to me.”<sup>1</sup> The supplication of the Prophet ﷺ was certainly accepted, for Daws soon accepted Islam and a delegation came with at-Tufail bin `Amr ؓ to the Prophet ﷺ. Tufail ؓ was with the Prophet ﷺ at the Conquest of Makkah and he ﷺ also sent Tufail ؓ to destroy some idols that were in the areas of Daws. Tufail ؓ remained with the Prophet ﷺ until he ﷺ passed away, and then Tufail later took part in many of the battles against the apostates. Ultimately, he ؓ was martyred in the Battle of Yamamah in 11 AH during the caliphate of Abu Bakr as-Siddiq ؓ.<sup>2</sup>

## Delegation of `Abd al-Qays

The tribe of `Abd al-Qays descended from Rabi`ah bin Nizar and originated from the region of Bahrain, some of them residing in cities while others in deserts. They had a longstanding relationship with Islam since a delegation from them first came to the Prophet ﷺ in 5 AH. In that delegation was a man named al-Ashaj bin `Abd al-Qays, one of their wise men, who the Prophet ﷺ praised by saying, “You have two qualities that Allah and His Messenger love: forbearance and patience.”<sup>3</sup>

Their first delegation arrived during the early conflicts between the Quraish and the Muslims. This delegation had come to declare the Islam of a group of people from the tribe of `Abd al-Qays. They asked the Prophet ﷺ to teach them about Islam and give them instructions to follow and to preach to their people when they return to them, and he did so.

Among them was a Christian, al-Jarud bin `Amr, who was interested in Islam. He said, “I was part of a religion and I am now leaving it for your religion, so can you guarantee for me (that this is the truth)?” The Prophet ﷺ replied, “Yes, I guarantee you that Allah has guided you to that which is better,” and so he and his companions accepted Islam. The faith of this delegation from `Abd al-Qays

1. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari: 5/123

2. Al-Isabah:2/225- Ibn Hisham:2/358

3. Al-Isabah: 2/356

flourished and they took Islam to the region of Jawatha and its surrounding areas in Bahrain. Accordingly, it is narrated from Ibn `Abbas ؓ, “The first Jumu`ah assembled after the one in the Prophet’s Masjid was in the Masjid of `Abd al-Qays in Jawatha, a village in Bahrain.”<sup>1</sup>

Before departing to Bahrain, they requested two mounts from the Prophet ﷺ, however, he apologized to them saying, “I can find no mounts for you.” They then asked, “O Messenger of Allah, on the way back to our lands there are some lost ride-animals that belong to people, may we use them to reach our lands?” The Prophet ﷺ forbade them from doing so and said, “Indeed that it is from the flames of Hellfire.” He wished to teach them that the sanctity of people’s property is recognized in Islam, and though they had a need and these animals were lost in the desert, it was not sufficient to give them permission to infringe on other people’s rights.<sup>2</sup> It is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ praised them before they even arrived, saying “From here a delegation of people will come to you; they are the best of the people of the east.” Upon hearing this, `Umar ؓ stood up and headed towards them, meeting their thirteen riders and giving them glad tidings.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, the delegation of `Abd al-Qays returned with the best religion and the greatest code of ethics and duty. Many years later, after the death of the Prophet ﷺ, people in their region began to apostatize due to the influence of the Lakhmids, who strove to make them leave Islam and return to Christianity. It was then that al-Jarud ؓ stood up among them, addressed them, and called them back to Islam. He ؓ declared his steadfastness and his testimony that there was no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad was His slave and Messenger. He ؓ declared that anyone who did not testify to this was a disbeliever.<sup>4</sup>

## The Delegation of Thaqif

The tribe of Thaqif lived in Taif, the closest city to Makkah geographically as well as politically. Taif has a pleasant climate and a lot of fertile land, so it produced an abundance of agricultural output. Some of the inhabitants of Makkah would

1. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:3/575

2. This perhaps requires some clarification. Certain animals, such as camels, were known to the Arabs to go off on their own occasionally and turn up to their owners after some time. They are resilient creatures and can typically survive in the wild and make their way back. If someone were to claim these animals and take them as his own, it would ensure that the owners never get them back.

3. Ibn Kathir, As-Seerah: 1/90

4. Ibn Hisham :4/575

spend their summers in Taif to escape Makkah's difficult summer heat.<sup>1</sup>

The tribe of Hawazin were neighbors of Thaqif within Taif as well as the bordering lands. Thaqif controlled who entered Taif, they lived in the city while Hawazin stayed on the outskirts. Thaqif worshipped al-Lat, the famous Arab idol mentioned in the Words of Allah: "Have you then considered al-Lat, and al-'Uzza (two idols of the pagan Arabs). And Manat (another idol of the pagan Arabs), the other third?" (an-Najm, 19-20). Additionally, Thaqif had joined Hawazin and other tribes against the Prophet ﷺ in the Battle of Hunain. The battle ended with the victory of the Muslims after the initial disarray at the beginning of the battle. Allah the Exalted said:

*"Truly Allah has given you victory on many battlefields, and on the Day of Hunain when you rejoiced at your great number, but it availed you naught, and the earth, vast as it is, was straitened for you, then you turned back in flight. Then Allah did send down His Sakinah (calmness, tranquillity and reassurance) on the Messenger, and on the believers, and sent down forces which you saw not, and punished the disbelievers. Such is the recompense of disbelievers. Then after that Allah will accept the repentance of whom He wills. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."* (at-Tawbah, 25-17).

After Hunain, the Muslim army marched to Taif in Shawwal of 8 AH. They besieged it close to twenty days but were unable to enter, despite using a battering ram and catapults. Taif's walls contributed greatly to their strong resistance. After seeing a dream that Taif would not be conquered, the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims retreated and returned to Makkah.

The Prophet ﷺ had gathered the spoils of war al-Ji'rannah, where he ﷺ was approached by a delegation from Hawazin. They lived on the outskirts of Taif and some of their people were captured by the Muslims. They came to the Prophet ﷺ interceding with him to return to their wealth and their captives. He ﷺ told them to choose between their wealth and their captives and they chose the captives. The Muslims felt pity for them and released their captives.

The leader of Hawazin, Malik bin `Awf, had fled to Taif. The Prophet ﷺ informed his people that if he returned in repentance and accepted Islam, his wealth and relatives would be returned to him along with one hundred camels. When Malik heard of this, he came to the Prophet ﷺ in repentance and accepted

<sup>1</sup> Muḥjam al-Buldan:4/11

Islam. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ employed Malik over those who had accepted Islam from his people and instructed him to fight Thaqif and tighten down on them in Taif, for it had become a place of refuge for the disbelievers who fled after the Conquest of Makkah. Malik ؓ did as he was instructed.

At the same time, `Urwah bin Mas`ud of the tribe of Thaqif came to the Prophet ﷺ and accepted Islam. He was loved among his people and therefore returned to them in Taif and began to call them to Islam. In one incident, as he was proclaiming his new faith and calling them towards it, he was attacked and was struck by an arrow that later killed him. It was said to `Urwah, “What do you think of your wound?” he replied, “It is an honor that Allah bestowed upon me and martyrdom that He granted me. I am no less than the martyrs who died fighting alongside the Messenger of Allah ﷺ before he departed [Taif] so bury me among them!” It was claimed that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The example of him [Urwah] among his people is like that of the man mentioned in Yasin<sup>1</sup> among his people.” Shortly after this event, Thaqif was convinced that they had no capacity to continue to fight with the Prophet ﷺ. They prepared a delegation to set out to meet him.<sup>2</sup>

Once they arrived, the Prophet ﷺ erected a tent for them on one side of the Masjid. Khalid bin Sa`id bin al-`Aas ؓ was the messenger between them and Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. They would not eat any food that came from the Prophet ﷺ until Khalid ؓ ate from it and this continued until they accepted Islam and finished writing their terms. Among their requests was that the Prophet ﷺ not destroy their idol, the false deity al-Lat, for three years. The Prophet ﷺ rejected this request. They continued to negotiate, reducing the term by a year, then two, then by months, and so on, until they were requesting that al-Lat remain undestroyed for only one month. However, the Prophet ﷺ refused to leave any space for negotiation in this regard, for it was a matter of utmost importance, and indeed it was the main issue of falsehood: the worship of false gods. They claimed that they wanted to leave the idol undamaged for a time in order to ease their people into Islam. They wished not to shock their people by destroying the idol before Islam truly entered their hearts. The Prophet ﷺ refused, and he sent Abu Sufyan bin Harb and al-Mughira bin Shu`bah to destroy the idol. Thaqif also asked to be pardoned from the daily prayers, and from breaking the idols with their own hands. The Prophet ﷺ said, “As for breaking the idols with your own hands, we will pardon you from it. As for the daily prayers, there is no good

1. Surat Yasin

2. Ibn Hisham As-Seerah: 4/539. Al-Isabah:2/478

in a religion that has no prayers.<sup>1</sup>”

After they accepted Islam and the Prophet ﷺ signed to their terms, he appointed `Uthman bin Abu al-`Aas as their leader. He was the youngest among them, but the keenest of them to understand Islam and learn the Qur'an. Abu Bakr ؓ had said, “O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, I have found this young man to be keenest of them to understand Islam and learns the Qur'an.” He remained the leader of Tha'if for the remainder of the Prophet's time and then for the duration of as-Siddiq's caliphate.

The delegation learned some portions of the Qur'an and some matters of the religion and the Prophet ﷺ agreed to delegate the task of destroying the idol to someone other than them. When the idols were destroyed, some of the women of Tha'if wept over them. Eventually, Islam spread among Tha'if and the people of Ta'if, and they were among those who were steadfast on Islam after the death of the Prophet ﷺ and did not apostatize.<sup>2</sup>

## The Delegation of Banu Tamim

Banu Tamim was one of the `Adnani tribes, descending from Murr bin Ad, and they are from largest tribes of the Arabs. They settled in Bahrain, Eastern Najd, and the regions of al-Ahsa'<sup>3</sup>.

The delegation of Banu Tamim arrived in 9 AH, after the return of the Prophet ﷺ from the Expedition of Tabuk. It is also mentioned that they had an envoy or a group of individuals who represented their people prior to that year. Imam al-Bukhari had also placed a chapter in his hadith collection entitled “The Chapter on the Delegation of Banu Tamim” where he mentioned several narrations.<sup>4</sup>

Their delegation was from the most renowned among the delegations that had come to the Prophet ﷺ. Among them were well known leaders among the Arabs such as al-Aqra' bin Haabis, `Uyaynah bin Hisn, and others.<sup>5</sup>

When they arrived at Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ was at his home, which was adjacent to the Masjid. The delegation entered the Masjid and began to call out to the Prophet ﷺ, saying loudly “Come out to us O Muhammad, for our praise is pleasant, but our scorn brings dishonor.” The Prophet ﷺ was offended by their speech and manners, as Allah the Exalted tells us in the verses revealed regarding this incident,

1 Ibn Hisham:4/539,540

2 Futoohul-Buldan,P:115

3 Al-Hamdani, Sifah Jazeerah al-Arab, P:281

4 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:4/115,116

5 Ibn Hisham:4/560

“Verily! Those who call you from behind the dwellings, most of them have no sense. And if they had patience till you could come out to them, it would have been better for them. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (al-Hujurat, 4-5).

After he ﷺ came out to them, they requested him to allow their orator `Utarid bin Hajib to give a speech. He was permitted to do so, and he began the speech with the praise of Allah, and then he praised the tribe of Banu Tamim at length until he finished his speech<sup>1</sup>.

Once he finished, the Prophet ﷺ commanded Thabit bin Qays bin ash-Shams to respond to him. He ﷺ stood up orating, “All praise belongs to Allah, who created the heavens and Earth, within them He executes His commands, His Footstool encompasses His World, and nothing has ever occurred except with His knowledge...” He ﷺ continued in his speech filled with faith, truthfulness, invitation to Allah, and praise of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ.

Subsequently, a poet of Tamim stood up and delivered a poem in front of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, again focused on boasting about his tribe Banu Tamim.

After he was done, the Prophet ﷺ then called on Hassan bin Thabit ﷺ to respond to him. Hassan’s response contained virtues of praise, pride in being the servants of Allah and His religion, love for Allah and His Prophet ﷺ, and so on. Some narrations indicate that this exchange of poetry went on for a few more rounds, until al-Aqra` bin Habis, one of the leaders of the delegation said, “By my father, this man is chosen! His orator is more eloquent than ours, his poet is more poetic than ours, and their voices are more pleasant than our voices.”

The delegation of Banu Tamim accepted Islam and remained in Madinah for a short while, learning about their new religion from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the Companions ﷺ. They then made their way back to their people.<sup>2</sup>

## The Delegation of Banu `Amir

The tribe of Banu `Amir also trace their roots back to Mudar. They resided in Najd, not too far from Madinah. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ would send some of his Companions ﷺ to invite them to Islam, until the incident of Bi`r Ma`una.

Banu `Amir’s delegation arrived in Madinah and among them was `Amir bin at-Tufail, who participated in the aggression at Bi`r Ma`una. He was a bedouin

1 Ibn Hisham:4/562

2 Ibn Hisham As-Seerah:4/567. Jamharah Ansabul-Arab: 2/271

of difficult temperament. When the Prophet ﷺ invited him to accept Islam, he responded, “What will you grant me if I accept Islam?” The Prophet ﷺ replied, “For you will be what is for all the Muslims, and upon you will be what is upon them.” `Amir said, “Appoint me as your successor.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “That is not for your, nor is it for your people.” `Amir continued to insist on receiving some sort of power, and when the Prophet ﷺ rejected, `Amir even threatened to attack the Muslims. The Prophet ﷺ had heard enough from this man who had already shown his treachery and willingness to harm, as evidenced by his participation at Bi`r Ma`una, so Prophet Muhammad ﷺ supplicated against him, asking Allah’s protection from his evil. `Amir soon became ill and passed away.<sup>1</sup>

A man named Arbad bin Qays was also in the delegation with `Amir, and they had both conspired to assassinate Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, but when `Amir died, Arbad chose not to act, and returned to Najd. He was a man of bad manners, and it is narrated that he said, “I wish I could shoot at the God of Muhammad with my arrows.” It is further said that he was killed by a lightning strike, and that the following verse was revealed about him:

*“And thunder glorifies and praises Him, and so do the angels because of His Awe. He sends the thunderbolts, and therewith He strikes whom He wills, yet they (disbelievers) dispute about Allah. And He is Mighty in strength and Severe in punishment.”*<sup>2</sup> (Surah ar-Ra`d, 13)

## The Delegation of Banu Hanifah

Banu Hanifah resided in the northern region of Arabia in Al-Yamamah, a land that was known for its production of wheat and dates. Their produce would even reach Makkah’s marketplace and as a result, they had an economic relationship with the Quraish. Before the Conquest of Makkah, one of their leaders, Thumamah bin Uthal, was captured by the Muslims. Abu Hurairah ؓ narrates: “The Prophet ﷺ sent some horsemen towards Najd and they brought a man from the tribe of Banu Hanifa named Thumamah bin Uthal. They fastened him to one of the pillars of the Masjid.

The Prophet went to him and said, “What do you have to say, O Thumamah?” He replied, “I have a good opinion of you, O Muhammad! If you should kill me, you will have killed a great man who will be avenged, and if you should set me free, you would be showing favor to one who is grateful, and if you want wealth, then ask of it you wish.” He was left until the next day when the Prophet ﷺ said

1 Ibn Kathir At-Tafseer:1/1008, Ibn Hisham :4/569

2 Ibn Kathir at-Tafseer:1/1008

to him, “What do you have to say, Thumamah? He said, “What I told you, i.e., if you set me free, you would do a favor to one who is grateful.” The Prophet ﷺ left him until the following day, when he said, “What do you have to say, O Thumamah?” He said, “I have what I told you.”

The Prophet ﷺ then said, “Release Thumamah.” Thumamah then went to a garden of date-palm trees near the Masjid, took a bath, returned to the Masjid and said, “I testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah, and I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah! By Allah, O Muhammad! There was no face on the surface of the earth more disliked by me than yours, but now your face has become the most beloved face to me. By Allah, there was no religion more disliked by me than yours, but now it is the most beloved religion to me. By Allah, there was no town more disliked by me than yours, but now it is the most beloved town to me.

He continued, “Your horsemen arrested me when I was intending to perform `Umrah. What should I now do?” The Prophet ﷺ gave him good tidings (congratulated him) and instructed him to perform the `Umrah. When he came to Makkah, someone said to him, “You have become a Sabian?” Thumamah replied, “No! By Allah, I have embraced Islam with Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. No, by Allah, not a single grain of wheat will come to you from Al-Yamamah unless the Prophet gives his permission.”<sup>1</sup>

Bukhari included this event in one of his subchapter headings, even mentioning Thumamah by name in it.

Thumamah’s acceptance of Islam was some years prior to the Conquest of Makkah, so when he travelled to Makkah to perform his `Umrah and the Quraish learned of his religion, they captured him and beat him, but ultimately decided to let him go, worried that they might ruin their economic relationship with the people of Al-Yamamah if they imprisoned or killed one of their men. Their fears were realized anyway, because when Thumamah returned to his people, he halted the caravan of goods that was heading to Makkah. The Quraish was put in great difficulty by this, so they wrote to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, asking him to intercede on their behalf, and they reminded him of their ties of kinship, for they were still related by blood despite their animosity and aggression towards the Muslims. The Prophet ﷺ, merciful as always, wrote to Thumamah ﷺ to allow the caravan to go to Makkah and resume the usual trade.<sup>2</sup>

1 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:4/117,118

2 Ibn Hisham, As-Seerah:4/639



Thumama ؓ was one of the first Muslims in the Yamama region, and he remained active and perseverant in calling his people towards faith and goodness. His efforts were blessed by Allah and many people embraced Islam.

In the year 9 AH, the delegation of Banu Hanifa arrived in Madinah, and Thumamah was among them, along with some of Banu Hanifah's noblemen. Musailimah was also with them, and this was before he claimed Prophethood and became known as Musailimah the Liar.<sup>1</sup>

The delegation stayed in the home of Ramlah bint al-Harith, which was prepared to receive guests. Ibn `Abbas ؓ narrates: "Musailimah the Liar came to Madinah during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ [i.e., with the delegation of Banu Hanifah], and said, "If Muhammad appoints me as a successor, I will follow him." Allah's Messenger ﷺ approached him, accompanied by Thabit bin Qays bin Shammas, and at the time, he ﷺ had a stick of a date-palm tree in his hand. He spoke to Musailimah who was among his own companions, saying "If you asked me for this stick, I would not give it to you. You cannot avoid the fate that you are destined for, and if you reject Islam, then Allah will destroy you. I believe you are the person I saw in my vision. Thabit will speak to you on my behalf." Then he ﷺ left."<sup>2</sup>

Regarding the vision the Prophet ﷺ saw, Abu Hurairah ؓ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: "When I was sleeping, I saw (in a dream) two bangles of gold on my hands and it worried me. Then I was divinely inspired in my dream that I should blow on them, so I blew on them and they were no more. I interpreted the dream to mean that two liars who would appear after me. One of them was al-`Anasi of San`a' and the other was Musailimah of Al-Yamamah."<sup>3</sup>

When Musailimah returned to Al-Yamamah and claimed prophethood, many of Banu Hanifah followed him simply out of tribalism. It is narrated that one of them said, "I bear witness that you are a liar, but the liar of Banu Hanifah is better than the truthful one of Mudar."<sup>4</sup>

Musailimah even wrote a letter to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, in which he said: "From Musailimah the Messenger of Allah to Muhammad the Messenger of Allah: Peace be upon you. I have been made your associate in Prophethood. Half the world is our domain, and the other half is for the Quraish, but they are a transgressive people."

1 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/118

2 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/118

3 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/118

4 At-Tabari:3/248

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ wrote back: “In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. From Muhammad the Messenger of Allah to Musailimah the Liar. Peace be upon those who follow the Guidance. As for what follows, the world belongs to Allah. He causes to inherit it whom He wills of His servants, and the [best] outcome is for the righteous.”

This exchange occurred in the year 10 AH. After Prophet Muhammad’s death, Musailimah and his followers became emboldened, and they threatened the Muslims of Madinah. One of the first things Abu Bakr ؓ dealt with as Caliph was the issue of the apostates, including Musailima’s army. Abu Bakr sent three armies to deal with Musailima, whose power had grown, for some tribes of apostates joined forces with him after the Prophet’s death. However, their alliance was only temporary, and the Muslims defeated them and killed Musailima during the well-known battle of Yamamah. Over three hundred of the noble Companions ؓ were martyred during the battle, many of them from the Ansar. Zaid bin al-Khattab ؓ and Abu Dujana ؓ were also martyred during the battle.<sup>1</sup>

## The Delegations of Yemen

Although the borders were not exactly as they are today, Yemen during the time of the Prophet ﷺ existed in the general region it encompasses today. Many Arab tribes lived there, and from a very early time in the Prophetic mission, they were aware of Islam and even corresponded with the Prophet ﷺ and the early Muslims. Thus, their history with Islam is too long to mention in depth here. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent Mu`adh bin Jabal ؓ and some others to Yemen to teach people about Islam, and it had a great effect by the blessings of Allah. Some of the delegations from Yemen include.<sup>2</sup>

## The Delegation of the Ash`aris

They trace their lineage to Ash`ar bin Zaid, hence their name. In this delegation was a man who became one of the great Companions, Abu Musa al-Ash`ari ؓ. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: “The people of Yemen have come; they have the softest and gentlest hearts. Faith is Yemenite, understanding (of the religion) is Yemenite, and wisdom is Yemenite.”<sup>3</sup>

In another hadith, he ﷺ said: “The people of Yemen have come to you as if they are clouds. They are the best people on earth.”

1 Al-Fatuhah-al-Islamiah by Abdul-Aziz Al-Umari, P:103, At-Tabari: 3/252

2 Ibn Hisham:4/592-Mahdi Rizq-ul-Allah, As-Seerah,P:676

3 Muslim

Truly, they had a willingness to accept faith, an honesty about them, and a readiness to listen and follow the commands of Allah's Messenger ﷺ without hesitation. The narrations indicate that many of them had accepted Islam even before their delegation set out for Madinah, as we mentioned before. Some narrations further indicate that some Yemenites joined the Hijrah to Abyssinia and participated in the conquest of Khaybar.

## The Representative from Murad (Furwah bin Musaik)

Murad was a tribe residing in eastern Yemen. Furwah bin Musaik ؓ traveled to Madinah to meet the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in 9 AH, and he had already embraced Islam.<sup>1</sup>

## The Delegation of Hamdan

Hamdan is a Yemeni tribe consisting of many branches. They trace their roots to Kahlan bin Saba'. Their first interaction with Islam was when members of the Banu Hamdan tribe met with the Prophet ﷺ in Makkah before the Pledge of al-'Aqaba, when he was inviting the different tribes to Islam. In the year 9 AH, their delegation arrived in Madinah, including a number of their leaders. They wore distinguishing clothes and rode in on their elegant mounts. Some of them recited poetry, and the sight of them certainly attracted the attention of the people of Madinah.

They came to Madinah as Muslims, believing in the truthfulness of the Prophet ﷺ. Their chief, Malik bin Namt ؓ, stood up and spoke with poetic elegance about their absolute faith in Islam, and their willingness to follow the Messenger ﷺ, and the certainty with which they had rejected the false idols.<sup>2</sup>

## The Delegation of Kindah

Kindah was a well-known Yemeni tribe that also traces its roots to Kahlan bin Saba'. News of Islam reached them in their homeland, and they accepted the message and embraced it before the Year of the Delegations, as per some narrations. Their delegation was comprised of eighty men led by al-Ash'ath bin Qays. They approached the Prophet ﷺ in his Masjid, dressed in elegant silk clothes. The Prophet ﷺ asked them, "Did you not accept Islam?" They replied, "Yes, we did." He said, "Then what are these silk clothes on your backs?" They understood and removed them immediately.

After the Prophet's death, al-Ash'ath bin Qays doubted the faith, but he eventually repented and remained firm on Islam. He married the sister of Abu

1 Ibn Hisham, As-Seerah:4/583

2 Ibn Sa'ad:1/341, Ibn Hisham:4/598

Bakr al-Siddiq ؓ, Umm Farwah. Al-Ash`ath participated in some of the conquests during the reigns of Abu Bakr and `Umar – may Allah be pleased with them all.<sup>1</sup>

## The Delegation of al-Azd and Jurash

The delegation of al-Azd came led by Surad bin `Abdullah, and they accepted Islam. Later on, they returned to their homeland and were in a conflict with Jurash. The tribe of Jurash sent their own delegation to meet the Messenger of Allah ﷺ at a later date and they, too, accepted Islam.<sup>2</sup>

## The Delegation of al-Harith bin Ka`b

They are a number of tribes that trace their roots to Kahlan bin Saba', and they resided near Najran. They were known among the Arabs for their strength and fierceness, and they controlled large swathes of land. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent an army led by Khalid bin al-Walid ؓ to them at the start of the 10<sup>th</sup> year after Hijrah, but he commanded him to invite them to Islam. Khalid did as he was instructed, and he sent out riders to speak to the people and call them to Islam. They accepted the call and embraced the religion, so Khalid and the other Companions ؓ remained with them for a time, teaching them about Islam and reciting the Book of Allah to them, and teaching them the Sunnah.

Khalid and the Companions ؓ were pleased to see the result of their efforts, and he wrote to the Prophet ﷺ, informing him of what had transpired. The following is an excerpt from his letter: “They accepted Islam and did not choose to go to war. I currently remain with them, teaching them Allah’s commands and prohibitions, the tenets of Islam, and the Sunnah of Allah’s Prophet ﷺ.” He ended the letter with, “And may peace be upon you, O Messenger of Allah, and the mercy of Allah, and His blessings.”<sup>3</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ wrote back to him requesting that he bring a delegation of them with him when he returns to Madinah, so when Khalid returned, he was accompanied by some of the tribe’s chiefs. When they saw Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, they said, “We bear witness that you are the Messenger of Allah, and that there is no god but Allah.”<sup>4</sup>

After some time, they returned to their homes, and the Prophet ﷺ sent `Amr bin Hazm ؓ to them as a teacher and to oversee collecting and distributing the sadaqah in their localities. `Amr took along some writings from Madinah that

1 Ibn Hisham:5/585- Ibn Sa`ad at-Tabaqat:6/22

2 Ibn Hisham:4/587

3 Ibn Hisham:4/593

4 Ibn Hisham, As-Seerah: 4/595

included some of the teachings of Islam as well as the details of zakat.<sup>1</sup>

## The Delegations of Arab Christians

As we mentioned earlier in the book, some Arab tribes followed Christianity, and they were typically more learned than their pagan cousins. Letters reached them from the Prophet ﷺ inviting them to Islam, and eventually some delegates from various tribes came to Madinah to announce their acceptance of Islam.

### The Delegation of ad-Dariyin

They were several tribes living in the region of Palestine and the Levant. They were Christian Arabs who received the message of Islam and sent a delegation of ten men to meet the Prophet ﷺ in Madinah after his return from Tabuk. They accepted Islam. Among them was the well-known Companion, Tamim ad-Dari ؓ and his brother Nu`aim ؓ. The Prophet ﷺ promised Tamim a piece of land in the Levant even though it was not yet under Muslim control, but the Prophet ﷺ knew that it soon would be. Tamim was also certain of the Prophet's promise to him, and eventually the land fell under Muslim rule during the reign of Abu Bakr ؓ and he gave it to Tamim ؓ.<sup>2</sup>

Tamim is known for a famous hadith about his encounter with ad-Dajjal on an island, after a journey by the sea. He recounted this story to the Prophet ﷺ, who gathered the people in his Masjid to hear it from Tamim.<sup>3</sup>

### The Delegation of Taghlib

Their name is derived from Taghlib bin Wa'il, and they are comprised of many sub-tribes. They resided in the northern region of the Arabian peninsula, and some of their branches reached the Levant and Iraq. Taghlib was one of the most important Christian Arab tribes, and they had many scholars who were influential to other tribes and had relationships with the Byzantines and Najran, and even Abyssinia.

In 10 AH, a delegation of sixteen men from Banu Taghlib came to Madinah, some of whom had already embraced Islam while others were still Christian. They stayed in the home of Ramla bint al-Harith. They spoke with the Prophet ﷺ and agreed to a treaty with him. Years later, some of them betrayed the treaty and joined the Byzantines.<sup>4</sup>

1 Ibn Hisham:2/1014,1015

2 Siyar Aalam an-Nubala:2/442

3 Muslim, P:4325, Siyar Aalam an-Nubala:6/373-2/442

4 Futooh al Buldan,P:251

## The Delegation of Tai'

Tai' was a Qahtani tribe that also traces its roots to Kahlan bin Saba'. They resided in northern Najd and parts of Iraq and the Levant. Their delegation arrived in Madinah in the year 9 AH, led by their chief, Zaid al-Khayl. Zaid was a well-known poet and horse rider during the pre-Islamic period, and he was also known for his generosity. He and his delegation accepted Islam after meeting Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and they became good Muslims.

It is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "I have never met a well-known man of the Arabs who lived up to the praise that is mentioned about him, except for Zaid al-Khayl, for indeed, what is said about him does not do him justice." He gave Zaid the nickname 'Zaid al-Khair' i.e., Zaid of Goodness, instead of his old nickname 'Zaid al-Khayl' which meant 'Zaid the Horseman'<sup>1</sup>.

## The Delegation of Farwah bin `Amr al-Judhami

Judham was also a Qahtani tribe, and they lived near the Byzantines, near the Levant. Farwah bin `Amr worked for the Byzantines, and he was a Christian when the message of Islam came to him. He accepted it and sent a delegation to the Prophet ﷺ in Madinah along with a gift for the Prophet ﷺ. When the Byzantines learned of his acceptance of Islam, they imprisoned him and then killed him. It is said that when he was about to be killed, he recited some poetry sending his farewell to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the Muslims, which included the following line:

"Inform the Muslims that I have submitted to my Lord my bones and my life."<sup>2</sup>

## The Delegation of Ghassan

Banu Ghassan was a well-known Arab tribe that traces its roots to al-Azd. They ruled Damascus and the neighboring lands to Hims, as a proxy of the Byzantine Empire. They were Arab Christians. Three men of Banu Ghassan arrived in Madinah in Ramadan of 10 AH, where they met with the Prophet ﷺ and accepted Islam. They then returned to their people and kept their conversion a secret, fearing backlash from the Byzantines. Many years later, when the Levant was under Muslim rule, only one of the three men was still alive to witness it, and he met with Abu `Ubaidah ؓ who honored him.<sup>3</sup>

1 Ibn Hisham:4/578, Ibn Sa`ad:1/355, Al-Isabah:1/572

2 Ibn Hisham, As-Seerah: 4/592. Zad al-Ma`ad:3/646

3 Zad al-Ma`ad:3/669

## The Delegation of `Adi bin Hatim at-Ta'i

`Adi ؓ was the son of Hatim at-Ta'i, who was one of the most well known people in Arabia, famous for his generosity. He was also one of the chiefs of their tribe and a leader among the Christian Arabs, and thus he had relationships with the Christian Arabs of the Levant, particularly the Ghassanids and the Iraqis.

News of Islam reached him early on, but he hesitated in contacting Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to hear what he had to say. Perhaps Zaid al-Khayr's and the leaders of Tai's acceptance of Islam even affected him negatively, for it is narrated that he said, "I hated him [i.e., the Prophet ﷺ] more than anything else. I traveled as far as I could, to the border between the Arabs and the Byzantines, but I found that I disliked the second place more than I disliked the first."<sup>1</sup>

`Adi ؓ chose not to meet with the Prophet ﷺ, until one day his sister became a captive during a battle with the Muslims, and the Prophet ﷺ treated her very well and told her about Islam, which she relayed to her brother. This occurred during an expedition led by `Ali bin Abi Talib ؓ in one of the regions of Tai', during the month of Rabi' al-Akhir, 9 AH. The goal of the expedition was to destroy the idol named al-Ghuls that was worshipped by some Arabs in pre-Islamic Arabia. During the aftermath of one of the battles, some of the people of Tai' were captured, including Safanah bint Hatim, `Adi's sister.

A tent was erected for her near the Masjid in Madinah. One day, when the Prophet ﷺ was passing by, she spoke to him – and she was an eloquent speaker – and said, "O Messenger of Allah, my father is dead, and my people have gone, so be merciful towards me, may Allah show mercy to you." The Prophet ﷺ asked her, "And who are your people?" She replied, "`Adi bin Hatim." The Prophet ﷺ said, "The one who ran away from Allah and His Messenger?"

The second day, when the Prophet ﷺ passed by her, she said the same thing, and he responded in a similar manner. The third day, she said the same thing to him: "Be merciful towards me, may Allah have mercy on you," and the Prophet ﷺ replied, "I will do so, but do not rush to leave until you can be escorted to your land by someone trustworthy from your people. (When you find such a person,) come see me."

Safanah narrates that she remained in Madinah for a time until some riders came from a region near her homeland, so she went to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "O Messenger of Allah, some men have come from my tribe, and I trust them."

1 Ibn Abi Shaibah,P:142

The Prophet ﷺ gave her clothes, provisions, and money for the journey, and she went with the riders and arrived safely at her home in the Levant.<sup>1</sup>

`Adi was one of the men who fled to the Levant, and he was certainly distressed upon learning the news of his sister's capture. When she returned home and informed him that she was treated well and was allowed to go home safely, he was relieved. `Adi narrates that he was at home one day when a woman traveler approached, and he was shocked to recognize that it was his sister! She began to raise her voice at him, scolding him for his flight and abandonment of her. He replied, "O beloved sister, you are speaking the truth, for by Allah, I do not have any excuse. I am guilty of what you say."

He continued: "She remained in my home for some time. I knew she was an intelligent woman, so I asked her, "What do you think about that man?" She replied, "My opinion, by Allah, is that you should join him immediately, for if that man is a Prophet, then there is virtue in those who follow him early, and if he is a king, then you will not be disgraced while you are who you are (i.e., his current status as a well-known chief)." I said, "By Allah, you are right."<sup>2</sup>

After their discussion, `Adi traveled from the Levant to Madinah to meet with Allah's Messenger ﷺ, at approximately midyear 9 AH. When he arrived, the people treated him with honor and respect. Perhaps his entry was a grand one due to his status, or the clothing he and his people wore. He entered the Masjid and greeted the Prophet ﷺ, who then asked him, "Who are you?" `Adi responded, "Adi bin Hatim."

`Adi narrates: "He then stood up and escorted me to his home, but by Allah, along the way, an old, frail woman wished to speak with him, so he stopped and spoke with her at length to help her with her problem. I said to myself, "By Allah, this is not a king." Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ continued with me until we entered his home. He picked up a leather pillow filled with fiber, gave it to me, and said, "Sit on this." I said, "No, you should sit on it." He insisted, so I sat on it, and he ﷺ sat on the ground. I said to myself, "By Allah, this is not how a king acts."

He then said, "O `Adi bin Hatim, are you not a Rakusi<sup>3</sup>?" I replied, "Yes." He asked, "Do you not take a quarter of your subjects' income?" I replied, "Yes." He said, "That is not permitted in your religion." I said, "That is true, by Allah." At this point, I knew he was a Prophet sent from God; he knew what he could not know.

1 Ibn Hisham, AS-Seerah:4/589

2 Ibn Hisham As-Seerah:4/580

3. A sect of Christianity that existed among the Arabs.



The Prophet ﷺ said, “Perhaps, O `Adi, you hesitate to accept this religion because you see that its people are not wealthy. By Allah, soon wealth will flow into this nation until they do not find anyone to accept any more. Perhaps you also hesitate to accept this religion because you see our many enemies, and our small numbers. By Allah, soon you will hear about a woman who will leave from al-Qadisiyyah on her camel until she arrives at this house, fearing nothing. Perhaps you also hesitate to accept this religion because you see that kingship and power belongs to others. By Allah, soon you will hear about the white palaces of Babylon conquered by the Muslims.”

After this exchange, `Adi accepted Islam. Later on, he used to say, “Two of the things the Prophet ﷺ mentioned have come to pass, and only one remains, and by Allah, it will certainly come. I have seen the white palaces of Babylon conquered by the Muslims, and I have witnessed that a woman travels from al-Qadisiyyah on her camel fearing nothing, until she reaches this house, and by Allah, the third one will certainly come: Wealth will flow into this Ummah so much that there will be none to accept any more.”<sup>1</sup>

Their meeting ended with `Adi having embraced the religion, with a newfound confidence and certainty in the religion and the man he just met. He was amazed to see the humbleness, kindness, and good manners of the Prophet ﷺ, as well as his knowledge of `Adi’s own sect of Christianity and `Adi’s violation of its ruling. It is likely that they had other discussions as well, and other meetings during his stay in Madinah.

It is narrated that `Adi visited the Prophet ﷺ with a silver necklace containing a cross dangling from his neck. The Prophet ﷺ recited the following verse:

*“They (Jews and Christians) took their rabbis and their monks to be their lords besides Allah (by obeying them in things which they made lawful or unlawful according to their own desires without being ordered by Allah), and (they also took as their Lord) Messiah, son of Maryam, while they (Jews and Christians) were commanded (in the Torah and the Gospel) to worship none but one God, none has the right to be worshipped but He. Praise and glory be to Him, (far above is He) from having the partners they associate (with Him).”*” (Surah at-Tawbah, 31).

`Adi said, “They do not worship them.” The Prophet ﷺ replied, “But they do. Do they not prohibit their followers from that which is permitted, and permit that

1 At-Tabari:3/150, Ibn Abi Shaibah, P:142, Ibn Hisham:4/581

which is prohibited – and they follow them? That is worship.”<sup>1</sup>

`Adi inquired more about Islam and had a thirst for knowledge about his newly adopted religion. It is narrated that he said, “I asked the Prophet (about the hunting dogs) and he replied, “If you let loose (with Allah’s name) your tamed dog after a game and it hunts it, you may eat it, but if the dog eats of (that game) then do not eat it because the dog has hunted it for itself.” I further said, “Sometimes I send my dog for hunting and find another dog with it.” He said, “Do not eat the game for you have mentioned Allah’s name only on sending your dog and not the other dog.””<sup>2</sup>

Islam truly entered his heart, for it is narrated that he said, “Prayer time does not come upon me except that I am longing for it.” He remained firm upon his faith during the mass apostasy that occurred in some faraway regions during the Caliphate of Abu Bakr ﷺ. `Adi ﷺ helped collect the sadaqah from his people. In fact, he was one of the first to submit the zakat to Abu Bakr ﷺ after the Prophet’s death ﷺ, and he was instrumental in preventing some of his people from falling into the grave error of apostasy. Furthermore, he helped defend the Muslims from the apostates.

Later, during the Caliphate of `Umar ﷺ, `Adi ﷺ visited him in a delegation. `Adi narrated: “We came to `Umar in a delegation (during his rule). He started calling the men one by one, calling each by his name. (As he did not call me early) I said to him. “Don’t you know me, O chief of the Believers?” He said, “Yes, you embraced Islam when they (i.e. your people) disbelieved; you have come (to the Truth) when they ran away; you fulfilled your promises when they broke theirs; and you recognized it (i.e. the Truth of Islam) when they denied it.”<sup>3</sup>

`Adi ﷺ also participated in the conquests during the reign of Abu Bakr ﷺ and `Umar ﷺ. He was present during the conquest of Iraq and Persia, including its capital. He witnessed the treasures of Chosroes in the hands of the Muslims, just as the Prophet ﷺ had foretold. `Adi ﷺ later went to live in Kufah in Iraq.<sup>4</sup>

## The Delegation of Christians from Najran

Najran is located in the southern region of the Arabian Peninsula. Several tribes resided there, some in cities and others in smaller towns. Christianity was the

1 Ibn Kathir at-Tafseer:1/874

2 Ibn Kathir at Tafseer:1/582

3 . Bukhari, book of Al-Maghazi: 5/123

4 . Mu,jam Al-Buldan: 5/266

most prominent religion in the region, so naturally, the tribes of Najran had strong ties with the Christian Arabs elsewhere in the peninsula as well as the Levant and even Abyssinia. They enjoyed the benefit of cultural exchange, which was one of the factors that led to them being more advanced than the pagan Arabs. They became aware of Islam in the early years, before the Prophet's Hijrah to Madinah.

As we mentioned before, Najran was essentially the main stronghold of Christianity in the southern region of Arabia. They had their own laws and government, including a structure of leadership that divided the responsibilities among the leaders. For example, one was in charge of financial decisions, while another oversaw education, and so on. People were not granted these positions based on tribal status, instead it was based more on religious teachings, and thus the leadership was spread amongst any tribes.

The Prophet ﷺ wrote to the leaders of Najran. When their leader, the archbishop, read the letter, he was shocked. He sent for a man named Shurahbil bin Wada'a, who was the first person that he consulted when a problem arose. He gave the Prophet's letter to Shurahbil, and he read it. The archbishop asked, "O Abu Maryam, what is your opinion?" Shurahbil replied, "You know very well that Allah promised Ibrahim that prophethood would come from his progeny through Isma'il. What if it is this man? I do not have an opinion about prophethood; had you consulted me about any worldly affair, I would have given my opinion on the matter." The archbishop instructed him to remain in the room, so he found a seat and sat down.

The archbishop then called for a man named 'Abdullah bin Shurahbil, a man from Himyar, and the letter was read to him. Then he was asked his opinion, and he replied in the same manner that Shurahbil did. The archbishop had him sit as well, and then called for a man of Najran called Jabbar bin Fayd, who read the letter and then replied in a similar manner. The archbishop then commanded that the bells be rung and the fires be lit in the churches, which is what they used to do in the event of emergencies. His command was carried out, and the fires were lit in the churches of seventy-three towns, and thousands of people gathered unto him. He had the Prophet's letter read to them, and he asked them their opinion. The wise among them decided it would be best to send Shurahbil bin Wada'a to investigate.

A delegation of approximately sixty riders began to prepare for the journey:

one-third of whom were noblemen, including three of their main leaders. They set out on their journey and eventually arrived in Madinah. They met with the Prophet ﷺ, and he said to their archbishop, “O Abu al-Harith, accept Islam.” He replied, “I am Muslim.” The Prophet ﷺ repeated, “O Abu al-Harith, accept Islam.” He replied, “I have been Muslim (i.e., submitting to Allah) before you.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “That is a lie. You are not truly submitting due to three things: Your claim that Allah had a son, your eating of swine, and your drinking of liquor.”<sup>1</sup>

They met with the Prophet ﷺ multiple times and had several discussions with him. It is narrated that their chief said to him, “You insult Jesus by calling him a slave of God?” and others asked, “Who, then, is the father of Jesus?” The Prophet ﷺ did not rush to answer these questions, for he awaited a command from his Lord. Allah the Exalted revealed:

*“Verily, the likeness of `Isa (Jesus) before Allah is the likeness of Adam. He created him from dust, then (He) said to him: “Be!” - and he was. (This is) the truth from your Lord, so be not of those who doubt. Then whoever disputes with you concerning him after (all this) knowledge that has come to you, (i.e. `Isa being a slave of Allah, and having no share in Divinity) say: (O Muhammad) “Come, let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves - then we pray and invoke (sincerely) the Curse of Allah upon those who lie.”” (Surah Aal `Imran, 59-61)*

When these verses were revealed, the Prophet ﷺ offered them *mubahala*<sup>2</sup>, and they discussed among themselves whether or not to accept it. They were learned people, knowledgeable of their religion, so they said to one another, “By Allah, if he is a Prophet, and we perform *mubahala*, then we will be ruined and so will our progeny after us.”

They concluded that they should not do it, particularly after what they witnessed of the Prophet’s manners and good conduct. They chose to accept Muslim rule, and Shurahbil said that the Prophet ﷺ seemed to be “a man that does not ever rule with injustice.” The next day, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was with Fatimah, al-Hasan, al-Hussain, and `Ali – may Allah be pleased with them all. The Christians were fearful that he might go forward with the *mubahala*, so they stayed away from him, until Shurahbil approached the Prophet ﷺ and

1. Ibn Abi Shaibah , Al-Maghazi, P; 409- Fathul -Bari: 16/259

2. Two parties invoke the curse of Allah upon the liar between them. It was a tradition that was also known to the Christians.

expressed that he wished to share a better option. The Prophet ﷺ asked what it was. Shurahbil said that they will accept whatever judgment the Prophet ﷺ passes regarding them. The next day, they met with Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and he made a treaty with them.

Allah the Exalted revealed:

*“Verily, the likeness of `Isa (Jesus) before Allah is the likeness of Adam. He created him from dust, then said to him: “Be!” - and he was. (This is) the truth from your Lord, so be not of those who doubt. Then whoever disputes with you concerning him after (all this) knowledge that has come to you, (i.e. `Isa being a slave of Allah, and having no share in Divinity) say: (O Muhammad) “Come, let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves - then we pray and invoke (sincerely) the Curse of Allah upon those who lie.” Verily! This is the true narrative, and there is no god except Allah, and indeed, Allah is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. And if they turn away (and do not accept these true proofs and evidences), then surely, Allah is All-Aware of those who do mischief. Say (O Muhammad): “O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allah. Then, if they turn away, say: “Bear witness that we are Muslims.”” (Surah Aal `Imran, 59-64)*

Before the delegation left, they requested that the Prophet ﷺ send with them a trustworthy man. He replied, “I will certainly send with you a man who is truly trustworthy, truly trustworthy.” The Companions ﷺ who heard this all wished to be the person who the Prophet ﷺ had praised so highly. He ﷺ selected Abu `Ubaidah bin al-Jarrah ؓ for the task.<sup>1</sup>

When the delegation returned to Najran, they informed their people that they had chosen to sign a treaty with Muhammad ﷺ, and they defended their actions by saying that they feared going into *mubalah* with him, for they knew he was a Prophet. Despite that, they chose not to embrace Islam. However, two of them went back to Madinah to accept Islam, one of whom was named Bishr, who remained upon Islam until he was martyred some time later.

Abu `Ubaidah ؓ went to Najran and invited the people to Islam and showed

1 Ibn Abi Shaibah, P:408, Bukhari Fath al-Bari:5121

them a good example of Muslim character. He was responsible for some of the administrative and financial affairs related to the treaty between the Muslims and the Christians of Najran, and he was truly an honest and trustworthy man for the job. He also had many discussions with the Christian scholars of Najran regarding religion and the Qur'an, as did the other Companions ﷺ who the Prophet ﷺ sent to Najran over the years.

For example, al-Mughirah bin Shu`bah ؓ narrated: "When I came to Najran, they (the Christians of Najran) asked me: 'You read "O sister of Harun (Aaron)" (i. e. Mary) in the Qur'an, whereas Moses was born much before Jesus.' When I came back to Allah's Messenger ﷺ I asked him about that, and he said: The (people of the old) used to give names (to people) after the names of Prophets and pious persons who had gone before them."<sup>1</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ also sent `Ali bin Abi Talib ؓ to Najran in 10 AH to collect the jizyah, as well as the sadaqah of the Muslims of Najran, and he returned to the Prophet ﷺ during the Farewell Hajj.<sup>2</sup> The Christians of Najran continued to interact peacefully with the Muslims for the remainder of Prophet Muhammad's lifetime, and the treaty remained in place. After he ﷺ passed away, and people began to apostatize in different regions of Arabia, Najran was not spared from this trial. Some of the Muslims of Najran also turned back on their religion, and it is possible that they were influenced by their non-Muslim surroundings or perhaps some ill-intentioned people, whether directly or indirectly. However, nothing arose between the Muslims and Najran during the entirety of the Caliphate of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq ؓ.

During the Caliphate of `Umar ؓ, Islam spread far and wide, and many of the inhabitants of Arabia ventured outwards towards the new lands and settled there, especially those who participated in conquests and so on. The Christians of Najran continued to be independent of the Muslim nation, so they did not quite benefit from all the changes that were occurring around them, but the peace continued between them and the Muslims.

It was during the reign of `Umar ؓ that the Christians of Najran left the Arabian peninsula. The exact reason is not known for sure; some narrations indicate that they approached `Umar and sold their land in exchange for new land elsewhere in the Muslim world, closer to the Christians of the Byzantine empire. Other narrations indicate that they breached their treaty with the Muslims by engaging in usury, which had been forbidden by the treaty. Whatever the exact

1. Ibn Abi Shaibah,P:409,Ibn Kathir , at-Tafseer:2/1185

2 Zad al-Ma`ad:3/637

cause was, it seems more likely that it was they who chose to end the treaty that had made with the Prophet ﷺ regarding the land of Najran, in exchange for the new lands that they wished to move to. They were also paid for some of the farms that they left behind in Najran. Later on, some of them wished to go back on the sales they had made but `Umar ؓ did not allow it.

They traveled to Iraq with a document from `Umar to the Muslim governors to grant them the specified lands and help them get settled. The letter stated: “From Umar, the Leader of the Believers, to the travelers of Najran: They have a pact of security under Allah’s Law in accordance with the pact that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and Abu Bakr ؓ upheld, therefore none of the Muslims may harm them.”

The letter included:

- An order to the Muslim governor to grant them the specified land
- A command to all Muslims to aid them against any who wronged them, for they are under the protection of the state
- *Jizyah* will not be collected from them for the twenty-four months following their arrival in their new land
- Their earnings from farming their new lands belong to them, and may not be encroached upon
- They should not be burdened, oppressed, or treated harshly
- The two witnesses were `Uthman bin `Affan and Mu`aiqib bin Abi Fatimah<sup>1</sup>

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1 Ibn Abi Shaibah, P:407,408 Ibn sa`ad, At-Tabaqat:1/358

## The Destruction of the Idols

Idols were a widespread phenomenon in Arab lands. In Makkah, they were placed in the Masjid itself, beside the Ka`bah. Some of the idols were mentioned by name in the Qur`an, such as al-*Lat*, al-`Uzza, and *Manat*. The Arab tribes would take pride in their respective idols and worship them besides Allah. For this reason, a multitude of verses in the Qur`an were revealed warning against this practice and clarifying the Prophets` conflict with idol worship throughout the ages. Allah the Exalted tells us that Prophet Ibrahim ؑ said:

*“O my Lord! They have indeed led astray many among mankind. But whoso follows me, he verily is of me. And whoso disobeys me, - still You are indeed Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”* (Surah Ibrahim, 36)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ wanted to remove idol-worship from the people`s hearts, put an end to the association partners with Allah, and physically destroy these idols in order to end their presence and influence over society. He began by destroying the idols surrounding the Ka`bah and those in its vicinity. He did this with his own hands, in front of all people on the day of the Conquest, so that they could hear and see for themselves. As he destroyed the idols, he repeated the verse of Allah:

*“And say: “Truth has come and Batil (falsehood, i.e. Satan or polytheism, etc.) has vanished. Surely! Batil is ever bound to vanish.””* (Surah al-Isra`, 81)

The Prophet ﷺ then delegated many Companions ؓ with the task of destroying the various idols of Arabia, sending conscripts in every direction to fulfill this dire objective. This cemented the authority of Islam over the region, and the Arab tribes realized that their idols availed them not, for they could not even protect themselves. Of the conscripts he sent out with this goal were:

### The Invasion of Khalid bin al-Walid to Destroy al-`Uzza

Al-`Uzza was an idol located east of Makkah in Nakhlah, the land of the tribe of



Hudhayl who lived between Makkah and Taif. It was one of the more significant idols worshipped besides Allah. Regarding al-`Uzza, Allah revealed:

*“Have you then considered al-Lat, and al-`Uzza, And Manat, the other third?”* (Surah an-Najm, 19-20)

The Arabs revered al-`Uzza and frequently called upon the idol, preferring it over Allah.<sup>1</sup> Abu Sufyan evoked its name at the Battle of Uhud when he said: “We have al-`Uzza and you have no `Uzza.” The Prophet ﷺ commanded the Companions to respond with: “Allah is our Protector, and you have no Protector.”<sup>2</sup>

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent Khalid bin al-Walid ؓ at the head of a invasion to destroy al-`Uzza immediately after the Conquest of Makkah.<sup>3</sup>

## The Invasion of `Amr bin al-`Aas to Destroy Suwa`

Suwa` was another idol of Hudhayl which Allah mentioned in the Qur’an:

*“And they have said: ‘You shall not leave your gods, nor shall you leave Wadd, nor Suwa`, nor Yaghuth, nor Ya`uq, nor Nasr (names of the idols).”* (Surah Nuh, 23)

After the Conquest of Makkah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ tasked `Amr bin al-`Aas ؓ and some others with the destruction of Suwa`. The caretakers of Suwa` assumed the idol would defend itself and that `Amr would be unable to destroy it. However, when they witnessed stone after stone fall with the idol being unable to put up any defense, utterly incapable of any type of harm or benefit, they abandoned it and embraced Islam. Thus, the idol of Suwa` ceased to exist.<sup>4</sup>

## The Invasion of Sa`d bin Zayd al-Ashali to Destroy Manat

The idol Manat was in the keeping of the tribe of Qudad, in the direction of an area called al-Mushallal located between Makkah and Madinah. It was worshipped by the Arabs in general, but the polytheists from the Aws and Khazraj tribe gave it a special reverence and devotion. Allah the Exalted referred to Manat in His Words:

*“Have you then considered al-Lat, and al-`Uzza, and Manat (another*

1. Bukhari

2. Ibn Abi Shaibah, P:238, Ibn Sa,d:2/145

3. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:6/51, Ibn Abi Shaibah,P:238

4. Ibn Kathir at Tafseer:1/1923

*idol of the pagan Arabs), the other third?” (Surah an-Najm, 19-20)*

After the Conquest of Makkah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent Sa`d bin Zaid al-Ansari ؓ at the head of an army to destroy Manat. Zayd accomplished the task without facing any resistance from the locals or the caretakers of Manat, who all assumed the idol would defend itself. This was the end of Manat in the land and in the hearts of the Arabs.<sup>1</sup>

## The Invasion of `Ali bin Abi Talib to Destroy al-Fuls in Tai`

In the month of Rabi` al-Akhir of the year 9 AH, `Ali ؓ was sent at the head of an offensive against Tai` and to destroy their idol, al-Fuls. `Ali succeeded in his objective and took some of the idol's treasures as spoils and some of the people of Tai` as captives. One of the captives was Sufana bint Hatim. Her captivity was the motive for the coming of her brother, `Adi, to the Prophet ﷺ and his acceptance of Islam.

## The Invasion of at-Tufayl bin `Amr to Destroy Dhul Kaffayn in Daws

After the Battle of Hunayn, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent at-Tufayl bin `Amr ad-Dawsi ؓ to destroy the idol called Dhul Kaffayn. At-Tufayl successfully destroyed Dhul Kaffayn and burned it to the ground, after which he headed back to the Prophet ﷺ, rejoining him at the Siege of Taif.<sup>2</sup>

## The Invasion of Jarir bin `Abdullah to Destroy Dhul Khalasah

Dhul Khalasah was a house of worship for the tribes of Khath`am, who were situated in the area of Bajila in Yemen. It was the most revered shrine for the locals, many even named the idol inside “Al-Ka`bah”.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ told Jarir bin `Abdullah, “Will you not relieve me of Dhul Khalisah?”

Jarir replied, “Indeed I will, O Messenger of Allah.”

Jarir was never able to firmly establish himself on his horse and was unable

1 Ibn Sa`ad:2/146

2 At-Tabaqat:2/157, Al-Waqidi:3/922

to ride it proficiently. He mentioned this to the Prophet ﷺ who struck Jarir's chest saying: "O Allah, make him firm and steadfast, a rightly guided guide [for others]." Jarir never fell off his horse after that.

Jarir set out with fifty horsemen from Ahmas and destroyed Dhul Khalasah. He then relayed the good news to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

Bukhari narrates in his *Sahih* from Jarir bin `Abdullah who said:

"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to me, 'Will you not relieve me of Dhul Khalasah?'

I replied, 'Indeed I will.'

So I headed out with one hundred and fifty horsemen from Ahmas, all expert riders. However, I was unable to sit firmly on a horse, so I mentioned this to the Prophet ﷺ. He struck my chest with his hand so strongly that I saw marks on my chest, and he said, 'O Allah, make him firm and steadfast, a rightly guided guide [for others].' And I never fell off a horse again."<sup>1</sup>

After they successfully destroyed the idol, Jarir then sent a man from Ahmas nicknamed Abu Artā'a to the Prophet ﷺ to give him glad tidings of the mission's success. When Abu Artā'a arrived, he said, "O Messenger of Allah, I swear by the One who sent you with the Truth, I have not come to except after leaving it [Dhul Khalasah] like a scabby camel [i.e. withered and falling apart]." So the Prophet ﷺ sought blessings for the steeds of Ahmas and its men five times.<sup>2</sup>



1. Ibn Hajar Fath al -Bari:16/190  
2. Bukhari:4357

# The Farewell Hajj

The pilgrimage of Hajj is the fifth pillar of Islam. The details, rites, and rituals of Hajj are mentioned in about twelve verses of the Holy Qur'an, and even an entire chapter was named after this act of worship (Surah al-Hajj).

Even though Hajj was not obligated until Allah revealed the verse:

*“And Hajj to the House (Ka`bah) is a duty that mankind owes to Allah, those who can afford the expenses (for one’s conveyance, provision and residence); and whoever disbelieves, then Allah stands not in need of any of the `Alamin (mankind and jinns).”* (Surah Aali `Imran, 97)<sup>1</sup>,

The Prophet ﷺ would still make Hajj before his emigration to Madinah. He, however, did not partake in the polytheistic practices added by Quraish, and instead followed the original monotheistic worship established by Prophet Ibrahim ؑ.

After the Hijrah to Madinah, it is not narrated that the Prophet ﷺ performed any Hajj besides the Farewell Hajj in the year 10 AH. Abu Bakr ؓ lead the Hajj on the Prophet’s behalf in the year 9 AH.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ delayed his Hajj until 10 AH because he was keen for all aspects of polytheism and associating partners with Allah to be completely abolished from Makkah. He also wanted the message to reach all people that the polytheists were no longer allowed to enter the Holy Masjid as Allah commanded:

*“O you who believe! Verily, the Mushrikun (polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah, and in the Message of Muhammad) are Najas (impure). So let them not come near al-Masjid al-Haram (at Makkah) after this year, and if you fear poverty, Allah will enrich you if He will, out of His Bounty. Surely, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.”* (Surah at-Tawbah, 28)

The Farewell Hajj was an opportunity for the Ummah to witness Prophet

<sup>1</sup> Zad al-Ma`ad :3/595, Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/126

Muhammad ﷺ perform Hajj according to the rules of Islam, in a manner that pleases Allah the Exalted. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Learn from me your rites [of Hajj], for I do not know, perhaps I will not make Hajj after this Hajj of mine.”<sup>1</sup> Due to the matter’s immense importance, Bukhari devoted an entire chapter in his hadith collection titled “The Farewell Hajj.”<sup>2</sup>

Towards the end of the year 10 AH, as the month of Dhul Hijjah neared, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ announced that he would perform Hajj, and “droves of people came to Madinah, all wishing to be led by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ [in Hajj]”<sup>3</sup> as Ibn Hajar mentions.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ left Madinah for Hajj on the 25<sup>th</sup> of Dhul Qa`dah. With the journey to Makkah taking approximately eight days, the people took the opportunity to learn from the Messenger of Allah, and their numbers increased daily. Multitudes of people from all over the Peninsula joined him from all the different Arab tribes, adding to the original followers from Madinah.

Throughout the journey, the Prophet ﷺ recited the *talbiyah*<sup>4</sup>, and he people repeated after him; a clear announcement that worship was purely for Allah alone, and that none deserved to be worshipped but Him, the Exalted. They said: “*Labayk Allahumma labayk, labayka la shareeka laka labayk. Innal hamda wan-ni`mata laka wal mulk, la shareeka lak* (Here I am [answering your call], O Allah, here I am. Here I am, You have no partners, here I am. Verily all praise and blessings are Yours, and all sovereignty, You have no partners).” This is the same *talbiyah* the Ummah continues to recite today, as it was passed down by the generations. The nation of Muslims continues relaying the announcement – the clear and powerful disavowal from polytheism and its followers – and correctly attributing all dominion and blessing to Allah alone without any partners.

The Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims camped near Makkah on the night of the 4<sup>th</sup> of Dhul Hijjah and entered it the next day. The Prophet ﷺ entered the Holy Sanctuary whilst repeating, “O Allah, indeed you are Peace, from you is all peace, greet us – O our Lord – with peace.” When he finally laid eyes on the Holy Masjid, he ﷺ said, “O Allah, increase this House of Yours in honor, greatness, nobility, and awe.” The Prophet ﷺ then headed to the Ka`bah and made tawaf<sup>5</sup>

1. Muslim:4/79

2. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/123, Ibn Hisham:4/601

3. Fath al-Bari

4. Saying: “*Labayk Allahumma labayk, labayka la shareeka laka labayk. Innal hamda wan-ni`mata laka wal mulk, la shareeka lak*”

5. Circumambulation

around it while he was still on his camel. The people observed him closely, for they wished to learn from him and follow his example. They surrounded him and inquired about his actions, and listened intently to all his supplications.

At the start of his tawaf, he touched the Black Stone with his staff, and performed the first three circuits hastily, then the remaining four with normal speed. After finishing all seven circuits around the Ka`bah, he recited the Words of Allah the Exalted:

*“And (remember) when We made the House a place of resort for mankind and a place of safety. And take you (people) the Maqam (place) of Ibrahim [or the stone on which Ibrahim stood while he was building the Ka`bah] as a place of prayer (for some of your prayers, e.g. two Rak`at after the Tawaf of the Ka`bah at Makkah), and We commanded Ibrahim and Isma`il that they should purify My House (the Ka`bah at Makkah) for those who are circumambulating it, or staying (i`tikaf), or bowing or prostrating themselves (there, in prayer).”* (Surah al-Baqarah, 125)

He then prayed two units behind the Maqam Ibrahim, such that it was between him and the Ka`bah. In the first unit of prayer, he recited *Surah al-Kafirun* and in the second he recited *Surah al-Ikhlās*. The Prophet then touched the Yemeni Corner of the Ka`bah and headed to the mountain of as-Safa while reciting:

*“Indeed, as-Safa and al-Marwah are among the symbols of Allah. So whoever makes Hajj to the House or performs ‘Umrah - there is no blame upon him for walking between them. And whoever volunteers good - then indeed, Allah is appreciative and Knowing.”* (Surah al-Baqarah, 158)

After ascending as-Safa, the Prophet ﷺ faced the Ka`bah and said, “Allah is the Greatest, there is no god except Allah alone; He fulfilled His promise, granted His servant victory, and defeated the Confederates alone.” He then walked to the mountain of al-Marwa and completed the *sa`i*<sup>1</sup>. Throughout his Hajj, the Prophet ﷺ often remembered the blessing that Allah had granted him and the Muslims by overcoming the oppressive pagans of Makkah, and he ﷺ would mention it to the Companions ﷺ. He would remind others of the victory of monotheism over the idols and how Allah, the Glorious and the Exalted, fulfilled His promise – that He granted the Muslims victory and fulfilled His promises to them, that they had

1. Ritual of going between as-Safa and al-Marwah seven times.

heard from the Prophet ﷺ years and years prior.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ remained in Makkah for four days, residing in a place called al-Abtah. During this period, `Ali bin Abi Talib came from Yemen to join the Hajj and was reunited with his beloved wife, Fatimah, may Allah be pleased with her.<sup>1</sup>

After sunrise on Thursday, the 8<sup>th</sup> of Dhul Hijjah and the Day of *Tarwiyah*<sup>2</sup>, the Prophet ﷺ headed to Mina along with all the pilgrims. When he reached Mina, he led the people in the Dhuhr and `Asr prayers, praying them one after the other and shortening them to two rak`at each instead of the normal four. Later that day, he did the same for Maghrib and `Isha, except that Maghrib remained three rak`at. As Bilal would call the *Athan* for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the people would rush forward to gather the water from the Prophet's ablution, seeking its blessings.

On the morning of the Day of `Arafah, the 9<sup>th</sup> of Dhul Hijjah, the Prophet ﷺ led the Muslims in Fajr prayer and then headed with the people to the plains of `Arafah after sunrise. A tent was set up for him at an area known as *Namirah*, which was different than what the Quraish had accustomed themselves to<sup>3</sup>, and thus the Prophet ﷺ was fulfilling the command of Allah:

*“Then depart from the place whence all the people depart and ask Allah for His Forgiveness. Truly, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most-Merciful.”*

(Surah al-Baqarah, 199)

The provided much-needed shade, for the weather was extremely hot that year, but the tent also served the purpose of making the location of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ visible to all the pilgrims. He remained there mentioning Allah and supplicating to Him, just as he had previously commanded the Muslims: “The most excellent supplication is the one made on the Day of `Arafah, and the best of what I and the Prophets before me have said, is ‘There is no god but Allah, alone, without partners.’” In another narration he said, “There is no god but Allah, alone, without partners, to Him belongs all dominion and praise, and He is capable over all things.”<sup>4</sup>

Az-Zubair bin al-`Awwam narrates:

- 1 Bukhari:4353- Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:4/334
2. Another name for the 8<sup>th</sup> of Dhul Hijjah. Lit. “The Day of Gathering Water”, as it was the day in which pilgrims would gather water at the start of their Hajj.
3. Quraish altered the rulings of Hajj to suit themselves, for they would not gather with the people at *Namirah*, and instead would stay behind just within the boundaries of the Holy Sanctuary, believing it was not befitting of them to exit it.
- 4 Malik bin Anas, Al-Muqatta, P:350

*“I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ recite the verse: “Allah bears witness that none has the right to be worshipped but He, and the angels, and those having knowledge (also give this witness); (He is always) maintaining His creation in Justice. La ilah illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.” (Surah Aal `Imran, 18)*

It is also narrated that he supplicated on the Day of `Arafah: “O Allah, You hear my speech, You see my place, You know my public and private affairs – and none of my affairs are hidden from You. I am the distressed, the poor, seeking your aid and protection, fearful and anxious, acknowledging and admitting my sins. I ask You as a poor one asks, and I invoke You the invocation of the humble, and I supplicate to You the supplication of the fearful and the blind. You are the One in front of Whom all necks are lowered, the One for Whom all tears are shed, the One in front of Whom all bodies are humbled, and the One in front of Whom all are powerless. O Allah, do not make me despair in my calling to You, Lord, and be merciful and compassionate to me! O Most Excellent of those who are asked, O Most Excellent of those who give.”<sup>1</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ continued in this fashion for the entire day, completely devoted to calling upon Allah, even doing so while riding on his camel.

Immediately after sunset, he requested that his camel be prepared and then rode it into the middle of the valley where he commanded that the people be gathered and that they listen to him very closely, and callers were sent out to relay his speech to the crowds. Portions of his speech were relayed in numerous different narrations, and even though many narrators did not gather the speech in its entirety in one single narration, by putting the different narrations together, the meanings of the whole speech were preserved. One narration of what the Prophet ﷺ said on that day states:

“O people: Listen to what I have to say, for I do not know, perhaps after this year of mine I will never meet you in this setting again.

O people: Indeed, your blood and your wealth are inviolable sanctities between you, until you meet your Lord. Just like the sanctity of this day [i.e. the Day of `Arafah], and the sanctity of this month [i.e Dhul Hijjah].

You will surely meet your Lord, and He will ask you about your actions – I have relayed the message [to you]. So, whoever was entrusted with something,

1. Bukhari: 4399,4400, Ibn Kathir, P:241



let him fulfill that trust to whomever entrusted him.

All *riba*<sup>1</sup> is hereby abolished, but you may keep your initial capital – you will neither oppress nor will you be oppressed. Allah has decreed there is to be no *riba*. The *riba* of `Abbas bin `Abd al-Muttalib is abolished in its entirety.

All blood feuds from the Days of Ignorance are hereby abolished. The first of your feuds that I abolish is the blood of Ibn Rabi`ah bin al-Harith bin `Abd al-Muttalib – he was a young child in the care of Banu Layth killed by the tribe of Hudhayl – so I begin by abolishing the feud over his killing.

Furthermore, O people: Indeed, Shaytan has despaired about being worshipped in your lands ever again, but he is content with being obeyed in the lesser things - the misdeeds that you belittle. So, beware of him regarding your religion.

O people: Indeed *Nasi*<sup>2</sup> is an increase in disbelief by which those who have disbelieved are led further astray. They make it lawful one year and unlawful another year, and thus make lawful what Allah made unlawful, and make unlawful that which He made lawful. Time has now returned to its original format from the day Allah created the heavens and the earth. Verily, the number of months with Allah is twelve months, four of which are sacred months: three consecutive<sup>3</sup> and Rajab, which is the month between Jumada and Sha`ban.

Furthermore, O people: Indeed, you have rights over your wives, and they have rights over you. It is your right upon them that they do not allow anyone you dislike into your home, and that they do not commit a clear immorality. If they do, then Allah has permitted you to forsake them in bed, and to strike them without causing them harm. If they desist, they have the right to provisions of food, drink, and clothing with appropriate kindness. I advise you to treat women well, for they are like captives with you. You took them under your care exclusively through Allah's trust, and intimacy with them was made permissible to you by His command.

Understand what I am saying, O people, for I have conveyed the message. I left behind for you what will never allow you to go astray again if you hold on firmly to it – a perfectly clear matter: The Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet.

1. All types of usurious transactions.
2. A practice from the Days of Ignorance of postponing sacred months and switching them with other months in the calendar in order to avoid their restrictions and obligations.
3. Dhul Qa`dah, Dhul Hijjah, and Muharram.

O people, listen to my words and understand them: know that every Muslim is a brother to all Muslims, and that the Muslims are a single brotherhood. So, it is not permissible for a Muslim [to take] from his brother except what he gives freely and willingly. So, do not oppress yourselves.

O people, have I conveyed the message?" It was mentioned that the people responded, "By Allah, yes."

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "O Allah, bear witness."<sup>1</sup>

It was also narrated from the Day of `Arafah that he ﷺ said:

"Verily, Allah has fulfilled the rights to all those entitled. It is not allowed to include an [already entitled] inheritor in a will. The child is to be attributed to the bed he is born on, and the stone is for the adulterer. Whoever attributes himself to other than his father or attributes to him other than his children will be cursed by Allah, the angels, and all people – Allah will not accept from him any repentance or ransom (i.e., on the Day of Judgment)."

He also said, "Do not return after my death to disbelief, each of you striking the neck of the other."<sup>2</sup>

As previously mentioned, the Prophet's sermon from the Day of `Arafah was reported in many different wordings and narrations, all indicating the same meaning as the narration of Ibn Hisham. It is likely that some of the narrations were from speeches he gave on the day of `Eid and the subsequent days. For example, the narration of Abu Bakr collected by Bukhari states that the Prophet ﷺ said:

"Time has returned to its original format from the day Allah created the heavens and the earth: the year is twelve months, four of which are sacred. Three consecutive months: Dhul Qa`dah, Dhul Hijjah, and Muharram, and Rajab which is between Jamada and Sha`ban."

He then asked, "What day is it today?"

We responded, "Allah and His Messenger know best."

He remained silent until we assumed he would change the name of the day then said, "Is it not the Day of Sacrifice?"

We replied, "Indeed, it is."

The Prophet ﷺ then asked, "What month is it?"

1. Portions were narrated from Bukhari and portions from other narrators.

2. Ibn Hisham As-Seerah:4/605, Bukhari:4403

We replied, “Allah and His Messenger know best.”

He remained silent until we assumed he would change the name of the day then said, “Is it not Dhul Hijjah?”

We replied, “Indeed, it is.”

He asked, “What land is this?”

We replied, “Allah and His Messenger know best.”

He remained silent until we assumed he would change the name of the day then said, “Is it not the [sacred] land?”

We replied, “Indeed, it is.”

Then the Prophet ﷺ said, “Indeed, your blood and your wealth – Abu Bakr interjects: And I think he also added “and your honor” - are inviolable sanctities between you, just like the sanctity of this day, the sanctity of this month, and the sanctity of this land.

You will surely meet your Lord, and He will ask you about your actions. Do not return after my death to misguidance, each of you striking the neck of the other.

Have I not relayed the message? Let those who are present relay the message to those who are absent, for it is possible that the one to whom the message is relayed understands better than the one who hears it [directly].” He then repeated “Have I not relayed the message?” two more times.<sup>1</sup>

It is clear that these sermons were laid out by the Prophet ﷺ as instructions for all of mankind, as guidance for all generations throughout the ages until Allah inherits the earth and those on it. They are the most important speeches the Messenger of Allah ever gave because they relay the commands of the Creator to His creation, and focus on singling Allah out in His Divinity, Lordship, and dedicating worship to Him alone. The speeches designate and preserve the people’s physical, spiritual, and economic rights, the rights of women and their honor, and emphasize the importance of fulfilling the rights of others and the prohibition of oppressing them or denying them what is due unto them. The Prophet ﷺ also initiated in these speeches a new way of life that would soon become global; a new system in which the economy is based on the prohibition of usury and interest, safety stems from the principles that all life is sacred and past feuds are forgotten, and morality is preserved by warning people of Shaytan and his incessant plots to destroy people’s relationships with one another, and spread terror, discord, and bloodshed.

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1 Bukhari:4406

The Prophet ﷺ emphasized equality between all people that they were but one brotherhood from the same source. He reminded them of the Islamic sources of legislation, the Qur'an and Sunnah, and by doing so emphasized the Islamic system of governance and its basis. His words show us that the only way to establish a successful society is through the laws of its Creator, which will lead people to a peaceful and secure civilization, and will earn His pleasure.

Finally, the Prophet ﷺ made it a point in each speech that the people bear witness to the fact that he had fulfilled the duty he was entrusted with, and that he had successfully relayed the Message. When they gave their testimony that he had fulfilled his duty, he raised his finger to the sky and said, "O Allah, be a witness." He felt that the people were pleased so he raised his sights to the heavens, requesting the pleasure of Allah, the Exalted, the Ultimate Observer.

The Prophet ﷺ also taught people on the Day of `Arafah that the entire plain of `Arafah is a valid area to stand and observe the rites of Hajj for that day, just as the entire of space of Muzdalifah is a valid area to stand in. When he slaughtered his animals at Mina, he also mentioned that all of Mina was valid to slaughter the sacrificial animals in.<sup>1</sup>

After his sermon on the Day of `Arafah, Allah revealed to him:

*"Forbidden to you (for food) are: al-maytah (dead animals that were not slaughtered), blood, the flesh of swine, and the meat of that which has been slaughtered as a sacrifice for others than Allah, or has been slaughtered for idols, etc., or on which Allah's Name has not been mentioned while slaughtering, and that which has been killed by strangling, or by a violent blow, or by a headlong fall, or by the goring of horns - and that which has been (partly) eaten by a wild animal - unless you are able to slaughter it (before its death) - and that which is sacrificed (slaughtered) on an-Nusub (stone altars). (Forbidden) also is to use arrows seeking luck or decision, (all) that is Fisq (disobedience of Allah and sin). This day, those who disbelieved have given up all hope of your religion, so fear them not, but fear Me. This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion. But as for him who is forced by severe hunger, with no inclination to sin*

1. Ahmad:1/72 At-Tabari:4/170, i.e., it is not a must that these rites be performed exactly where he performed them, what matters is that the pilgrim be in the proper designated area at the appropriate date and time.

(such can eat these above-mentioned meats), then surely, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Surah al-Ma’idah, 3)

When `Umar heard this verse, he began to cry. The Prophet ﷺ asked him, “What makes you weep?”

`Umar replied, “I am weeping because we were enjoying an abundance of good [i.e., the revelation], but now it has been completed and perfected. There is nothing after perfection except deficiency.”

The Prophet ﷺ said, “You have spoken the truth.” For this verse was one of the heralds of the Prophet’s impending death.<sup>1</sup>

This verse and others like it were in response to the people’s testimony and a confirmation from Allah that the Messenger ﷺ had successfully conveyed His Message, fulfilled the trust he was tasked with, and sincerely advised his nation. The verses also confirmed the completion and perfection of the religion, and the blessing Allah had bestowed by bringing the Prophet’s mission to fruition and success. They also served as the Prophet’s general farewell to the people, as his time to depart neared. It was truly as the Companions said: “We used to discuss the Farewell Hajj while the Prophet ﷺ was among us, when we did not truly understand what it meant [i.e., that he would soon pass away].”<sup>2</sup>

After the Prophet ﷺ finished his speech on the Day of `Arafah, Bilal called the *Adhan* and the *Iqama* and the Prophet led the people in Dhuhr shortened to two rak`at, after which Bilal made another iqamah and the Prophet led `Asr, also shortened to two rak`at. He then rode his camel to the base of what would later be called *Jabal ar-Rahmah* [the Mountain of Mercy], dismounted and faced the *qiblah*, and occupied himself with supplication (du`a) for the rest of the day. After sunset, he took with him Usamah bin Zaid ؓ and left the plain of `Arafa while reciting the verse:

*“Then depart from the place whence all the people depart and ask Allah for His Forgiveness. Truly, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most-Merciful.”*  
(Surah al-Baqarah, 199)

As they departed, he commanded the people, “O people, tranquility, tranquility [i.e., depart with tranquility].”<sup>3</sup>

1. Bukhari:4407

2. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/126

3. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:2/176

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ constantly repeated the *talbiyah* on his way to the valley of Muzdalifah. When he arrived, he had Bilal call the *Adhan* and *Iqama*, then lead the people in Maghrib and 'Isha', shortening 'Isha' to two rak'at. He then slept until Fajr, which he prayed as soon as its time came. With al-Fadl bin 'Abbas riding behind him, he stopped at the *Mash'ar al-Haram*<sup>1</sup> and faced the *qiblah* in supplication until the sun fully rose.

It was narrated:

“The Prophet ﷺ made *du`a* for his nation at length in Muzdalifah until Allah revealed to him: ‘I have forgiven them except the oppression they commit against one another.’ So the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘My Lord! Surely You are capable of rewarding the oppressed with good as a result of the oppression he faced, and forgiving the oppressor for his oppression.’

However, he did not receive an immediate response that night. The next morning in Muzdalifah, the Prophet returned to supplicating until Allah revealed to him that He had forgiven them all their sins. Iblis then poured dust on his own head and called for destruction and woe upon himself.”<sup>2</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ asked Ibn 'Abbas ؓ to collect for him seven small pebbles for stoning the *Jamarat*<sup>3</sup>. He indicated to Ibn 'Abbas their approximate size, which the pilgrims follow until this day. He arrived at Mina after sunrise on the Day of Sacrifice [i.e 'Eid] and stoned al-*Jamara al-'Aqabah*<sup>4</sup> while on his mount, making *takbir* with each throw. He then rode back into Mina and spoke to the people.<sup>5</sup>

As previously mentioned, the Prophet ﷺ spoke to the people numerous times on different occasions during the days of Hajj, advising and instructing them in Mina, Makkah, and the surrounding areas. The subsequent speeches on the Day of Sacrifice and the Days of 'Eid had different messages. For example, one narration transmitted by Ibn 'Umar ؓ and collected by Bukhari states:

“The Prophet ﷺ praised Allah and glorified Him, then he began speaking about the Dajjal<sup>6</sup> extensively and said, ‘No Prophet was sent except that he warned his nation regarding him [the Dajjal]; Nuh warned about him, as did all the Prophets after him. He surely will appear among you [i.e., this Ummah],

1. Boundary of the Sacred Land

2 Abu Shahbah, *As-Seerah*, P:576

3. Three stone pillars in Mina representing the Shaytan.

4. The largest of the three stone pillars.

5 Ibn Kathir *As-Seerah*:4/373

6. False Messiah that will come at the end times; he is one of the major signs of the Day of Judgment.

so if some of his affair is not clear to you, know that your Lord is not one who is unclear to you (he repeated this thrice). Your Lord is not one-eyed, but he [Dajjal] is one-eyed; his right eye is like a bulging grape.”<sup>1</sup>

Also from what was narrated of his speeches on the Day of `Eid:

“As Bilal lead the Prophet’s ﷺ mount in Mina and Usamah gave him shade, he spoke to the people. He reaffirmed the prohibition of adultery and the sanctity of people’s wealth and honor. He also reminded the people of the sanctity of the Day of Sacrifice and the sanctity of Makkah over other lands. He said:

‘O people, what day is it?’ The people replied, ‘The sacred day [i.e. `Eid].’

He then asked, ‘What land is this?’ They replied, ‘The sacred land.’

He asked, ‘What month is this?’ They replied, ‘The sacred month [i.e. Dhul Hijjah].’

The Prophet ﷺ then said, ‘Indeed, your blood, your wealth, and your honor are inviolable sanctities between you, just like the sanctity of this day, the sanctity of this land, and the sanctity of this month.’ He repeated this a number of times, then he raised his head and said, ‘O Allah, have I conveyed the Message? O Allah, have I conveyed the Message? Let those who are present relay the message to those who are absent. Do not return after my death to disbelief, each of you striking the neck of the other.’

He also commanded them to learn the rites of Hajj from him, as he did not expect to make Hajj after this year. He was standing between the *Jamarat*, and the people were around him, some of them sitting and some standing.”<sup>2</sup>

It was also transmitted that he said on this day: “Worship your Lord, pray your five [daily prayers], and obey when you are commanded [by your leaders], and you shall enter your Lord’s Paradise.”<sup>3</sup>

Another narration states that he ﷺ said: “There is no preference for an Arab over a non-Arab, nor for a non-Arab over an Arab; for a white person over a black person, nor for a black person over a white person – except through piety. All people are from Adam, and Adam is from dust.”<sup>4</sup>

One might assume there is a mistake or misunderstanding between the narrators and transmitters of his words due to the overlapping wordings and meanings, but in reality, what is apparent is that the Prophet ﷺ insisted on

1 Bukhari:3057, Fath al-Bari:5/126

2 Salih al-Ali Sahih as-Seerah an-Nabawiyah,P:327

3 Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:4/392

4 As-Sallabi As-Seerah:2/780

emphasizing certain issues and principles, repeating them in several speeches in succession during his Farewell Hajj.

After stoning the *Jamarah* on the Day of `Eid, the Prophet ﷺ headed to the sacrificial area. There he sacrificed sixty-three camels with his own blessed hands – one for each year of his life – then he had `Ali sacrifice the remaining thirty-seven to complete one-hundred. Thus, he taught us the virtues of sacrificing for the sake of Allah, by insisting on doing as many as possible himself (as opposed to delegating `Ali to sacrifice all of them) and by going far beyond the minimum sacrifice that is required during Hajj. This situation also shows us the status of `Ali bin Abi Talib ؑ, as it is perfectly clear that the Prophet ﷺ would not choose just anyone for this special task.

The Prophet ﷺ took a very small portion from every camel, placed it in a large pot, then ate a bit of its meat and drank from its broth. He then commanded that the rest be distributed among the people along with the skins. He also commanded that the butcher should not be paid with its meat (instead he should be allotted a separate payment).<sup>1</sup> The Prophet then had his blessed head shaved by Mu`ammar bin `Abdullah ؑ, who he instructed to begin with the right half of his head first, followed by the left. It was mentioned that he gave half of his hair to Abu Talhah al-Ansari (the husband of Umm Sulaym) and instructed him to distribute the other half among the people. The people would seek blessings in his hair, sweat, and scent, so he had the hairs distributed individually, in twos, and in threes.<sup>2</sup>

After having his hair shaved, the Prophet ﷺ supplicated, “O Allah, forgive those who shave their heads.” Some people said, “And those who trim as well.” But he repeated the supplication only for those who shave three times, and each time the people repeated their suggestion, until he added to the fourth supplication, “And those who trim.”<sup>3</sup> A`ishah ؓ applied perfume to him after he shaved his head. Some people had shaved their heads before sacrificing their animals and others had sacrificed first, so they came to him to inquire about the validity of their actions to which he replied, “Do your actions [as you have done], there is no harm.”<sup>4</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ headed to Makkah and performed *Tawaf al-Ifadah*, drank from the water offered by al-`Abbas ؑ, then drank from the well of Zamzam.

1. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:2/176

2. Muslim:4/82, Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/188

3. Bukhari:2/188

4. Bukhari: 4410, Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:3/378



He wished to join his tribe of Banu `Abd al-Muttalib in offering the pilgrims water but was afraid the people would rush to emulate him, so he said, “Offer [the water], Banu `Abd al-Muttalib. Were it not for the fact that the people would overwhelm you from your position, I would have offered along with you.”<sup>1</sup>

He returned to Mina, where he spent the Days of *Tashriq*<sup>2</sup>, and stoned all three *Jamarat*. He stoned them each day at noon with seven pebbles, reciting the *takbir* with each throw, just as he did for *Jamarat al-`Aqaba* on the Day of `Eid. Some Companions requested permission to leave Mina and visit the Ka`bah during these days and he permitted them. During these days, he would pray Dhuhr and `Asr at the same time, and likewise for Maghrib and `Isha`. He spent much time instructing people regarding the rites of Hajj, answering their questions, and bidding them farewell.

Mina was filled with people; the Muhajirun, the Ansar, and all the various Arab tribes. Some wished to erect a house for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to which he replied, “No, Mina is [simply] a resting stop for whoever arrives there first.” He gave many concessions for those who requested them, especially the shepherds, the weak, and the women. He also gave a speech on the second day of the Days of *Tashriq* (i.e. the 12<sup>th</sup> of Dhul Hijjah), a day also known as *Yawmul Ru`us*<sup>3</sup>. Much of what he said was an emphasis on the speeches from the previous days with some additions, such as: “I warn you against oppressing one another.” He repeated this twice then said, “Verily, the wealth of a Muslim is not permissible unless he is pleased with giving it.”<sup>4</sup>

It is also narrated that this was when Surah an-Nasr was revealed. Allah says:

*“When comes the Help of Allah (to you, O Muhammad, against your enemies) and the conquest (of Makkah), And you see that the people enter Allah’s religion in crowds, glorify the Praises of your Lord, and ask for His Forgiveness. Verily, He is the One Who accepts the repentance and forgives.”* (Surah an-Nasr, 1-3)

It became clear that this was another sign of his impending departure.<sup>5</sup>

After the conclusion of the rites of Hajj, the Prophet ﷺ left Mina. Usama bin Zayd ؓ asked him, “Where shall you stay tomorrow? Will you go to your

1 Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:4/381

2. 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, and 13<sup>th</sup> of Dhul Hijjah.

3. Lit. the Day of the Heads. It was a day that many people would cook the heads of their sacrificial animals and eat from them.

4 Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:4/401

5. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:6/93,94, Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:4/401

original house in Makkah?”

The Prophet ﷺ replied, “Did `Aqil [ibn Abi Talib] leave for us a home to stay in? We shall stay tomorrow, *in sha' Allah*, at the settlement of Banu Kinana.” So he settled in Makkah in a place called Abtah. Abtah was occupied by Banu Kinana and other small tribes and was also known as al-Mukhaddab. It close to the outskirts of the city, making it convenient for an easy departure.

The next morning, the Prophet ﷺ lead the people in Fajr at the Ka`bah, reciting Surat at-Tur in its entirety. He made *tawaf* around the Ka`bah, stopping in the *Multazam*<sup>1</sup> to make *du`a*. He then commanded the people to make *Tawaf al-Wada*<sup>2</sup>. He commanded them, “No one should depart [from Makkah] unless his last moments are with the House [i.e. *tawaf*].”<sup>3</sup>

Even during this busy time, and in addition to preparing for the departure of thousands of people from Makkah, the Prophet ﷺ was still keen to take care of the affairs of his Companions and his wives. It was during this time, for example, that A`ishah came to him requesting to make `Umrah, so he requested from `Abdur-Rahman bin Abi Bakr (i.e., her brother) to take her. He said, “Exit the *Haram* with your sister so she can make the intention of `Umrah, then bring her to make *tawaf* around the House, and I will wait for you.”

A`ishah ؓ says, “We left the *Haram*, and I made the intention for `Umrah. Then, I made *tawaf* around the House and between the Safa and Marwah. We then returned in the middle of the night to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ where he was staying. He asked, ‘Are you finished?’

I said, ‘Yes,’ so he announced to the Companions that it was time to depart.”<sup>4</sup>

This is not the only instance of the Prophet’s compassion and specific attention to the personal affairs of his followers. During the Hajj, in the midst of instructing people, answering questions, and granting concessions, he learned that Sa`d bin Abi Waqqas ؓ was ill. The Prophet ﷺ was keen to make the time to visit Sa`d, who was one of the original Companions ؓ from before the Hijrah and one of the ten guaranteed Paradise. In the hadith collected by Bukhari, Sa`d narrates:

“The Prophet ﷺ visited me during the Farewell Hajj during an illness so

1 Area between the black stone and the door of the Ka`bah.

2 Farewell Tawaf. Final rite of Hajj

3 Bukhari & Muslim:4/93

4 Bukhari & Muslim, Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:4/410

severe, I assumed I would die. I said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, I am in so much pain, as you can see, and I am wealthy with no inheritors except a single daughter. Should I give two thirds of my wealth in charity?’

The Prophet ﷺ replied, “No.”

I asked, “Should I give half of it?”

The Prophet ﷺ again replied, “No.”

I then asked, “Should I give a third?”

Finally, the Prophet ﷺ replied, “[Give] a third, and a third is a lot. For you to leave your progeny rich is better than leaving them poor, with their palms outstretched towards the people. There is no expenditure you make, seeking with it the Face of Allah, except that Allah will reward you for it. Even the morsel that you place in your wife’s mouth.”

Sa`d asked, “O Messenger of Allah, should I remain here after my companions depart [i.e., back to Madinah]?”

The Prophet ﷺ said, “If you remain behind and do righteous deeds intending Allah’s Face, it will elevate and increase you in rank. Perhaps you may remain until some people benefit from you and others [i.e., evil people] will be harmed by you. O Allah! Complete the emigration of my Companions and do not turn them on their heels.”<sup>1</sup>

And so, we see the care and compassion the Prophet ﷺ had for his Companions. He was always keen on following up with their predicaments and ailments. It is also one of the Prophet’s miracles that he predicted Sa`d would live on, having a significant role to play in the future; Sa`d was the general at the Battle of Qadisiyyah and led the Conquest of Ctesiphon. He entered the capital of the Persian Empire, making *takbir* and *tahlil*<sup>2</sup>, reciting the testimony of faith for all to hear. Just as the Prophet ﷺ predicted to him during the Farewell Hajj: “Perhaps you will remain until some people benefit from you and others will be harmed by you.”<sup>3</sup>

Finally, the Prophet ﷺ bid farewell to Makkah for the last time, and departed with the Companions ﷺ, heading home to Madinah. This was the first Hajj since the Hijrah to Madinah, and the final one for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, just as it was his final visit to Makkah. He would never visit it again after this, until his death.

1. Bukhari, Fath al- Bari:4/127

2. Saying *Allahu Akbar* (takbir) and *La ilaha illa Allah* (tahlil).

3. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari: 5/128

## Lessons from the Farewell Hajj

1. This was the only Hajj in which the Ummah was led by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. We derive all the rulings and legislations of Hajj directly from it.

2. We have countless eyewitness narrations about this Hajj from those who closely accompanied the Prophet ﷺ, such as his wives. This also shows us one of the wisdoms behind him marrying more than one wife, as each one had her own situation, and thus we learned the different rulings according to different scenarios during Hajj.

3. The number of attendees who relayed eyewitness testimonies gives us a very clear image of the Hajj. As the Prophet ﷺ had told the people, “Learn from me your rites [of Hajj].” The same goes for the number of eyewitness narrations of the speeches the Prophet gave at `Arafah and the subsequent days. These narrations are so numerous, and each adds to the important message he wished to relay in these days. The repetition and emphasis on certain topics shows us just how important the principles he mentioned are, and how keen he was on the message reaching as many people as possible.

4. The Prophet ﷺ asked the people to bear witness to the completion of his mission, and that they relay everything they heard to anyone they could reach.

5. In his repeated speeches, he emphasized *Tawhid*, i.e., the Oneness of God, and that he was truly sent from Allah for the benefit of all mankind, and the importance of the rights of the people, as well as the sanctity of their blood and their wealth. He also emphasized the prohibition of oppression between people, the importance of women’s rights, and the abolishment of the ways of the Days of Ignorance. He made it clear that the corrupt and evil system must never be returned, be it economic, like *riba*, or social, like adultery and oppression. He also emphasized equality between all races.

6. The Prophet ﷺ made it clear that Islam is a system with firm sources – the Qur’an and Sunnah – that the people must return to for judgment. By doing so, they would always benefit and never go astray, until the Day Allah inherits the earth and those on it. This places an immense responsibility to the Ummah and

its members – the responsibility of learning the Qur’an and Sunnah and passing down the teachings from each generation to the next.

7. He emphasized to all those present the obligation and importance of relaying the message: “Let those who are present relay the message to those who are absent, for it is possible that the one to whom the message is relayed understands better than the one who hears it [directly].” The Prophet ﷺ followed this advice himself when he repeated his speech to as many people as possible and spent the majority of his Hajj instructing the people, answering their questions, and guiding them.

8. The Farewell Hajj is a physical manifestation of the Victory of Allah, and proof that He fulfilled His promise. As He revealed during this occasion: {This day, those who disbelieved have given up all hope of your religion, so fear them not, but fear Me. This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.} {al-Maidah, 3)

9. The Ummah received bittersweet news in the revelation of Surah an-Nasr. On one hand it announced that the Victory of Allah had come and the people were happy. On the other hand, the Companions ﷺ were saddened, understanding that it was also an official farewell - an announcement that the Prophet ﷺ was to soon depart this world. This was further confirmed when he sought Allah’s testimony that he had fulfilled his mission, as well as the people’s testimony.

10. The Hajj in its entirety – beginning from the *talbiyah* all the way to its conclusion – is a manifestation of singling Allah out in His Lordship and Divinity, while simultaneously denying any associates a share in worship. It was performed just as He commanded:

*“And perform properly the Hajj and `Umrah for Allah. But if you are prevented (from completing them), sacrifice a Hady (animal, i.e. a sheep, a cow, or a camel, etc.) such as you can afford, and do not shave your heads until the Hady reaches the place of sacrifice. And whosoever of you is ill or has an ailment in his scalp (necessitating shaving), he must pay a Fidyah (ransom) of either observing Saum (fasts) (three days) or giving Sadaqah (charity - feeding six poor persons) or offering sacrifice (one sheep). Then if you are in safety and whosoever performs the `Umrah in the months of Hajj, before (performing) the Hajj, (i.e. Hajj-at-Tamattu’ and al-Qiran), he must slaughter a Hady such as he can afford, but if he cannot afford it, he*

should observe Saum (fasts) three days during the Hajj and seven days after his return (to his home), making ten days in all. This is for him whose family is not present at al-Masjid-al-Haram (i.e., non-resident of Makkah). And fear Allah much and know that Allah is Severe in punishment.” (Surah al-Baqarah, 196)

11. The Prophet ﷺ gave special attention to those who might experience difficulty during Hajj, such as the shepherds, the women, and the weak. He granted them concessions whenever they requested and was gentle and tranquil in his rituals, and likewise commanded the people to be gentle and tranquil in their movements and rituals.

12. Most of the rituals of Hajj are directly tied to verses from the Qur’an in Surah al-Hajj as well as others. For example:

“And (remember) when We made the House (the Ka`bah at Makkah) a place of resort for mankind and a place of safety. And take you (people) the Maqam (place) of Ibrahim [or the stone on which Ibrahim stood while he was building the Ka`ba] as a place of prayer (for some of your prayers, e.g. two Rak`at after the Tawaf of the Ka`bah at Makkah), and We commanded Ibrahim and Isma`il that they should purify My House (the Ka`bah at Makkah) for those who are circumambulating it, or staying (I`tikaf), or bowing or prostrating themselves (there, in prayer).” (Surah al-Baqarah, 125)

“Verily! As-Safa and al-Marwah (two mountains in Makkah) are of the Symbols of Allah. So it is not a sin on him who perform Hajj or `Umrah of the House (the Ka`ba at Makkah) to perform the going (Tawaf) between them (As-Safa and al-Marwah). And whoever does good voluntarily, then verily, Allah is All-Recogniser, All-Knower.” (Surah al-Baqarah, 158)

13. During Hajj, it is a requirement that the pilgrims abstain from immorality and any sexual relations. Allah says:

“The Hajj is (in) the well-known (lunar year) months (i.e. the 10th month, the 11th month and the first ten days of the 12th month of the Islamic calendar, i.e. two months and ten days). So whosoever intends to perform Hajj therein by assuming Ihram, then he should not have sexual relations, nor commit sin, nor dispute unjustly during the Hajj. And whatever good you do, (be sure) Allah knows it. And take a provision (with you) for the journey, but the best provision is at-Taqwah

(piety, righteousness, etc.). So fear Me, O you of understanding!”  
(Surah al-Baqarah, 197)

14. Hajj is an obligation on whomever is able to fulfill it. Allah says:

*“In it are manifest signs (for example), the Maqam (place) of Ibrahim; and whosoever enters it, he attains security. And Hajj to the House (Ka`bah) is a duty that mankind owes to Allah, those who can afford the expenses (for one’s conveyance, provision and residence); and whoever disbelieves [i.e., denies Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah), then he is a disbeliever of Allah], then Allah stands not in need of any of the `Alamin (mankind and jinns).”* (Surah Aal `Imran, 97)

15. Each day of Hajj is unique with its own name and its own meanings, and specific actions are tied to each day. For example, the Day of Tarwiya, the Day of `Arafah, the Day of Sacrifice, and the Days of Tashriq. This is what is referred to in the verse:

*“And remember Allah during the appointed Days. But whosoever hastens to leave in two days, there is no sin on him and whosoever stays on, there is no sin on him, if his aim is to do good and obey Allah (fear Him), and know that you will surely be gathered unto Him.”*  
(Surah al-Baqarah, 203)

16. The Prophet ﷺ taught us that it is incumbent upon us to love all *Ahl al-Bayt*<sup>1</sup> and to give them preference, and in particular the Leader of the Believers `Ali bin Abi Talib ؑ. It is part of the creed of *Ahl as-Sunnah* to teach and relay this love and respect allotted to `Ali, his children, and all *Ahl al-Bayt*. This love and respect was taught by the same man ﷺ who taught us *Tawhid* and warned us to avoid *shirk*. Therefore it is not considered part of loving them to extol them beyond their reality or to raise them above their inherent humanity, making them partners with Allah in His worship and mentioning them alongside Him in supplication, as some people do. Glorified is Allah, He is above accepting or being satisfied with such beliefs or actions, as are His Messenger, and the pure and blessed members of *Ahl al-Bayt*.

17. The Prophet’s advice to show love and excellent treatment towards *Ahl al-Bayt* is yet another indication of his farewell. He did not live after this Hajj for more than three months. He spoke the truth when he said, “Learn from me your rites [of Hajj], for perhaps, after this year of mine I will never meet you again.”<sup>2</sup>

1. The household of the Prophet ﷺ and his family members.

2. Bukhari:3654

## Ghadir Khum

All Muslims know the lofty status of `Ali bin Abi Talib ؑ; he is the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet ﷺ, the husband of Fatimah and the father of al-Hasan and al-Husain, the grandchildren of the Prophet. He was the first youth to enter Islam and was one of the ten given glad tidings of Paradise. There is no doubt that `Ali was one of the closest and most beloved people to the Messenger of Allah. He is also the fourth of the Rightly Guided Caliphs.

The Prophet ﷺ had sent him on a mission to Yemen as a judge and treasurer after the Battle of Khaybar, and he had rejoined the Prophet in Makkah for the Farewell Hajj. It is apparent from the narrations that a group of people were displeased with `Ali's rulings and wished to receive more preferential treatment from him. They waited until the Hajj was over and the Prophet ﷺ was on his return journey to Madinah to complain about `Ali. When they reached the wells of Ghadir Khum, a group of them began complaining about `Ali in the presence of the Prophet ﷺ.

Zayd bin Arqam ؑ narrates:

“At the wells of Khum, between Makkah and Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ stood in front of us to give a speech. The Prophet said, ‘To proceed, O people: I am a human being, and perhaps soon, a messenger will come to me from my Lord and I will answer the call of my Lord (i.e., I will die).

I leave behind two weighty matters: The first is the Book of Allah, in which is guidance and light, so take the Book of Allah and hold onto it tightly.’ And he encouraged us regarding the Qur’an and advised us with it.

Then he ﷺ said, ‘The second matter is the members of my household (*Ahl al-Bayt*). I remind you to be mindful of Allah regarding the members of my household. I remind you to be mindful of Allah regarding the members of my household. I remind you to be mindful of Allah regarding the members of my household.’”<sup>1</sup>

1. Muslim:8/123- Salih al Ali As-Seerah:550,551



In another narration, the Prophet ﷺ grabbed the hand of `Ali and said, “Whoever is an ally of mine is an ally of his. O Allah, ally whomever he allies and show animosity to his enemies.”<sup>1</sup> It is clear that `Ali was harmed by those who accompanied him to Najran the same way the Prophet ﷺ was harmed by those who accompanied him in the army of Hunayn.

The Ummah in its entirety, and especially *Ahl As-Sunnah*, agrees upon love of `Ali, allegiance to him, and defending him against detractors, especially the Companions ؓ, who heard the words of the Prophet ﷺ at Ghadir Khum in person, and as a result increased in their already present love for `Ali ؓ and then taught this love to the following generations. Had the Prophet ﷺ directly mentioned leadership or rulership after him belonging to `Ali, the Companions would have never taken the matter lightly or ignored their Prophet’s command. It is inconceivable that he would give a direct order in this matter and an audience this large consisting of Companions would ignore it or fail to relay it, as meticulous as they were with all other speeches and events related to the Prophet ﷺ. And yet, some people from later generations claimed that he did directly mention rulership after him, despite evidence of such claims being absent from the original gathering and having no chain of narration to trace back to any of the Companions who were present!

Allah is glorified far above having His Messenger fail to raise an exemplary generation that would lead the Ummah in honesty and trustworthiness. Those who make such claims have gone to extremes regarding `Ali and his status, some of them even deifying him and worshipping him. `Ali ؓ was the most courageous man of his time; he would not back down from his rights or justice and the truth. No generation loved `Ali as much as the Companions, and we ask Allah to resurrect us with them, in the company of `Ali, Abu Bakr, `Umar, and `Uthman – may Allah be pleased with them all.

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1 Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:4/425-Salih al-Ali As-Seerah,P:551

# The Army of Usamah bin Zayd

At this point in time, the Byzantine Empire had an unresolved conflict with the Muslims. The lands of *ash-Sham*<sup>1</sup> were still primarily under Roman control. The Prophet ﷺ had some correspondence with their Emperor, as previously mentioned in this book. In the year 8 AH, the Battle of Mu'ta was fought on the southern borders of the Levant, in which a number of Companions ﷺ were martyred. `Abdullah bin Rawahah, Ja`far bin Abi Talib, and, most importantly, Zayd bin Harithah, the leader of the army, and the freed slave and formerly adopted son of the Prophet ﷺ, were three significant deaths that, up to this point, had remained unavenged. The Prophet ﷺ lead the Expedition of Tabuk himself the following year in 9 AH but did not meet any Byzantine forces, as the Emperor had commanded his armies to refrain from engaging the Muslims. It is likely the Emperor feared the spread of Islam and kept in mind the prophecy that the Muslims would one day own the land beneath his feet. After staying at Tabuk for weeks without any military engagement, the Prophet ﷺ returned to Madinah after striking pacts with the surrounding Arab tribes of the area.

The arrival of tribal ambassadors and the Farewell Hajj occupied much of the Prophet's time in the 10<sup>th</sup> year, and so it passed without any significant interaction with the Byzantines. In the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> year, the Prophet ﷺ returned from Hajj and began preparing an army under the leadership of Usamah (the son of Zayd bin Harithah who led the Muslims in Mu'tah and was martyred there), to engage the Byzantines once more. Despite Usamah being a young man – only eighteen years old – the Prophet ﷺ commanded him, “Go to where your father was killed and descend upon them with your steeds. I have given you command of this army, so make haste and you will reach them before they receive news of you. If Allah grants you victory over them, do not extend your stay among them. Take guides with you and send ahead of you spies and utilize reconnaissance.”<sup>2</sup>

The goal of this army was to enter the borders of Palestine with a show of strength and establish the Muslim authority up to the borders of Byzantine lands, which is why the Prophet encouraged haste and discourage prolonging the stay.

1. The Levant – greater Syria, Palestine, Lebanon, and Jordan.

2 Ibn Sa`ad at-Tabaqat :2/190

The Prophet ﷺ placed 3000 fighters under the command of Usamah, including some of the most senior companions, such as Abu Bakr and `Umar.<sup>1</sup>

The selection of Usamah as the army's commander was a strange decision in the eyes of some. He was a very young man chosen to lead an army of soldiers, some of whom were older than his father, had accepted Islam before he was even born, and had the capability to lead. Some people voiced their dissatisfaction, and this reached the Prophet ﷺ who said, "You criticize his leadership now, and you used to criticize his father's leadership before. I swear by Allah, he [Zayd] was a natural leader, and one of the most beloved people to me. And this man [Usamah] is one of the most beloved people to me after him."<sup>2</sup>

The Prophet himself then handed his standard to Usamah and gave him final instructions. Usamah ﷺ camped with his army north of Madinah at a place called Jurf, awaiting the command of the Prophet to set out. The Prophet ﷺ fell ill before he could give the command and Usamah waited with the Muslim army at Jurf for the duration of the Prophet's illness. When he ﷺ passed away, Usamah returned with the army to pray over the Prophet, after which they returned to Jurf, awaiting the command from Abu Bakr, the Prophet's successor. Abu Bakr ﷺ commanded the army to set out in obedience to one of the Prophet's final commands: "Send forth the army of Usamah."<sup>3</sup>

The wisdom behind this command is obvious: The Prophet ﷺ wanted to send a clear message to Islam's enemies, those who were biding their time, hoping his death would herald the end of this religion. Usamah's army going forward with their original mission to face the Byzantines made Islam's enemies think twice about attacking the Muslims in Madinah and showed the Byzantines the unwavering resolve of the Muslims upon the original plan of their Prophet to spread Islam to *ash-Sham* had not changed with his death.

The message was clear: Islam was not going to end after the Prophet's death. In the Prophet's selection of Usamah to lead the army, and Abu Bakr refusing to change that selection after the Prophet's death was another clear announcement that the tribalism of the Days of Ignorance was abolished. Leadership was to be for those who deserved it and demonstrated the capabilities and responsibilities rather than for those of a notable lineage or simply based on age alone. The selection was also an important indication of the Prophet's love and trust for Usamah and his father Zayd, and their lofty status with him ﷺ.

1 Ibn Abi Shaibah,P:376

2 Bukhari:4468- Ibn Abi Shaibah: 376

3 Ibn Sa`ad at-Tabaqat:2/191

# Establishing the Islamic Nation

It is clear from the onset of revelation that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was striving towards two main goals: the first was to establish worship for Allah alone without any partners in His Divinity or Attributes. The second was to establish a compassionate nation with a just government in which the Law of Allah, which in and of itself is mercy and justice, would be the system people live by. From the early days of the Message in Makkah, the Prophet ﷺ would regularly give his Companions the glad tidings that Islam would spread all over the world, and would one day overcome polytheism and its various unjust manifestations and systems.

One of the many wisdoms behind the message of Islam sprouting from Makkah and the lands of Arabia was that these lands knew no government. They lived by a disorganized culture of customs and traditions, a majority of which were injustice and oppression. There were no discernable laws, forms of government, judicial systems, or universally recognized officials of any sort. Injustice and immorality were widespread. Despicable actions like fornication, intoxication, usury, infanticide, homicide, and oppression of women were widespread. This was one of the reasons opposition to the law and order of Islam was so strong in the early days of Makkah. The Arab tribes in their ignorance were not ready to adhere to such organization and justice and so they fought against it.

The rules and regulations of Islam came down gradually, and were relative to the situations that arose, or the issues that needed to be addressed. Islam's goals were clear from the beginning: to preserve the rights of Allah and the rights of His servants, to establish justice, mercy, and equality between people, and to bring about excellence in all things. These goals were to be established through Islam's laws, rulings, and interior and exterior political system which Allah revealed to produce a successful civil society.

When it became impossible for the Prophet ﷺ to turn Makkah into this society and to establish the civil state Allah intended, he began to look to the other Arab tribes, searching for one that could aid him in this lofty goal. He

needed a compatible group of people to aid him, and a proper location from which to establish his state and begin spreading this message and system to the rest of the world. The people would be leaders of the rest of the world, setting the example for all those who search for an honorable and successful life. Thus, the Prophet ﷺ began presenting himself and his Message to the various Arab tribes who came to Makkah during the Hajj season and those who would come during the trade seasons.

Through Allah's aid, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ met the Ansar in one such Hajj season. They listened to intently to his Message and believed in him when no one else would. They immediately returned to their city and began preparing it to be the base from which the Message would flourish. In a short time, their city became a command center for this new state and its Divine Message, and their men became soldiers ready to sacrifice their lives and their wealth for the sake of this profound Message that they had embraced.

In his book, *Al-Watha'iq As-Siyasiyyah lil `Ahd An-Nabawi wa Al-Khilafah Ar-Rashidah*, Muhammad Hamidullah mentions:

“The foundations for the state and its politics at the time of the Prophet ﷺ were set before the Hijrah to Madinah, during the First and Second Pledges of `Aqabah.”<sup>1</sup> The clauses of the Pledges were then gradually applied as necessary until the Islamic nation was established.

Many publications have been written on the establishment of the Islamic nation by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, focusing on the fundamentals, principles, and laws of its social, economic, and religious structure. Perhaps one of the most prominent works is *Takhreej Ad-Dalalat Ash-Shar'yyah* by Al-Khuza'i which was explained by *Shaykh* Abdul Hayy Al-Kittani in his book *Nitham Al-Hukuma An-Nabawiyyah* which is also called *At-Tarateeb Al-Idariyya*. Also, *Nash'at Ad-Dawlah Al-Islamiyyah* by `Awn Ash-Sharif Qasim is an excellent work on the topic.

In the introduction to *At-Tarateeb Al-Idariyya*, Al-Kittani says:

“With his religious position as the Prophet, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ occupied himself with establishing his perfect religion as both the topmost authority both religiously and secularly. The result was that all authority and political power fell under the religion's authority, leading to advancement and progression in all

<sup>1</sup> *Al-Watha'iq As-Siyasiyyah lil `Ahd An-Nabawi wa Al-Khilafah Ar-Rashidah*. Muhammad Hamidullah

fields.”<sup>1</sup>

The administration that the Prophet ﷺ established in terms of public service and governmental organization became a source which countless leaders and scholars quoted in their laws throughout the generations. It is undeniable that he was a political genius, for he led an Islamic system which many rely on in their social, economic, political, and military policies. The most amazing thing is that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was able to tie together these different policies and systems, making them mesh seamlessly into a structured Islamic civilization. This initial Islamic nation which the Prophet ﷺ built became the nucleus and basis from which many various Islamic empires and dynasties sprouted, using his example to build their governments.

The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ were severely persecuted in Makkah, and so he comforted them and encouraged them to be steadfast by informing them that they would one establish justice and prevent oppression not only in Makkah, but in all the lands. For example, Khabbab bin al-Aratt ؓ came complaining to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ after undergoing particularly brutal torture from Makkans. He requested that the Prophet ﷺ supplicate against his oppressors and for the victory of the Muslims, but he ﷺ replied, “I swear by Allah, Allah will complete this religion until a rider will travel from San`a’ to Hadhramaut fearing none except Allah, and the wolf against his sheep, but you are in too much of a hurry.”<sup>2</sup>

Allah and His Messenger promised that Islam would be victorious and that the Muslims would be given authority over the land, and that they would be established and secure. This promise only came true through the establishment of a nation and a system through which the authority and security would result. The system would meld religion and secular law into one system resulting in the perfect laws and practical policies that mankind needs. This is the clear intended meaning of the Words of Allah the Exalted:

*“Allah has promised those among you who believe and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to (the present rulers) in the earth, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practice their religion, that which He has chosen for them (i.e., Islam). And He will surely give them in exchange a safe security after their fear (provided) they (believers)*

1 At-Tarateeb Al-Idariyyah. Al-Kittani:1/9

2 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/238

*worship Me and do not associate anything (in worship) with Me. But whoever disbelieved after this, they are the Fasiquun (rebellious, disobedient to Allah).” (Surah an-Nur, 55)*

Succession to the rulers of the earth here means succeeding the powers of the world in authority, power, law, and order.

Allah also says:

*“And We wished to confer favor upon those who were weak (and oppressed) in the land, and to make them rulers and to make them the inheritors.” (Surah al-Qasas, 5)*

*And:*

*“And We have already written in the book [of Psalms] after the [previous] mention that the land [of Paradise] is inherited by My righteous servants.” (Surah al-Anbiya’, 105)*

These verses make it clear that the Islamic nation and system were to be superior to the laws of the other nations and were revealed to succeed the powerful nations of the world, Rome and Persia for example, in authority over the land. Jabir bin Samurah narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said, “A group of Muslims will conquer the land of Chosroes.”<sup>1</sup>

While the Muslims were digging the trench during the Battle of Ahzab in 5 AH, a group of Companions came across a large boulder which none of them were able to break. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was called and he began to strike it with his axe. With the first strike, a spark flew out and he shouted “*Allahu Akbar!*” and the Muslims echoed his *takbir*. The Prophet ﷺ then said, “I have been given the keys of *ash-Sham*. I swear by Allah, I can see its red palaces this very moment.” Another spark flew with the second strike, and again the Prophet ﷺ made *takbir* and the Muslims repeated after him. He then said, “I have been given the keys of Persia. I swear by Allah, I can see the White Palace of Ctesiphon.” This happened with the third strike as well, then the boulder crumbled. He then said, “I have been given the keys of Yemen. I swear by Allah, I can see the gates of San`aa from my place this very moment.”<sup>2</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ was training his Companions ﷺ and engraining in them the notion that this religion would one day spread to the lands of the world. He

1 Ibn Ishaq, *As-Seerah*, P: 271

2 Musnad Ahmad:4/303



wanted them to know that the Muslims would one day conquer these lands, directing the people to the worship of Allah. They would do this by establishing the aforementioned political and religious system the world so desperately needed. We see this is the conversation between Rib`i bin `Amir and Rustam, the Persian general, in their dialogue shortly before the Battle of Qadisiyyah, where Rib`i said: “Indeed, Allah has sent us to bring whomever He wills from servitude to other servants to the servitude of Allah; to bring them from the constricts of this worldly life to its expansiveness; and to bring them from the oppression of other religions to the justice of Islam...”

The Prophet’s vision from the early days of his call was a humanistic system that embodies justice and equality. The nation he built was established in stages: it started with the revelation and the beginning of the Call, gained strength and foundations after the Hijrah, and finally developed and blossomed after the Conquest of Makkah, leading almost every nation of the entire Arabian Peninsula. The Prophet ﷺ became the head of state to this great nation in addition to being its Prophet and Messenger, and he prepped his Companions to bring this religion and Divine system of justice to the world.<sup>1</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ lead this nation with impeccable administration. He appointed positions and delegated responsibilities as needed to provide the nation with a proper working government with all the necessary moving parts. All this was directly inspired to him by Allah as a part of the religion he came with to bring mercy to all mankind. Allah the Exalted says:

*“And We have not sent you (O Muhammad) but as a mercy for the `Alamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists).” (Surah al-Anbiya’, 107)*

In his book, *The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History*, Michael H. Hart says: “Muhammad (unlike Jesus) was a political as well as a religious leader. In fact, as the driving force behind the Arab conquests, he may well rank as the most influential political leader of all time.”<sup>2</sup>



1 At-Tabari:4/106

2. Hart, Michael. *The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History*





## Organizing the Nation

Arab lands – the areas of Najd and Hejaz in particular – were far removed from any type of political or administrative organization. They knew no government, and instead functioned based on customs and at the random discretion of the tribes who lived there. They could not be called a nation in the true sense of the word. Makkah did not have any system of officials who can be held responsible or any clear hierarchy of leadership. The same went for Madinah and the surrounding areas. Despite being cities and having large populations compared to the surrounding lands, they still functioned using tribal customs until they fell under the authority of the Messenger ﷺ. This was something clearly highlighted in the Qur'an, Allah says:

*“Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever Hearing and Seeing. O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger, and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority. (And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger if you believe in Allah and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.”* (Surah an-Nisa', 58-59)

Allah also says:

*“Indeed We have sent Our Messengers with clear proofs, and revealed with them the Scripture and the Balance (justice) that mankind may keep up justice. And We brought forth iron wherein is mighty power (in matters of war), as well as many benefits for mankind, that Allah may test who it is that will help Him (His religion), and His Messengers in the unseen. Verily, Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty.”* (Surah al-Hadid, 25)

The Prophet ﷺ became the head of state, appointed officials and administrators, and delegated responsibilities – all foreign concepts to the Arab population of the time. From the time of the Second Pledge of al-'Aqaba, the Prophet ﷺ began his work as head of state. He requested from those who made the pledge to select twelve leaders that would represent them, take orders on their behalf, and follow up with them regarding the commands they were tasked with.

He even took specific pledges of allegiance from the men and women respectively, according to what each gender was tasked with. Allah says:

*“O Prophet! When believing women come to you to give you the Bai`a (pledge), that they will not associate anything in worship with Allah, that they will not steal, that they will not commit illegal sexual intercourse, that they will not kill their children, that they will not utter slander, intentionally forging falsehood (i.e., by making illegal children belonging to their husbands), and that they will not disobey you in any Ma`ruf (Islamic Monotheism and all that which Islam ordains) then accept their pledge, and ask Allah to forgive them, Verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”* (Surah al-Mumtahinah, 12)

He introduced organized leadership, so responsibilities can be perfectly clear. For example, he ﷺ said, “When three persons set out on a journey, they should appoint one of them as their leader.”<sup>1</sup>

If we turn to his military leadership, we see that the Prophet ﷺ would lead some expeditions himself at times and send troops at other times. He would take all necessary precautions to appoint the appropriate leadership and set up contingency plans for his soldiers. For example, in the Battle of Mu'tah, he placed Zayd bin Harithah ؓ in charge of the army and said, “If he is killed, [the leader will be] Ja'far bin Abi Talib, and if Ja'far is killed then `Abdullah bin Rawahah, and if `Abdullah is killed then let the Muslims choose a man.”<sup>2</sup> So we see that he stressed to his Companions the need for organization, leadership, obedience in good, and unity.

Thus, Madinah evolved from a normal city to the capital of the Islamic nation with the Prophet ﷺ as its head of state. When he would leave on expeditions or for any other purpose, he would leave a deputy behind to manage the city's affairs until his return and to act in his absence. We see that the narrators always mention the name of the Companion that the Prophet ﷺ left behind in his stead in every narration wherein the Prophet ﷺ had set out on a journey. Of the most prominent Companions whom the Prophet would choose was `Abdullah bin Umm Maktum ؓ. He left him in charge during the Battle of Badr, the Expedition of Hamra al-Asad, and many other expeditions. The Prophet ﷺ left him as his deputy over Madinah approximately thirteen times.<sup>3</sup>

1 Al-Kattani At-Tarateeb al-Idariyah:1/222, Ahmad:2/177

2 Ibn Abi Shaibah :367

3 Ibn Hajar, Al-Isabah:523

Other notable Companions chosen for this task include `Uthman bin `Affan and `Ali bin Abi Talib, whom he appointed during the Battle of Tabuk. When `Ali was not satisfied with being left behind and wished to accompany the Prophet ﷺ, the Messenger of Allah told him, “Are you not satisfied with being to me just as Aaron was to Moses, except that no Prophet shall come after me?”<sup>1</sup>

The Prophet’s diligence in appointing a deputy, no matter how short his planned absence was, shows us his impeccable skills as a leader and administrator. Again, he sought to teach his Companions, and us, the importance of leadership and organization.

As the Nation continued to expand in the end of his lifetime ﷺ, passing far beyond the boundaries of Madinah and encompassing most of the surrounding lands, the Prophet ﷺ sent to each land governors, judges, and other ministers to teach the people, administer their affairs, and judge between them in disputes. He even sent representatives to the various tribes located all over the Arabian Peninsula.



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1. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/128- Ahmad:1/182

## Justice and Equality

Justice is an important Islamic and human principle. It governs the Muslim's private and public life and plays a role in all his or her affairs, particularly when it comes to any interaction that involves others. At all times and in all places, the implementation of justice from the bottom to the top, from the individual citizen all the way to the government and heads of state, is one of the most important goals of every nation. Allah the Exalted said:

*“Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded.”* (Surah an-Nahl, 90)

Allah also says:

*“Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever Hearing and Seeing.”* (Surah an-Nisa', 58)

And:

*“So to that [religion of Allah] invite, [O Muhammad], and remain on a right course as you are commanded and do not follow their inclinations but say, “I have believed in what Allah has revealed of the Qur'an, and I have been commanded to do justice among you. Allah is our Lord and your Lord. For us are our deeds, and for you your deeds. There is no [need for] argument between us and you. Allah will bring us together, and to Him is the [final] destination.””* (Surah ash-Shura, 15)

Likewise, Allah warned us sternly in the Qur'an regarding oppression:

*“And never think that Allah is unaware of what the wrongdoers do. He only delays them for a Day when eyes will stare [in horror]. Racing ahead, their heads raised up, their glance does not come back to them,*

*and their hearts are void. And, [O Muhammad], warn the people of a Day when the punishment will come to them and those who did wrong will say, "Our Lord, delay us for a short term; we will answer Your call and follow the messengers." [But it will be said], "Had you not sworn, before, that for you there would be no cessation?"* (Surah Ibrahim, 42-44)

Allah commands us to deal justly with all people, even our enemies:

*"O you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah and be just witnesses and let not the enmity and hatred of others make you avoid justice. Be just: that is nearer to piety, and fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do."* (Surah al-Ma'idah, 8)

The Prophet ﷺ also warned us against oppression, saying: "Beware of oppression, for oppression will result in excessive darkness on the Day of Resurrection and beware of miserliness, for miserliness destroyed your predecessors; it led them to spill each other's blood and make lawful the prohibitions."<sup>1</sup>

These verses make it undoubtedly clear that justice does not pertain to judgement alone, rather it is a general concept relevant to every Muslim in all his or her dealings. For example, justice plays an essential role in all types of administrative work. Any type of administrator must be just by being diligent in performing what they are tasked with, regarding their duty towards the people whose affairs they manage, and in the responsibilities they were tasked with by their superiors. As many sacred texts indicate, this is even applicable to the administrative tasks we carry out regarding our families, which is even more indicative of the emphasis on justice and fairness in our responsibilities towards everyone else.

Another aspect of justice which the Prophet ﷺ emphasized was the universal application of the law. There could be no favors or connections that suspend the application of the law as some of the previous nations allowed. He warned that the law must be applied to the rich and the poor, and the strong and the weak alike. In one narration, he said: "The nations before you were destroyed because if one of their nobles stole, they would forgive him, and if one of their poor stole, they would apply Allah's legal punishment on him. By Allah, if Fatimah the daughter of Muhammad stole, I would cut off her hand."<sup>2</sup>

1. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:3/99- Ahmad:2/92

2. Bukhari:3733

This hadith also teaches us that it was the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself who would judge between the people in disputes, establishing justice and preventing disputants from cheating one another. He would constantly warn against encroaching on the rights of others, especially by taking advantage of a judicial ruling. Umm Suliam narrates: “The Prophet ﷺ heard some people quarreling at his door, so he went out to them and said, “I am only a human being, and litigants come to me with disputes, and someone may happen to be more eloquent [in presenting a case] than the other, whereby I may consider that he is truthful and pass a judgment in his favor. If ever I pass a judgment in favor of somebody whereby he takes a Muslim’s right unjustly, then whatever he takes is nothing but a piece of Fire, and it is up to him to take it or leave it.”<sup>1</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ was a fair judge who focused solely on guaranteeing the rights to whomever they were entitled, even if they were not Muslims. He warned us severely from lying under oath or twisting words to make one’s case more appealing. In the hadith narrated by `Abdullah bin Mas`ud ؓ, the Prophet ﷺ said: “Whoever swears a false oath intending to take the property of a Muslim shall meet Allah [on the Day of Judgment] while He is angry with him.”<sup>2</sup> Regarding this, Allah the Exalted revealed the verse:

*“Verily, those who purchase a small gain at the cost of Allah’s Covenant and their oaths, they shall have no portion in the Hereafter (Paradise). Neither will Allah speak to them, nor look at them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He purify them, and they shall have a painful torment.”* (Surah Aal-`Imran, 77)

Allah showed us the severity of this matter when He paired false testimony with associating partners with Him in worship (i.e., shirk). Allah the Exalted said:

*“... So shun the abomination (worshipping) of idols, and shun lying speech (false statements).”* (Surah al-Hajj, 30)

The Prophet ﷺ also made it very clear that impartiality when judging disputes was crucial. The judge must view litigants on a level field, not favoring one over the other in any way. The Prophet ﷺ clarified the Islamic system of disputation in the hadith: “Proof is due from the plaintiff and the oath is due from the defendant.”<sup>3</sup> He also closed the door for false claims in the hadith: “If people were given whatever they claimed [in disputes], some people would claim the

1 Bukhari: 2458

2 Bukhari:2416

3 Bukhari: Fath al-Bari:3/146

lives and wealth of others [unjustly].”<sup>1</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ taught us the integral role of testimonies in disputes and emphasized that it was a duty that must be upheld with justice. As Allah the Exalted said:

*“Then when they are about to fulfil their term appointed, either take them back in a good manner or part with them in a good manner. And take for witness two just persons from among you (Muslims). And establish the witness for Allah. That will be an admonition given to him who believes in Allah and the Last Day. And whosoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty).”* (Surah at-Talaq, 2)

Allah commands us in the Qur’an to establish justice, even if it go against our desires, even if it is against our dearest family members, and even if it against our own selves:

*“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.”* (Surah an-Nisa’, 135)

Allah also said:

*“O Dawud (David)! Verily! We have placed you as a successor on earth, so judge you between men in truth (and justice) and follow not your desire for it will mislead you from the Path of Allah. Verily! Those who wander astray from the Path of Allah (shall) have a severe torment, because they forgot the Day of Reckoning.”* (Surah Sad, 26)

Justice and fairness are such universal rights; even enemies are due their share:

*“O you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah and be just witnesses and let not the enmity and hatred of others make you avoid justice. Be just: that is nearer to piety, and fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do.”* (Surah al-Ma’idah, 8).

In the Divine Hadith, the Prophet ﷺ narrated to us the words of Allah: “O My servants, indeed I have forbidden oppression upon Myself, and have made it

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1 Muslim:5/138

forbidden upon you, so do not oppress one another.”<sup>1</sup>

Allah also said:

*“(They like to) listen to falsehood, to devour anything forbidden. So if they come to you (O Muhammad), either judge between them, or turn away from them. If you turn away from them, they cannot hurt you in the least. And if you judge, judge with justice between them. Verily, Allah loves those who act justly.”* (Surah al-Ma’idah, 42)

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Judges are of three types; two types will be in the Hellfire and one will be in Paradise. [The first is] a man who knowingly judges without the truth, and so he is in the Fire. [The second is] A judge who judges while not knowing, thereby ruining the rights of the people. So, he is in the Fire. [The third is] a judge who judges with the truth, that is the one in Paradise.”<sup>2</sup>

Islam forbade us from giving or accepting bribes, for they promote injustice, facilitate oppression, and wrongly influence judgments. The Prophet ﷺ said: “Allah curses the one who gives a bribe and the one who takes it.”<sup>3</sup>

After thoroughly teaching the concepts of justice and fairness to his Companions, reciting to them the multitude of verses which Allah revealed on the topic, and engraining these principles in their hearts, the Prophet ﷺ sent various Companions to put these Islamic virtues into practice in different areas far beyond Madinah, most of which entered Islam and joined the Islamic State towards the end of the Prophet’s life. The most prominent Companion he sent was `Ali bin Abi Talib ؑ, whom he sent to Yemen as a judge. While advising him regarding the task at hand, the Prophet ﷺ told `Ali: “When two litigants come to you, do not pass judgment for one of them until you hear what the other has to say.”

Another prominent Companion sent as a judge to Yemen was Mu`adh bin Jabal ؑ. Before his departure, the Prophet ﷺ asked Mu`adh: “What will you judge with?”

Mu`adh replied, “With the Book of Allah.”

The Prophet then asked, “And if you do not find [the answer therein]?”

Mu`adh said, “With the Sunnah of His Messenger.”

The Prophet again asked, “And if you do not find [the answer therein]?”

Mu`adh answered, “I will use my opinion to the best of my knowledge.”

1 Muslim:8/17, Ahmad:5/160

2 Tirmidhi:1322

3 Ahmad: 2/164-5/279, Ibn Majah, and Tirmidhi:1336



The Prophet then said, “All praise be to Allah, who made the messenger of the Messenger of Allah upon that which pleases His Messenger.” (Al-Albani considered this hadith unauthentic.<sup>1</sup>)

Thus, the Prophet ﷺ left no nation or tribe in the Islamic Ummah without governors or judges that would establish justice and judge between the people.

During his reign as caliph, `Umar ؓ followed the same precedent left by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He appointed Abu Musa al-Ash`ari ؓ as a judge and wrote to him a lengthy treatise advising him regarding his duty. Of what `Umar wrote to Abu Musa was:

“To proceed:

Judging between people is a binding obligation [from Allah] and a sunnah [of the Prophet] that must be followed. Understand clearly when evidence is presented before you and know that there is no benefit in speaking the truth without practical application, and no benefit in a single person despairing in receiving your attention, your justice, or being in your gatherings. Be so that no honorable person can hope in your injustice in their favor and no weak person despairs in your justice.

Proof is due from the plaintiff and the oath is due from the defendant. Mutually satisfactory agreements between Muslims are allowed unless they make permissible that which is prohibited or prohibit that which is permissible. You are not prevented by the fact that you passed a judgment yesterday from returning to the truth today – if you reviewed it in your mind and then were guided to what is correct, for the truth is ever present, it is never invalidated by anything. Returning to the truth after review is far better than continuing upon falsehood.

Understanding! Understanding is vital when things do not sit well in your heart, issues that are not from the Book of Allah the Exalted or in the Sunnah of His Prophet. Know the examples and the comparable issues, then make analogies between things that correspond.

Appoint a set time for the plaintiff to produce his evidence if he requests it and ensure the rights of whoever produces satisfactory evidence by granting the proper judgment. This is more conducive to eliminating doubt and clearing up confusion.

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1 Al-Mawardi, al-Ahkam as-Sultaniyah,P: 67

Do not grow weary or be worried while judging between litigants, for presenting the truth where it is needed is an extraordinary deed that Allah rewards for greatly.”<sup>1</sup>

There is no doubt that clear regulations and legislation wherein equality between people is codified are essential components for a successful Islamic society to flourish. A judiciary which can be relied on to preserve people’s rights and an authority with the strength to allocate rights as they are due, uphold judgments, and prevent oppression are also essentials that will apply these principles in society. The result would be a safe and secure society, living honorable lives in the shade of justice and equality, fruitful and successful, without the constant worry and fear of oppression and transgression regarding their lives, honor, or wealth. This is the society the Prophet ﷺ aimed to build and taught his Companions to establish.

Based on these teachings, the scholars of Islam have produced countless works deducing policies and extrapolating legislation for every day and age, all with the aim of producing this ideal society and promoting these exemplary values, based solely on the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ. Unfortunately, much of our Ummah is unaware of this knowledge and many leaders ignored it, resulting in the widespread misguidance we see today.



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1 .A,lam al-Mu,aqeen: 1/85,86

## Peace and Security

Preserving security is another essential human value needed for a functioning society. When the Prophet ﷺ began his mission, the Arab world lived in a violent society void of security. Chaos reigned in Arab lands; the strong devoured the weak, travel was difficult if not impossible for most people, security was only somewhat achievable through brute force, such as covenants between tribes that threatened whoever harmed their constituents, and there was no universally recognized law that guaranteed safety.

Allah reminded us in the Qur'an of the importance of security, pairing it provision and sustenance. Allah the Exalted said:

*“(He) Who has fed them against hunger and has made them safe from fear.” (Surah Quraish, 4)*

He also said:

*“Allah has promised those among you who believe, and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to (the present rulers) in the earth, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practice their religion, that which He has chosen for them (i.e., Islam). And He will surely give them in exchange a safe security after their fear (provided) they (believers) worship Me and do not associate anything (in worship) with Me. But whoever disbelieved after this, they are the Fasiqun (rebellious, disobedient to Allah).” (Surah an-Nur, 55)*

As well as the verse

*“And We placed between them and the towns which We had blessed, towns easy to be seen, and We made the stages (of journey) between them easy (saying): “Travel in them safely both by night and day.”” (Surah Saba', 18)*

And:

“In it are manifest signs (for example), the Maqam (place) of Ibrahim; whosoever enters it, he attains security. And Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah) to the House (Ka`bah) is a duty that mankind owes to Allah, those who can afford the expenses (for one’s conveyance, provision and residence); and whoever disbelieves [i.e., denies Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah), then he is a disbeliever of Allah], then Allah stands not in need of any of the `alamin (mankind and jinns).” (Surah Aal-`Imran, 97)

In the Qur’an, we find the words of Abraham:

“And (remember) when Ibrahim said: “O my Lord! Make this city (Makkah) one of peace and security, and keep me and my sons away from worshipping idols.” (Surah Ibrahim, 35)

In Surah al-Baqarah, Allah says:

“And (remember) when We made the House (the Ka`bah at Makkah) a place of resort for mankind and a place of safety. And take you (people) the Maqam (place) of Ibrahim [or the stone on which Ibrahim stood while he was building the Ka`bah] as a place of prayer (for some of your prayers, e.g. two Rak`at after the Tawaf of the Ka`bah at Makkah), and We commanded Ibrahim and Isma`il that they should purify My House (the Ka`bah at Makkah) for those who are circumambulating it, or staying (I`tikaf), or bowing or prostrating themselves (there, in prayer).” (Surah al-Baqarah, 125)

And in Surah al-An`am:

“It is those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah and worship none but Him Alone) and confuse not their belief with Dhulm (wrong i.e., by worshipping others besides Allah), for them (only) there is security and they are the guided.” (Surah al-An`am, 82)

And Allah reminded all cities and nations of the blessing when He said:

“Did the people of the towns then feel secure against the coming of Our Punishment by night while they are asleep? Or, did the people of the towns then feel secure against the coming of Our Punishment in the forenoon while they play? Did they then feel secure against the Plan of Allah? None feels secure from the Plan of Allah except the

*people who are the losers.” (Surah al-A`raf, 97-99)*

As well as in the verse:

*“And Allah puts forward the example of a township (Makkah), that dwelt secure and well content; its provision coming to it in abundance from every place, but it (its people) denied the Favours of Allah (with ungratefulness). So Allah made it taste the extreme of hunger (famine) and fear, because of that (evil, i.e., denying Prophet Muhammad) which they (its people) used to do.” (Surah an-Nahl, 112)*

The Prophet ﷺ gave the Companions glad tidings many times that this religion would one day spread far and wide and lead to peace and security. He ﷺ said to `Adi bin Hatim ؓ: “I swear by Allah, soon you will hear of a woman leaving from Qadisiyya on her camel, traveling [safely] until she visits this House [i.e., the Ka`bah], not fearing anything but Allah.”<sup>1</sup>

He also said: “Allah will bring this matter [Islam] to fruition, such that a rider will travel [safely] from Sanaa to Hadramawt, not fearing anything but Allah and the wolf against his sheep.”<sup>2</sup>

Safety and security in society is one of the most important goals of Islam, and as such eradicating fear, insecurity, and their causes is a must. Of the purposes behind the establishment of laws and the Islamic judicial system is to uphold security and preserve lives. Allah the Exalted says:

*“Because of that We ordained for the Children of Israel that if anyone killed a person not in retaliation of murder, or (and) to spread mischief in the land - it would be as if he killed all mankind, and if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of all mankind. And indeed, there came to them Our Messengers with clear proofs, evidences, and signs, even then after that many of them continued to exceed the limits (e.g. by doing oppression unjustly and exceeding beyond the limits set by Allah by committing the major sins) in the land!” (Surah al-Ma`idah, 32)*

And: “And (remember) when We took your covenant (saying): Shed not the blood of your people, nor turn out your own people from their dwellings. Then, (this) you ratified and (to this) you bear witness.” (Surah al-Baqarah, 84)

And: “And those who invoke not any other ilah (god) along with Allah, nor kill such life as Allah has forbidden, except for just cause, nor commit illegal

1 Ibn Abi Shaibah, P: 142, Ibn Hisham As-seerah: 4/581

2 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/238

sexual intercourse and whoever does this shall receive the punishment.” (Surah al-Furqan, 68)

As well as: “And do not kill anyone which Allah has forbidden, except for a just cause. And whoever is killed (intentionally with hostility and oppression and not by mistake), We have given his heir the authority [(to demand Qisas, Law of Equality in punishment or to forgive, or to take Diya (blood money))]. But let him not exceed limits in the matter of taking life (i.e., he should not kill except the killer only). Verily, he is helped (by the Islamic law).” (Surah al-Isra’, 33)

Likewise, the Prophet ﷺ emphasized in his teachings the importance of trust and safety between people, as well as the prohibition of transgressing against one another’s lives. This principle was so important that he had people recite it in their oaths of allegiance to him. `Ubadah bin as-Samit ؓ narrates:

“I gave the Messenger of Allah ﷺ my oath along with a group of people. The Prophet ﷺ said: ‘I take your oaths that you will not associate any partners with Allah in worship; that you will not steal, fornicate, kill your children, or bring forth a slander you invented from between your arms and legs, and that you will not disobey me in what is right. Whoever among you fulfills [his oath], then his reward is with Allah. Whoever commits any of these acts will be punished for it in this world, and that will be an expiation and purification for him. Whoever Allah conceals, then it is up to Him – He will punish him if He wills, or He will forgive him if He wills.’”<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the most notable instances when the Prophet ﷺ emphasized the matter of security was during the Farewell Hajj. In his speech at `Arafah, he said: “Which month do you know has the greatest sanctity?”

The people replied, “This month of ours [i.e., Dhul Hijjah].”

He asked, “Which land do you know has the greatest sanctity?”

They replied, “This land of ours [i.e., Makkah].”

He asked, “Which day do you know has the greatest sanctity?”

They replied, “This day of ours [i.e., the Day of `Arafah].”

The Prophet ﷺ then said, “Indeed, Allah the Exalted has made your blood, your wealth, and your honor inviolable between one another, except by due right, just like the sanctity of this day, in this land, in this month. Have I not relayed [the message]?” He repeated this three times, each time the people replied in the

1 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:7/18, H:6784,6801

affirmative.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Beware! Do not go back to being disbelievers after me; each one of you striking the neck of the other.”<sup>1</sup>

He also emphasized the importance of the blessing of security in general when he said: “Whosoever begins the day secure in [the presence of] his family, with his body in good health, and possessing provision for his day, it is as though he possesses the whole world.”<sup>2</sup>

He emphasized the security of others as well. He said: “It is not permissible for a Muslim to terrify another Muslim.”<sup>3</sup> He would often supplicate: “O Allah, conceal my faults and soothe my fears.”<sup>4</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ used the authority of the Islamic State of Madinah to secure the surrounding lands and procure safety and peace for all people, Muslim or not. For this reason, he ﷺ arranged a general covenant and a constitution of peace with all Madinah’s inhabitants as soon as he arrived. In this agreement, everyone agreed to defend the city, uphold peace, and refrain from allying or aiding anyone who wished to attack or terrorize its inhabitants. He took the task upon himself to follow up with all of Madinah’s affairs, ensuring the safety and security of its citizens, and establishing Allah’s legal punishment upon those who infringed on this security, regardless of their status.

In Bukhari’s authentic hadith collection, under a number of different chapters, we have the narration of A’ishah ؓ which clarifies the inviolable nature of the sanctity of security. She says: “Some members of the Quraish took up the cause of a woman from Banu Makhzum who stole. They said, ‘Who shall speak on her behalf?’ i.e., in front of the Messenger of Allah. So they decided, ‘None has the ability to do so except Usamah bin Zayd, the beloved of the Messenger of Allah.’

So Usamah spoke on her behalf to the Messenger of Allah. The Prophet ﷺ became very angry and said, ‘O Usamah, do you intercede regarding one of the legal punishments of Allah?!’ He then gathered the people and said: “Nations before you were destroyed because if one of their nobles stole, they would forgive him, and if one of their poor stole, they would apply Allah’s legal punishment on him. By Allah, if Fatimah the daughter of Muhammad stole, I would cut off her

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1 Bukhari:6785

2 Tirmidhi:2346

3 Ahmad:5/262

4 Ahmad:2/25

hand.”<sup>1</sup> This was because the legal punishment of cutting the thief’s hands is a direct command of Allah:

*“Cut off (from the wrist joint) the hand of the thief, male or female, as a recompense for that which they committed, a punishment by way of example from Allah. And Allah is All-Powerful, All-Wise. But whosoever repents after his crime and does righteous good deeds (by obeying Allah), then verily, Allah will pardon him (accept his repentance). Verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”* (Surah al-Ma’idah, 38-39)

The Prophet implemented this legal punishment against the woman from Banu Makhzum despite her nobility, the intercession of Usamah, and despite the intercession of the Makkan nobles. He did this to emphasize the important role this prescribed legal punishment has in maintaining security, particularly regarding people’s wealth. It is obvious that any nation that implements this legal punishment will see the rate of theft diminish, as it did during the time of the Prophet ﷺ, until it was almost non-existent. Thus, the people lived in security regarding the wealth.

Similarly, the prescribed legal punishment for murder was death, unless the family of the victim were willing to forgive the murderer. Allah the Exalted clearly said this in the verse:

*“And do not kill anyone which Allah has forbidden, except for a just cause. And whoever is killed (intentionally with hostility and oppression and not by mistake), We have given his heir the authority [(to demand Qisas, Law of Equality in punishment or to forgive, or to take Diah (blood money)]. But let him not exceed limits in the matter of taking life (i.e., he should not kill except the killer only). Verily, he is helped (by the Islamic law).”* (Surah al-Isra’, 33)

*Qisas*<sup>2</sup> as the punishment for murder prevented people from thinking so easily of spilling blood as they once used to before Islam. Thus, *Qisas* in fact preserves life, just as Allah the Exalted said:

*“And there is (a saving of) life for you in al-Qisas (the Law of Equality in punishment), O men of understanding, that you may become al-Muttaqun (the pious).”* (Surah al-Baqarah, 179).

Likewise, Allah outlined the punishment for those who actively wage war against

1. Bukhari Fath al-Bari: 8/16  
2. Legally prescribed retribution.



Him, His Messenger, and the Muslims and spread corruption in the land:

*“The recompense of those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger and do mischief in the land is only that they shall be killed or crucified or their hands and their feet be cut off on the opposite sides, or be exiled from the land. That is their disgrace in this world, and a great torment is theirs in the Hereafter. Except for those who (having fled away and then) came back (as Muslims) with repentance before they fall into your power; in that case, know that Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”* (Surah al-Ma’idah, 33-34)

There was a group of men from the tribe of `Ukal who came to the Messenger of Allah while they were ill. They requested provisions and aid, so he directed them to a flock of his camels where they drank from the camels’ milk and urine until they were fat and healthy again. In an act of pure treachery, they then killed the shepherd in a gruesome manner and chased away the guards. When news of this reached the Prophet ﷺ, the men were captured and received their punishment. So, we see that this punishment is reserved for the most brutal of criminals who spread terror in the land, uproot covenants of security, deceive and kill indiscriminately, and similar actions.<sup>1</sup>

Despite this, the Prophet ﷺ showed us that the default is security and forgiveness, even for enemies if they are not actively fighting against the Muslims. He even entered Makkah during its conquest declaring to all his enemies that whoever entered the home of Abu Sufyan would be secure, whoever closed their door would be secure, and whoever entered the Sacred Masjid would be secure.

The Prophet ﷺ established safety and security in the state of Madinah and outside of it by combining crime prevention, establishment of Allah’s legal punishments, preservation of rights, organization of justice and judgment, and enforcing peace. Religion, belief in Allah alone, provision, and security are the main goals of humanity Allah outlined in His Words:

*“So let them worship (Allah) the Lord of this House (the Ka`bah in Makkah). (He) Who has fed them against hunger and has made them safe from fear.”* (Surah Quraish, 3-4)

Allah grouped *Tawhid*, provisions, and security together in these verses, tying them to the Ka`bah, the physical focal point of worship of all Muslims, to symbolize Islam as a system. For that is the only way to truly actualize these principles.

1 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari: 8/19

# A Society of Values and Manners<sup>1</sup>

If we take a general look at modern day societies, and a specific glance at the Arab nations, we will see a widespread decay of morals and values. It has reached a point that a large segment of society has generally adopted evil ways and deal with each other with the worst of manners.

The Prophet ﷺ began his mission in Makkah, where members of that society also had a lack of compassion and mercy in their dealings with one another. The Prophet's mission was to replace this harsh uncivilized society with a more humane and caring one, to achieve perfect harmony between the religious and civil aspects of society.

As we know, the Quraish resisted the Prophet's Message from its first day. The Muslims endured this resistance for many years, but after facing increasing amounts persecution and oppression, they were forced to leave Makkah and establish their society elsewhere. They found refuge in Madinah where they were hosted by the Ansar. The first step taken by the Prophet ﷺ in establishing this society was to form a bond between the Muhajirun and the Ansar, a permanent brotherhood of faith. Allah the Exalted references this brotherhood in His Words:

*“And those who, before them, had homes (in Madinah) and had adopted the Faith, love those who emigrate to them, and have no jealousy in their breasts for that which they have been given, and give them (emigrants) preference over themselves, even though they were in need of that. And whosoever is saved from his own covetousness, such are they who will be the successful.”* (Surah al-Hashr, 9)

This brotherhood was not exclusive to the Companions alone. Rather, it was

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1 Perhaps the best summary of how the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ built a society with the best of manners and the loftiest values, and trained them to aim for excellence in all their interactions is the section labeled “The Book of Manners” in *Sahih Bukhari*. Here one can find over 120 headings detailing the Prophet's guidance for excellence with the rich and the poor, the old and the young, the neighbor and the stranger, and a guideline for mercy and compassion with all people.

a precedent for all Muslim societies to come. Allah said in the verses after that:  
“And those who came after them say:

*“Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in Faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful.”*  
(Surah al-Hashr, 10)

Purification of the soul, personal development, and building moral character were all fundamental components of the Prophet’s Message. We see this in a multitude of Qur’anic verses. For example, Allah says:

*“Similarly (to complete My Blessings on you) We have sent among you a Messenger of your own, reciting to you Our Verses (the Qur’an) and sanctifying you, and teaching you the Book (the Qur’an) and the Hikmah (i.e., Sunnah, Islamic laws and Fiqh - jurisprudence), and teaching you that which you used not to know.”* (Surah al-Baqarah, 151)

And:

*“Indeed Allah conferred a great favor on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from among themselves, reciting unto them His Verses, and purifying them, and instructing them (in) the Book (the Qur’an) and Al-Hikmah [the wisdom and the Sunnah of the Prophet (i.e., his legal ways, statements, acts of worship, etc.)], while before that they had been in manifest error.”* (Surah Aal `Imran, 164)

And:

*“He it is Who sent among the unlettered ones a Messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His Verses, purifying them (from the filth of disbelief and polytheism), and teaching them the Book and Al-Hikmah. And verily, they had been before in manifest error.”* (Surah al-Jumu`ah, 2)

As well as:

*“Our Lord! Send amongst them a Messenger of their own who shall recite unto them Your Verses and instruct them in the Book and Al-Hikmah and sanctify them. Verily! You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.”* (Surah al-Baqarah, 129)

Likewise, the Prophet ﷺ informed us: “I was only sent to perfect the most honorable characteristics.”<sup>1</sup> He also summarized religiosity by saying: “Righteousness is [having] excellent manners.”<sup>2</sup> He also said: “The best of you are those with the best manners.”<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, we see much of Islamic teachings outlining proper relationships and legislating the correct interaction between individual members of society. Logically, Islam focuses on the most important and most basic relationship first, and so we see the most emphasis on children’s relationship with their parents and vice versa. By commanding it directly through divine revelation, Allah the Exalted ordered mercy, compassion, and understanding between one generation and the next. We see the importance of this relationship in several places in the Qur’an, especially since it is commonly paired with the obedience of Allah Himself. Allah the Exalted said:

*“And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be dutiful to your parents. If one or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect nor shout at them, but address them in terms of honor and lower unto them the wing of submission and humility through mercy, and say: “My Lord! Bestow on them Your Mercy as they did bring me up when I was small.””*  
(Surah al-Isra’, 23-24)

Next, Allah directed our compassion and kind treatment towards our relatives. Allah the Exalted says:

*“And give to the kindred his due and to the poor and to the wayfarer. But spend not wastefully (your wealth) in the manner of a spendthrift.”*  
(Surah al-Isra’, 26)

The Prophet ﷺ exemplified these commands in every waking moment of his life, and he was the most well-mannered individual, as attested to by friend and foe. Allah Himself attested before all to this fact in His Words:

*“And verily, you (O Muhammad) are on an exalted standard of character.”* (Surah al-Qalam, 4)

Accordingly, Allah commanded us to take His Prophet as our role model. Allah says:

*“Indeed in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example to follow*

1. Ahmad: 8952
2. Ahmad: 2/250
3. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari: 7/82

*for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much.” (Surah al-Ahzab, 21)*

Inspecting his daily life, we see that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ lived with the utmost humility. He regularly visited the sick, followed funeral processions, and accepted the invitations of his community members regardless of their social status. He disliked when people would stand for him, and he did not have any trouble interacting humbly with the old and the young. When a traveler would come to Madinah, he would have trouble singling out the Prophet in a gathering. The Prophet ﷺ was generous, honorable, virtuous, self-reliant, brave, patient, compassionate, gentle, and sincere, and he taught others to uphold these same virtues. He took matters of hygiene seriously as part of the religion, such as purification with water, as well as adorning oneself with pleasant scents, and he instructed his Companions ﷺ with the same.

Most importantly, he was the most excellent in his manners with Allah, the Glorified and the Exalted. He embodied the understanding of true *Tawhid*, which is not interacting with anyone or anything with the same manners that are exclusive to Allah alone, manners like absolute obedience, complete satisfaction in serving Him, assuming and expecting the best from Him, fully relying on Him, fearing and hoping in Him, thanking Him, being reassured by His mention, and being conscious and observant of Him in public and in private.

Allah the Exalted says:

*“The believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, feel a fear in their hearts and when His Verses (this Qur’an) are recited unto them, they (i.e., the Verses) increase their Faith; and they put their trust in their Lord (Alone); who establish prayer and spend out of that We have provided them.” (Surah al-Anfal, 2-3)*

He also says:

*“Therefore remember Me (by praying, glorifying, etc.). I will remember you, and be grateful to Me (for My countless Favors on you) and never be ungrateful to Me.” (Surah al-Baqarah, 152)*

And:

*“What is the matter with you, [that you fear not Allah (His punishment), and] you hope not for reward (from Allah or you believe not in His Oneness). While He has created you in (different) stages.” (Surah Nuh, 13-14)*

As well as:

*“Whatever you (O Muhammad) may be doing, and whatever portion you may be reciting from the Qur’an, - and whatever deed you (mankind) may be doing (good or evil), We are Witness thereof, when you are doing it. And nothing is hidden from your Lord (so much as) the weight of an atom (or small ant) on the earth or in the heaven. Not what is less than that or what is greater than that but is (written) in a Clear Record.”* (Surah Yunus, 61)

The Prophet ﷺ emphasized the importance of excellence in one’s approach with one’s Lord. He ﷺ said: “Have modesty from Allah as is His due; protect the head and what it contains, protect the insides and what it includes, and remember death and trials.”<sup>1</sup> He also said: “Allah is more deserving of [your] being modest than the people.”<sup>2</sup>

Repenting to Allah, seeking His forgiveness, and constantly returning to Him are other qualities that fall under excellent manners with Allah. As Allah says:

*“So flee to Allah, verily, I (Muhammad) am a plain warner to you from Him.”* (Surah ad-Dhariyat, 50)

Allah also taught us that those who wish to show Him excellence would do well to show reverence to His Words:

*“So, when the Qur’an is recited, listen to it, and be silent that you may receive mercy.”* (Surah al-A`raf, 204)

Exhibiting only the most excellent manners with Allah is only logical, as He is the source of all blessings. Allah reminds us:

*“And whatever of blessings and good things you have, it is from Allah. Then, when harm touches you, unto Him you cry aloud for help.”* (Surah an-Nahl, 53)

He is constantly showering us with His blessings and bestowing His favors upon us, and He promises to continue doing so:

*“Whoever works righteousness, whether male or female, while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islamic Monotheism) verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision), and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion*

1. Ahmad:1/387

2. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari: 1/73

*to the best of what they used to do (i.e., Paradise in the Hereafter).”*  
(Surah an-Nahl, 97)

In addition, Allah paired excellence with Him with excellence with His Prophet, commanding us to treat His Messenger with the utmost reverence. Allah says:

*“O you who believe! Do not put (yourselves) forward before Allah and His Messenger; and fear Allah. Verily! Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. O you who believe! Raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet, nor speak aloud to him in talk as you speak aloud to one another; lest your deeds may be rendered fruitless while you perceive not. Verily! Those who lower their voices in the presence of Allah’s Messenger; they are the ones whose hearts Allah has tested for piety. For them is forgiveness and a great reward. Verily! Those who call you from behind the dwellings, most of them have no sense. And if they had patience till you could come out to them, it would have been better for them. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”* (Surah al-Hujurat, 1-5)

Allah commands the Companions, and us, in the Qur’an to obey His Prophet:

*“Make not the calling of the Messenger (Muhammad) among you as your calling of one another. Allah knows those of you who slip away under shelter (of some excuse without taking the permission to leave, from the Messenger). And let those who oppose the Messenger’s commandment (i.e., his Sunnah legal ways, orders, acts of worship, statements, etc.) (among the sects) beware, lest some Fitnah (disbelief, trials, afflictions, earthquakes, killing, overpowered by a tyrant, etc.) befall them or a painful torment be inflicted on them.”* (Surah an-Nur, 63)

He also said:

*“...And whatsoever the Messenger gives you, take it, and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it), and fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Severe in punishment.”* (Surah al-Hashr, 7)

As well as:

*“But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you (O Muhammad) judge in all disputes between them, and find in*

*themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission.*” (Surah an-Nisa’, 65)

And:

*“The only saying of the faithful believers, when they are called to Allah (His Words, the Qur’an) and His Messenger; to judge between them, is that they say: “We hear and we obey.” And such are the prosperous ones (who will live forever in Paradise). And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger; fears Allah, and keeps his duty (to Him), such are the successful ones. They swear by Allah their strongest oaths, that if only you would order them, they would leave (their homes for fighting in Allah’s Cause). Say: “Swear you not; (this) obedience (of yours) is known (to be false). Verily, Allah knows well what you do.” Say: “Obey Allah and obey the Messenger; but if you turn away, he (Muhammad) is only responsible for the duty placed on him (i.e., to convey Allah’s Message) and you for that placed on you. If you obey him, you shall be on the right guidance. The Messenger’s duty is only to convey (the message) in a clear way (i.e., to preach in a plain way).”” (Surah an-Nur, 51-54)*

Allah even taught the Companions it was not befitting of the respect due to the Messenger that they depart from his presence during a gathering without his permission:

*“The true believers are only those, who believe in Allah and His Messenger; and when they are with him on some common matter; they go not away until they have asked his permission. Verily! Those who ask your permission, those are they who (really) believe in Allah and His Messenger. So if they ask your permission for some affairs of theirs, give permission to whom you will of them, and ask Allah for their forgiveness. Truly, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”* (Surah an-Nur, 62)

The most perfect manners and the utmost excellence are due to Allah and His Messenger. After that, the Prophet ﷺ taught us that the people are also due their share of good treatment. He ﷺ said: “Whoever would be pleased by being drawn away from the Fire and entered into Paradise should testify that there is no god worthy of worship but Allah and that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger as death comes to him, and should treat the people how he would like



to be treated.”<sup>1</sup>

Again, we see the perfect example and role model in the Prophet ﷺ himself. He lived an ascetic lifestyle; he dressed, ate, and drank in a simple manner, always considering those around him. One of the manners he encouraged was spreading love among the people, and he taught that the first step in doing so is to convey the *salam*<sup>2</sup> to others. The Prophet ﷺ said: “By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, you will not enter Paradise until you believe, and you shall not believe until you love one another. Shall I inform you of something that will cause you to love one another? Spread *salam* among each other.”<sup>3</sup> The Prophet ﷺ would even greet the children as he passed them in the streets.

He also said: “Shall I tell you about who among you I love the most and the ones who will be seated closest to me on the Day of Resurrection? The ones among you with the best character, who lower themselves [in humility]; they love people and are loved by people.”<sup>4</sup>

This is another instance where the Prophet ﷺ was enacting a verse from the Qur’an, as it was Allah who said:

*“O you who believe! Enter not houses other than your own, until you have asked permission and greeted those in them, that is better for you, in order that you may remember.”* (Surah an-Nur, 27)

The greeting of *salam* was also tied to humility in the Qur’an. Allah says:

*“And the slaves of the Most Beneficent (Allah) are those who walk on the earth in humility and sedateness, and when the foolish address them (with bad words) they reply with mild words of gentleness.”* (Surah al-Furqan, 27)

And the verses:

*“And walk not on the earth with conceit and arrogance. Verily, you can neither rend nor penetrate the earth, nor can you attain a stature like the mountains in height.”* (Surah al-Isra’, 37)

*““And turn not your face away from men with pride, nor walk in insolence through the earth. Verily, Allah likes not each arrogant boaster. And be moderate (or show no insolence) in your walking,*

1 Minhaj al-Muslim, P:103

2. Islamic greeting of peace.

3. Muslim:1/53

4. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari: 4/218, Ahmad: 4/193

*and lower your voice. Verily, the harshest of all voices is the voice (braying) of the donkey.”*” (Surah Luqman, 18-19)

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Indeed, Allah loves gentleness in all matters.”<sup>1</sup> He also said: “Gentleness is not included in anything except it beautifies it.”<sup>2</sup> And we see this in many instances when he interacted with his Companions ﷺ.

This was a characteristic that Allah placed in His Prophet ﷺ. Allah the Exalted says:

*“And by the Mercy of Allah, you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you; so pass over (their faults), and ask (Allah’s) Forgiveness for them; and consult them in the affairs. Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah, certainly, Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him).”* (Surah Aal `Imran, 159)

Allah commanded His Prophet ﷺ with compassion and gentleness:

*“...And lower your wings for the believers (be courteous to the fellow believers).”* (Surah al-Hijr, 88)

And:

*“And be kind and humble to the believers who follow you.”* (Surah ash-Shu`ara, 215)

Allah informed us that of the manifestations of this mercy and gentleness was the Prophet’s deep love for his Ummah and his eagerness to serve and protect them. Allah says:

*“Verily, there has come unto you a Messenger from amongst yourselves (i.e., whom you know well). It grieves him that you should receive any injury or difficulty. He is anxious over you (to be rightly guided, to repent to Allah, and beg Him to pardon and forgive your sins, in order that you may enter Paradise and be saved from the punishment of the Hell-fire), for the believers (he is) full of pity, kind, and merciful.”* (Surah at-Tawbah, 128)

All throughout his life, we see examples of the Prophet’s exemplary character, compassion, and generosity. When revelation first began, and he was apprehensive of what the future held, his wife Khadijah ﷺ reassured him by reminding him of his character. At that crucial moment, he was fearful, but she told him: “Never! I

1. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:7/8

2. Muslim: 8/22- Ahmad:6/58,112

swear By Allah, He will never disgrace you. You keep good relations with your kith and kin, help the poor and the destitute, serve your guests generously and assist the needy and those afflicted by calamity.”<sup>1</sup> Commenting on this event in his book *Akhlaq An-Nabi Fi Al-Qur'an Was-Sunnah* [The Character of the Prophet ﷺ As Taken From the Qur'an and Sunnah], Ahmed ibn `Abdil-Aziz Al-Haddad writes: “Indeed good manners and characteristics protect a person from an evil ending.”<sup>2</sup>

When the Prophet ﷺ entered Makkah, he was technically a conqueror, but he rode in with his head lowered in humility, praising Allah, and showing no signs of arrogance. He was the first to enact the teachings of humbleness, as he told the Companions: “Indeed, Allah the Exalted has revealed to me that you should humble yourselves, such that no one should boast over the other.”<sup>3</sup>

Anas narrates to us the Prophet's ﷺ humble character: “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ would visit the sick, follow the funeral procession, ride donkeys, and respond to invitations from slaves. On the day of Banu Quraidha, he was on a donkey bridled with palm fibers on which was a saddle also of palm fibers.”<sup>4</sup>

Not only would he often ride a donkey instead of a horse or a camel, the Prophet ﷺ also showed he was not too proud to have someone ride behind him. In countless narrations, we see that he would often carry behind him Usamah ibn Zayd, `Abdullah ibn `Abbas, or one of his wives.<sup>5</sup>

In another manifestation of humility, we see that the Prophet ﷺ would often work alongside his Companions ﷺ, engaging in the same type of work directly by their sides. For example, he worked with them during the building of his Masjid in Madinah and during the digging of the Trench. He ﷺ also performed household chores. `Aishah ﷺ even described him as “constantly in the service of his family.”<sup>6</sup>

Allah referenced this in the verse:

*“O you who believe! Enter not the Prophet's houses, except when leave is given to you for a meal, (and then) not (so early as) to wait for its preparation. But when you are invited, enter, and when you have taken your meal, disperse, without sitting for a talk. Verily, such*

1. Bukhari, Fath al- Bari:1/3
2. *Akhlaq An-Nabi Fi Al-Qur'an Was-Sunnah*: 1/77
3. Ibn Majah: 4179
4. Tirmidhi: 1017
5. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:7/116
6. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:7/83

*(behavior) annoys the Prophet, and he is shy of (asking) you (to go), but Allah is not shy of (telling you) the truth. And when you ask (his wives) for anything you want, ask them from behind a screen, that is purer for your hearts and for their hearts. And it is not (right) for you that you should annoy Allah's Messenger, nor that you should ever marry his wives after him (his death). Verily! With Allah that shall be an enormity.*" (Surah al-Ahzab, 53)

Allah inspired him to be the people's perfect example for humility, moderation, and balance between focus on the worldly life and the Hereafter, while simultaneously making the Hereafter the priority and not being distracted by the worldly life.

Ponder the following verses and you will see that Allah the Exalted teaches a Muslim to be balanced; not going to extremes in pursuing worldly pleasures, but not going so far as to declare them unlawful either.

Allah the Exalted says:

*"Beautiful for men is the love of things they covet; women, children, much of gold and silver (wealth), branded beautiful horses, cattle and well-tilled land. This is the pleasure of the present world's life; but Allah has the excellent return (Paradise with flowing rivers, etc.) with Him."* (Surah Aal `Imran, 14)

Allah also says:

*"Say (O Muhammad): "Who has forbidden the adoration with clothes given by Allah, which He has produced for His slaves, and At-Taiyibat [all kinds of Halal (lawful) things] of food?" Say: "They are, in the life of this world, for those who believe, (and) exclusively for them (believers) on the Day of Resurrection (the disbelievers will not share them)." Thus We explain the Ayat (Islamic laws) in detail for people who have knowledge."* (Surah al-A`raf, 32)

And:

*"But seek, with that (wealth) which Allah has bestowed on you, the home of the Hereafter, and forget not your portion of legal enjoyment in this world, and do good as Allah has been good to you, and seek not mischief in the land. Verily, Allah likes not the Mufsidun (those who commit great crimes and sins, oppressors, tyrants, mischief-makers, corrupts)." (Surah al-Qasas, 77)*

And:

*“... But of mankind there are some who say: “Our Lord! Give us (Your Bounties) in this world!” and for such there will be no portion in the Hereafter. And of them there are some who say: “Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire!” For them there will be allotted a share for what they have earned. And Allah is Swift at reckoning.”* (Surah al-Baqarah, 200-202)

Another example of the Prophet’s beautiful character was his closeness with his Companions ﷺ. For example, on one occasion he told Mu`adh ibn Jabal: “O Mu`adh, I swear by Allah that I love you. I advise you not to leave off saying ‘O Allah give me strength in remembering and mentioning You, thanking You, and worshipping You in the most excellent fashion [*Allahumma a`ini `ala thikrika, wa shukrika, wa husni `ibadatik*]’ after every prayer.”<sup>1</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ said: “If one of you loves your brother, then inform him.”<sup>2</sup> Likewise, he encouraged any action that would spread love in the society, like giving gifts and visiting one another, and greeting people with a smile. He ﷺ said: “Your smile in the face of your brother is a [form of] charity.”<sup>3</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ also taught us that we should greet one another with the best possible greeting, even better than the one we receive, as Allah the Exalted said:

*“When you are greeted with a greeting, greet in return with what is better than it, or (at least) return it equally. Certainly, Allah is Ever a Careful Account Taker of all things.”* (Surah an-Nisa’, 86)

This concept of greeting is so important in Islam and was given so much emphasis by the Prophet ﷺ, that Bukhari placed entire sections in his hadith collection devoted to spreading the *salam* and greeting fellow Muslims.

Just as Allah commands in the Qur’an to be humble, He also forbid arrogance and dealing with people unjustly. Allah says:

*“O you who believe! Let not a group scoff at another group, it may be that the latter are better than the former; nor let (some) women scoff at other women, it may be that the latter are better than the former, nor defame one another, nor insult one another by nicknames. How bad is it, to insult one’s brother after having Faith? And whosoever does*

1. Ahmad: 5/245
2. Ahmad: 4/30
3. Tirmidhi: 1956

not repent, then such are indeed Zalimun (wrong-doers, etc.). O you who believe! Avoid much suspicions, indeed some suspicions are sins. And spy not, neither backbite one another. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would hate it (so hate backbiting). And fear Allah. Verily, Allah is the One Who accepts repentance, Most Merciful. O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honorable of you with Allah is that (believer) who has At-Taqwah [i.e., one of the Muttaqun (pious - see V. 2:2)]. Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.” (Surah al-Hujurat, 11-13)

Allah emphasized that all Muslims are part of the same brotherhood:

“The believers are nothing else than brothers (in Islamic religion). So make reconciliation between your brothers, and fear Allah, that you may receive mercy.” (Surah al-Hujurat, 10)

And He also commanded us to reconcile between any Muslims who are fighting or differing with one another:

“And if two parties or groups among the believers fall to fighting, then make peace between them both, but if one of them rebels against the other, then fight you (all) against the one that which rebels till it complies with the Command of Allah; then if it complies, then make reconciliation between them justly, and be equitable. Verily! Allah loves those who are equitable.” (Surah al-Hujurat, 9)

Allah and His Messenger forbid us from backbiting or belittling one another. Allah the Exalted says:

““And turn not your face away from men with pride, nor walk in insolence through the earth. Verily, Allah likes not each arrogant boaster.”” (Surah Luqman, 18)

The Prophet ﷺ said: “It is enough of an evil for a person to belittle his Muslim brother.”<sup>1</sup>

Allah encourages us in the Qur’an to forgive one another and forget past grievances:

“O you who believe! Al-Qisas (the Law of Equality in punishment) is prescribed for you in case of murder: the free for the free, the slave for the slave, and the female for the female. But if the killer is forgiven by

1. Tirmidhi: 1927- Ahmad :3/491

*the brother (or the relatives, etc.) of the killed against blood money, then adhering to it with fairness and payment of the blood money, to the heir should be made in fairness. This is an alleviation and a mercy from your Lord. So after this whoever transgresses the limits (i.e., kills the killer after taking the blood money), he shall have a painful torment.*” (Surah al-Baqarah, 178)

Allah also says:

*“And let not those among you who are blessed with graces and wealth swear not to give (any sort of help) to their kinsmen, the poor, and those who left their homes for Allah’s Cause. Let them pardon and forgive. Do you not love that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”* (Surah an-Nur, 22)

And:

*“The recompense for an evil is an evil like thereof, but whoever forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is due from Allah. Verily, He likes not the Zalimun (oppressors, polytheists, and wrong-doers, etc.).”* (Surah ash-Shura, 40)

And:

*“The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better (i.e., Allah ordered the faithful believers to be patient at the time of anger, and to excuse those who treat them badly), then verily, he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend.”* (Surah Fussilat, 34)

Also:

*“And march forth in the way (which leads to) forgiveness from your Lord, and for Paradise as wide as are the heavens and the earth, prepared for al-Muttaqun. Those who spend [in Allah’s Cause - deeds of charity, alms, etc.] in prosperity and in adversity, who repress anger, and who pardon people; verily, Allah loves al-Muhsinun (the good-doers).”* (Surah Aal `Imran, 133-134)

To further show the importance of safeguarding Muslim society from any ill will or harboring evil feelings, Allah the Exalted even forbid secret gathering where people plot against one another or mention each other with evil:

*“There is no good in most of their secret talks save (in) him who orders Sadaqah (charity in Allah’s Cause), or Ma`ruf (Islamic Monotheism*

*and all the good and righteous deeds which Allah has ordained), or conciliation between mankind, and he who does this, seeking the good Pleasure of Allah, We shall give him a great reward.” (Surah an-Nisa’, 114)*

Instead, people should constantly advise one another with good. Allah the Exalted says:

*“Then he became one of those who believed, and recommended one another to perseverance and patience, and (also) recommended one another to pity and compassion.” (Surah al-Balad, 17)*

The Prophet ﷺ taught us that this mercy was an identifying component of a Muslim society. He said: “The believers, in their mutual kindness, compassion, and sympathy, are just like one body. When one of the limbs suffers, the whole body responds to it with wakefulness and fever.”<sup>1</sup>

In addition to building a strong successful society, this mutual compassion and mercy also leads to Mercy of Allah Himself. The Prophet ﷺ said: “Allah only bestows mercy upon those of His slaves who are merciful.”<sup>2</sup>

He ﷺ also said: “Have mercy on those on earth, and the One in the heavens will have mercy on you.”<sup>3</sup>

We can see how seriously the Prophet ﷺ took these concepts in many instances in his life. For example, he even considered the young and the weak during his prayer, out of mercy for them. He ﷺ said: “Whenever I start the prayer, I intend to prolong it, but on hearing the cries of a child, I cut short the prayer because I know that the cries of the child will incite his or her mother’s emotions.”<sup>4</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ would make sure to show compassion to the slaves and the servants, people whose lives were less likely to receive mercy in Arab society. He taught that freeing a slave was of the greatest acts that brought one closer to Allah, and an important way to expiate a number of different sins. Islam eliminated many of the means of enslavement and produced many new means of emancipation. Thus, the influx of slaves was dramatically reduced, and the rate of emancipation soared. In addition, he taught compassion towards this sector of society. The Prophet ﷺ said: “Your slaves are your brothers. Allah has placed them under your hands [authority]. Whoever has his brother under his hand, he

1. Muslim: 8/20

2. Bukhari, Fath al -Bari:2/81

3. Tirmidhi: 4/324

4. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari: 1/172, Ahmad:3/205



should feed him from the same food he eats and clothe him with the same clothes he wears. Do not burden them with work they cannot bear, and if you do, then aid them. None of you should say ‘My slave, my she-slave’, instead you should say ‘My young boy, my young girl.’”<sup>1</sup>

The mercy of Islam and the compassionate teachings of the Prophet ﷺ extend past Muslims and even mankind, for we have even been commanded with mercy and compassion towards animals. Compassion in feeding, sheltering, and working animals are all teachings of Islam. Any act of kindness to an animal is encouraged, as the Prophet ﷺ said: “In every living creature is a reward.”<sup>2</sup>

He ﷺ also said: “Whoever does not show mercy will not be shown mercy.”<sup>3</sup>

Likewise, we have been forbidden from torturing any creature, or killing it without a justifiable reason. Emphasizing on how severe this prohibition is, the Prophet ﷺ said: “A woman entered the Hellfire because of a cat which she had imprisoned until it died. She entered the Hellfire because of it; she neither gave it food and water in its imprisonment, nor did she set it free to eat from the vermin of the earth.”<sup>4</sup>

He ﷺ also said: “Allah curses anyone who uses anything with a soul as a target.”<sup>5</sup>

These animal rights were the first of their kind. Islam introduced them to the world centuries before any other nation inscribed them into law. Allah the Most Merciful commanded His servants with this mercy and these compassionate laws, so that they can lead the world with His guidance, and relay His Mercy to all creatures, not just humans.

Islam also taught us to be in the constant service of people, to aid the needy and stand with the afflicted. At the same time, we were commanded with lifting any source of harm the people suffer from and were ourselves forbidden from harming them. Allah the Exalted says:

*“And let not those among you who are blessed with graces and wealth swear not to give (any sort of help) to their kinsmen, the poor, and those who left their homes for Allah’s Cause. Let them pardon and forgive. Do you not love that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. Verily, those who accuse chaste women,*

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1. Ahmad: 2/247

2. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:3/77

3. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:7/75, Muslim 4282

4. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:3/77- Muslim: 8/35

5. Ahmad: 1/216

who never even think of anything touching their chastity and are good believers, are cursed in this life and in the Hereafter, and for them will be a great torment, On the Day when their tongues, their hands, and their legs or feet will bear witness against them as to what they used to do. On that Day Allah will pay them the recompense of their deeds in full, and they will know that Allah, He is the Manifest Truth.” (Surah an-Nur, 22-25)

We were also commanded to treat our neighbors in the most excellent manner, and to make a strong effort to be kind to them. Allah says:

*“Worship Allah and join none with Him in worship, and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, the poor, the neighbor who is near of kin, the neighbor who is a stranger, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet), and those whom your right hands possess. Verily, Allah does not like such as are proud and boastful.”* (Surah an-Nisa’, 36)

Likewise, the Prophet ﷺ said: “Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should not harm their neighbor.”<sup>1</sup> He also said: “Jibreel continued to advise me regarding good treatment of the neighbor until I assumed he would [also] allot him a portion of the inheritance.”<sup>2</sup>

And he ﷺ said: “I swear, he does not believe, I swear he does not believe.” He was asked, “Who, O Messenger of Allah?” He ﷺ responded, “The one whose neighbor feels unsafe from his harm.”<sup>3</sup>

Being kind to one’s neighbors is not limited to the Muslims only; it is for any neighbor. Allah the Exalted said:

*“Allah does not forbid you to deal justly and kindly with those who fought not against you on account of religion and did not drive you out of your homes. Verily, Allah loves those who deal with equity. It is only as regards those who fought against you on account of religion, and have driven you out of your homes, and helped to drive you out, that Allah forbids you to befriend them. And whosoever will befriend them, then such are the Zalimun (wrong-doers those who disobey Allah).”* (Surah al-Mumtahana, 8-9)

Allah even tells the believers to be kind to prisoners of war, even though they are

1. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:7/78
2. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari: 7/78
3. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari: 7/78

from the enemy who is warring against the Muslims:

*“And they give food, in spite of their love for it (or for the love of Him), to the poor, the orphan, and the captive, (saying): “We feed you seeking Allah’s Countenance only. We wish for no reward, nor thanks from you.””* (Surah al-Insan, 8-9)

The Prophet ﷺ commanded the believers to treat the war prisoners well during the aftermath of various battles, and the Companions ﷺ did so. They fed them from the same food that they themselves ate, and treated them kindly to the extent that many of them accepted Islam eventually.

Generosity and giving are the traits that this Ummah is taught to embody in all aspects of life. The biggest example of this lies in the Islamic injunction to give from one’s wealth to those who are less fortunate, i.e., zakat and sadaqah, which are mentioned alongside prayer in multiple places in Islamic scripture. For example, the Words of Allah the Exalted:

*“Verily, man was created very impatient; irritable (discontented) when evil touches him; And niggardly when good touches him; except those devoted to Salat (prayers) Those who remain constant in their Salat (prayers); and those in whose wealth there is a known right, For the beggar who asks, and for the unlucky who has lost his property and wealth, (and his means of living has been straitened); and those who believe in the Day of Recompense.”* (Surah al-Ma`arij 19-26)

And:

*“As for him who gives (in charity) and keeps his duty to Allah and fears Him, and believes in the best [reward], We will ease him toward ease. But he who is greedy miser and thinks himself self-sufficient, and denies the best [reward], We will ease him toward difficulty. And what will his wealth benefit him when he goes down (in destruction)? Indeed, [incumbent] upon Us is guidance, and truly, unto Us (belong) the last (Hereafter) and the first (this world).”* (Surah al-Layl, 5-13)

And:

*“Not upon you is their guidance, but Allah guides whom He wills. And whatever you spend in good, it is for yourselves, when you spend not except seeking Allah’s Countenance. And whatever you spend in good, it will be repaid to you in full, and you shall not be wronged.”* (Surah al-Baqarah, 272)

Also:

*“O you who believe! Spend of that with which We have provided for you, before a Day comes when there will be no bargaining, nor friendship, nor intercession. And it is the disbelievers who are the Zalimun (wrong-doers, etc.).”* (Surah al-Baqarah, 254)

Likewise, in the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ, he encouraged generosity and giving, for he said, “Indeed, Allah is *Jawwad* (Generous) and He loves generosity.”<sup>1</sup> He taught us to stay well away from the opposite, negative traits: “Beware of stinginess because it doomed those who were before you; it incited them to shed blood and treat the unlawful as lawful.”<sup>2</sup>

These blessed teachings shaped the understanding of the early followers of Islam, the Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ, for they witnessed the noble traits in the character of the Prophet ﷺ as they lived their lives in his blessed presence. He would advise, for example, “Protect yourself from the Fire, even if it be only with half a date (given in charity),”<sup>3</sup> and his actions would match his words. The Muslims would then compete to follow in his footsteps, and they would compete to give the most in sadaqah to worthy causes and to those who desperately needed the financial help. `Uthman bin `Affan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ is a notable example in this regard, for Allah blessed him with wealth, and he loved to give it freely for the sake of Allah, such as when he donated an enormous sum during the difficult time when the Muslims were preparing for the Battle of Tabuk.

Another very important trait that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ embodied was faithfulness and sticking to his word, and he insisted that every Muslim follow this as well, even with their enemies.

*“Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but [true] righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allah , the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves; [and who] establishes prayer and gives zakah; [those who] fulfill their promise when they promise; and [those who] are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who have been true, and it is those who are the righteous.”* (Surah al-Baqarah, 177)

1. Tirmidhi: 2799

2. Muslim:8/18- Ahmad:2/160

3. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:2/114

Allah the Exalted also said:

*“O you who believe! Fulfill (your) obligations. Lawful to you (for food) are all the beasts of cattle except that which will be announced to you (herein), game (also) being unlawful when you assume Ihram for Hajj or `Umrah. Verily, Allah commands that which He wills.”*  
(Surah al-Ma'idah, 1)

Honesty, in general, is of the utmost importance in a Muslim. Another aspect of honesty is trustworthiness. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, of course, was a shining example of this, for he was known as ‘the Honest, the Trustworthy’ among the people of Makkah even before Islam, and they were happy to keep things with him for safekeeping even after they showed their enmity towards him, for they knew he would never breach their trust.

The Prophet ﷺ said: “Adhere to honesty, for honesty leads to good deeds and good deeds lead to Paradise, and a man will continue to speak the truth and makes truth his object until he is recorded as truthful before Allah. Avoid falsehood, for falsehood leads to wickedness and wickedness leads to Hell, and a man will continue to speak falsehood and make falsehood his object until he is recorded as a liar before Allah.”<sup>1</sup>

He also said: “There are three signs of a hypocrite: When he speaks, he lies; when he makes a promise, he breaks it; and when he is trusted, he betrays his trust.”<sup>2</sup>

Regarding social interaction, and especially interacting with one’s family and relatives, Islam places great value in ensuring that there is social cohesion on every level, which acknowledging that clashes and usual day-to-day problems will occur. For this reason, the default rule with regards to treating other people is to show kindness and treat them as you want to be treated, but if problems arise, then there are also steps to take to ensure that a reasonable resolution can be found. For example, in a marriage, both spouses are encouraged to treat each other well, and Islam informs each of them of their duties towards the other, as well as the rights they have. However, in the event of a conflict between a husband and wife, divorce is permitted as a final resort, after other avenues are attempted. Some of the duties in an Islamic marriage are: spending on the family, raising children, ensuring they have access to a good education, respecting one another, maintaining the home, and so on. The benefit of clearly outlining duties

1. Muslim: 8/29

2. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:1/14- Muslim:1/56

is that each party knows what to expect and what they owe.

The Qur'an is a book of guidance and thus it includes spirituality as well as laws that Muslims should follow to live blessed lives. In the Qur'an, one can also find warnings from Allah to those who might wish to overstep the boundaries and break Allah's laws. Perhaps one can look at Surah al-Baqarah verses 226-237 to see an example of the laws of Allah mentioned in the Qur'an.

The topic of marriage is covered in the Qur'an in some detail, beginning with the engagement process and some rules regarding it, and even including rules to follow in the event of conflict or divorce, in order to ensure that each party's rights are not oppressed. Allah the Exalted said:

*“O you who have believed, it is not lawful for you to inherit women by compulsion. And do not make difficulties for them in order to take [back] part of what you gave them unless they commit a clear immorality. And live with them in kindness. For if you dislike them - perhaps you dislike a thing and Allah makes therein much good.”*  
(Surah an-Nisa', 19)

In fact, this Surah itself is titled an-Nisa', i.e., Women, as a blessing to women from their Creator, Allah, and to show their importance and honor in society. In an Islamic household, the mother is the most precious member in the family, and she deserves the utmost honor, love, and respect, even when a child grows into adulthood.

Allah the Exalted said:

*“And among His Signs is that He created for you wives from among yourselves, that you may find repose in them, and He has put between you affection and mercy. Verily, in that are indeed signs for a people who reflect.”* (Surah Ar-Rum, 21).

This is the depiction of a Muslim household; it is one of love and mercy and serenity. For that reason, zina, i.e., adultery and fornication, was made impermissible, for it tears at the fabric of a solid household and creates many social problems, such as children being born out of wedlock and subsequently raised by single parents – typically mothers. It creates evil desires in husbands and wives, causes diseases to spread, resulting in the weakening of the moral compass of society, and as such it is considered one of the major sins in Islam. In fact, both men and women are commanded to lower their gaze from that which they are not permitted to see, because that is the first step.

Allah the Exalted said:

*“Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.). That is purer for them. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what they do. And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.) and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent and to draw their veils all over Juyubihin (i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms, etc.) and not to reveal their adornment except to their husbands, their fathers, their husband’s fathers, their sons, their husband’s sons, their brothers or their brother’s sons, or their sister’s sons, or their (Muslim) women (i.e. their sisters in Islam), or the (female) slaves whom their right hands possess, or old male servants who lack vigor, or small children who have no sense of the shame of sex. And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment. And all of you beg Allah to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful.”* (Surah an-Nur, 30-31)

One who reflects upon these verses can see the deep wisdom behind the injunction for a man to lower his gaze, and for a woman to do likewise, for it serves as a protection and preventative measure, lest they fall into evil action. Furthermore, it strengthens the bond between the spouses, for they do not desire others, and the trust between them grows.

The topic of oppression, or transgression, is often tackled in Islamic scripture. That is because it is a broad theme that encompasses many evil actions. Allah the Exalted said:

*“And whoever commits injustice among you - We will make him taste a great punishment.”* (Surah al-Furqan, 19)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: “Beware of the supplication of the oppressed, for there is no barrier between it and Allah.”<sup>1</sup>

Islam teaches us to stay away from envy:

*“Or do they envy people for what Allah has given them of His bounty? But we had already given the family of Abraham the Scripture and wisdom and conferred upon them a great kingdom.”* (Surah an-Nisa’, 54)

1 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari: 3/99

From cheating: “He who deceives us is not from us.”<sup>1</sup>

And insincerity:

*“So woe to those who pray [but] who are heedless of their prayer - Those who make show [of their deeds] and withhold [simple] assistance.”* (Surah al-Ma`un, 4-7)

The Prophet ﷺ said: “What I fear most for you is the lesser *shirk*.” They asked, “What is lesser *shirk*?” He replied, “*ar-Riya*’.” (i.e., doing deeds to show off; to be seen; insincerity.)

Other sins that can destroy a person are arrogance and being amazed by one’s own accomplishments. The Prophet ﷺ warned us that we should never become deluded by our wealth, strength, status, or even our actions – including acts of worship, for everything we have is but a blessing from Allah. He ﷺ said, “No one’s deeds will enter them into Paradise.” The companions asked, “Not even yours, O Messenger of Allah?” He said, “Not even mine, unless Allah engulfs me in His mercy.”<sup>2</sup>

Another trait that Muslims are taught to stay well away from is laziness and lethargy. The Prophet ﷺ used to supplicate regularly and he taught us to do likewise: “O Allah! I seek refuge in You from helplessness (to do good), indolence, cowardice, senility, and miserliness; and I seek Your Protection against the torment of the grave and the trials of life and death.”<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps one of the most important lessons that Islam brings forth is the necessity of using one’s time wisely, organizing it properly, working during the daytime and resting during the night, and avoiding that which does not benefit. Even in the five daily prayers, one can observe the importance Islam places on organizing one’s time, for a person’s life is made up of the time he or she is allotted in this world, and all that truly matters is how he or she uses it. Actions can be divided into three categories: worldly work, worship, and rest. Though a Muslim strives to live life for the sake of Allah, it is still essential to allow time for this worldly life, as well as resting one’s soul.

Thus it becomes clear that all these teachings and laws come together to form a perfect religion, and it was observed in the life of the Prophet ﷺ as an example for his Companions ﷺ, as well as the rest of mankind, for we continue to learn from his life to this very day.

1 Muslim: 1/69

2 Muslim: 8/139

3 Muslim: 8/139



## Military growth

At the beginning, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ called people to Islam in Makkah secretly for approximately three years, and then he began to do so publicly. As we mentioned, many among the Quraish tormented him and his Companions ﷺ as a result, even killing some of them, such as `Ammar and Sumayyah – may Allah be pleased with them. The Prophet ﷺ advised his Companions at the time to be patient, and to persevere for their Lord, and he promised them that the future would be fruitful for the believers, and he did not permit them to fight back against their oppressors just yet.

After Hamzah ؓ and `Umar ؓ accepted Islam, it was a great boost of strength for the Muslims. Even so, it was Allah's wisdom that He not give them permission to fight the pagans of Makkah despite their many transgressions, which eventually reached the extent that the Quraish attempted to assassinate the Prophet ﷺ, but Allah protected him from their evil.

Then Allah commanded the believers to migrate to Madinah in the event known as the Hijrah, and thus the Muhajirun and the Ansar became one Ummah, and it was certainly a major turning point in Islamic history. The numbers began to grow, and the Ummah's strength was, too, growing, but still, Allah did not command the believers to fight. Many among the Muhajirun as well as the Ansar were young, strong men skilled in sword fighting, horse riding, and archery, for the Arabs would teach their men combat skills from an early age. Eventually, the Muslims of Madinah became more organized in their training and strategizing, for it was clear that their city would need protection from external foes.

Then Allah revealed verses to His Prophet ﷺ, granting the Muslims permission to fight against those people who oppressed them, transgressed against them and their wealth, and wished them harm. Allah the Exalted said:

*“Permission [to fight] has been given to those who are being fought, because they were wronged, and surely, Allah is Able to give them*

victory. Those who have been expelled from their homes unjustly only because they said: "Our Lord is Allah." - For had it not been that Allah checks one set of people by means of another, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, wherein the Name of Allah is mentioned much would surely have been pulled down. Verily, Allah will help those who help His (Cause). Truly, Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty. [And they are] those who, if We give them authority in the land, establish prayer and give zakah and enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. And to Allah belongs the outcome of [all] matters." (Surah al-Hajj, 39-41)

He further informed us about the fate of those who die as martyrs in His Path:

*"And never think of those who have been killed in the cause of Allah as dead. Rather, they are alive with their Lord, receiving provision, rejoicing in what Allah has bestowed upon them of His bounty, and they receive good tidings about those [to be martyred] after them who have not yet joined them - that there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve."* (Surah Aal `Imran, 169-170)

And He teaches the Muslims an essential principle to uphold:

*"Fight in the way of Allah those who fight you but do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors."* (Surah al-Baqarah, 190)

Throughout the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Allah the Exalted revealed laws regarding the concept of jihad, which the scholars of Islam have compiled and discussed throughout the Ummah's history, and they became the basis of the rules of engagement for the Muslim armies of the different caliphates, states, and kingdoms.

The state of the Muslim army evolved as time progressed. In its earliest form, it simply consisted of the able-bodied Muslim men who were trained in combat individually. It was perhaps not yet an army in the modern understanding; rather it was the beginning of one. As the Ummah grew and became more organized, it was clear that something more coordinated was needed, and thus the Muslims began to train and strategize. The army became more structured, and those with battle experience and expertise taught the others. They went on expeditions to execute specific goals, and through them learned the geography of their surrounding lands and how to exploit them to protect Madinah if the need arose.

Furthermore, the participation of the Companions ﷺ in the battles of Badr, Uhud, al-Khandaq and others provided invaluable training and experience. The bond that the Muslims shared was one that did not depend on tribalism or shared bloodlines, rather it was a connection of the hearts and thus it traversed all those superficial worldly boundaries and united people from all backgrounds, races, and walks of life. The strength and brotherhood of Islam was a new paradigm that was to wipe away the ignorant worldviews that came before it and divided people. Allah the Exalted said:

*“Allah has promised those among you who believe, and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to (the present rulers) in the earth, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practice their religion, that which He has chosen for them. And He will surely give them in exchange a safe security after their fear (provided) they (believers) worship Me and do not associate anything (in worship) with Me. But whoever disbelieved after this, they are the Fasiqun (rebellious, disobedient to Allah).”*  
(Surah an-Nur, 55)

Some points of benefit regarding the Muslim army:

- The Prophet ﷺ used to lead the army himself during his lifetime. He did not choose to do as other leaders and simply remain in a palace far away while his subjects do his bidding. Rather, he sacrificed with them, placing himself in the same dangers as his soldiers and Companions. He suffered the difficulties of travel and battle with them. He would care for the wounded and help like any other soldier; he never acted arrogantly or oppressively.
- He ﷺ would select those who were clearly fit to be military leaders, and he would assign them leadership positions, even if there were others present who were older in age or had accepted Islam years earlier. This is because those traits, while virtuous, were not the deciding factors.
- He ﷺ would not force any of the Muslims to join the army, rather he taught them the virtues of defending the Ummah and sacrificing for Allah’s sake, and of course, he led by example. He encouraged them by telling them what Allah had prepared as a reward for those who are martyred in His cause, and this caused them not to fear death, for they longed for what came after. This change alone marked a major difference in mentality between the Muslim and pagan armies. It further served to make the Muslims that

much more conscious about their actions, so they avoid transgressing and oppressing others, lest they become deserving of the punishment of Allah, rather than His reward.

- In the early days of the army, every soldier was a volunteer; there were no salaries or other guaranteed worldly rewards. Furthermore, each soldier brought his own weaponry and supplies; they were not yet provided by the state. The Companions ﷺ were motivated by their sincerity to Allah and their sense of duty, and they provided what they could, each according to his means. Some were on foot while others had riding beasts, some were sword fighters, others spear-throwers or archers, or flag bearers. Others were skilled in spying and staking out the enemy, being aware of their movements, and others still took the responsibility of providing food and drink for the army, or tending to the ill and wounded.
- The Muslims were human like any other army, so they were not immune from feeling fear when facing the very real possibility of imminent death. However, they relied on their faith in Allah, and their hope for His reward and fear of His punishment proved stronger than any worldly challenge.

As we mentioned, the early days of the Muslim army typically saw each individual providing his own supplies, but Allah the Exalted encouraged the Muslims to help one another within their means:

*“O You who believe! Shall I guide you to a commerce that will save you from a painful torment? [It is that] you believe in Allah and His Messenger and strive in the cause of Allah with your wealth and your lives. That is best for you, if you should know.”* (Surah as-Saff, 10-11).

This is because very often, one can make a bigger difference with his wealth. Some of the Companions ﷺ became well known for their generous donations to the budding Muslim nation, including helping the army, such as `Uthman bin `Affan ﷺ, Talhah bin `Ubaidillah ﷺ – who the Prophet ﷺ nicknamed ‘Talhah the Generous’ due to his actions. Financial donation was also a way for the women of the Ummah to contribute to the cause, and they also helped with preparations, providing food and drink, tending to the wounded, and even fighting in battle on certain occasions.<sup>1</sup>

In Madinah there were several fortresses belonging to the Ansar, and they

<sup>1</sup> Abdul Aziz as-Saloomi, Devan al-Jund, P: 373

served as a place of protection for the women and children in the event that the city was attacked or besieged. One of such fortresses was called Fari`. The Jewish tribes of Madinah also had many fortresses that were utilized for protection. Madinah, however, lacked an outside wall or gate to serve as another barrier of protection from external foes, but it did have some natural barriers in the form of mountains and rocky terrain. When Quraish and their allies attempted to attack Madinah during the Battle of the Confederates, the Muslims outsmarted them by quickly digging a trench in a short amount of time, based on the advice of the esteemed Companion, Salman al-Farisi ؓ. Time was of the essence, so the Prophet ﷺ assessed the situation, and he and the Companions ؓ began work immediately, and it proved successful.<sup>1</sup>



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1 Abdul al-Wahab Kalziah, *Ash-Shar-ad-Duwal Fee Ahd ar-Rasool*, P: 86 Muhammad Rawas Qalaji, *Qira'ah Siyasiah li as-Seerah an-Nabawiyah*

## The Muslim State and International Peace

The Muslim government under the leadership of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was highly concerned with the peace and security of its subjects, whether they were Muslim or not. The system is designed to protect their rights and safety from oppressors or those who wish to do harm and spread evil in the land. Eventually, the entirety of the Arabian Peninsula became part of the Muslim state, and relationships were formed or strengthened between the Muslims and the outside world, whether they were simply other Arab tribes residing in the neighboring lands, or non-Arabs.

The Prophet ﷺ, even before beginning his divine mission, was aware of the powerful nations that surrounded Arabia. This is evidenced by the fact that he sent his Companions ﷺ to Abyssinia to seek refuge, and he told them, “there you will find a king under whom none are wronged.” Furthermore, he continued to meet with different tribes in Makkah during Hajj season, or he would travel to meet them elsewhere, accompanied by Abu Bakr ﷺ. After Hijrah, when the Muslim nation became more established, the Prophet ﷺ began formal correspondence with many leaders and kings, including the Byzantines and the Persians, who were the two superpowers of the time. He began each of his letters with a peaceful greeting, “Peace be upon those who follow the guidance.” All the while, he ﷺ informed and reassured his Companions ﷺ that this religion of Islam would one day reach everywhere that night and day touches, for it is a universal message for all of mankind:

*“And We have not sent you, (O Muhammad), except as a mercy to the `Alamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists).” (Surah al-Anbiya’, 107).*

When you read the Prophet’s letters to the various heads of state, you can see his care for all people. The laws that Allah sent down are in the best interest of all people, especially the common folk who are often mistreated and oppressed by those with wealth and power. Islam protects their rights; even if they choose not

to accept the religion, on the condition that they do not, themselves, transgress against others or against the Muslim nation. The Prophet ﷺ wished to deliver the message of Islam to all of mankind, and for them to meet and interact with the Muslims so they can see that message in action – provided the Muslims act upon their faith in order to be good examples. A Muslim’s character is one of good manners, peacefulness, kindness and neighborliness, even with those who have different or opposing views.

Islam encourages communities and nations to work together in harmony towards the common goals of international peace, furthering technology and education, cultural exchange, strengthening the economy and the exchange of goods and services, and so on. Many books have been written throughout history about Islam’s philosophy regarding these matters.



# The Death of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was sent to teach the people about the worship of Allah, to help them prepare for the Last Day and their meeting with their Lord. He would often remind them that this worldly life is a temporary one, and that death is inevitable – in fact, the concept of death is referred to many times in the Noble Qur’an. Since the very beginning of the Prophetic mission, Allah was teaching His Prophet:

*“And indeed the Hereafter is better for you than the present (life of this world). And verily, your Lord will give you (all i.e., good) so that you shall be well-pleased.”* (Surah ad-Duha, 4-5)

The Qur’an is very straightforward about the topic of death. Allah the Exalted told His Prophet:

*“Verily, you (O Muhammad) will die and verily, they (too) will die. Then, on the Day of Resurrection, you will be disputing before your Lord.”* (Surah az-Zumar, 30-31).

Furthermore, Allah addressed the disbelievers of Quraish who were eagerly awaiting the death of the Prophet ﷺ, hoping that it meant the death of his Message. Allah the Exalted said:

*“And We did not grant to any man before you eternity [on earth]; so if you die - would they be eternal?”* (Surah al-Anbiya’, 34).

Indeed, it is a reality that no living creation can escape:

*“Every soul will taste death. And We test you with evil and with good as trial; and to Us you will be returned.”* (Surah al-Anbiya’, 35).

*“Whatsoever is on it (the earth) will perish. And the Face of your Lord full of Majesty and Honor will abide forever.”* (Surah ar-Rahman, 26-27)

*“And invoke not any other god along with Allah, none has the right to be worshipped but He. Everything will perish except His Face. His is*



*the Decision, and to Him you (all) shall be returned.*” (Surah al-Qasas, 88)

*“Wheresoever you may be, death will overtake you even if you are in fortresses built up strong and high. And if some good reaches them, they say, “This is from Allah,” but if some evil befalls them, they say, “This is from you (O Muhammad).” Say: “All things are from Allah,” so what is wrong with these people that they fail to understand any word?”* (Surah an-Nisa’, 78)

When Prophet Muhammad ﷺ spoke to Mu`adh bin Jabal ؓ before he set off for Yemen, he said, “O Mu`adh, perhaps you will not meet me again after this year, but instead you will see my grave and my Masjid.” Upon hearing this, Mu`adh ؓ wept.<sup>1</sup>

As the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was preparing himself to meet his Lord, the Qur’an was preparing his Companions ؓ for the reality that was soon to come, i.e., their farewell. Allah the Exalted said:

*“Muhammad is no more than a Messenger, and indeed (many) Messengers have passed away before him. If he dies or is killed, will you then turn back on your heels (as disbelievers)? And he who turns back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to Allah, and Allah will give reward to those who are grateful.”* (Surah Aal `Imran, 144)

When the Prophet ﷺ passed away, Abu Bakr ؓ recited this verse to the people, for many of them were in shock. It served to strengthen their faith and calm down their emotions of extreme grief.

The Prophet ﷺ said to his daughter Fatimah ؓ, “Every year Jibril used to revise the Qur’an with me only once, but this year he has done so twice. I believe this means that my death is near.”<sup>2</sup>

A`ishah ؓ narrated, “Before he passed away, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would frequently say, “Glory be to you, O Allah, I seek your forgiveness and repent to you.” I said, “O Messenger of Allah, what are these new words I hear you saying?” He replied, “A sign has been appointed for me relating to my Ummah that I should repeat these words at the sight of that sign:

*“When comes the Help of Allah and the conquest, and you see that the people enter Allah’s religion in crowds, glorify the Praises of your*

1. Ahmad: 4/210  
2. Bukhari: 3624

*Lord, and ask for His Forgiveness. Verily, He is the One Who accepts repentance and forgives.” (Surah an-Nasr, 1-3).”<sup>1</sup>*

Along with bidding farewell to his living Companions ﷺ, the Prophet ﷺ visited the Baqi` graveyard near the end of his life, as well as the graves of the martyrs of Uhud, to visit those who had passed on from the Muslims and pray for them.<sup>2</sup>

During the last few days of the month of Safar, 11 AH, the Prophet ﷺ fell ill. Umm al-Fadl bint al-Harith ﷺ said, “I heard the Prophet ﷺ reciting ‘By those [winds] sent forth in gusts’ [i.e., Surah al-Mursalat] in Maghrib prayer one night, and that was the last time he led us in prayer until Allah took his soul.”<sup>3</sup> This hadith probably refers to the night the Prophet’s illness worsened, which was approximately two weeks before his death.

## The illness worsens

A’ishah ﷺ narrated that one day Fatimah ﷺ came walking and her gait resembled the gait of the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Welcome, O my daughter!” Then he had her sit on his right or on his left side, and then he spoke to her privately and she started weeping. I asked her, “Why are you weeping?” He again told her a secret and she started laughing. I said, “I never saw happiness so near to sadness as I saw today.” I asked her what the Prophet ﷺ had told her. She said, “I would never disclose the secret of Allah’s Messenger ﷺ.” When the Prophet ﷺ died, I asked her about it. She replied. “The Prophet ﷺ said: ‘Every year Gabriel used to revise the Qur’an with me once, but this year he has done so twice. I believe this means my death is near, and you will be the first of my family to follow me.’ So I started weeping. Then he said. ‘Would you not like to be the leader of all the ladies of Paradise or the leader of the believing women? So that made me smile.’”<sup>4</sup>

This narration shows that Fatimah ﷺ had a special place in the heart of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and A’ishah ﷺ had no problem narrating the event truthfully, mentioning the virtues of Fatimah ﷺ. This serves as proof that the Mothers of the Believers and the rest of the Prophet’s relatives got along well and were on good terms. In fact, most of the hadiths that mention the virtues of Fatimah or `Ali – may Allah be pleased with them – were narrated by A’ishah ﷺ.

It is narrated that when the Prophet’s illness worsened, Fatima ﷺ said, “O my

1. Muslim: 4/210- Ibn Kathir at-Tafseer:2/2043
2. Ibn Abi Shaibah, P: 418. Ibn Hisham:2/662
3. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/137
4. Bukhari:3623,3624,3625

father, what severe agony!” and the Prophet ﷺ replied, “Your father will suffer no more agony after today.”<sup>1</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ spent the last days of his sickness in the home of A’ishah ؓ, and perhaps there were many benefits to that, including the fact that she had the strongest memory and could more easily memorize his parting words to then share them with the Ummah.

A’ishah ؓ narrated: “When he was ill, the Messenger of Allah said: “I would like to have some of my Companions with me.” We said: “O Messenger of Allah! Shall we call Abu Bakr for you?” He remained silent. We said, “Shall we call ‘Umar for you?” He remained silent. We said, “Shall we call ‘Uthman for you?” He said, “Yes.” So ‘Uthman came and he spoke to him in private. The Prophet ﷺ started to speak to him and ‘Uthman’s expression changed.”<sup>2</sup>

It is likely that the Prophet ﷺ was warning ‘Uthman ؓ about the evils that would come to pass, for it is narrated that years later, during his reign as Caliph, ‘Uthman bin ‘Affan ؓ said, “The Messenger of Allah told me what would come to pass and now I am coming to that day.”

On the same topic, A’ishah ؓ narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “O ‘Uthman, if Allah places you in authority over this matter (as the caliph) one day, and the hypocrites want to rid you of the garment with which Allah has clothed you (i.e., the position of caliph), do not take it off.” He said that three times.<sup>3</sup>

Usamah bin Zaid ؓ narrated that he came to Madinah when he learned that the Prophet’s illness worsened, as did many Companions ؓ who were elsewhere. Usamah visited the Prophet ﷺ, who was not speaking due to his weakness, but he placed his hands on Usamah and then raised them, and Usamah understood that he ﷺ was supplicating for him. Usamah was not present in Madinah due to some duties that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ tasked him with.<sup>4</sup>

‘Abdullah bin Mas’ud ؓ narrated: “I visited the Prophet ﷺ while he had a high fever. I touched him and said, “You have a very high fever,” He said, “Yes, as much fever as two men of you may have.” I asked, “You will have a double reward?” He said, “Yes, no Muslim is afflicted with hurt caused by disease or some other difficulty, except that Allah will remove his sins as a tree sheds its leaves.”<sup>5</sup>

1. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/144

2. Ibn Majah, P:113, Ibn Sa,d:3/66

3. Tirmidhi, P: 3705

4. Ibn Hisham:4/651- Ahmad :21248

5. Bukhari:5647,5648

It is narrated the Prophet ﷺ went to his pulpit during his illness, and spoke about the people of Madinah, the Ansar. He said, “O people! Indeed, the Muslims will continue to increase, but the Ansar will decrease until they are like salt in a dish. Therefore, whoever of you is placed in a position of power and thus can harm and benefit others, then let him accept the good from the Ansar and forgive their wrongdoings.”<sup>1</sup>

It is also narrated that Ibn `Abbas ؓ said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ came out during his final illness with a piece of cloth tied around his head and sat on the pulpit. After thanking and praising Allah, he said, “There is no one who has done more favor to me with life and property than Abu Bakr bin Abi Quhafah. If I were to take a *khalil*<sup>2</sup> from the people, I would have taken Abu Bakr as my *khalil*, but Islamic brotherhood is better. Close all the small doors in this Masjid except that of Abu Bakr.”<sup>3</sup>

Abu Sa`id al-Khudri ؓ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ sat on the pulpit and said, “Allah has given one of His slaves the choice of receiving whatever he likes of the splendor and luxury of the worldly life, or to accept the good (of the Hereafter) which is with Allah, and he has chosen that which is with Allah.” Upon hearing that, Abu Bakr ؓ wept and said, “Our fathers and mothers be sacrificed for you!” We became astonished at this, and the people said, “Look at this old man! Allah’s Messenger ﷺ talks about a slave of Allah to whom He has given the option to choose either the splendor of this worldly life or the good which is with Him, and he says, ‘our fathers and mothers be sacrificed for you’.”

But it was Allah’s Messenger ﷺ who had been given the option, and Abu Bakr knew it better than we. Allah’s Messenger ﷺ added, “No doubt, I am more indebted to Abu Bakr than to anybody else regarding both his companionship and his wealth. Were I to take a *khalil* from my Ummah, it would have been Abu Bakr, but the fraternity of Islam is sufficient. Let no door of the Masjid remain open except the door of Abu Bakr.”<sup>4</sup>

These narrations are clear evidence against those who claim that there was a conflict between Abu Bakr ؓ and the noble household of the Prophet ﷺ, especially the narration of Ibn `Abbas ؓ, who was himself from the noble household, and is clearly narrating about the virtues of Abu Bakr in the final

1 Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:4/277- Ibn Hisham:4/650

2. A very close friend; a best friend. In another hadith, the Prophet ﷺ informed the people that he would not be taking any amongst mankind as his *khalil*, but Abu Bakr is his closest friend.

3 Bukhari: 1/120- Ahmad:1/270

4. Bukhari:466, Ibn Hisham,P: 649 Ad-Darmi:1/36

words of the Prophet ﷺ.

Abu Bakr ؓ understood from the words of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that he was bidding farewell to his Ummah. He wept and announced that he would rather lose anything else but him, and the Prophet ﷺ comforted him and reciprocated the affection by announcing to the people Abu Bakr's immense virtues and their close companionship. Furthermore, he allowed only Abu Bakr's door to remain open, which was an indication of his high rank, and that he is to lead the Muslims after the Prophet's passing, and indeed it was so.

A'ishah ؓ narrated: "When the ailment of the Prophet ﷺ became aggravated and his disease became severe, he asked his wives to permit him to be nursed (treated) in my house, so they gave him the permission. Then the Prophet came (to my house) with the support of two men, and his legs were dragging on the ground, between al-'Abbas, and another man." 'Ubaidullah (the sub narrator) said, "I informed 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas of what 'Aishah said. Ibn 'Abbas said: 'Do you know who the other man was?' I replied in the negative. Ibn 'Abbas said, 'He was 'Ali ؓ (bin Abi Talib).'"

'Aishah ؓ further said, "When the Prophet ﷺ came to my house and his sickness became aggravated, he ordered us to pour seven skins full of water on him, so that he might give some advice to the people. He was seated in a *mikhdab* (brass tub) belonging to Hafsah, the wife of the Prophet. Then, all of us started pouring water on him from the water skins till he beckoned to us to stop and that we have done (what he wanted us to do). After that he went out to the people."<sup>1</sup>

A'ishah ؓ also said, "When Allah's Messenger ﷺ became seriously ill, he would cover his face with a cloth, and when he felt hot, he would remove it from his face."

It was his Sunnah to perform *naftħ*<sup>2</sup> when he was healthy as well as when he was ill. A'ishah ؓ narrated: "Whenever Allah's Messenger ﷺ became ill, he used to recite the *Muawidhatan* (i.e., the last two surahs of the Qur'an) and blow his breath over himself (after their recitation) and rub his hands over his body. When he was afflicted with his fatal illness, I started reciting the *Muawidhatan* and blowing my breath over him as he used to do and then I rubbed the hand of

1. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:5/137

2. The linguistic meaning of *naftħ* is to blow air out of one's mouth with force, such that a very small amount of spittle comes out. The sunnah of *naftħ* entails cupping one's hands around one's mouth, reciting the last two surahs of the Qur'an, and then performing *naftħ* into the cupped hands and rubbing them over one's body.

the Prophet ﷺ over his body.”<sup>1</sup>

In his final days, he was surrounded by his noble household and his closest Companions – may Allah be pleased with them all. They would visit often to check up on his health and keep him company. Since it was impossible for everyone to visit him and would place unnecessary strain on him, those who could not visit would ask the ones who did how he was doing.

The issue of who was to be the next leader of the Ummah after the Prophet ﷺ is a sensitive one among some sects nowadays. Some people believe it should have been `Ali ؑ instead of Abu Bakr ؓ. During the Prophet’s final days, the Companions differed regarding whether or not to ask him ﷺ to appoint a successor. Ultimately, he did not specifically appoint one, even though it is clear that the Prophet ﷺ spoke to the people several times during his illness, and even bid them farewell, i.e., he had the opportunity to appoint a successor but chose not to out of his own accord. Many of his actions and words indicated that he would have preferred Abu Bakr ؓ to succeed him, which is what occurred.<sup>2</sup>

When the Prophet ﷺ was too ill to lead the people in prayer, Abu Bakr ؓ led the prayers for a few days, some narrations indicate that it was approximately a week. The first instance of this was `Isha prayer, for A’ishah ؓ narrated that when the pain increased for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he asked, “Did the people pray yet?” They replied, “No, they are awaiting you, O Messenger of Allah.”

He then asked for some water to be prepared, then he made wudu’ and was heading out but he fainted. When he awoke, he asked, “Did the people pray yet?” They replied, “No, they are awaiting you, O Messenger of Allah.” The Companions ؓ were sitting in the Masjid, waiting for him ﷺ. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then sent for Abu Bakr ؓ to lead the people in prayer.<sup>3</sup>

Jabir bin `Abdullah ؓ narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “None of you should die except while expecting good from his Lord.”<sup>4</sup>

## The last day of the Prophet’s life

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ passed away on Monday, the 12<sup>th</sup> of Rabi` al-Awwal, 11 AH, corresponding to June 8<sup>th</sup>, 632, in the late morning, before midday on a summer day. It had been a few days since he ﷺ had led the Muslims in prayer. On the morning of his passing, the Prophet ﷺ had stepped out and saw the Muslims

1. Bukhari, :4444

2. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari:4447- Ibn Hisham, P: 654

3. Ibn Hisham:4/652

4. Ad-Sahbi, As-Seerah, P: 557

in prayer, being led by Abu Bakr ؓ. Anas bin Malik ؓ narrated: “While the Muslims were offering the Fajr prayer behind Abu Bakr, Allah’s Messenger ﷺ suddenly appeared, for he had moved the curtain of the dwelling place of A’ishah and looked towards them while they were standing in rows in prayer. He smiled with pleasure. Abu Bakr started retreating to join the row on the assumption that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ wanted to come out for the prayer. The Muslims almost became too distracted in their prayer due to their sheer joy in seeing Allah’s Messenger ﷺ, but he beckoned them to complete their prayer.”

This was the last time that the Prophet ﷺ was seen in public, for he passed away not long after. Only a few Companions had the honor of being with him after that, including Abu Bakr ؓ, who had requested leave from the Prophet ﷺ for a brief time to visit his family.<sup>1</sup>

When the last illness of Messenger of Allah ﷺ made him unconscious, Fatimah ؓ exclaimed: “O the distress of my dear father!” He ﷺ said, “There will be no distress for your father after today.”<sup>2</sup>

Abu `Ubaidah bin al-Jarrah ؓ narrates that the last advice he heard from the Prophet ﷺ on his deathbed was that “the worst of people are those who took their Prophets’ graves as places of worship.”<sup>3</sup> This clearly shows that the Prophet ﷺ did not want his followers to make his grave into a place of prayer, for it was an evil act that either includes *kufir* and *shirk* or quite easily leads to them. He ﷺ was afraid that after he passes, the people might wish to express their honor and love for him and may perhaps commit this grave evil, as many nations had before them – including the Jews and Christians. It is narrated by both A’ishah ؓ and Ibn `Abbas ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ also said on his deathbed, “May Allah’s curse be on the Jews and the Christians; they made their Prophets’ graves places of worship.”<sup>4</sup>

If it is impermissible to make the Prophet’s grave a place of worship, then it is impermissible for anyone else’s grave as well.

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1 Ibn Hisham: 4/654  
2. Bukhari:4462  
3 Ahmad:1/195  
4. Bukhari:4441

## The *Siwak* <sup>1</sup>

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to use the *siwak* throughout his life and he instructed the Muslims to use it often; before each wudu' and before prayer. He would even bring it with him when traveling.

A'ishah ؓ narrates, "Abdur-Rahman bin Abi Bakr entered upon the Prophet ﷺ while I was supporting the Prophet ﷺ on my chest. `Abdur-Rahman had a fresh *siwak* with him and was cleaning his teeth with it. Allah's Messenger ﷺ looked at it, so I took the *siwak*, cut it (chewed it with my teeth), shook it and made it soft (with water), and then gave it to him and he cleaned his teeth with it. I had never seen Allah's Messenger ﷺ cleaning his teeth in a better way. After he finished brushing of his teeth, he lifted his hand or his finger and said thrice, "O Allah! Let me be with the highest companions." and then died." A'ishah used to say, "He died while his head was resting between my chest and chin."<sup>2</sup>

She also narrates: "I used to hear (from the Prophet) that no Prophet dies till he is given the option to select either the worldly life or the life of the Hereafter. I heard the Prophet ﷺ in his last illness, with his voice becoming hoarse, saying:

*"In the company of those on whom is the grace of Allah...( to the end of the Verse)."* (Surah an-Nisa', 69).

Thereupon I thought that the Prophet ﷺ had been given the option."<sup>3</sup>

A'ishah ؓ said, "And those were the last words that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ spoke, i.e., 'O Allah, the highest companions.'"

He ﷺ supplicated: "O Allah, forgive me, bestow mercy upon me, and join me with the highest company [i.e., in Paradise]."<sup>4</sup>

A'ishah ؓ said: "There was a leather or wood container full of water in front of Allah's Messenger ﷺ (at the time of his death). He would put his hand into

1. *Siwak* or *Miswak* refers to a twig made primarily from the Arak tree. It was used by the Prophet ﷺ as a toothbrush, and it is a sunnah to use it regularly to clean one's teeth.
2. Bukhari: 4438, 4449, 4450
3. Bukhari: 4435
4. Bukhari: 4463



the water and rub his face with it, saying, “None has the right to be worshipped but Allah! No doubt, death has its throes.” Then he raised his hand and started saying, “(O Allah!) with the highest companions.” (and he repeated it) till he passed away and his hand dropped.”<sup>1</sup>

After the Prophet’s soul exited his body, A’ishah ؓ did not yet know that he had passed on, for she had never witnessed death before. She remained with the Prophet ﷺ for a time, until `Umar ؓ and al-Mughirah ؓ came and asked for permission to enter. She put on her *hijab* and granted them permission. Upon seeing the Prophet ﷺ, `Umar asked her what happened, and she replied that he had been unconscious for a short while, but `Umar and al-Mughirah recognized it more than she. Al-Mughira ؓ said quietly, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has died.” `Umar ؓ became angry and said, “You have lied!” He was too distressed and was having difficulty accepting the situation. As we mentioned before, Abu Bakr ؓ – the Prophet’s closest companion – was not in the city at the time, but he was approximately one mile away. As soon as the news spread that the Prophet ﷺ had passed away, people sent for Abu Bakr ؓ, who came immediately riding on his horse. He did not speak to anyone, and he entered the home immediately and removed the cloth that was on the face of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and then said, “Indeed, we belong to Allah and to Him we return. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has died.” Then he leaned in and kissed the Prophet’s blessed forehead and said, “O my Prophet. O pure one. O my closest friend. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has died.”<sup>2</sup>

He then said, “By Allah, He will never cause you to die twice. You have now died the death that was written for you.”<sup>3</sup>

The people had gotten used to gathering in the Prophet’s Masjid to ask about his health and learn of any news, even to the extent that some would frequent it or remain there during the final days of his life, out of their love for him ﷺ. This time they were also gathered there, and `Umar ؓ was among them. He was still in shock and did not want to believe that the Prophet had passed away, and he was angrily refusing to accept any claim that it had happened.

Abu Bakr ؓ exited the home of A’ishah ؓ and entered the Masjid. When the people saw him, they gathered around him to hear what he has to say. Ibn `Abbas ؓ – who was present at the time – narrates: “Abu Bakr came out while `Umar was speaking to the people, and he said, ‘Sit, O `Umar,’ but `Umar refused to do so. Upon seeing Abu Bakr, the people left `Umar and surrounded him instead.

1 Bukhari: 4449

2 Ahmad: 6/31- Bukhari: 4450

3 Bukhari: 4452

Abu Bakr said, “To proceed: Whoever worships Muhammad, then indeed Muhammad has died, but whoever among you worships Allah, then indeed Allah is alive and will never die. Allah the Exalted said:

*“Muhammad is not but a messenger. [Other] messengers have passed on before him. So if he was to die or be killed, would you turn back on your heels [to unbelief]? And he who turns back on his heels will never harm Allah at all; but Allah will reward the grateful.”* (Surah Aal `Imran, 144).”

Ibn `Abbas ؓ continues: “By Allah, it is as if the people did not know that Allah revealed that verse until Abu Bakr recited it. They all received it from him, and I heard every single person reciting it.”

`Umar ؓ said: “By Allah, when I heard Abu Bakr reciting it, my legs could not support me, and I fell down to the ground at the very moment of hearing him reciting it, declaring that the Prophet ﷺ had died.”<sup>1</sup>

Abu Bakr’s wisdom during a time of crisis, and his deep understanding of the religion of Islam truly shone that day. His leadership was clear on that day, for he calmed the hearts of the people and helped them in that difficult moment by reminding them of the Words of Allah. The people were aware of the verse he recited, but due to the difficulty of the moment, they needed to be reminded of it, and thus when he recited it to them, they felt the message clearly, and began to recite it themselves.

Fatimah ؓ, the blessed daughter of the Prophet ﷺ, had previously received news from the Prophet ﷺ that she would be the first of his family to pass away after him. Anas bin Malik ؓ narrates that when the Prophet ﷺ passed away, Fatimah ؓ said: “My father, Allah has called you back and you have responded to His Call. O father! The Garden of Firdaus is your abode. O father! We announce to Jibril your death.” When he was buried, she said, “How was your soul able to bear putting the earth over (the grave of) Messenger of Allah ﷺ?”<sup>2</sup>

Anas bin Malik ؓ served the Prophet ﷺ for several years, and when he ﷺ passed away, Anas said, “The day the Prophet ﷺ came to Madinah, everything in it became illuminated, and on the day when he died, everything went dark, and no sooner had we dusted off our hands (after burying him) that we felt our hearts had changed.”

1 Bukhari: 4497 Ibn Abi Shaibah, P:410

2 Bukhari: 4462

Everyone was grieving over the death of Allah's Messenger ﷺ, for they loved him dearly. Umm Ayman ؓ, who the Prophet ﷺ referred to as his second mother, was living in Madinah at the time of his death. She had made Hijrah years prior, and he would visit her now and again. After he ﷺ passed on, Abu Bakr ؓ made sure to visit her as well.

On one occasion, he said to `Umar, "Let us go visit Umm Ayman as the Prophet ﷺ used to do." When they arrived at her home, she wept, and Abu Bakr asked her, "Why do you weep? What is with Allah is better for His Messenger." She replied, "By Allah, I do not weep about that, for I know that what is with Allah is better for His Messenger. I, however, weep because the revelation that used to come down from the heavens has now stopped [forever]." Upon hearing this, Abu Bakr and `Umar both wept with her.<sup>1</sup>

Umm Ayman ؓ was weeping for mankind's loss, indeed our need for a connection with our Lord is dire. Having lost the final Messenger ﷺ, that connection weakened, and now what remains is the guidance of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Our merciful, patient, noble teacher and guide – may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him – had passed on to the next world, the next stage in his journey towards His Lord.

While the Companions ؓ grieved their loss, they attempted to comfort one another and remind each other about the reality of this temporary worldly life. It is mentioned that when Bilal bin Rabah ؓ – who was the *muadh-dhin* of the Prophet ﷺ – stood up to perform the Adhan after the Prophet's death, when he reached the statement 'I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah,' the entire Masjid shook with emotion as everyone began to weep. After the Prophet ﷺ was buried, Bilal could no longer find it in himself to be the muezzin, and he stepped down from the position.<sup>2</sup>

The scholar Muhammad al-Ghazali – may Allah have mercy on him – wrote: "The difficult news left the grieving home and weighed heavily on the souls of those who heard it and caused their minds to be in a state of confusion. The believers felt as if the horizons of Madinah had darkened by the agony of their loss."<sup>3</sup>

The people of Madinah, naturally, felt the loss the heaviest, for they were the neighbors of Allah's Messenger ﷺ, and they had the blessing of seeing him come

1. Muslim: 2454- Ibn Abi Shaibah, P: 519

2. Al-Qastalani:3/392

3. Al-Ghazali, Muhammad. *Fiqh as-Sirah*, P:519

and go on a daily basis. They learned from him, prayed with him, and interacted with him. They felt solace in the worlds of Allah the Exalted:

*“And indeed the Hereafter is better for you than the present (life of this world). And verily, your Lord will give you (all i.e. good) so that you shall be well-pleased.”* (Surah ad-Duha, 4-5)

They were certain that meeting Allah was a blessing for His Messenger ﷺ, and that the next stages of his eternal existence will be a relief from the temporary worldly life, the test that he had passed by Allah’s permission and blessing. However, as we previously mentioned, not all the Arabs and the Muslims in the faraway regions took the news the same way. Turmoil and difficulty began to brew quickly. A’ishah ؓ narrated: “When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed away, [many of] the Arabs apostatized, and the Jews and Christians felt emboldened, as did the *munafiqun*. The Muslims became like a lost sheep during a stormy night after their Prophet ﷺ died, until Allah gathered them under Abu Bakr as-Siddiq ؓ.”<sup>1</sup>

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ did not leave behind any wealth for inheritance. `Amr bin al-Harith ؓ said: “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not leave a Dinar or a Dirham or a male or a female slave. He left only his white mule on which he used to ride, and his weapons, and a piece of land which he gave in charity for the needy travelers.”<sup>2</sup>

A’ishah ؓ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ passed away while his armor was in the possession of a Jewish man. The Prophet ﷺ had given it to him as *rahn*, or collateral, based on a business transaction that they had; the Prophet ﷺ had purchased some food from him to be paid for at a later date with the armor given in advance as collateral, as per one of the customs of the time.

The Prophet ﷺ gave us the example of his life in this world. He said, “What is the world to me? What am I to the world? Verily, the example of this world and myself is that of a rider who seeks shade under a tree, then he moves on and leaves it behind.”<sup>3</sup>

He never occupied himself with hoarding wealth, and he warned his Ummah against such practices. He ﷺ taught us to utilize our wealth wisely for the sake of Allah. He ﷺ asked his Companions ؓ: “Who among you considers the

1 Ibn Hisham: 4/665

2. Bukhari:4461

3. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari: 7/176

wealth of his heirs dearer to him than his own wealth?” They replied, “O Allah’s Messenger, there is none among us but loves his own wealth more.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “His wealth is whatever he spends (in Allah’s Cause) during his life (on good deeds) while the wealth of his heirs is whatever he leaves behind.”<sup>1</sup>

He ﷺ informed us that the Prophets are bound by a specific ruling ordained upon them by Allah regarding the wealth they leave behind after death: “Our [i.e., Prophets’] property is not inherited; what we leave behind is charity.”<sup>2</sup>

Throughout Islamic history and even to this day, many poets have written beautiful poems eulogizing the beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, including the Companion, Hassan bin Thabit ؓ. He was an eloquent, skilled poet who praised the Prophet ﷺ in his poetry when he was alive, and eulogized him after his death, thus being the first to do so.



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1. Bukhari: 3554  
2. Bukhari: 2578

## The funeral and burial of the blessed Prophet ﷺ

Anas ؓ said regarding the Prophet's appearance, "When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed away, his head and beard did not even have twenty white hairs."

The household of the Prophet ﷺ were gathered in the home of `Ali ؓ and Fatimah ؓ, and among them were al-`Abbas ؓ and Talhah bin `Ubaidillah ؓ. The homes of the people at the time were very small, and it was not possible for too many people to be gathered together inside. Abu Bakr ؓ had exited the home of the Prophet ﷺ, and everyone else exited as well, and the Prophet's blessed body remained inside on that day, which was a Monday – the day of his passing.

The people began to wonder who was going to lead the Ummah, and the question arose in the different gatherings. They knew that it was unwise and disastrous for a nation to remain without a leader to run its affairs, and the longer the situation remained uncertain, the more problematic it would become. After some discussions, the people pledged to Abu Bakr ؓ and he became the next leader of the Ummah after the Prophet ﷺ, assuming the title of *khalifah*, or Caliph, i.e., successor. We will discuss this in more detail later on.<sup>1</sup>

The next day, Tuesday, the family of the Prophet ﷺ gathered in the home of A'ishah ؓ, where the Prophet's noble body was. Al-`Abbas ؓ was the head of the household due to his seniority. A man of the Ansar named Aws bin Khawli ؓ requested permission to join them, and `Ali ؓ allowed him.<sup>2</sup>

The male family members of the Prophet ﷺ then proceeded to perform *ghusl* on his body, i.e., the pre-burial ritual cleansing. They did so without removing his clothes. A'ishah ؓ narrated: "By Allah, we did not know whether we should take off the clothes of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as we did for our dead, or wash him while his clothes were on him. When they (the people) differed among themselves, Allah cast slumber over them until every one of them had put his chin on his chest. Then a speaker spoke from a side of the house, and they did

1 Ibn Hisham:4/655

2 Ibn Hisham:4/662

not know who he was: Wash the Prophet ﷺ while his clothes are on him. So they stood round the Prophet ﷺ and washed him while he had his shirt on him. They poured water on his shirt and rubbed him with his shirt and not with their hands.”<sup>1</sup>

They washed his blessed body with water taken from the well of Sa'd bin Khaithama in Quba', mixed with *sidr*. Then they enshrouded him in two white cloths and a Yemeni garment, as narrated by A'ishah ؓ: “The body of Messenger of Allah ﷺ was shrouded in three white Yemeni cotton garments, among which was neither a gown nor a turban.”<sup>2</sup>

After they finished enshrouding him, they did not know if they should move his body elsewhere for the *janazah*, i.e., funeral, prayer. Abu Bakr ؓ opined that they should not move him ﷺ from the place where he died. It is narrated that he was asked, “O companion of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, should we offer the prayer for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ?” He replied, “Yes.” They asked, “How?” He said, “A group of people should enter and pray, then supplicate, then leave, then another group should enter, pray, supplicate, and so on until everyone has done so.”

They asked, “O companion of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, should we bury the Messenger of Allah ﷺ?” He replied, “Yes.” They asked, “Where?” He said, “In the very place that Allah took his soul, for indeed, Allah did not take his soul except in a pure place.”<sup>3</sup>

Thus the Companions ؓ prayed the *janazah* in groups, men separately and women separately, and then the children. No one led the prayer as the *imam*, for the people still saw the Prophet ﷺ as their true *imam*. Of course, this took some time due to the small space and the sheer number of people who wished to offer the prayers and bid farewell to the Prophet ﷺ.

Abu Bakr ؓ said: “I heard something from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that I have not forgotten. He said, “Allah has not taken the soul of a Prophet except in the location where He wishes they be buried.” Therefore, bury him in the land underneath his bed.”<sup>4</sup>

The typical Muslim grave can be dug straight down in a form known as *shaqq*, or a niche is dug out to either side at the bottom, known as *lahd*. The

1. Abu Dawud:3141- Ibn Hisham As-Seerah:4/662
2. Bukhari: 1271,1272, Muslim:1/94
3. Tirmidhi Fee Ash -Shamail, P:378
4. Tirmidhi P:108 Ibn Hisham As-Seerah:4/263

Companions ﷺ discussed which form to choose for the Prophet's grave, but ultimately decided on the *lahd*. After learning that the Prophet ﷺ was buried in this manner, the people began to prefer this method for themselves and their loved ones. It is narrated that Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas ﷺ said on his deathbed: "Make a niche for me in the side of the grave and set up (bricks) over me as was done for the Messenger of Allah."<sup>1</sup>

The Companions ﷺ were deliberating each step of the funeral process because they wanted to choose only the best for the Prophet ﷺ. It is narrated that they were supplicating, "O Allah, choose what is best for Your Messenger." And thus, Allah did so.<sup>2</sup>

When night fell on Tuesday the 14<sup>th</sup> of Rabi` al-Awwal 11 AH, and the people had finished performing the *janazah* prayer, the burial process began. The bed of the Prophet ﷺ was moved, and the Companions ﷺ began digging the grave. After it was done, they carefully placed his noble body in the grave, and after positioning him ﷺ in the *lahd*, they blocked it off with some bricks, as per the custom that continues to this day. After the bricks were placed, the dirt was put back into the grave to seal it off, and thus the Prophet's burial was completed that night.

Thus the grave of the Prophet ﷺ remained in the room that used to belong to A'ishah ﷺ, and nothing was built over it, nor was it raised above ground level or any other extravagant additions. This is because the Prophet ﷺ said in the hadith narrated by A'ishah ﷺ: "May Allah's curse be upon the Jews and the Christians; they made the graves of their Prophets into places of worship."<sup>3</sup> It is prohibited in Islam to add any extravagance to a grave, even if it be the grave of a Prophet, because it leads to deifying the inhabitant of the grave over time, and eventually may lead to worshipping the person in the grave, as can be observed in many sects and religions around the world even today.

When Abu Bakr ﷺ passed away, he was buried next to the Prophet ﷺ, and `Umar ﷺ asked A'ishah's permission to be buried next to his two companions, and she granted it. Abu Bakr's grave was placed slightly lower than the Prophet's, at about his shoulder level, and `Umar's is at Abu Bakr's shoulder level.<sup>4</sup>

They were among the people who spent the most time with the Prophet ﷺ, especially during the end of his life, as did his wives and relatives. The Mothers of the Believers ﷺ, and A'ishah ﷺ in particular, have narrated several hadiths

1. Muslim Book of Funerals

2. Ibn Hisham As-Seerah:4/663

3. Bukhari:1390

4. Bukhari:1390- Al Qastalani:3/401



that the Prophet ﷺ spoke in his final illness. Perhaps the fact that the Prophet ﷺ passed away in A'ishah's room, in her arms, is a sign of their closeness and a virtue for her. She was a young woman when he passed away, and she went on to narrate many hadiths and become one of the most knowledgeable scholars this Ummah has ever witnessed.

During the Prophet's final illness, the members of his family – which included `Ali and al-`Abbas ؓ – and Abu Bakr's family were at his service at all times, trying their best to make him as comfortable as possible. The rest of the Companions ؓ would visit often and offer what they could, and they would meet in the Prophet's Masjid and ask about his health. The atmosphere of love and respect was vibrant in Madinah amongst the Companions ؓ.

## The people pledge to Abu Bakr ؓ as a successor

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was not just the *imam* of prayer for the Muslims, he was the leader of the nation and the one who built it – by Allah's permission – from the start. He always knew that he would not remain on this earth forever, and he sought to build a self-sustaining nation that would have all the guidance and tools it needed to prosper after his time for departure came. A nation built on worshipping Allah, establishing justice, granting people the rights they deserve, and fighting against oppression. A nation whose message would one day reach the entire globe.

The Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims knew that the nation simply could not exist without a leader, and thus the Companions ؓ sought to solve this problem immediately after the Prophet ﷺ passed away. As we mentioned, he ﷺ did not specifically appoint anyone as a successor, but there were many indications that he wanted Abu Bakr ؓ to fill the position.

## As-Saqifah

On Monday, the day the Prophet ﷺ passed away, some of the Ansar gathered around Sa'd bin `Ubadah ؓ in a place known as Saqifah Bani Sa'idai. At this time, the members of the household of the Prophet ﷺ were gathered at the house of Fatimah ؓ, `Umar and Abu Bakr ؓ were together near the Prophet's Masjid along with some of the other Companions ؓ. It was a difficult time, and many people were still trying to understand the situation, and what was to come next.

It was certainly a time of mixed thoughts. Some of the Ansar thought that it was only natural for someone from the people of Madinah to assume leadership, for it was still their city after all, and they had voluntarily granted Prophet Muhammad ﷺ the right to leadership many years prior, though it was not part of Arab custom at all to be led by someone from a different tribe. Some understood that since the Prophet ﷺ had passed away, leadership in Madinah could return to its original people. However, most people understood that it was no longer that simple, for the Muslim Ummah was now far greater than simply Madinah, and there was now a structure and organization that was beyond the old ways before the Hijrah.

Some felt it was logical for a relative of the Prophet ﷺ to be the successor, while others thought Abu Bakr ؓ was clearly the next in command due to his close companionship with the Prophet ﷺ and all the other indicating factors.

Some of the Ansar became aware of the meeting at as-Saqifah, so they informed Abu Bakr ؓ of it, fearing that a decision might be reached without the input of Abu Bakr ؓ. This is proof that many amongst the Ansar themselves understood the authority of Abu Bakr ؓ and his natural succession to the Prophet ﷺ. Upon hearing them, Abu Bakr told `Umar, “Let us go to our brothers from the Ansar and see what is happening.”<sup>1</sup>

Allah the Exalted praised both the Muhajirun and the Ansar in the following verse:

*“And the first to embrace Islam of the Muhajirun and the Ansar and also those who followed them exactly (in Faith). Allah is well-pleased with them as they are well-pleased with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success.”* (Surah at-Tawbah, 100)

It may be difficult to understand the situation now in the twenty-first century, living in nations with codified laws and centuries of relative structure. However, you must understand that the Ummah at the time was just one generation in, and only twenty-three years prior, everyone present in Madinah was living in relatively-lawless tribal rule. Add to this the emotional turmoil and difficulty of hearing the news that the Prophet ﷺ had passed away, and it certainly led to some tension. Islam’s teachings do away with tribalism, and they instead insist on leadership based on merit and sincerity, but there had not yet been a structure in place to choose a leader, and there were a number of nobles still living amongst

1 Ibn Hisham As-Seerah an -Nabawiyah:4/657

the Muhajirun – many of whom were from Quraish – as well as the two tribes of the Ansar, al-Aws and al-Khazraj. People had different understandings of what was the best path going forward for the Ummah, and thus this led to multiple discussions and debates.

Abu Bakr and `Umar arrived at al-Saqifah, and they found the people discussing the matter of succession. `Umar رضي الله عنه wished to speak, but Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه asked him to remain silent, perhaps due to knowing Umar's nature of outspokenness and that he may say something too strong or confrontational. Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه spoke instead, reminding the Ansar that the Arabs at large still saw the world in the tribal ways, and it would not change overnight. They would be willing to follow a man from the Quraish but simply would not accept a leader from al-Aws or al-Khazraj. He reminded them of their duty to Islam, and that the situation was dire, and a wrong move at this moment could cause immeasurable turmoil and bloodshed. He offered them Abu `Ubaidah bin al-Jarrah رضي الله عنه, one of the Muhajirun and a major Companion who was present at the meeting, as the successor for the Ummah.

Upon hearing this, `Umar said, "O Ansar! O Muslims! Truly the best person to succeed the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم is his companion in the cave [i.e., he was referencing the verse in Surah at-Tawbah]. Abu Bakr, the early Companion, always at the forefront of good!"

It is then that one of the Ansar rushed ahead and put his hand in Abu Bakr's to pledge allegiance to him. This caused the others to follow suit, and they immediately came forward and began to put their hands in Abu Bakr's, and thus the matter was decided, and Allah protected the Ummah from much division and turmoil. The people who were at the gathering were not normal individuals; they were elders and leaders of their own communities; people who understood leadership. They knew that Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه spoke the truth, for wisdom in leadership is not simply a matter of what is correct on paper and in theory, it is doing what needs to be done and working with the situation at hand, making compromises and difficult decisions when necessary.

It is to be noted that there are multiple narrations regarding the events at al-Saqifah in which Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه began his speech by praising the Ansar and acknowledging their virtue in Islam, and the deep debt and gratitude the Ummah has towards them. In one narration, he offered them `Umar رضي الله عنه as the successor rather than Abu Ubaidah رضي الله عنه. This clearly shows his humbleness and lack of

desire for leadership himself, but also his keen sense of awareness of the needs of the Ummah and the political situation at the time.

In one narration, it is mentioned that `Umar ؓ spoke, saying: “O Ansar, are you not aware that Allah’s Messenger ﷺ commanded Abu Bakr to lead the people in prayer [for the duration of his illness]?” They replied, “Yes.” `Umar continued, “Then which of you would be satisfied putting himself ahead of Abu Bakr in leadership?” They replied, “We seek refuge in Allah from putting ourselves ahead of Abu Bakr.”

One Ansari man stood up and said, “We were the Ansar (supporters, helpers) of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and we will be the Ansar of his successor as well.” And thus the first person to pledge was an Ansari man, and it is said that at first, Abu Bakr ؓ was not pleased with having been chosen, due to his humbleness. This pledge occurred on Monday, the 12<sup>th</sup> of Rabi` al-Awwal.<sup>1</sup>

There are some Muslims today who claim that the Prophet ﷺ clearly instructed the Ummah that `Ali bin Abi Talib ؓ would be his successor. This claim is problematic in many ways, the first being that the Prophet ﷺ would have made such a major announcement in public, and there would have been an abundance of narrations regarding it. Secondly, it is impossible that such instructions existed and the Ummah simply ignored them, especially because `Ali ؓ and the members of the Prophet’s household pledged to Abu Bakr ؓ as the successor to the Prophet ﷺ.

It is highly unlikely that people who fought many wars with the Prophet ﷺ and risked their lives in dire situations for two decades and gave so much of their wealth in charity to support the religion would simply turn on their heels the instant the Prophet ﷺ passed away. The incidences of mass apostasy that occurred immediately after his death were all in the faraway regions of Arabia and its outskirts, among the Muslims that had accepted Islam en masse with their tribes, as more of a pledge rather than a true acceptance and submission of the faith. Many of them were new Muslims who had never met the Prophet ﷺ or possibly even learned much of the teachings of Islam to begin with. In Madinah, however, the Ansar and Muhajirun had a long history of sincerity to Islam, and their faith remained strong, and they took up the reins of leading this Ummah to success and prosperity by the blessing of Allah.

*“Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah. Of them some have fulfilled their obligations (i.e. have*

1 Ibn Abi Shaibah,P: 425- Ibn Sa`ad:3/178 Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:4/490

*been martyred), and some of them are still waiting, but they have never changed [i.e., they never proved treacherous to their covenant which they concluded with Allah] in the least.” (Surah al-Ahzab, 23)*

The pledge at as-Saqifah was not a public one, for it only included the people present at that gathering. Therefore, the next day after Fajr prayer, `Umar ؓ stood and addressed the people. Anas bin Malik ؓ narrated: “The morning after the pledge was made to Abu Bakr at as-Saqifah, Abu Bakr sat on the pulpit, and `Umar stood and spoke before Abu Bakr. He praised Allah in the manner that He deserves, then he said: ‘O people, yesterday I said something to you that was incorrect according to the Book of Allah, and it was not something that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had informed me, but it was simply out of my own accord that I thought Allah’s Messenger ﷺ would tend to our affairs [or: would continue living amongst us]. [i.e., he is referring to his previous claim that the Prophet ﷺ had not died, which he said immediately after the Prophet’s death.]

He continued, “Indeed, Allah has left among you His Book that He guided His Messenger ﷺ with, so if you hold on to it, Allah will guide you as He guided him. And Allah has gathered you under the leadership of the best of you, the companion of Allah’s Messenger ﷺ, the second of two that was in the cave, so come and pledge to him!” Then the people pledged to Abu Bakr in the public pledge, after the pledge of as-Saqifah.”<sup>1</sup>

There are no authentic reports of anyone refusing this pledge, not even `Ali ؓ as some people claim today, nor anyone else from the noble household of the Prophet ﷺ. In fact, they pledged to Abu Bakr ؓ and began to help him in leading the Ummah towards prosperity and greatness, and the first major situation after burying the Prophet ﷺ, which was dealing with the mass apostasies in the various regions.

After the people pledged, Abu Bakr ؓ addressed them in his first address as Caliph, outlining his approach to the position. He began by praising Allah, then he said: “To proceed. O people, I have been appointed over you though I am not the best among you. If I do well, then help me; and if I act wrongly, then correct me. Truthfulness is a duty, and lying is equivalent to treachery. The weak among you is deemed strong by me, until I return to them that which is rightfully theirs, by Allah’s will, and the strong among you is deemed weak by me, until I take from them what is rightfully due, by Allah’s will. No nation abandons *jihad* in the path of Allah except that Allah makes them suffer humiliation, and sexual

1 Ibn Abi Shaibah, P: 429- Ibn Hisham:4/66

deviance does not become widespread among a people except that Allah inflicts them with calamity. Obey me so long as I obey Allah and His Messenger, but if I disobey Allah and His Messenger, then I have no right to your obedience.”<sup>1</sup>

His inaugural speech was full of humility, and it was an announcement to the people that he did not consider himself better than them, but would strive to serve them as best he could. He emphasized that he would take great care to ensure justice especially to the weak, and that he would not favor the strong, wealthy, and powerful. He also let the people know that the nation must remain strong and prepared militarily so as not to be overcome by malicious actors. He was aware of the need for social cohesion, and warned against sins that would ruin the fabric and morality of society if they became widespread. And finally, he iterated to the people that his only authority over them is granted by the Book of Allah and that he would consider himself bound by it. Truly, it was a concise but informative and noble inaugural speech that showed his mindset towards authority and leadership, and outlined his approach for the future of his reign as Caliph.<sup>2</sup>

## The reasons Abu Bakr ﷺ was chosen

Abu Bakr ﷺ was the most virtuous Muslim in this Ummah after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and he was his closest companion. The Prophet ﷺ chose him to accompany him during the long, difficult journey of the Hijrah, as `Umar ﷺ alluded to when he referenced the verse in Surah at-Tawbah:

*“If you help him (Muhammad) not (it does not matter), for Allah did indeed help him when the disbelievers drove him out, the second of two, when they (Muhammad and Abu Bakr) were in the cave, and he said to his companion (Abu Bakr): “Be not sad (or afraid), surely Allah is with us.” Then Allah sent down His Sakinah (calmness, tranquillity, peace, etc.) upon him, and strengthened him with forces (angels) which you saw not, and made the word of those who disbelieved the lowermost, while it was the Word of Allah that became the uppermost, and Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.”*<sup>3</sup> (Surah at-Tawbah, 40)

During the Prophet’s final days, he relied on Abu Bakr ﷺ for several tasks. Though the Prophet ﷺ did not directly appoint a successor due to his wisdom in letting the Muslims decide their next leader, many of his actions indicate

1 Ibn Hisham :4/661- At-Tabari:2/238 Ibn Kathir:5/248

2 As-Sallabi, Abu Bakr As-Siddiq: P: 168-178

3 Ibn Abi Shaibah, P: 428,429

that Abu Bakr ؓ was his choice. Ultimately, it was in the best interest of the Ummah for it to develop a political system wherein its own leaders are chosen with wisdom and deliberation, so the system can withstand the test of time, as opposed to a simple case of the previous leader appointing a successor.

Some of the indicators that the Prophet ﷺ wanted Abu Bakr ؓ to succeed him:

- Hudhaifah bin al-Yaman ؓ said: “We were sitting with the Prophet ﷺ when he said, “I do not know how much longer I shall remain among you, so follow those who will come after me,” and he pointed towards Abu Bakr and `Umar. “And follow the guidance of `Ammar, and whatever Ibn Mas`ud says to you, then believe him.”<sup>1</sup>
- Ibn `Umar ؓ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: “(I saw in a dream that) while I was standing at a well and drawing water therefrom, suddenly Abu Bakr and `Umar came to me. Abu Bakr took the bucket and drew one or two buckets (full of water), but there was weakness in his pulling, but Allah forgave him. Then Ibn al-Khattab took the bucket from Abu Bakr’s hand and the bucket turned into a very large one in his hand. I have never seen such a mighty man among the people doing such a hard job as `Umar did, and (the people drank to their satisfaction) and so did their camels until they were satisfied.”<sup>2</sup>
- Bukhari recorded a hadith in his collection: A woman came to the Prophet ﷺ [with a situation] and he instructed her to return at a later time. She asked, “What if I return and do not find you?” and perhaps she meant if he had passed away. He ﷺ replied, “If you do not find me, then go to Abu Bakr.”<sup>3</sup>
- It is important to note that `Ali bin Abi Talib ؓ was one of the biggest supporters of Abu Bakr ؓ. Bukhari recorded a hadith narrated by Ibn `Abbas ؓ who was recalling something that happened to him after `Umar ؓ passed away. He said: “While I was standing amongst the people who were supplicating to Allah for `Umar bin al-Khattab who was lying (dead) on his bed, a man behind me rested his elbows on my shoulder and said, “(O `Umar!) May Allah bestow His Mercy on you. I always hoped that Allah would keep you with your two companions, for I often heard Allah’s

1 Ibn Abi Shaibah, p: 427,428

2. Bukhari: 3682

3. Bukhari:3659

Messenger ﷺ saying, “I, Abu Bakr and `Umar were (somewhere). I, Abu Bakr and `Umar did (something). I, Abu Bakr and `Umar set out.’ So I hoped that Allah will keep you with both of them.” I turned back to see that the speaker was `Ali bin Abi Talib.”<sup>1</sup>

- There are other narrations that clearly show `Ali’s support for the caliphates of Abu Bakr and `Umar. In one narration, `Ali ؑ says: “The Prophet ﷺ passed away in the best state, then Abu Bakr became his successor, and he followed his actions and his Sunnah, then he too passed away in the best state – and he was the best of this Ummah after its Prophet ﷺ. Then `Umar succeeded Abu Bakr, and he followed both of their actions and their Sunnah, then he passed away in the best state, and he was the best of this Ummah after its Prophet ﷺ and then Abu Bakr.”
- Muhammad, the son of `Ali ؑ, said: “I asked my father, ‘Who is the best Muslim after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ?’ and he replied, ‘Abu Bakr.’ I asked, ‘Then who?’ He replied, “`Umar.’ I was afraid he would say `Uthman next, so I simply asked, “And then you?” He said, “I am nothing but one of the Muslims.”<sup>2</sup>
- `Ali ؑ and al-`Abbas ؑ pledged to Abu Bakr ؑ on Tuesday morning, the day after the Prophet’s death, as did the rest of the household of the Prophet ﷺ. They also immediately went to work together to tackle the problem of the apostatizing tribes.

The Prophet ﷺ left the Ummah with principles and a structure to follow, and he left it up to the wise, intelligent, learned people among this nation to choose a leader from themselves, and to build upon the system already put in place to ensure a just and fair society. Had he appointed `Ali ؑ, for example, the people would assume the issue of leadership in Islam was a kingship, and thus would transfer from one relative to the next, and that is against Islam’s teachings.

When `Umar ؑ was on his deathbed, he was asked, “Will you not appoint a successor, O Leader of the Believers?” He replied, “If I choose to do so, then I would be following in the footsteps of one who is better than me [i.e., Abu Bakr], and if I choose not to do so, then I will be following in the footsteps of one who is better than me [i.e., the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.]”

Ibn `Umar ؑ said, “When I heard him mention the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, I

1. Bukhari: 3721  
2. Bukhari: 3715



knew he had decided not to appoint a successor.”<sup>1</sup> [i.e., he had chosen to follow the Prophet’s method.]

When `Ali ؑ was Caliph, he was also asked to appoint a successor. He responded, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not appoint one, so I will not do so. However, if Allah wants good for the people, He will gather them after me under the leadership of the best of them, just as He gathered them after their Prophet under the leadership of the best of them.”<sup>2</sup>

Ibn Kathir, the well-known historian and scholar, recorded that `Ali ؑ and aZ-Zubair ؑ prayed the Fajr prayer led by Abu Bakr ؑ on Tuesday just as they were praying behind him for the days prior to the Prophet’s death, and they pledged to him with the people afterwards.

Six months after the Prophet ﷺ passed away and Abu Bakr ؑ became Caliph, `Ali ؑ renewed his pledge to Abu Bakr, further indicating his support and brotherhood.<sup>3</sup>



1. Bukhari, Fath al-Bari: 8/126
2. Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:4/401- Ibn Hisham As-Seerah:4/653
3. Ibn Kathir As-Seerah:4/397

## Closing words

Allah the Exalted blessed the believers by sending them a Prophet ﷺ who was nothing but a mercy for them. He ﷺ taught them how to worship Allah in the correct way, and lived among them as one of them, until he passed on to the next world. Allah the Exalted granted him an honor and a rank that surpassed anyone else of mankind until the Day of Resurrection, for kings come and go, they live in splendor for a time and then become forgotten, and nations rise and fall, and all records come and go, but Prophet Muhammad ﷺ remains alive in the hearts. His Sunnah continues to be practiced by billions around the world, and his Sira continues to be studied, even to the minutest details.

The believers love him more than their own selves, and the non-Muslims who read about his life respect his struggle, his honesty, and his sincerity. He ﷺ was truly an exemplary human being, a pious worshipper of Allah, a wise leader, a loving husband, a caring father. Over 1,400 years later and authors still write books about his noble qualities. Thus, his *Seerah* is a blessed journey, a manual that one can use to become a better worshipper of Allah, but it is also a roadmap to building a community and a nation that can thrive. Honor, mercy, justice, and perfection towards every living thing.

Studying the *Seerah* brings one closer to revelation, i.e., the Qur'an, and allows one to truly understand it in order to practice it in one's life. The Prophet ﷺ was indeed an example for any who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah often. We ask Allah to gather us in the Prophet's company on the Day of Resurrection, and to grant us his intercession, and to allow us to drink from his basin on that Day, and to protect us always.

All praise is due to Allah, the one by whose blessing good is achieved.