

wrote to the Chief of Hamdan, he made mention of the region's native flora and natural resources of which they made use, even explaining how they drew benefit from these in raising their camels and livestock.⁴⁶³

His even correcting their mistakes, when necessary, can also be observed. For example, he reminded 'Adi ibn Hatim of a practice that was not permitted according to 'Adi's beliefs, but that he engaged in nonetheless. God's Messenger thus indicated his knowledge of the actual situation that 'Adi was in, as well as the need for him to reform it. 'Adi was astonished at God's Messenger knowing what was not generally known and at his possessing such specific and thorough knowledge about his own beliefs, and so he embraced Islam. He was later to recall this incident, conceding his shame at the attitude he displayed on the day, and was to add his delight at the Messenger's never having mentioned the incident again after that day.⁴⁶⁴

Peace and Honoring Agreements and Treaties

From the very beginning of his life until his demise, the Messenger of God was always the representative of peace. He concluded agreements with all the diverse groups with which he made contact, and most scrupulously honored these agreements to the end. Hudaybiya generally comes to mind at the mention of peace and was a process characterized by the pursuit of peace. When the life of God's Messenger is examined from a more universal standpoint, it becomes clear that he led it, from beginning to end, as the Prophet of Peace. Even during the Meccan period where a different friction was experienced every day, he was forever party to peace, never condoned tension, and he sat and conversed with even the most intractable of people. Even at times where the doors were shut on his face, he bided the time when he should sit down with them in conversation, extended hospitality to them, invited them to meals, organized feasts for them, and called upon them at their homes at the risk of being turned away. And through all this, behind every door that was shut, he aimed to open brand new doors that would allow him to reach them.

With his Emigration to Medina, he immediately signed agreements with two different communities with whom he dealt, earned the trust and support of both the Arabs and the Jews despite his having come from outside Medina, and established therein a state on the foundation of 'peace'. This state that was founded on rule of law, embraced and addressed itself to all the subjects, and took it as a duty upon itself to ensure that they could practice their belief freely and openly.

God's Messenger's arrival in Medina spelled the end of ongoing war of 120 years, and a surprise peace was effected between the parties. Taking into account the conditions of the day, blood feuds thought would never end came to a halt, arbitrary killings were put to an end, and Medina became acquainted with all the seriousness of a state on the path of peace.

Immediately after the establishment of the Medinan State, contact was made with surrounding tribes and towns. While security was ensured via reconnoitering patrols on the one hand, agreements were made and treaties signed with all the tribes visited on the other, thus expanding the security cordon, until ultimately, a peace that no one could even have imagined was established in the Hijaz. In a region where no one had ventured even so much

⁴⁶³ Kādı İyâz, Şifâ 1/71

⁴⁶⁴ İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 2/363

as traveling alone between cities, a climate of peace where women could travel on their own took shape within a very short time. And all this was realized with 19 military campaigns and 36 expeditions.⁴⁶⁵ An era where no one trusted the other, those with power acted as they pleased, and the weak had no recourse to any authority when their rights were violated, perpetrators got off scot-free, and where arbitrary rule was the order of the day,⁴⁶⁶ was transformed into an extraordinary age centered on justice, and where rule of law defined human affairs.

Reaching such a point was of course no easy task. There were efforts to undermine this peace with provocations from time to time, but for all that, he stood behind the promises he made and the agreements he entered into, did not conceal or gloss over wrongdoing, gave those who were wronged things their rightful due, and was never the party who broke the agreement. He is, after all, the Prophet of a religion which prioritizes peace, deems keeping agreements the indispensable attribute of a believer. The Qur'an with which he was sent also commands him thus.⁴⁶⁷ Declaring, "How could there be a covenant with those who associate partners with God (and recognize no laws and treaty) on the part of God and His Messenger? – excepting those with whom you made a treaty in the vicinity of the Sacred Mosque: (as for the latter) so long as they remain true to you, be true to them. Surely God loves the God-revering, pious (who keep their duties to Him),"⁴⁶⁸ the Qur'an puts forth the necessity of granting safeguard to those seeking it. It is again the Qur'an that emphasizes the granting of protection to the people on the basis of peace being a positive way for the people to recognize the beauties of Islam. And it is the Messenger of God who states: "Whoever kills a person granted a visa to enter your land, temporarily residing therein, or with whom a treaty has been concluded, shall not smell the smell of Paradise,"⁴⁶⁹ though its smell can be perceived from a distance of forty years,"⁴⁷⁰ and "Whoever oppresses a ⁴⁷¹mu'ahad and burdens them beyond their capacity, then I myself will be their accuser on the Day of Judgment."⁴⁷² Again, God's Messenger emphatically states that one who oppresses a person of dhimmi status (the non-

⁴⁶⁵ For a comprehensive discussion on the topic, refer to the heading, "The Prophetic Stance in the Face of Violence and War".

⁴⁶⁶ Placing emphatic and express stress on human rights law, the Qur'an explicitly pronounces the necessity of administering criminal sanctions in the event of the killing of any individual, whoever they may be and, as such, completely abolishes rule. Nisâ 4/92

⁴⁶⁷ See for examples: Mâide 5/1; Tevbe 9/4, 7; Nahl 16/95; İsrâ 17/34

⁴⁶⁸ Tevbe 9/6

⁴⁶⁹ As the term mu'ahad employed in the Tradition clearly includes any foreigner with a residence permit, or coming to the country with the special permission of the head of state or any individual Muslim, I have rendered it thus. İbn-i Hacer, Fethu'l-Bârî 12/259

⁴⁷⁰ Buhârî, Cizye 5 (3166); Ahmed İbn-i Hanbel, *Müsned* 11/356 (6745)

⁴⁷¹ Ebû Dâvûd, Harâc 33 (3052)

⁴⁷² For other relevant Prophetic Traditions, see Ebû Dâvûd, *Cihâd* 152 (2759); Tirmizî, Siyer 27 (1580); Ahmed İbn-i Hanbel, *Müsned* 32/182 (19436)

muslim subject of the Muslim state) has perpetrated an evil which incurs the curse of God, of His angels and of all humankind, and that such a person will not be regarded favorably in the Hereafter.⁴⁷³

This is why the aman, or safe conduct granted by any civilian in Muslim society has been viewed as a principle binding on the state as a whole, and which warrants their recognition and endorsement.⁴⁷⁴ At a time where women, as expressed by 'A'isha, were not even treated as human beings, it is evident that the protection granted by any woman held the same status and authority.⁴⁷⁵ The protection granted by the Messenger's daughter Zaynab to Abu al-'As,⁴⁷⁶ albeit not initially looked on favorably by the Companions, and the protection granted by Abu Talib's daughter Umm Hani' to Abu Jahl's brother Harith ibn Hisham,⁴⁷⁷ in spite of her own brother 'Ali, are the most salient examples in this regard. In any case, going back on one's words in his eyes is an downright sign of hypocrisy⁴⁷⁸ and a wrongdoing which warrants humiliation and disgrace in the Hereafter.⁴⁷⁹ The following detail pointed out by Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman in his explanation of the reason for his inability to participate in Badr is instructive:

"Nothing prevented me from participating in the Battle of Badr except for this incident: I came out with my father Husayl to participate in the Battle but we were caught by some Qurayshi unbelievers. Upon seeing us, they said, 'Do you intend to go to Muhammad?' We said, 'We do not intend to go to him, we wish only to go to Medina.' So they allowed us to go in return for our assurance in the name of God that we would turn back to Medina and that we would not undertake or support military action against them. We came to the Messenger of God and related the incident to him. He said, 'Return to Medina. We will honor the agreement made with them and seek God's help against them.'"⁴⁸⁰

⁴⁷³ Buhârî, *Cizye* 10 (3172); Müslim, *Hac* 85 (1370); Ahmed İbn-i Hanbel, *Müsned* 15/91 (9173)

⁴⁷⁴ Just as immunity is a given for a person who is granted safeguard (aman) – in conformity with Islam's clearly delineated criteria in the matter – a Muslim's complicity in crimes committed against such a person has also been deemed unlawful. *Enfâl* 8/72

⁴⁷⁵ Ebû Dâvûd, *Cihâd* 167 (2764)

⁴⁷⁶ İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 1/388

⁴⁷⁷ On the day of Mecca's conquest, Umm Hani' came to God's Messenger at forenoon. God's Messenger was performing the major ablution, while his daughter Fatima screened him with his garment. When she gave the greetings of peace to God's Messenger, he asked who had arrived. "It is me, Umm Hani'," she replied, after which he welcomed her. After completing his ablution he offered eight units of prayer in the garment in which he wrapped himself. Umm Hani' then said, "O Messenger of God, the son of my mother, 'Ali, says that he is determined to kill so and so, son of Hubayra, a man who I have placed under my protection." The Messenger of God said, "We give protection to whoever you have given protection to, Umm Hani'." Müslim, *Salâtu'l-Müsâfirîn* 13 (336); İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 2/257-258; İbn-i Sa'd, *Tabakât* 2/110; Beyhakî, *Delâil* 5/80-81

⁴⁷⁸ Buhârî, *Cizye* 17 (3178)

⁴⁷⁹ Buhârî, *Cizye* 22 (3187); Edeb 99 (6177); Müslim, *Cihâd* 9 (1735-1738)

⁴⁸⁰ Müslim, *Cihâd*, 35 (1787)

As another facet of the pursuit of peace, God's Messenger warmly received the envoys sent by those who saw him as their enemy, and sent them back with gifts as an extension of his kind treatment and reception.⁴⁸¹ His treatment of the envoy sent by the Quraysh, for instance, is rather striking on this account. The Quraysh had sent the Copt Abu Rafi' as their envoy to God's Messenger. When Abu Rafi' entered the Messenger's presence and took in of the divinely emanating energy therein, his heart softened and he began to look favorably upon Islam. "O Messenger of God," he then said. "By God, I will not return to them."

This was, under normal circumstances, a matter with which God's Messenger would be immensely pleased. But he said, "No. I will not violate the agreement, nor will I will be the one to detain an envoy. It is best you go now. Should you find, on reaching Mecca, that your feeling persuasion remains unchanged, you can come back."

Abu Rafi' who returned to Mecca at the behest of God's Messenger later came back to Medina and thought not of ever going back to Mecca.⁴⁸²

Despite all the adversity and provocation, by no means were the agreements entered into with diverse communities via the Medina Charter violated. To the contrary, by renewing these agreements when problems intensified, God's Messenger sought to carry his relations with these communities to a more stable plane.⁴⁸³

There are of course a great deal of examples exemplifying just how sensitive God's Messenger was on the subject; however, Hudaybiya is of a richness encompassing all of these, with respect to illustrating this sensitivity.

God's Messenger set off in the direction of Medina with peaceful intent, accompanied by around 1500 of his Companions, meaning to circumambulate the Ka'ba and perform the Lesser Pilgrimage that had so embellished his dreams. They were not armed. They had taken along with them their sacrificial camels and entering into the state of ihram, donning pilgrim garb, they came all the way to Hudaybiya despite all the obstacles they faced along the way. The Quraysh, however, allowed for nothing further and hurled death threats at them. Whereas the Ka'ba that was the legacy of Abraham, could be monopolized by no one; all could come and circumambulate it and no one would say a single word. What is more, families would rally for the guests of God coming to visit it, and by means of such institutions as siqaya, hijaba, sidana, and rifada, would compete in attending to pilgrims' needs, to facilitate their worship and allow them to observe their rites more comfortably. However, when those who came were believers, the situation changed. Even if it were

⁴⁸¹ Among these delegates were also the men of the imposter Musaylima the Liar. Ebû Dâvûd, *Cihâd* 166 (166, 2761); Hâkim, *Müstedrek* 2/155. As stated by 'Abd Allah ibn Mas'ud, the principle of not killing envoys existed at that time also. Beyhakî, *Kübrâ* 9/212

⁴⁸² Ebû Dâvûd, *Cihâd* 163 (2758); Ahmed İbn-i Hanbel, *Müsned* 39/282 (23857); Nesâî, *Kübrâ* 8/52 (8621); İbn-i Hibbân, *Sahîh* 11/233 (4877); Taberânî, *Kebîr* 1/323 (963); Hâkim, *Müstedrek* 3/691 (6538); Beyhakî, *Kübrâ* 9/244 (18428)

⁴⁸³ The best example of this is the Messenger's reaffirmation of the agreements he made with the Banu Qurayza Jews, in the face of the treachery of some Jewish tribes despite their joint establishment of the State of Medina and their being party to the Medina Charter. İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 2/515

his homeland, they had barred God's Messenger from entering and had come between him and his twin.⁴⁸⁴ On top of that, they constantly acted in an unrestrained fashion and engaged in provocation.

Despite all the incitement and provocation, God's Messenger's objective was peace with the Quraysh. This is why many envoys shuttled between them, but the peace that was so desired did not seem possible. This nervous wait continued for close to twenty days. At a stage when the bridges had not yet been burnt, the Messenger of God delegated 'Uthman as their last hope, sending him to the Meccans. He was to explain the intention for their coming here, and seek a ground for peace by mention of their having no weapons with them, coming instead with their sacrificial animals.

'Uthman went as an envoy to be sure, but before long, the news that both 'Uthman and ten Companions who had gone to the Ka'ba for worship had been martyred reached Hudaybiya. These were reports that brought the already constantly escalating tension to a climax. For the sake of fulfilling all the causes, to rule out the possibility of even worse repercussions, God's Messenger called his Companions to take a pledge beneath a tree at Hudaybiya. Waiting for such an invitation until this day, the Companions swore to the death to God's Messenger, to be able to weather this storm that had pushed them to the limits of their patience, and demonstrated through their actions exactly how they would break the hand that encroached on the cause of God. One of the key objectives of giving such a pledge in the presence of the Qurayshi envoys in the first place was to cause the Meccans to step back from the idea of war, and to bring them to a peaceful course of action.

This was, in effect, what happened. Representatives of the Quraysh, Suhayl ibn 'Amr, Huwaytib ibn 'Abd al-'Uzza, Mikraz ibn Hafs, and other members of the Quraysh present at the time watched developments with heightened attention. Strictly speaking, they had been discomposed. There was no possibility of contending with people who went willingly to their death and with such candor. It was just not possible for them to see the likes of these people, for this was not a loyalty of the sort that could be defined on the basis of simple blood relations or tribal allegiance. The Companions had as good as begun to compete in personally demonstrating to the Meccan polytheists, through their own actions, how a leader ought to be respected, just how responsive one could be in carrying out that leader's orders, and precisely what kind of sacrifice could be shown when push comes to shove. These were virtues of a nature that the Quraysh had neither seen nor heard until that day. They had been unnerved, and had begun to believe that definitely had to find a way to strike an agreement.

The mission had been accomplished and the Meccans saw exactly what kind of impasse their meaningless stance would lead them to, when news refuting the rumor that 'Uthman and the other ten Companions had been martyred arrived. Hudaybiya that had been prepared for the worst, had now taken a deep sigh of relief.

Meanwhile, Suhayl ibn 'Amr and his companions returned once more to Mecca and began relating the scene that they had witnessed in all its clarity at Hudaybiya, to the Quraysh. They spoke of how each and every Companion turned lion when the news of the murder of their friends reached them, and strove to depict the attitude the Companions exhibited in the pledge they took under the tree when God's Messenger summoned them. They expressed their concern regarding the

⁴⁸⁴ By virtue of the Messenger of God being the 'first light' created, and the Ka'ba's status as the first place of worship on earth, they have been deemed 'twins'. Gülen, Kur'an'dan İdrake Yansıyanlar 83

Companions' resolve to fight against all the odds, and emphatically stated the impossibility of fighting against these death-defying people. Rightminded Qurayshis recognizing the difficulty of coming face to face with these people, who personally demonstrated that they were fighting, insisted upon they would do justice to this also, convened in the face of the delicacy of the matter and took the following decision:

"There is nothing better for us than to conclude an agreement with Muhammad on the condition that they quit Mecca this year without circumambulating the House. That way, the Arabs and all those who have heard of his coming here will have also heard that we have prevented him. They might return next year, enter Mecca, stay therein for three days, then slaughter their sacrificial animals and return. In this way, they would not have made a forcible entry into our city and would reside here for but a few days."

As a result, the Quraysh again sent Huwaytib and Mikraz under the leadership of Suhayl ibn 'Amr to God's Messenger. They instructed the delegation head Suhayl ibn 'Amr saying, "Go to Muhammad and make peace with him on the understanding that on no account will entry into Mecca be allowed this year. By God, we will not give cause for the Arabs to say that he made a forcible entry."⁴⁸⁵

As was planned, Suhayl ibn 'Amr and his fellows set off for Hudaybiya once more. When the Messenger of God saw them coming he said, "The Quraysh want to make peace seeing that they have sent these men." Reading Suhayl's name, a derivative of the root meaning to make easy, or facilitate, as a good omen, God's Messenger remarked upon seeing him, "The matter has been put in order and has become 'easy' (salaha)." He presumably also knew what they had discussed in Mecca and the decision they had come to. This meant the renewing of hope once again. The intended message of the Pledge had been registered and the Quraysh retreated. This was what the Messenger of God had wanted after all.

The course of peace had begun at Hudaybiya. Suhayl approached the Messenger who was seated on the floor with his legs crossed and knelt beside him. Meanwhile, 'Abbad ibn Bishr and Salama ibn Aslam ibn Huraysh were standing guard by God's Messenger donning their coat of mail and helmets. The Companions had formed a circle around them and were closely following the next phase of the process.

Deliberations continued at length. Voices sometimes raised and sometimes not, Hudaybiya was being witness to a vehement round of negotiations. With Suhayl ibn 'Amr's voice raised even more at one point, 'Abbad ibn Bishr felt the need to say in his anger, "Know your place in the presence of God's Messenger and lower your voice!" 'Abbad tasted the tranquility of being in the Messenger's presence and enabled the representatives of the Quraysh to recognize this also. As a result of these lengthy deliberations, certain articles were accepted in principle⁴⁸⁶ and the time had now come for putting it down on paper.

⁴⁸⁵ İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 2/196; Beyhakî, *Kübrâ* 9/371 (18809)

⁴⁸⁶ The terms agreed upon were as follows: 1. There would be no conflict for ten years. 2. Each party would be secure against any threat or injury. 3. God's Messenger and his Companions were to withdraw from Mecca this year to return the following year, where they would be able to visit the Ka'ba. During this visit, they would be able to stay for three nights, bringing in no other weapons than those of a traveler, the swords remaining in their sheaths. 4. If anyone were to come Muhammad without the permission of his guardian, he would be sent back, even if he had accepted Islam; however, if those with Muhammad were to go to the Quraysh, they would not be returned. 5. There would be bad faith or antagonism between the parties, with honesty and honor prevailing between them. 6. Anyone wishing to enter into a pact or agreement with either party would be able to do so. As soon as the last article was accepted, the Khuza'a promptly announced, "We have concluded a pact and agreement

‘Umar’s Outbursts

The articles insisted upon by the Quraysh and the conditions stipulated had deeply offended the feelings of the believers. There was, on the one hand, the obstinance of Suhayl ibn ‘Amr who made no concessions whatsoever, while on the other hand, there were the believers who evaluated these as concessions made to the opponent. Sure enough, their intent was not reaction to God’s Messenger. They merely sought the matter’s clarification in all its facets, and still supposed there to be another way out of the situation. ‘Umar, in particular, could not contain himself, coming to the presence of God’s Messenger saying, “O Messenger of God, are you not God’s Messenger?”

“Indeed,” replied God’s Messenger, “I am the Messenger of God.”

“Do we not stand for truth and they for falsehood?”

“Yes.”

“Are not our dead in Paradise and theirs in the Fire?”

“Yes.”

“Why then should we make concessions in the matter of our religion and return while God has not yet judged between us and them?”

“I am God’s servant and His Messenger. Never will I go against His command, nor will He forsake me, for He is my Helper.”

“Was it not you who said that we would visit the House and circumambulate it?”

“Yes, indeed, but did I tell you that you would visit it this year?”

“No.”

“Surely, you will go there and you will circumambulate it.”

‘Umar, who was clearly of a passionate temperament, thought only of that day and, without taking into account exactly what kind of opportunities the absence of war would bring in the future, responded to these developments on impulse. Whereas God’s Messenger was building tomorrow on the foundation of peace, and acted with the foresight of knowing that this process would contribute a lot to both sides.⁴⁸⁷

with Muhammad," and thus made clear their side. Ahmed Ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned* 31/218 (18910); Vâkıdî, *Megâzî* 429; Ibn-i Hişâm *Sîre* 2/196; Ibn-i Sa’d, *Tabakât* 2/74

⁴⁸⁷ So highly strung was 'Umar that he approached Abu Bakr telling him similar things. Abu Bakr, the paragon of fidelity, responded to each of his questions with great self-possession, with each of his responses paralleling those of God's Messenger. Abu Bakr then said to 'Umar, "O Ibn al-Khattab, follow what he says, for I bear witness that he is the Messenger of God, and he is not to go against His command."

"I, too, bear witness that he is the Messenger of God," 'Umar replied. Abu Bakr continued:

"God is his helper, and God will never neglect him, so do not depart one inch from his path. By God, he is forever upon the path of truth."

It was clear that God was showing the Community of Muhammad, in the person of 'Umar, exactly what kind of attitude needed to be adopted in similar situations. Through this incident, God was demonstrating, in praxis, the importance of not reacting purely on the basis of the concerns of the day, but taking into account all outcomes, and the equanimity that is therefore required. Years later, 'Umar was to bitterly regret all his actions and words on the day, and was to say: "I continued to fast, give in alms, observe supererogatory prayer, and free slaves, for fear of the words I had spoken, until I hoped it would be set right."

Abu 'Ubayda ibn al-Jarrah, another Companion witness to 'Umar's insistence on the day, turned to 'Umar and said, "O son of Khattab! Do you not hear what the Messenger of God says? You had better seek refuge in God against the accursed Satan and criticize your own views if you are to criticize."

Despite all the hardships, peace had been established and the time had now come to put the terms of the truce agreed upon into writing. The Messenger of God summoned ‘Ali to set down the text of the agreement and said, “Write, ‘In the Name of God, The All-Merciful, The All-Compassionate.’”

Infuriated, Suhayl interjected, “What is the All-Merciful? I neither know, nor recognize the All-Merciful. *Write instead, ‘In Your Name, O God.’*”

For those who laid their heads on the line in the name of the All-Merciful and the All-Compassionate, this was a suggestion that was enough to make them to lose their head, and so the words, “By God, we will not write other than ‘In the Name of God, The All-Merciful, The All-Compassionate,’ swelled to a chorus of protests at Hudaybiya. These were expressions of their refusal to accept the absurd request of the Meccans, to whom they had not yielded at Badr, Uhud, and Khandaq. However, seeing what they were as yet unable to see, God’s Messenger thought differently. The statement, “In the Name of God, The All-Merciful, The All-Compassionate,” written at the top of the document was erased, and in its place was written the customary formula, “In Your Name, O God” as Suhayl had suggested. Clearly, behind peace was a gain much greater than the removal of this statement from the document. After the first complication was overcome, the Messenger of God turned to ‘Ali who was committing the treaty to paper and said, “Write, this is the agreement concluded between Muhammad, the Messenger of God, and Suhayl ibn ‘Amr.”

He had scarcely finished his words, when Suhayl’s objection rose again from Hudaybiya plain. “By God,” he cried out. “Had I believed in your being the Messenger of God, I would neither have prevented your visiting the Sanctuary, nor fought against you and shed blood. Write only your own name and that of your father.”

For the Companions who had been subject to a constant and heavy barrage of provocation for the past twenty days, this seemed the straw that broke the camel’s back. The man had the nerve to demand that the expression, “Messenger of God,” the Messenger for whose sake many lives had been sacrificed, be removed from the text. Hudaybiya’s patience was wearing thin. All eyes were focused on the Messenger, waiting for the smallest sign. But, yet again, the awaited indication did not come. Instead, he said, “By God, I am the Messenger of God, even if you should deny it.” Again, he turned to ‘Ali and instructed, “Write, this is the agreement concluded between Muhammad, the Messenger of God, and Suhayl ibn ‘Amr.”

This was a command that tore away at him. He was unable to bring himself to wipe out the Divinely certified title of God’s Messenger, for whom he had fought tooth and nail for all these years, and was grieving very deeply. Moreover, this was the view shared by all those at Hudaybiya. Such Companions as Khazraj chief Sa’d ibn ‘Ubada and Usayd ibn Hudayr grabbed hold of ‘Ali’s hand, insisting that the Prophetic title could not be erased, and said, “Either you write ‘Messenger of God,’ or the matter between us and them will be settled by the sword.” ‘Ali did not hold a different view in any event. The ‘Ali that had only just now removed the statement, “In the Name of God, The All-Merciful, The All-Compassionate,” had gone, and in his place was another ‘Ali, looking at Suhayl with a piercing gaze, and brandishing his pen against the tyranny of unbelief. He did not want to rub out this blessed title that he deemed his crown, and wished for

At this, ‘Umar was begin to repeat the words, “I seek refuge in God against the accursed Satan,” and even if he was not able to attain repose in feeling, yielded in mind and reason, and thereafter strove to repress his emotions. Vâkıdî, *Megâzî* 426; Sâlihî, *Sübûlü’l-Hüdâ* 5/52-53

the words, “Messenger of God” to remain like a seal on the pact. Though this be his desire, he was now face to face with a Prophetic command. He was stuck in between contravening the Messenger’s expressed order, and removing the appellation, “Messenger of God.” A slice of time that drove a person to distraction was being experienced at Hudaybiya. For Hudaybiya had begun to buzz like a beehive. Voices were getting increasingly louder, and a continuous droning filled the air. Intervention in the course of events came again from God’s Messenger. He raised his hands and invited his Companions to calm. In his demeanor could be read the meaning, “There are many things that while they are not pleasing to you at the beginning, end in all sweetness,” and “And if there is at the end of these steps the picking of roses tomorrow, then a thousand gardeners could be hailed today.” Then he turned to his son-in-law ‘Ali, who could not bring himself to carry out this Prophetic command and who still awaited a new command to replace this one, and in a dignity and grace such as befit him, said, “One day you will find yourself in a similar predicament and, on that day, you will have to make concessions also.”⁴⁸⁸

He had also seen that those who rendered “Messenger of God” the finial of every particle of their existence, could not possibly do this; what is more, it was clear that whoever effaced this title other than him, this would effect an irreparable wound on the hearts of the Companions enduring a nervous wait at Hudaybiya. He turned to ‘Ali once more and directed, “Show it to me.” He himself then erased the inscription “Messenger of God” that ‘Ali pointed out to him and asked that “Muhammad ibn ‘Abd Allah” be inscribed in its place, as Suhayl had said.

This demand, too, had been met and yet another crisis standing in the way of peace had been averted. But Suhayl was about to bring discussions to an end without making mention of the concession that the Meccans had made as he set off for Hudaybiya. Well aware of this and presumably also aware of discussions in Mecca, God’s Messenger reminded him of this: “Cease coming between us and the Ka’ba so that we can circumambulate it also.” It was clear that they thought this a definite compromise and feared the talk of the Arabs, and Suhayl, the Meccan delegate, wanted to play ignorant. The firm stance of the Messenger’s Companions who witnessed his unnecessary obstinance and one-sided impositions, and seeing that God’s Messenger also had knowledge on the subject, led Suhayl to soften. He had perhaps realized that such sincere requests and wishes need not be opposed in their entirety. This was also the Meccans’ view at any rate, and he stated that this visit that he had accepted could only be realized the following year.

Meanwhile, the task of setting down the treaty in writing continued. Suhayl ibn ‘Amr said, “If anyone should come to you without the permission of his guardian you will return him to them, even if he be of your religion.” He then stated that they would not return those who returned to Mecca from Medina. It was as though he had sat down and had singlehandedly composed a statement on behalf of the Quraysh, and was now speaking almost as he were dictating that statement to God’s Messenger. The offense that his demeanor and tone of voice caused was of a kind to incense those at

⁴⁸⁸ Beyhakî, *Delâil* 4/147; Zehebî, *Târih*, 2/224; Sâlihî, *Sübûlü’l-Hüdâ* 5/54. Yet another veil to the Unseen realm was lifted and perhaps with these words, he wished to evoke the choices that ‘Ali would one day be forced to make in the slice of time beginning with the martyrdom of ‘Uthman up until his own martyrdom, especially in the incident of the *tahkim* (arbitration). When that day indeed came, ‘Ali was to remember these words and say, “So this is the time that the Messenger of God alluded to.”

Hudaybiya. Hence, cries of “All-Glorified is God” began to rise around him. “How could a person who had come to Medina as a Muslim be returned to the Meccan polytheists!”⁴⁸⁹

On that day, God’s Messenger accepted all the terms that Suhayl set forth for the sake of putting an end to all hostilities and making peace prevail, even if the Companions, ‘Umar first and foremost, took issue with them. To all appearances, there was a step back; however, this step back was to become a move that would tomorrow take him perhaps a hundred steps forward. As there would be no fighting for ten years and the swords were to go back in their sheaths. The anguish they felt at not being able to circumambulate the Ka’ba despite coming so close to Mecca was to be made up for with a new journey the following year, and the worship unfulfilled on that day was to be delayed for a year. Nevertheless, the Qur’anic chapter entitled The Victory (Al-Fath) revealed on the return from Hudaybiya, had put a name to this treaty and had referred to this process as a ‘manifest victory’. By moving back at the point where tension had reached boiling point, God’s Messenger opened a new space wherein he would conquer hearts tomorrow, and affirmed the presence and power of Medina to the Meccans who hitherto were not acquainted with it.

Abu Jandal

With the conclusion of the treaty, a new phase had begun at Hudaybiya, when a wearied person was seen coming from the direction of Mecca, attempting to walk dragging his iron chains behind him, after what appeared to be a most arduous journey. All eyes suddenly turned to the exhausted man who had fled for dear life and thrown himself into Hudaybiya in one last hope. All those present were watching and listening attentively, trying to make out who this person was. Quraysh representative Suhayl ibn ‘Amr, in particular, looked the ‘fugitive’ up and down with piercing eyes by way of intimidation, and with the power afforded him by the new truce, calculated exactly how he would get the better of him. The uncertainty did not last long. The young man was *none other than the younger son of Suhayl himself*. Taking advantage of his father’s absence, he escaped torture and persecution and threw himself in the compassionate embrace of the Muslims who had come all the way to Hudaybiya.

Seeing a second son flee from Mecca, after ‘Abd Allah who slipped through his fingers at Badr, to seek sanctuary with the Muslims, Suhayl ibn ‘Amr burst into fits of rage. All his experiences with his brothers Sakran and Salit, son ‘Abd Allah, daughters Sahla and Umm Gulthum, and his sons-in-law Abu Hudhayfa and Abu Sabra ibn Abi Ruhm over many years, flashed before his eyes. Only Abu Jandal was left, and now he too had defected and was trying to throw himself into Hudaybiya’s atmosphere of security – and despite his father!

He flew into a rage. He set upon him hurling insults, grabbed him by the collar, dragging him only to knock him about further. He then turned to God’s Messenger and said, “And here, Muhammad, we have our first test. You are to give him to me, as the pact between us was concluded before this man came to you. I will not violate the agreement after this point in time, and I swear by God that there will be no treaty, either now or hereafter, unless he is returned.”

Every unfolding at Hudaybiya was as though taking place to the detriment of peace. On the one hand were the Companions who had difficulty accepting the process, while on the other hand

⁴⁸⁹ Beyhakî, *Kübrâ* 9/370 (18807)

was the pitiable state of the believer who had made it all the way there. On top of this, was Qurayshi envoy and father of Abu Jandal, Suhayl ibn ‘Amr who threatened to annul the treaty.

This was indeed a heartrending scene. Putting himself on the line, the exemplar of mercy approached Suhayl and petitioned, “Allow him to remain on my account and exempt him from the agreement.” But the hardened heart of the Suhayl of the day was not in a position to hear any of this to this. Instead, he stubbornly reiterated his demands saying, “I will neither leave him to you, nor exempt him from the agreement,” and threatened to revoke the agreement and cancel everything that had been achieved.

Looking with compassion at Abu Jandal and then his ruthless father Suhayl, God’s Messenger repeated, “Indeed, you can do this and you must.” But Suhayl ibn ‘Amr merely said, “No, I absolutely will not,” and nothing else.

Having observed the extent of Suhayl’s rigidity and the insistence of God’s Messenger, the other two Qurayshi delegates Huwaytib and Mikraz came to reason and supported God’s Messenger in the matter of leaving Abu Jandal out of the agreement, but this too would not prove enough to prevail upon the Suhayl of that time.

Abu Jandal followed developments closely until this moment, oscillating between hope and fear. When he was carried away from both arms by Huwaytib and Mikraz towards a tent to be returned to Quraysh custody, he screamed at the top of his voice, his voice reverberating throughout Hudaibiya: “O Muslims, am I to be returned to the polytheists knowing what they have made me suffer on account of my religion? Whereas I came to you as a Muslim. My present state is before you.”

Just when he thought he had been saved, Abu Jandal was being subjected to his father’s violence once more, and dragged off to torture. His cries and screams resounded through Hudaibiya. He was right, for only he knew all that he had gone through until now. The thought of what he would endure after this only exacerbated his cries, and despite everything, he uttered a long loud piercing cry as though pleading for mercy. The scene was enough to overwhelm them with sorrow and drive them to despondency.

Surely Abu Jandal cried out on that day in the helplessness of not knowing what was in store for him, and lamented due to his not being able to know of the serenity and peace that God would bestow upon him. Whereas this was a singular cry – one that a few would have to endure so that thousands of people would not cry out in the Hereafter. For who knows what beauty and acts of goodness could be squeezed into a period of ten years devoid of conflict and clamor, how many hearts in need could be won over in such a climate, and a road leading them, too, to Paradise be found. Moreover, who knows what manner of oppression could be prevented in such an atmosphere, and all the bloodshed that would otherwise have been probable, averted. The Divine revelations conveyed by Archangel Gabriel stated that peace was the norm, and summoned the community of the Qur’an to precisely such a platform.⁴⁹⁰ In that case, under these circumstances, there was no possibility of leaving the door open for Abu Jandal. Even if a heart-scalding decision, there appeared no other alternative but to endure as much for abundant good.

The Messenger of God who was the highest, perfect example of mercy, approached Abu Jandal and in a tone of voice conveying his concern and compassion said, “O Abu Jandal, be patient and compose yourself, for God will provide for you and those of you who are helpless

⁴⁹⁰ Nisâ 4/128; Enfâl 8/61

relief and a way out of your suffering. We have entered into a truce with them and have exchanged a solemn pledge invoking God that none will deal falsely with the other.”

Running alongside Abu Jandal with the hilt of his sword close to him, ‘Umar said, “O Abu Jandal, be patient, for they are only polytheists; their blood is worth no more than the blood of a dog.”

Surely ‘Umar’s purpose was for Abu Jandal to take the sword that he had motioned for him to take, and strike his father with it.⁴⁹¹ But Abu Jandal was then in no state to listen to ‘Umar, and he was to return to the place from which he fled in the arms of the Qurayshi envoys.⁴⁹²

But with one notable difference this time: from here on in, not weapons, but the side that could better express themselves with respect to their views and thoughts, and that was culturally self-assured, would be the winning side in the Hijaz.

Abu Basir

Abu Jandal’s return to Mecca aside, such a treaty became a beacon of hope for those who could not until then find a way of emigrating to Medina and who continued to be persecuted in Mecca. Abu Basir, who was one such person, *also*⁴⁹³ *got such a chance and escaped to Medina, coming to God’s Messenger, reunion with whom he had been yearning for years on end.* Like Abu Jandal, when he became Muslim he was subjected to imprisonment, torture, and all kinds of insult and injury, and upon finding such an opportunity, stole away to Medina in the hope of finding sanctuary and freedom from all his worries. His feet were swollen and covered in blisters, as he could make his escape only by running, and had only been able to make it this far by preferring the rough tracks to avoid leaving a trace. Everything was as clear as day; when the grueling nature of the travel was added to the years of torture, an unbearable image had emerged, and an overpowering sorrow engulfed the heart of God’s Messenger that beat with compassion. However, Abu Basir’s coming to Medina in spite of the agreement concluded with the Meccans⁴⁹⁴ grieved the Messenger of God even more. He turned to Abu Basir and said, “O Abu Basir, you know the undertaking we have given these people and it ill becomes us to be the side that is treacherous, for our religion forbids treachery. God will grant deliverance and a way of escape to those who are likewise helpless, so go back to your people.”

⁴⁹¹ ‘Umar used to say in reference to this incident: “I hoped that he would take the sword and kill his father with it, but the man spared his father and so the matter ended.” Ahmed İbn-i Hanbel, *Müsned* 31/220 (18910); İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 2/197; Vâkidî, *Megâzî* 427; Sâlihî, *Sübûlû’l-Hüdâ* 5/56

⁴⁹² İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 2/197; Beyhakî, *Delâil* 4/171

⁴⁹³ More commonly known by his honorific title Abu Basir, the name of this Companion was ‘Utba ibn Usayd. Vâkidî, *Megâzî* 436; İbn-i Hişâm, 2/199; Beyhakî, *Kübrâ* 9/227; İbn-i Hacer, *İsâbe* 4/433 (5401)

⁴⁹⁴ The sole exception were those female emigrants who escaped the violence and persecution in Mecca to seek sanctuary in Medina. They were exempted from this stipulation on the basis of their not being able to defend themselves in the face of aggression, or endure the oppression. Mümtahine 60/10; İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 2/201-202; Vâkidî, *Megâzî* 440; Taberî, *Târîh* 3/134. Furthermore, their marriage to polytheists or their remaining married to them was also prohibited. In regards to them, however, was placed the condition of ascertaining the sincerity of their intention beforehand. Mümtahine 60/10

Hurt constantly like Abu Jandal, Abu Basir too pleaded, “O Messenger of God, would you have me return to the polytheists who have subjected me to very possible persecution because of my religion?”

While his heart was overcome with unutterable sorrow, God’s Messenger repeated, “O Abu Basir, “Go, for God will grant relief and a way of escape to those helpless like you.”⁴⁹⁵

Meanwhile, the Quraysh had convened amongst themselves and had taken action to bring back runaway Abu Basir, to make an example out of him. They resolved to send Khunays ibn Jabir to Medina with a letter written by Akhnas ibn Shariq and Azhar ibn Abd 'Awf. Khunays was to go, remind them of Hudaibiya, demand Abu Basir’s return, and take him back with him. With him on this journey was his slave Kawthar. They arrived in Medina three days after Abu Basir, saying, “You well know the terms of the agreement we entered into with you. We had undertaken in the presence of witnesses that whoever was to come to you from among us would be returned, so turn him over to us.”

God’s Messenger experienced one of his most trying moments. Just as protecting a Companion who had come all this way and keeping him by his side in Medina would not solve the problems that would arise tomorrow, it would also endanger the peace today. In such cases, one sometimes needed to be able to make certain concessions so as to solve the matter at its source in the long-term, and to turn and put one’s energy towards building tomorrows with an active patience. Thus, he handed Abu Jandal and Abu Basir over to the Meccans with his own hands. In spite of the tears trickling down his face while watching them leave, he swallowed yet again the anguish he felt, and took a step back for the general peace that the Hijaz would experience in the future.

Abu Basir was going back to the torture, oppression, pursuit, and all the associated tribulations and hardships. Those approaching him in the meantime assured him saying, “O Abu Basir, do not doubt that God will grant you deliverance and relief. For now, look to rejoicing in the glad tidings of God’s Messenger. Sometimes one man is greater than a thousand men. You should do such and such.”⁴⁹⁶

When the two men who took Abu Basir away reached Dhu al-Hulayfa with him, Abu Basir found a way to kill Khunays, while Kawthar managed to get away. Kawthar fled desperately to Medina, to seek refuge with God’s Messenger. God’s Messenger was sitting in the mosque with his Companions following the Afternoon Prayer. When he saw the man coming, he said, “This man has seen something frightful.” As soon as the man approached, God’s Messenger asked him, “What is the matter? What has happened to you?” Gasping for breath, Kawthar stammered, “He has killed him! I swear that your companion has killed my companion! I barely escaped with my life!”

In saying these words he sought help from God’s Messenger, asking him for protection. Never one to turn away any who asked something of him, God’s Messenger granted him protection also.

⁴⁹⁵ Vâkıdî, *Megâzî* 436; İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 2/200; Sâlihî, *Sübülü'l-Hüdâ* 5/61

⁴⁹⁶ Vâkıdî, *Megâzî* 436; Sâlihî, *Sübülü'l-Hüdâ* 5/61. Their intent was obvious. They supposed that Abu Basir could find a way out if he were able to kill the Qurayshi envoys on the way back, and suggested it to him as a feasible plan of action. 'Umar was more explicit: "You are a fine man, and you have with you a sword!" Sâlihî, *Sübülü'l-Hüdâ* 5/61

Before long, Abu Basir joined them. He had mounted Khunays' camel, and appeared before God's Messenger girt with Khunays' sword, saying, "O Messenger of God, you did what fell on you to do. You have fulfilled your duty under the agreement and God has relieved you of your obligation. You handed me over to my people, agreeably to stipulation, while I have defended myself as concerns my religion lest I should be forced into abjuring it and persecuted. I have escaped and am thus here."

Having heard what Abu Basir had to say, God's Messenger first said, "Woe unto you." In his words were hidden condemnation of Abu Basir's actions, as well as the concern he felt with the current outcome. Then he added:

"Had he men enough with him, this would have meant war."

Abu Basir inferred from these words that God's Messenger would hand him over to the Quraysh once more. Apparently, there was no way of his remaining in Medina with God's Messenger. He was to go and determine his own path himself. And so he left Medina full of sorrow, bidding farewell to the Messenger with whom he had so longed to be reunited.⁴⁹⁷

In the meantime, the Quraysh who had gotten wind of the Khunays' death were raving and could make no sense of all that had happened. Suhayl ibn 'Amr who was party to the agreement paced back and forth and was at a loss as to what to do in his grief. "This is not what we agreed upon," he kept muttering to himself as he shook his head. He sought a way out, sharing the dilemma that was difficult even in his own mind to sort out. The task of placating him again fell to the Quraysh. "Muhammad has no hand in the matter, they said in defending God's Messenger before Suhayl. "He handed Abu Basir over to your associate. But whatever happened, happened on the return journey to Mecca. Muhammad is blameless in the matter." All the same, these words were not enough to conciliate Suhayl. Leaning his back against the Ka'ba, he said, "By God, I will not remove my back from the Ka'ba until they pay the blood money for this man." In the face of Suhayl's unnecessary insistence, Abu Sufyan said,

"By God, this is utter foolishness. No blood money will be paid for him. Why should the Quraysh pay his blood money when it was the Banu Zuhra who sent him?"

Khunays' death had sparked a new dispute between the Meccans. As the killer was a fellow tribesman, Akhnas ibn Shariq also became involved saying, "By God, we will not put up this blood money. As we neither killed him, nor commanded his killing. To the contrary, he was killed by a man opposed to us. You had better send news to Muhammad to settle his blood money."

"No," interjected Abu Sufyan once more. "What has Muhammad to do with the matter, that he should pay for his blood money? He is under no obligation to pay neither the blood money, nor compensation, for he was in no way involved, and did as was prescribed (by the agreement)."

As can be seen, the Messenger of God executed such a delicate strategy that those who were vehemently opposed to him until that day had now begun to defend him. The virtuous stance characterized by principled action, the pursuit of peace, and honoring any agreement entered into, had caused the adversary, too, to open up, and when others wanted to lay the blame for the situation on God's Messenger, they were the first to come to his defense. By means of such a stance, God's Messenger demonstrated to all that he was an authority to

⁴⁹⁷ Abu Basir was thereafter to follow the coastal road to eventually settle in al-'Is. Vâkidi, *Megâzî* 1/625-629; İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 2/200; İbn-i Abdilberr, *İstîâb* 4/1614 (2875); İbnü'l-Esîr, *Üsdü'l-Gâbe* 3/146

which they could turn in any situation and setting. Before long, encouraged by his stance, the Quraysh were to send Abu Sufyan to Medina to inform him that they had rendered invalid the article of the Treaty of Hudaibiya in question. This was because after leaving Medina, Abu Basir did not return to Mecca but went instead to al-'Is on the sea coast, where he set up camp. His became the address for every believer in Mecca to whom news of him had reached, and every ⁴⁹⁸ mustad'af came to seek refuge with him. There numbers had reached three hundred and they had begun to intercept the Meccan trade caravans en route to Syria. How ironic it was that the Quraysh, who had forced this article of the treaty with great resolve upon the Muslims, were now the ones wishing to declare the very same term null and void. To this end, they appealed to God's Messenger in desperation to take Abu Basir, for whose return to Mecca they had sent a letter and two of their men, into his community and bring the raids to an end. "Send word to Abu Basir, Abu Jandal, and those who have joined them," said Abu Sufyan. And he continued:

"Whoever leaves us from this day forth to seek refuge in Medina, keep them there and do not send them back to us. You are no longer liable to do so, for those who have escaped Mecca and have made a place for themselves there have caused us such grief that this situation is no longer sufferable."

The Prophetic stance and yielded fruit once again, and the matter had been solved at its source with patience and prudence. And what is more, this was an outcome that was without hitch, and without any who would object. As a result of Abu Sufyan's appeal, God's Messenger wrote a letter to Abu Basir who was stationed at 'Is, inviting him to Medina. As a matter of fact, Abu Basir who was then stricken with illness, was overjoyed that the letter of the Messenger with whom he yearned to reunite had reached him, but his heart could not bear it and he died while reading it.⁴⁹⁹

The Following Year (The Compensatory Pilgrimage)

Remaining faithful to the treaty concluded, God's Messenger came to Mecca with his Companions exactly one year later. Here, he was to perform the Lesser Pilgrimage he had been unable to perform a year earlier,⁵⁰⁰ and realize for the very first time an act of worship, in the general sense, that was in line with the spirit of the Ka'ba. In addition, he would conduct a series of meetings and discussions, and would seize the opportunity to win over the hearts of the Meccans.

Even though the essential purpose of this journey was to duly fulfill an act of worship, God's Messenger erred on the side of caution and on this occasion wanted to carry weapons

⁴⁹⁸ Mustad'af is the term used to refer to those Companions who were unable to emigrate to Medina and who were forced to remain in Mecca due to the practice of their faith under difficult conditions, and because of their generally being subjected to torture. Mustad'afin is the plural form of the term.

⁴⁹⁹ Vâkîdî, *Megâzî* 436-439; İbn-i Sa'd, *Tabakât* 4/134; Beyhakî, *Delâil* 4/175; İbn-i Abdilberr, *İstîâb* 4/1614 (2875); İbnü'l-Esîr, *Üsdü'l-Gâbe* 3/146

⁵⁰⁰ Just as this Lesser Pilgrimage is known as 'Umra al-Qada' (the Compensatory Pilgrimage), it is also sometimes called 'Umra al-Qadiyya (the Pilgrimage of the Pact) by virtue of its contributory role to the treaty in the previous attempt, 'Umra al-Qisas (the Retaliatory Pilgrimage) as it was done in response to the previous unfulfilled pilgrimage, and 'Umra al-Sulh (Pilgrimage of Peace) for its leading to peace. Sâlihî, *Sübûlü'l-Hüdâ* 5/196