

Carrying his audience over to such a degree of sensitivity, God's Messenger turned each of them into a part of the solution also. Even if it took time initially, he ultimately raised them to be the masters of winning over the hearts of the people. It can even be said that while the people in your audience whom you cannot bring to the point of saying, "We have heard and we obey," may appear to be your supporters today, they are each empty crowds ready to desert you at the most critical point, when things go amiss.

The Farewell and the Duty Entrusted

These efforts of God's Messenger were clearly not limited to the city of Mecca, and were valid for all the people he addressed in his day, Medina first and foremost.

At a time when the days neared the day of separation and the sun moved towards sunset, God's Messenger increased the number of Companions he sent to neighboring tribes and states, and received a new delegation in Medina almost every day. Considering the fact that the population of Mecca and Medina at the time was ten thousand, the massive crowds gathering at 'Arafat during the Farewell Pilgrimage, are nothing but the fruits of such an endeavor gathered in such a short time.

On the other hand, we see God's Messenger in the process of leave-taking. He would sit and talk at length with the delegations sent by neighboring tribes and states, in particular, would see them off to the outskirts of the city, and when time came for separation, would send them after asking their pardon. When sending Mu'adh – one of those of whom he makes special mention saying, "Learn to recite the Qur'an from four,"⁷⁸⁵ and whom he describes as the most knowledgeable of the community in matters of the lawful and unlawful – to Yemen, they set off together and God's Messenger saw him off right to the city's outskirts.⁷⁸⁶ As they traveled, God's Messenger asked him, "You are going to a nation of the People of the Book; according to what will you judge?" "According to the Book of God," Mu'adh replied.

"And if you cannot find it therein?"

"According to the Practice of the Messenger of God."

"And if you cannot find it therein?"

"Then I will exercise independent reasoning (ijtihad) to form my own judgment."⁷⁸⁷

When Mu'adh, as a Companion who had internalized the Qur'an and the Prophetic Practice, said that he would render an independent ruling based on the intellectual repertoire he acquired from these two sources, God's Messenger expressed his approval and the time for departure had come. After taking his leave from God's Messenger, Mu'adh set off on his journey, and when God's Messenger called out him saying "O Mu'adh," he turned to him. "You will not find me in Medina upon your return," God's Messenger said. "You shall find only my Mosque and my grave."

⁷⁸⁵ These four esteemed individuals mentioned by God's Messenger were Mu'adh ibn Jabal, 'Abd Allah ibn Mas'ud, Ubayy ibn Ka'b, and Salim, the freed slave of Abu Hudhayfa. Buhari, *Menâkıbu'l-Ensâr* 16 (3808); Müslim, *Fedâil* 22 (2464); Tirmizî, *Menâkıb* 38 (3810); Ahmed İbn-i Hanbel, *Müsned* 11/76 (6523)

⁷⁸⁶ Tirmizî, *Menâkıb* 33 (3790-3791); İbn-i Mâce, *Fedâil* 17 (154)

⁷⁸⁷ Ahmed İbn-i Hanbel, *Müsned* 36/333 (22007)

These were words that shook Mu'adh to the core. While he was now leaving, the Messenger of God spoke to him of yet another separation, and was seeking his pardon.⁷⁸⁸ The journey that every human being was destined to travel now came to God's Messenger, and the Most Beloved of God was preparing for Union.

We also see him, during this time, increasing his visits to those Companions he had already entrusted to the earth, and making more frequent visits to the Jannat al-Baqi cemetery in Medina, as well as to Uhud. Just as he exchanged pardons with his Companions who were still living, he conversed and exchanged pardons with those in the grave, bidding farewell to the world and everything in it.

Taking leave after leave, he had come all the way to Mecca once more, and was to fulfill his Major Pilgrimage obligation for the very first time. He came to Hajun before proceeding to 'Arafat. He stood by the grave of his wife Khadija with whom he shared twenty-five years, and prayed for her, too, at length. For God's Messenger, Hajun was the site where his two sons were also buried. Perhaps in catching sight of their graves, he said inwardly, "There is not long to go now, soon we will be reunited."

The yield of twenty-three years had been gathered at 'Arafat. Ten thousand Companions stood before him, to carry as a trust each of the words that would fall from his lips, and were paying utmost attention. "O people," he began his sermon saying. "I know not whether after this year, I shall ever be amongst you again." In his every manner, in the rise and fall of his voice, and in his facial expressions and gestures could be read the signs of separation. From time to time he asked them whether he had fulfilled his duty and held those present at 'Arafat as witness, after which he proclaimed, "Be my witness, O Lord, that I have conveyed Your message to Your people." Such statements as, "All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again," were an expression of another dimension of this parting.

It was a Friday. While the sun was setting, the Angel of Revelation, the Truthful Gabriel delivered the final trust of the Qur'an. God declared: "...This day, those who disbelieve have lost all hope of (preventing the establishment of) your Religion, so do not hold them in awe, but be in awe of Me. This day I have perfected for you your Religion (with all its rules, commandments and universality), completed My favor upon you, and have been pleased to assign for you Islam as religion."⁷⁸⁹ This seemed to be the final fruit of the period that began with the dominion of Hira. There were those who stepped aside and wept as soon as they heard these words. They had collapsed in sobs, and were in weeping each in their own corner. For those who understood the special language of words, had understood this also. This did not escape the Messenger's notice and approaching 'Umar, he asked him, "What is it that makes you cry?" He turned to the Messenger whom he looked at in awe and admiration and said, "I cry because until now we experienced a constant heightening in our religion. While now it has attained perfection. Nothing is perfect but which is fated for imperfection."

'Umar was a possessor of keen discernment and before him, there was situation that could be concealed any longer, and the Messenger of God said, "You have spoken the truth."

⁷⁸⁸ Things turned out exactly how God's Messenger had foretold they would. Mu'adh returned to Medina immediately after receiving the news of the Messenger's demise and visited him at his grave and Mosque, just as he had said. Ibn-i Sa'd, *Tabakât* 3/441; Ferec, *Ashâbu'n-Nabiyy* 406

⁷⁸⁹ *Mâide* 5/3; Ahmed Ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned* 1/320 (188); Tirmizî, *Tefsîr* 6 (3043); Ibn-i Sa'd, *Tabakât* 2/144

Of course, God's Messenger spoke the truth also. However, there was another truth that had to be told here. This cause conveyed by God's Messenger would not remain confined to Mecca and Medina, and would reach all corners of the world. When once describing this truth, the dreams of which had become etched in his consciousness, he said: "God gathered up the earth for me so that I saw its east and its west; and indeed the dominion of my community will reach those parts of the earth which have been shown to me."⁷⁹⁰ The time had now come to entrust the same truth to everyone.

Joy and sorrow had become intertwined, and a heavenliness that defied description had pervaded 'Arafat. God's Messenger had bid farewell and the time had come once again for departure. He turned once more to his Companions, all of whom he convened with for the first time here, and said: "My duty is only to convey the message. Indeed it is God Who grants guidance. O people, there is no Prophet or Messenger to come after me and no new community to be formed. Indeed, this Religion, or this affair⁷⁹¹ will reach wherever the night and day has reached. God will not leave a single mud brick house, nor any tent from animal hair or hide, but that He will allow this Religion to reach it, with it raising and honoring some, while humbling and lowering others. He will raise and honor Islam, while humbling and lowering unbelief."⁷⁹²

There was added import to God's Messenger having made these declarations at 'Arafat,⁷⁹³ where he bid farewell to everyone. In so doing, he put forth the yield of the twenty-three years

⁷⁹⁰ Müslim, Fiten 5 (2889); Ebû Dâvûd, Fiten 1 (4252); Tirmizî, Fiten 14 (2176); İbn-i Mâce, Fiten 9 (3952)

⁷⁹¹ Some narrations contain the phrase "this affair," while some refer to, "this religion." Ahmed İbn-i Hanbel, *Müsned* 4/103 (16998); Hâkim, *Müstedrek* 4/477 (8326); Beyhakî, *Kübrâ* 9/181 (18400). Others still contain both these expressions. Heysemî, *Mecmaü'z-Zevâid* 6/7 (9807); Taberânî, *Müsnedü's-Şâmiyyîn* 2/79 (951). One narration includes the expression, "the word of Islam." Ahmed İbn-i Hanbel, *Müsned* 6/4 (23865)

⁷⁹² Ahmed İbn-i Hanbel, *Müsned* 4/103 (16998); 6/4 (23865); Hâkim, *Müstedrek* 4/476 (8324), 477 (8326); Beyhakî, *Kübrâ* 9/181 (18399, 18400); Heysemî, *Mecmaü'z-Zevâid* 4/15; 6/7 (9807); 6/14; 8/262, 263; Taberânî, *Kebîr* 2/58 (1280); *Müsnedü's-Şâmiyyîn* 2/79 (951); İbn-i Münde, *İmân* 2/982 (1085); İbn-i Hibbân 15/91 (6699); Hindî, *Kenzu'l-Ummâl* 1/469 (1345). Its transmitter Tamim al-Dari makes the following addition after narrating the Tradition: "I observed this in my own family: those who were graced with Islam attained good, honor and esteem, while those of them who chose to remain in unbelief attained ignominy, humiliation, and were forced to pay the jizya." Ahmed İbn-i Hanbel, *Müsned* 4/103 (16998); Hâkim, *Müstedrek* 4/477 (8326); Heysemî, *Mecmaü'z-Zevâid* 4/15; 6/7 (9807); 8/262, 263; Taberânî, *Kebîr* 2/58 (1280)

⁷⁹³ It is also apparent that God's Messenger expressed similar sentiments to his daughter Fatima on the return from the Farewell Pilgrimage. As was always the case, he first went to the Mosque where he offered the supererogatory Prayer of Thankfulness, and then called upon his daughter. When she saw her father, for whom she had been waiting for such a long time, suddenly appear before her, she was overtaken with joy. She threw herself into her father's arms and covered his face with kisses. She stroked her father's cheek with her delicate hand as an expression of how much she had missed him. Reuniting with him was beyond description, but what she saw upon her father seemed to make manifest exactly what kind of suffering was behind this reunion. For the Messenger of God whom she scanned from head to toe had lost his color, his beard was disheveled, and the clothing he wore in tatters. So much like her father in compassion also, Fatima at once began to experience jubilation and sorrow and was no longer able to contain her emotions. Her tears flowed as she wept inconsolably. And as she cried, she moved him to emotion. At this, God's Messenger turned to her and said, "My beloved daughter, why are you weeping?" Her words stuck in her throat as she sobbed. She was eventually able to bring herself to look at her father and say, "You who are dearest to me! I see you, your color pale, your beard disheveled and your clothes worn and shabby. It is clear that you have suffered much!" He was grieved at the depth of his daughter's grief and was again the one to offer her solace. He looked at her with compassion, with the visible signs of a heart broken. It was clear that the very thing she needed was the glad

that was kneaded with great anguish and suffering, and gave the following message for his universal cause to attain its objective:

"This affair is not theory, but practice. This shows that this is possible. The way in which this affair was realized is self-evident, and its method manifest. The rest, then, is entrusted to you. Be those who will take this cause and carry it to every corner of the globe, until there is no house or tent left on earth to which you have not conveyed it."

His Companions who fully grasped his meaning, scattered to all parts of the world from that day forth, even going all the way to China, until there were very few who remained in the Hijaz.⁷⁹⁴ Wherever this is a stir and dynamism in his name today, it is without a doubt by virtue of the blessing of the Companions who went thus far in their day.

Passed on from one to another, akin to a relay, the banner has come all the way to our day. Toiling in our time to realize his aim, is a duty and obligation incumbent upon every person who sees the Messenger of God as their guide.

This path is the path of the Prophet and his Companions;
It is the trust of the Sun of Mercy who warms even the hardest of hearts!
Its aim, to reach every heart;
Only through such a path is possible the conquest of hearts!
It is he who shows how it is tread;
It is tried and tested!
But, patience, forbearance, self-sacrifice, altruism, and resolve it requires!
It is the path trod by the Prophets;
Its fruit, the Mercy of the All-Merciful and Paradise;
Its sustenance, talk of the Beloved;
Its consequence, the approbation of the jinn and humankind!
Thousands of greetings to the travelers of this path!

tiding that would dispel the clouds of sorrow descended upon her. He thus directed his gaze to the horizon and said tenderly, "Do not weep, for God has sent your father with such a mission that the day will come when He will affect every house of mud or brick, and every tent of animal hide and hair, within the reaches of night and day (i.e. whether urban or rural), bringing to it either honor or humiliation, until this mission is fulfilled just as night (inevitably) comes."

Hâkim, *Müstedrek* 3/169; Heysemî, *Mecmaü'z-Zevâid* 8/262, 263; Taberânî, *Taberânî*, *Kebîr* 22/225, 226 (595, 596); *Müsnedü'ş-Şâmiyyîn* 1/299, 300; Ebû Nuaym, *Hilye* 2/30; 6/123

⁷⁹⁴ The Companions remaining in the Hijaz were barely ten percent.