

a completely new and peaceful existence began and lasted again for about three-and-a-half years until the demise of God's Messenger. It is to be regretted that, today, instead of seeing that God's Messenger solved every kind of problem and looking at this last phase of his life, we look to the slice of time in which problems came to the forefront and constantly create problems rather than solutions. What is central, however, is focusing on the situations where problems were resolved and the particular manner of their resolution and solving the problems of our day with the same Prophetic methods.

Verification and Diplomacy

Another example of Prophetic discretion exhibited from the moment conflict was brought to the Messenger's agenda was his verification of the reports received; God's Messenger immediately sent one of his Companions or a delegation to the relevant place and ask them to gather intelligence from within, wanting to be certain of the truth of the information he received so as not to leave any room for error. We see this same sensitivity in virtually every problematic arena beginning with Badr. As a case in point, to the Banu Qurayza who acted treacherously in the course of the Khandaq episode, he dispatched a delegation led by the two leaders of the Aws and Khazraj tribes, Sa'd ibn Mu'adh and Sa'd ibn 'Ubayda, and including such Companions as 'Abd Allah ibn Rawaha and Khawwat ibn Jubayr, advising them, "Now go forth and learn the truth of the news that has come to us from them. If these reports are indeed correct, then do not inform me of this openly upon your return, but in a way that only I can comprehend your meaning. However, should you find the Banu Qurayza loyal to the pact between us (and the rumors to be thus groundless), then you may openly declare your findings." In so doing, he laid the groundwork for the strategy to be built upon this information.⁹⁸ This same discretion was in question in all the problematic situations.

An additional Prophetic measure coming into play when it became clear that the reports were in line with the information received, was undoubtedly diplomacy. This time, envoys were assigned and in conveying the Prophet's message to the most authorized people, the struggle to dissuade them from conflict was waged. From the moment news of Badr had been received, it was the Messenger of God who declared that brother would be in arms against brother and father against son, and thus strove to talk them out of meeting face to face in deadly conflict. Reading the Prophet's messages correctly, Khadija's nephew Hakim ibn Hizam⁹⁹ approached 'Utba and said, "O Abu al-Walid, you are an elder of the Quraysh and their lord, and command their obedience. Would you not want to do that for which the people would praise you until the end of time?"

'Utba, who was himself constantly wavering,¹⁰⁰ was stunned by this most unexpected proposal and asked, "What do you mean to say, O Hakim? What is that you speak of?" "Return with the

⁹⁸ Ibn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 2/139

⁹⁹ Hakim ibn Hizam was to act with the Meccans until the conquest of Mecca and was to embrace Islam after Conquest. Said to have been 60 years of age at the time, Hakim lived for another 60 years and died aged 120. Ibn-i Abdilberr, *İstiâb* 1/184

¹⁰⁰ He wanted to turn back at least a couple of times before reaching Badr, but was prevented from doing so by Abu Jahl's intervention. It becomes apparent that 'Utba had a constant fear, from the very beginning, of the error of what they were doing. Ibn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 1/368

people (to Mecca),” Hakim said, “and take upon yourself the responsibility of your ally, ‘Amr ibn Hadrami.” He was very straightforward and among the most outspoken of the people, and his offer was what needed to happen in any case. With a view to expressing the reasonableness of the offer, he turned to Hakim ibn Hizam and said, “All right, I will do so, but only on the condition that you help me in return.

It is true, he is my ally. I will surely assume responsibility for his blood money and restore the caravan that was taken, or you can testify against me about that.” And you go to Ibn al-Hanzaliyya (meaning Abu Jahl)¹⁰¹, for I do not fear that anyone else will object to the idea of the people’s return.”

Making a new move at the field at Badr, ‘Utba was on the verge of taking a historic step. He turned to those around him and began his address: “O people of the Quraysh,” he said. “By God, you will achieve nothing by meeting Muhammad and his Companions in battle. Even if you should fight and defeat him, how will you be able to look one another in the face when you have killed the son of your paternal or maternal uncle or a member of your clan? You had better turn back and not come between Muhammad and the rest of the Arabs. For should they defeat him, this will be in line with your wishes, and if not, no harm will come to you from him for you have not done to him what you would have wished to do. To be sure, I see those among you this very moment who are determined to fight to the death, while it is not possible for you to overcome them. Still, it is not too late, and this propitious decision is yours to make. Now, go back!”

In uttering these words, he assumed that he needed to take upon himself the accusations to be leveled against him from those he addressed and continued his words saying, “My people, If you should so wish, you might bind this affair on my head and blame it on my cowardice, it is no matter. Yet you know full well that I am by no means the most cowardly of you.”

When the Messenger of God saw ‘Utba from afar calling out to the Qurayshi forces from upon his horse and summoning them to turn back, he too turned to his Companions and said:

“If there is any good in this host opposing us, it is surely in that rider of the red camel, for should they follow his advice, they would have done what is best.”¹⁰²

Meanwhile, Hakim ibn Hizam approached Abu Jahl who was busy readying his coat of mail and sharpening his sword. He conveyed to him ‘Utba’s greetings of peace and related to him the situation as it presently stood. He had hoped that Abu Jahl too would give up on this cause and wanted for them to return altogether, safe and sound. But this was not what happened. Flying into a rage at what he heard, Abu Jahl hurled threats around and accused those who backtracked with cowardice and treason. On the firing line was ‘Utba, the figure who triggered the dissolution. “It appears,” he said, that his lungs were filled with fear when he saw Muhammad and his Companions. No, by God, we will not return until God has judged between Muhammad and us. Never mind ‘Utba. He is not a man to do such a thing. What really troubles him is the fact that he sees Muhammad and his Companions so few in number that the meat of one slaughtered camel

¹⁰¹ Ibn al-Hanzaliyya was another one of Abu Jahl’s epithets and was given to him in reference to his mother’s tribe. Pejorative, however, it was used in expression of his disagreeable temperament when he did what he wanted to do without care for the opinion of others.

¹⁰² He was to task ‘Ali and Hamza immediately afterwards, wanting to learn the identity of the man who wanted to stop the people from going to battle. *Sâlihî, Sûbûlî ‘l-Hüdâ* 4/31

would suffice them, and he speaks thus for fear that harm will come to his son, who is among them.”¹⁰³

Abu Jahl had found fault with ‘Utba’s ingenuousness and was as good as throwing them off the scent. But this was not enough for him. Wild-eyed, he formulated alternative schemes to channel developments anew into the direction of his own liking. It did not take long for him to do so and by exploiting a handful of men willing to sacrifice their lives in his cause, he transformed the atmosphere of Badr that had shortly before verged to peace, into the cold climate of war once more.

Hearing of Abu Jahl’s treacherous outburst, upon a course of certain death, ‘Utba too began to vituperate. He swore at Abu Jahl, hurling words of insult at him, and retorted, “He will soon find out whose lungs are inflated with fear, mine or his!”

Even at times when calls for death rose from the Meccan ranks, God’s Messenger the peerless representative of complete mercy stretched out to the Meccans a renewed hand of mercy. He sent ‘Umar as an envoy, proposing to stop that battle that had not yet begun. In his message, he said the following:

“Lay down your arms and return (to Mecca)! I would have preferred someone other than you to have come and assumed responsibility for this affair. and it is better for you that I assume control of the affair from someone other than you.

The first to respond to the message brought by ‘Umar was Hakim ibn Hizam who stepped forward and said to those around him, “He proposes justice, so accept it. For you will not be victorious over him, if you insist on fighting, after what he proposes.” Such was his impassioned appeal. However, all the strings on that day were in the hands of Abu Jahl. He turned to those around him, as though wanting to frustrate Hakim’s plea, and said, “Bu God, we will not return now that God has given us this opportunity and until we have completely outmaneuvered and cornered them.”¹⁰⁴

As can be seen, the final hand of mercy extended was not accepted either. Such individuals as ‘Utba and Hakim ibn Hizam who witnessed this stance would henceforth take a seat and servilely await Abu Jahl’s commands.

At the same time this was blazing demonstration that everything that could have been done was done, that all local avenues were exhausted, and that there was no further step that could be taken in the name of diplomacy.

Recourse to Causes and Sensitivity

It is a well-established fact that the Messenger of God was not wanting in regard to having recourse to causes and, not ruling out the probability of war, prepared his Companions for such an outcome. In any case, the power that he needed to retain was a deterring element and this was in line with the Qur’anic commandment.¹⁰⁵ The application was also in strict conformity with this

¹⁰³ Reference here is to ‘Utba’s son Abu Hudhayfa.

¹⁰⁴ Vākidi, *Megâzî* 78; Sâlihî, *Sübülü’l-Hüdâ* 4/33

¹⁰⁵ Possessing the strength that is to deter the enemy from resorting to violence is at the same time a Qur’anic injunction. God declares in a relevant verse:

"(Believers:) make ready against them whatever you can of force and horses assigned (for war), that thereby you may dismay the enemies of God and your enemies and others besides them, of whom (and the nature of whose

injunction. When the steps directed towards preventing war proved fruitless, the necessary causes were resorted to. After this juncture, God's Messenger organized his Companions, ensured that they were battle-ready,¹⁰⁶ gave them the necessary instructions,¹⁰⁷ and did justice where a counteroffensive against an attacking force was called for. But here, too, we see a notable difference: before us stands a Prophet who hurts no one, who conceals his intent so as to take care of the situation without bloodshed,¹⁰⁸ and who approached even those who attacked with the intent of killing him with compassion. Despite all the crises he weathered and his defending himself against those launching assault against him, there was not a drop of blood on the sword he carried with him.¹⁰⁹ Despite all the fighting and onslaught, he did not shed the blood or take the life of even a single person. Even when he came face to face with death, he did what behoved him and merely intended to subdue an attacker who came to kill him, ensuring that he aimed at a part of his body that would not cause a fatal injury.¹¹⁰ Whereas self defense is one of the five fundamental principles that God demands from every Prophet and Messenger;¹¹¹ a person who dies in the struggle to protect their life and property is considered a martyr.¹¹² Thus, in this case, God's Messenger could have killed the person who came to kill him and no one could have said anything in this regard. Besides, going on the defensive when faced with such a threat and making such a move is binding upon him while acting otherwise is tantamount to suicide. But even here he did not think of killing and neither smashed the attacker's head to pieces, nor thrust the spear in his hand into their heart. We see the first and only example of this at Uhud:

Ubayy ibn Khalaf, who was taken prisoner in the aftermath of Badr, vowed to himself on the day that he paid the ransom for his release was that he would begin preparations as soon as he returned to Mecca and would kill the Messenger of God. He did as he promised and came to Uhud completely ready for the task. He lay in wait. Just at that moment, the cavalry forces who found the opening they had been waiting for following the mobilization at Archers' Hill attacked from behind and the Companions who had begun to think that they gained victory, were caught in

enmity) you may be unaware. God is aware of them (and of the nature of their enmity). Whatever you spend in God's cause will be repaid to you in full, and you will not be wronged." Enfâl 8/60. When looking at the praxis, the need for understanding the Prophetic statements referring to strength and power as statements uttered with this in mind, becomes clear.

¹⁰⁶ Buhârî, *Cihâd* 97 (2930); Müslim, *Cihâd* 28 (1776); İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 1/370

¹⁰⁷ Buhârî, *Cihâd* 78 (2899)

¹⁰⁸ After setting off for battle, God's Messenger concealed his destination and headed towards the actual destination only after covering a considerable distance. This tactic was employed in almost his campaigns with the exception of Tabuk. Buhârî, *Cihâd* 103 (2947); Müslim, *Tevbe* 9 (2769)

¹⁰⁹ Gülen, *Takdim* (Mukaddes Emanetler) 2

¹¹⁰ Gülen, *Takdim* (Mukaddes Emanetler) 2

¹¹¹ These five universals, or rights, are the preservation of belief, life, the mind, property, and honor/progeny. While alcohol and drugs are prohibited due to their impairing mind function, fornication has been forbidden due to its giving rise to lineage confusion. Gazalî, *Mustasfâ* 1/174

¹¹² Müslim, *Îmân* 62 (226); Tirmizî, *Diyyât* 22 (1418-1421); Ebû Dâvûd, *Sünnet* 32 (4771- 4772); Nesâî, *Kübrâ* 3/455 (3544); İbn-i Mâce, *Hudud* 21 (2580-2582)

a crossfire. Meanwhile, God's Messenger had become aware of the situation and warned his Companions saying, "I fear that Ubayy ibn Khalaf will come from behind me, so be sure to inform me if you see him approach."

Indeed, shortly thereafter, Ubayy appeared clad in armor of iron, mounted on his horse, and with a group of men by his side. "Where is Muhammad?" he shouted in open challenge, "If he lives today then consider me dead!" Even if a few people tried to prevent him, they could not. But the task had fallen upon him. "Leave him," God's Messenger said. "Give him way." Ubayy charged God's Messenger at this point, while simultaneously shouting out profanities and insults. God's Messenger first took the spear that Harith ibn al-Simma held in his possession. Those who saw him in such a state for the very first time frantically fled in all directions. He then thrust it into Ubayy who was almost about to make his final, fatal maneuver.

Ubayy fell to the ground with the force of the spear and began rolling about, bellowing, "By God, Muhammad has killed me!" He was an important figure, so those who rushed to his aid strove to understand at once the reason for his moaning. But there was scarcely a wound, let alone one that could kill him. They asked him why he made such a fuss when there were those who were more seriously wounded than him and they had not made a sound. "Don't say that," he protested. "By Lat and 'Uzza, had all the people of Dhu al-Majaz been struck with its like, they would all have surely perished. Did he not say when in Mecca, 'I will kill you?'"¹¹³ By God, he'd have killed me today even if he had struck me with his spit."

Ubayy did not die that day, nor the following day. But he died a thousand deaths every moment, waiting for death to come, for no matter how much they opposed the Messenger of God, they knew that what he said would most certainly occur. As they had never once seen him speak a single word of untruth. Then this too would transpire as predicted, and Ubayy too would die. Ubayy's meeting with the Angel of Death occurred on the return to Mecca. When they had reached the place called Sarif,¹¹⁴ he was all but spent, and it is here that he died. It is not known whether his death was a result of fear or cerebral hemorrhage.¹¹⁵

The first and only such incident in the life of God's Messenger was this incident with Ubayy ibn Khalaf and is nothing but self defense, a natural reflex response and obligation required of every living being. However, the singularity here ought not be overlooked upon more detailed consideration: a Prophet confirmed by Divine revelation was no doubt one who was achieved his goal perfectly. The Messenger of God was the leader and sultan of all the Prophets and Messengers. Had he wished to kill Ubayy that day, he could have easily done so. It is important to note at this juncture that even here, he merely sought to prevent Ubayy from achieving his

¹¹³ In the early years of the Meccan period, when he joined the next-door neighbors of God's Messenger in assaulting him from all sides, Ubayy too made repeated threats to kill him. So unyielding and excessive was he in doing so that God's Messenger was once forced to said to him, "And perhaps I, you," as if to say, "What makes you so certain?" (Vâkîdî, *Megâzî* 200; İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 2/55) As can be seen, God's Messenger did not even utter the word death, but as this was Ubayy's entire preoccupation, this was what he understood. Ubayy never forgot these words that had shot through him, and at the moment he felt the lance, he realized that death had begun for him and raised hell.

¹¹⁴ Sarif is the name of the place located close to Tan'im, and approximately ten kilometers distance from Mecca. This is also where the grave of Mother of the Believers Maymuna is located, the very place where she had spent her wedding night with God's Messenger. İbnü'l-Esîr, *Üsdü'l-Gâbe* 7/263

¹¹⁵ Vâkîdî, *Megâzî* 200-201; İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 2/55

goal. Aiming his spear between the lower part of Ubayy's helmet and coat of mail, God's Messenger pierced him there.¹¹⁶ And so as Ubayy lost his balance and fell to the ground, God's Messenger had both fulfilled his duty of defending his own person, as well as demonstrating what set him apart, as a Messenger sent out of mercy.

God's Messenger even accorded aman, or a pledge of security to those who came to kill him, to say nothing of the notion of killing itself. For instance, he had turned to his Companions at Badr and said: "I have learned that some men of the Banu Hashim, and others, have been forced to march against us against their will, having no desire to fight us. Whoever of you meets one of the Banu Hashim, let him not kill him." His words were not limited only to these statements. He continued: "If any of you should meet Abu al-Bakhtari ibn Hisham ibn al-Harith ibn Asad, he should not kill him."¹¹⁷

There were other names granted protection on that day, such as Hakim ibn Hizam. And what is more, God's Messenger did this despite the objections of those around him, which were voiced in the words, "Shall we kill our fathers, sons, brothers and other kin, and spare 'Abbas?"¹¹⁸ The earth was arguably witnessing such a stance for the very first time. Even if they were eager and impatient to shed blood, God's Messenger did not allow anyone to lay a finger on them, and took them within the Prophetic 'armor', even under war conditions.

At a point where nothing could be seen from the dust and smoke, Abu al-Bakhtari, who had been granted protection from God's Messenger, was met by the Companion Mujadhdhar. *When the latter saw him brandishing his sword and setting upon him, he said, "The Messenger of God has forbidden us to kill you."* Hesitating before this most unexpected statement, Abu al-Bakhtari indicated his fellow rider Junada bin Mulayha who had accompanied him from Mecca, and said, "And what of my friend here?" "There is no such protection for your companion," Mujadhdhar replied. "By God, we will not spare him, for the Messenger of God gave us orders about you only." Junada then said, "In that case, I will not leave him be. By God, if I am to die, then I will die with him. The women of Mecca shall not say of me that I forsook my friend to save my own life." He then continued his assault all the while saying in reference to himself, "A son of a noble woman betrays not his friend until he's dead, or sees him safe on his way."

Left with no other option, Mujadhdhar too had drawn his sword. Bakhtari's short temper proved more potent than any sense of Prophetic compassion as he brandished his sword with all his might until, eventually, he fell to the ground with a single blow of Mujadhdhar's sword.

Mujadhdhar ibn Dhiyad was at a loss as to what to do. He wanted to rejoice on the one hand because he had slain one of the upholders of unbelief. But he could not shake off his sadness, for he had killed the man that God's Messenger had warned about. In the end, he came to the Prophet's presence hanging his head, with a sense of shame manifest in his every manner. In informing God's Messenger of the situation, he said in a low voice, "O Messenger of God, By Him Who has sent you with the truth, I tried so hard to make him give himself up

¹¹⁶ While one narration states that the lance struck him in the thigh, the situation remains the same. Sâlihî, *Sûbûlû'l-Hidâ* 4/208

¹¹⁷ İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 1/371. Abu al-Bakhtari was among the slain at Badr in spite of this. İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 1/372

¹¹⁸ İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 1/371; İbn-i Kesîr, *Bidâye* 3/284; Beyhakî, *Delâil* 3/140

so that I could bring him to you, but he insisted on fighting, and so I fought and killed him.”¹¹⁹

This was, at the same time, a heightened sensibility exhibited by a sensitive soul raised in the educational climate of the Prophet of Mercy who was sent to enable others to live. The same sensibility was evident on that day in all who were nurtured in the same climate.¹²⁰

War Discipline

The Messenger of God established inviolable and clear-cut rules where diplomatic measures were reciprocated with violence, where the rule of law was flouted, and where conflict thus became inevitable, and he followed developments closely and meticulously in order for these rules to be implemented to the smallest detail. We can clearly say that just as the rules that he put into place in his time were a first, humanity is yet to arrive at these principles which were not merely established at that time, but which also found their vivid expression in praxis. Without further elaboration, the rules for warfare that God’s Messenger established are thus:

“Go forth in the name of God and against those who deny God and rebel against Him, but do not wrong anyone. Do not break your pledge and do not oppress. Do not kill women and children, and do not kill those who have devoted themselves in their places of worship. Do not cut down trees or destroy date orchards. Do not destroy any buildings.”¹²¹

However, he did not merely express these in words but, as indicated by Anas, reminded the people of them as the indispensable rules and conduct for war and forever reiterated them. Within this context, Anas¹²² relates that whenever God’s Messenger dispatched a detachment to a certain

¹¹⁹ Ibn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 1/372

¹²⁰ The words of God's Messenger to 'Ali, when sending him to conquest on the day of Khaybar, can be recalled here:

"Proceed without looking back until you alight in their quarter and then invite them to Islam and tell them what is incumbent on them regarding the rights of God. By God, it is better for one man to be guided by you than for you to possess the most valuable red camels." Buhârî, *Fedâil* 9 (3701); *Cihâd* 102 (2942); Müslim, *Fedâil* 4

¹²¹ Vâkidî, *Megazî* 515

¹²² The Prophet's Companion Burayda relates the following in this regard:

"When the Messenger of God appointed anyone as leader of an army or detachment he would especially exhort him to fear God and to be good to the Muslims who were with him. He would say: 'Fight in the name of God and in the way of God. Fight against those who deny God. Fight, but do not embezzle the spoils and go against your pledge; do not wrong, and do not mutilate the dead; do not kill children. When you meet your enemies who are polytheists, invite them to three courses of action. If they respond to any one of these, you also accept it and desist from doing them any harm. First, invite them to accept Islam; if they respond to you, accept it from them and desist from fighting against them. Then invite them to migrate from their lands to the land of the Emigrants and inform them that, if they do so, they shall have all the privileges and responsibilities of the Emigrants. If they refuse to migrate, tell them that they will be considered Bedouin Muslims and will be subjected to God's decree which is binding for the believers, but they will not receive any share from the spoils of war or from those possessions obtained without fighting (fay'), except when they actually fight with the Muslims. If they refuse to accept Islam, demand from them the jizya. If they agree to pay, accept it from them and let them go. If they refuse to pay the tax, seek God's help and fight them. When you lay siege to a fort and the besieged appeal to you for protection in the name of God and His Messenger, do not accord to them the guarantee of God and His Messenger, but accord to them your own guarantee and the guarantee of your Companions for it is a lesser sin that the security given by you or your Companions be disregarded than that the security granted in the name of God and His Messenger be violated. When you besiege a fort and the besieged ask that you let them out in accordance with God's Command, do not do so in accordance with His Command, but do so at your own

place, he instructed them as follows: “Go forth in the name of God, trusting in Him, and adhering to the religion of His Messenger. Do not kill the old verging on death, young infants, children, or women. Do not transgress the bounds. Gather all that falls to your lot on the battlefield, be the representatives of peace and do good, for God those who do good to others.”¹²³ Similarly, another relevant narration reads: “Set forth in the name of God, against those who deny Him, in the path of God, but do not wrong or oppress others and do not mutilate the dead. Do not exceed the bounds and do not kill children or those occupied in their convents.”¹²⁴

The meaning of these Prophetic directives is clear: you are only permitted to fight against those engaged in active combat and, beyond this, are not allowed to harm civilians, whoever they may be. You cannot even harm flora or trees, let alone civilians.

Let us ask ourselves at this point: in which war of our day can such sensitivity be shown? We witness with bitterness the women, children, elderly, and civilians in general, killed in wars taking place in different parts of the world today, who are made the subject of news reports almost every day. While taking pride with the point to which we have come in the name of ‘civilization’ on the one hand, our innovations in the bloodcurdling field of ‘weapons of mass destruction’ on the other, our investments in killing-oriented ‘guided missiles’, and our setting aside hundreds of times the budgets for weapons manufacture than we do to for the ‘human being’, is impossible to account for. Who knows just how many more weapons, from the chemical to the biological, continued to be produced not merely for decorative purposes, but show what they can do with the pharaohships, tyrannical oppressions and Nimrod-like strategems that rear their ugly head from time to time. Even a cursory glance at the regions through which the cold face of war has passed, is enough to reveal the cries and lamentations of women and children, the ceaseless tears of the elderly, and the complete decimation of the places of worship that have been targeted despite their being humanity’s most powerful call to peace. Furthermore, the impact of the destruction spoken of in our day does not remain confined to those affected at the time, but can threaten future generations as a disease inherited in full virulence across the ages.

Let us now look at the Prophetic sensitivity anew: the rules that the Messenger of God established, which we still cannot even name today, were not merely set in word, but personally put in practice so much so that by adamantly responding to any who violated them, God’s Messenger kept a close check until all these became second nature and ingrained in every single believer. Here are some examples:

Violating the terms of the Hudaibiya treaty, the Meccans had attacked the Khuza’a tribe who were allied with God’s Messenger and killed 23 people in one night — women, children and the elderly, without discrimination. The tribe, in turn, came to Medina to inform the Messenger of the unjust treatment they had suffered, upon which an envoy was sent to Mecca and the Meccans presented with a clear range of options. But paying no mind to any of these, the Meccans instead attempted to kill the Prophet’s envoy and their reckless attitude continued without hiatus. God too had a promise and God’s Messenger moved forward towards the conquest of Mecca with his Companions. On the other

command, for you do not know whether or not you will be able to carry out God’s judgment with regard to them.” Muslim, *Cihâd* 3 (1731); Tirmizî, *Siyer* 48 (1617); Diyât 14 (1408); Ebû Dâvûd, *Cihâd* 90 (2612, 2613); İbn-i Hibbân, *Hudûd* (4473)

¹²³ Ebû Dâvûd, *Cihâd* 85 3/37 (2614)

¹²⁴ Beyhakî, *Kübrâ* 9/90

hand, when the Meccans' irresponsiveness to God's Messenger — who had made use of all available means to reach out to the Meccans, even generating new reasons to make contact each time — had become all but certain, God's Messenger as good as told them that he would go to them instead. Rising anew on the Meccan horizon, he wanted to extend to them a helping hand himself. So meticulous was he to this end that no one could mistake from his every manner that his sole aim was to realize the colossal conquest of Mecca without even the slightest harm coming to anyone.

Meanwhile, the Khuza'a tribe had begun tussling with the Hudhayl, paying no heed to all the warnings given, and had shed blood. As soon as God's Messenger became informed of this, he turned his back to the Ka'ba so as to face the people and, after praising God, called out to them saying, "O people of the Khuza'a, Remove your hands from killing. By God, this is too much!" He then uttered the following momentous words:

"I will surely pay the blood money for the man that you have killed. How prone this Khirash¹²⁵ is to killing! Were I to kill a believer in return for a disbeliever, I would surely have killed Khirash on this day."

He then turned to the people and said:

"O people, God made Mecca a sanctuary when He created the heavens and the earth, and the day He created the sun and moon and put down these two mountains. It will remain a sanctuary by virtue of the sanctity God has bestowed upon it until the Day of Resurrection. It is not lawful for anyone who believes in God and the Last Day to shed blood therein, nor to cut down trees, nor uproot its grass or vegetation. It was not made lawful to anyone before me. Nor will it be made lawful to anyone after me, and it was not made lawful for me except for a short period of time. It has now regained its former sacredness. Let those who are present convey my words to those who could not be here today. *Should anyone say, 'The Messenger of God also fought in the sanctuary,' say, 'God permitted His Messenger to do so for a given period, but He does not permit you.'*

O people, Those most inclined to flouting the Divine Law are those who kill another in the Sanctuary, those who intend to kill any person other than the killer, and those who seek to shed blood unjustly, motivated by feelings of revenge that remain from the Age of Ignorance.

Whoever kills from this time forth, his people have a choice: if they so wish, they can have the blood of the killer or the blood money, should they want this instead."

Through this sermon, the Messenger of God made clear his unwavering stance towards indifference to the rights of human beings and thus announced that from this point on he would take even sterner action against those who broke the law, for the welfare of society.¹²⁶

¹²⁵ Khirash ibn Umayya, also known with the honorific Abu Nadla, accompanied God's Messenger at such critical points as the Muraysi expedition, the conquest of Khaybar, and Hudaibiya. On the day of Hudaibiya, God's Messenger sent him to the Quraysh in Mecca, mounting him on top his camel by the name of Tha'lab, to inform them that they had with them their offerings, and that they merely wanted to circumambulate the Ka'ba and then turn back. He would cut the hair of God's Messenger from time to time and was indeed the one to shave his hair at Hudaibiya, to leave the ritual state of ihram. God's Messenger was very grieved at his killing Junaydib on the second day of Conquest. He rebuked Khirash as mentioned above and made Khirash's tribe, the Khuza'a, pay his blood money. He died during Mu'awiya's caliphate. Vâkidi, *Megâzi* 422, 567-568; İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 2/259-260; İbnü'l-Esîr, *Üsdü'l-Gâbe* 2/161; İbn-i Hacer, *İsâbe* 1/480

¹²⁶ On this day, God's Messenger was to take payment of compensation of one hundred camels upon himself, despite his having no involvement in the killing which had angered him to such an extent. On top of that, he did so buy

The second example is from the conquest of Mecca. During the entry into Mecca via four different routes, God's Messenger heard commotion coming from Khalid ibn al-Walid's point of entry and, upon closer observation from a place called Adhakhir, saw the glistening of swords and people fleeing in all directions. Indicating this scene, he asked those next to him, "What is this glimmer?" and added,

"Did I not forbid you from fighting?"

"O Messenger of God," they said. "Khalid ibn al-Walid was attacked and had he not been attacked, he would not have fought. O Messenger of God, He neither meant to disobey nor oppose you, but merely fought those who mounted a resistance against him."

Thus was the manner in which they related the truth of the event and vindicated the actions of their friends who had been forced to defend themselves. However, when God's Messenger was informed that there were also some people killed during the tumult, he was deeply angered with what Khalid ibn al-Walid¹²⁷ had done, raised his hands in entreaty, and thrice exclaimed, "My Lord, I am innocent of what Khalid has done!"¹²⁸

The Prophet's monitoring continued. We see the same discretion in the case of Malik ibn 'Awf, the commander errant who, troubled by the conquest of Mecca and for fear that this advent that he viewed as a threat today would come to bite him tomorrow, burnt all his bridges and sent everything and everyone to the front — livestock, women, and children included. When his Companions with drawn swords in front of the women and children who were forced to the front on the day of Hunayn caught the Prophet's eye, he called out to those next to him, "What is the matter with people that they go killing even the children?" He then added,

"Children should never be killed!"

It is important to note at this point that these women and children were not those innocent civilians residing in their homes, but were those who traversed a distance of approximately seventy kilometers in the prevailing conditions of the day, coming all the way to Hunayn with the troops, and in active combat on the front line with the arrows, spears and swords they held in their hands.

Presumably unable to fully grasp the profundity of this message for that particular time, Usayd ibn Hudayr who was with God's Messenger, said, "O Messenger of God, are they not the children of polytheists?"

borrowing from the Meccans. Relevant examples are discussed under the heading "Loan Request," where details can be found.

¹²⁷ He once saw some people crowded around something and sent someone to see the reason for this. When he learned that a woman had been killed he said, "They were not to be killed! He then sent word to Khalid commanding him not to kill any woman or child. Ebû Dâvûd, *Cihâd* 121 (2669); İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 2/286

¹²⁸ Buhârî, *Megâzî* 58 (4339). The sources make mention of three similar incidents involving Khalid. Accordingly, the first of these is at Adhakhir, during Conquest, the second immediately after Conquest in the raid to Banu Jadhima, and the third at Hunayn. During the Banu Jadhima raid, a disagreement arose between Khalid and the Companions under his command, and they disobeyed Khalid's order to kill the captives. When they returned to Medina and the incident was relayed to God's Messenger, he was extremely angered by what he had heard and thrice declared that he was innocent of what Khalid had done. Vâkidî, *Megâzî* 585-591; İbn-i Sa'd, *Tabakât* 2/148; İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 2/270; Taberî, *Târîh* 3/67, 68. When he learned of Khalid's having killed a woman at Hunayn, he sent one of his Companions to tell him, "The Messenger of God forbids the killing of women or children!" İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 2/286

Outwardly, there was nothing out of the ordinary in terms of the prevalent culture of the day and what was put forth on the battlefields. There was, therefore, no apparent oversight. However, there was an entirely different meaning in the Prophet's stance and this meaning that lay in the depths needed to be brought to light. Such a question had to be asked so that everyone until the end of time could become acquainted with this truth and establish it as a key principle in their lives. This is why he had asked such a question.

The valley of Hunayn was being witness to another example of Prophetic indignation, to such an extent that the veins on God's Messenger's neck became swollen (in anger) and he said, "Are not the best of you the children of polytheists?"

Usayd ibn Hudayr and all those with him were stupefied; these words cut them to the quick. Indeed, whose parents had believed until only just recently? Moreover, on that day, the valley of Hunayn received hundreds of Companions whose fathers died while still polytheists. And had not the message brought by archangel Gabriel¹²⁹ communicated the same matter? The Messenger of God had once again spoken in all honesty and frankness, but he did not stop here:

"There is none born but is created with their true nature and they remain thus until they begin to express themselves with their tongue. It is their parents who make them a Jew or a Christian."¹³⁰

In so doing, God's Messenger reminded them that what mattered most was that they be busy with the ideal of letting others live and stand by the people. And in drawing attention to an incident that no one could forget, at a most critical time, he left an indelible mark. Which Companion witnessing such a stance could raise their sword against a woman or a child from that day forth! Furthermore, outside the abovementioned incident involving Khalid ibn al-Walid,¹³¹ not a single woman or child was killed in any of the battles taking place during the Age of Happiness. Whereas, at sites of active combat such as Badr, Uhud, and Hunayn, there were women and children present among the enemy forces. Despite the fact that they had come to the battlefield as combatants and notwithstanding their taking up arms, no woman or child was killed, and not a single civilian was harmed.¹³²

There is no doubt that this Prophetic stance¹³³ which continued from the very beginning was widely talked about, until there was no one left in the Arabian Peninsula that had not heard about

¹²⁹ In this verse, God declares: "No soul, as bearer of burden, is made to bear the burden of another. We would never punish (a person or community for the wrong they have done) until We have sent a Messenger (to give counsel and warning)." *Īsrâ* 17/15. For related verses, refer to *En'âm* 6/164; *Fâtır* 35/18; *Zümer* 39/7

¹³⁰ Vâkıdî, *Megazî* 603, 604; Buhârî, *Cenâiz* 92 (1385); 79 (1358, 1359); Müslim, *Kader* 6 (2658); Ebû Dâvûd, *Sünne* 17; Tirmizî, *Kader* 5 (2138)

¹³¹ It is quite apparent that the incidents under discussion took place soon after Khalid ibn al-Walid's acceptance of Islam, when he was yet unaware of the Prophet's sensitivity on this point. Refer to footnotes 116 and 117 for details.

¹³² Nubata, who was killed during the Banu Qurayza affair, was killed in retaliation for the Companion that she had killed; Qisas, or retribution, was exacted in the case of Zaynab bint Harith whose attempted poisoning of God's Messenger at Khaybar resulted in the killing of another Companion; and Fartana, again, was killed for a former crime.

¹³³ We see a projection of this same stance at Uhud also. Taking the sword that God's Messenger had given him and rushing onto the battlefield, Abu Dujana cleaved through the lines until he raised his sword above the head of

it. One striking example as a case in point was experienced among the Banu Qurayza. There was a Jew by the name of Hakam who realized that their actions were war crimes and amounted to flagrant treachery, and who later, during the siege, foresaw the outcome and shared it with his beloved wife Nubata, with whom he was deeply in love and did not wish to part. She looked at her husband in deep sorrow and said, "Indeed you will be separated from me." He said to her, "By the Torah, it will be as you say." He then indicated to his wife a way that she too could be killed along with him (as it was not for the Muslims to kill women):

"You are a woman and you will not be killed. You should throw a millstone down upon them. Indeed, we have not killed one of them yet (thus warranting their retaliation). And, in any case, we will not have the chance to kill any of them after this. You are a woman and if Muhammad defeats us he will not kill women."¹³⁴

As can be seen, just as Hakam knew that God's Messenger did not kill women,¹³⁵ he was also sure that God's Messenger would never act contrary to the law. This is why he called on his wife to commit murder and in this way be killed along with him. He hated the thought of her being taken prisoner and wanted her to be killed for the crime. Together, the two of them took a millstone to the top of the fortress of al-Zabir ibn Bata, and threw it down from above the fortress, on top of the Prophet's Companion Khallad ibn Suwayd, *and thus killed him. It was of course Hakam's wife Nubata who actually dealt the fatal blow and who was to face the consequences for her actions.*¹³⁶¹³⁷

The True Source of Appeal

So meticulous, so unmistakable and so full of compassion was the Prophet of Mercy. He did not shed the blood of even a single person. In that case, what did he do when he was forced to fight? Let us examine this together:

God's Messenger was a model of perfection in reliance on God as well as in having recourse to causes. He thus demonstrated that one's connection with God must not be omitted even at the most critical times and, as such, entreated God in supplication until the morning on the eve of

someone who jumped in front of him. A shriek was heard rising above the battlefield. This was a woman's voice and was coming from the person who stood right before him. He took a closer look and saw that it was Hind, the wife of the Meccan commander Abu Sufyan. "I hated the idea of striking woman with the sword of the Messenger of God," he said, and returned to his ranks. Vâkîdî, *Megâzî* 206. Whereas, another person being given such a chance within this context would have jumped at the idea of killing the wife of the enemy commander and would not have hesitated.

¹³⁴ Vâkîdî, *Megâzî* 370

¹³⁵ For relevant warnings, see Buhârî, *Cihâd* 148 (3015); Müslim, *Cihâd* 8 (1744); Ebû Dâvûd, *Cihâd* 121 (2668); Tirmizî, *Siyer* 19 (1569); Nesâî, *Siyer* 31 (8564)

¹³⁶ Vâkîdî, *Megâzî* 370

¹³⁷ Things turned out just as Hakam had anticipated. When she was being sought for murder, Nubata came to 'A'isha's chamber. Upon hearing her name being called out outside, she said, "My husband killed me." 'A'isha was baffled. This woman who had been laughing hysterically did not look to be a woman that was to be killed. When she related everything that happened to her, the matter came to light and she paid the price of her crime with her life. The only woman killed from the Banu Qurayza that day was Nubata. Vâkîdî, *Megâzî* 370

Badr.¹³⁸ For before them stood an enemy that was three times their size. Turning to God especially at these times, where battles were forged by human power, was clearly of utmost importance. This was, after all, where the secret to many a small community's prevailing over those many times their size, was hidden. For there was no power that could not be overcome by relying on God and submitting to Him. Hence he had opened his hands and was beseeching the Creator and the True Cause of All Causes thus:

"My Lord, Leave me not to my own devices. My Lord, I beseech You for the fulfillment of Your promise and the bestowal of Your favor. My Lord, should this small band of Muslims be destroyed here today, there will be none left to worship You on earth."¹³⁹

So sincere was he in these words and so completely absorbed was he in his petition that each time he raised his hands towards the heavens, the mantle that he was wearing fell down from his shoulders. Abu Bakr picked it up the mantle and placed it back on the Prophet's shoulders while saying, "O Messenger of God, this prayer of yours to your Lord will suffice you. You have appealed to your Lord too pressingly, and He will fulfill for you what He has promised you."¹⁴⁰

Shortly thereafter, he turned to those around him with a beaming countenance, his face shining like the full moon, and said, "Glad tidings to you, O Abu Bakr! This is Gabriel appearing in a yellow turban, taking the reign of his horse, and poised between the heavens and the earth. When he descended on earth I had lost sight of him for a short time. He then appeared to me once more from the peaks of Badr, saying: 'God's help has come in response to your prayer and invocation.'"¹⁴¹

With the attainment of perfect purity of poise and in doing justice to a consciousness of being in the Divine presence, the angels descended to Badr.¹⁴² The forces who stood against one who was deeply absorbed in the Divine presence had in effect waged war against God Himself, and the end of those who waged such a war was clear from the outset.

With jubilation visible on his face as he stepped out of his tent, God's Messenger experienced difficulty standing up in his armor, while at the same time reciting the Qur'anic verse to all those around him, "But let them know that) the hosts will all be routed, and they will turn their backs and flee. Indeed, the Last Hour is their appointed time (for their complete recompense), and the Last Hour will be more grievous and more bitter."¹⁴³

¹³⁸ It is well known, that the Messenger of God entreated God saying: "O Lord, here come the Quraysh with all their conceit and and pomp to challenge You and make a liar of Your Messenger. O Lord, I beseech You to grant us the help which You have promised. O Lord, drive them to the ground, the morning of this day! Vâkıdî, *Megâzî* 77; Sâlihî, *Sübülü'l-Hüdâ* 4/31

¹³⁹ Müslim, *Cihâd* 18 (1763); Tirmizî, *Tefsir* 9 (3081); Ahmed İbn-i Hanbel, *Müsned* 1/32; Saïd İbn-i Mansûr, *Sünen* 2872

¹⁴⁰ To see all the narrations in their entirety, see Sâlihî, *Sübülü'l-Hüdâ* 4/36 vd.

¹⁴¹ Beyhâkî, *Delâil* 2/336; 3/54

¹⁴² In a verse depicting the day, God was to describe the scene as follows:
"When you were imploring your Lord for help (as a special mercy), and He responded to you: 'I will help you with a thousand angels, coming host after host.'" Enfâl 8/9; Müslim, *Cihâd* 18 (1763); Tirmizî, *Tefsir* 9 (3081); Ahmed İbn-i Hanbel, *Müsned* 1/30

¹⁴³ Kamer 54/45, 46; Sâlihî, *Sübülü'l-Hüdâ* 4/38

‘Ali, who was drawing water from one of the wells of Badr at the time, witnessed three strong winds blowing successively, the likes he had never seen before, and was utterly bemused by what he saw. God’s Messenger shed light on the situation not long after: Gabriel had come with the first wind, Mika’il with the second, and Israfil with the third. With one discernible difference: each angel came with a further one thousand angels and this figure was to later reach five thousand.¹⁴⁴

This was manifest grace. God had supported His servant who acted as being in His presence required against the army of Abu Jahl who had come with the presumption that they would exterminate everyone in their path and then revel in their victory.¹⁴⁵ From this moment on a celestial aroma of victory filled the air at Badr. Those favored with Divine confirmation and support conducted themselves in the consciousness of their standing and acted in complete reliance upon an insuperable power.¹⁴⁶ There were further Prophetic tidings at a time when there were smiles of joy on all faces. The Messenger of God informed his Companions thus:

“I am as though beholding, at this very moment, the precise places where the leaders of the enemy will be killed. So and so will be killed here, so and so here, and so and so here.”¹⁴⁷

He himself had girded on his sword and was poised for battle against the enemy. At the forefront in every undertaking, God’s Messenger demonstrated to his Companions in person exactly what form standing against a Meccan army which refused to hold back and which insisted on fighting was to take. At one point, he threw a handful of dust at the Meccan army, saying, “May their faces be ruined.” He then blew the remaining dust in his palm in their direction and said, “O Lord, Cast fear into their hearts, and make their steps stumble.”

He also instructed his Companions to stand firm and close ranks.¹⁴⁸

Such was the result of the unity of spirit and matter. The battle was about to start. From this moment on God’s Messenger was going to follow developments from his tent.

What, then, did he do in his tent?

Let us listen to the answer to this question from ‘Ali: indicating that he went to the tent of God’s Messenger worried about God’s Messenger in the heat of the battle, ‘Ali states that he found the Prophet in prostration each time, engrossed in supplication and entreaty. ‘Ali even says that he came to the tent three times throughout the battle’s three-hour duration and that he witnessed the same scene on each occasion. So much so that when he came to the tent at the end of the battle, he found God’s Messenger again in the same posture, imploring God with the

¹⁴⁴ Sâlihî, *Sübülü’l-Hüdâ* 4/43, 44

¹⁴⁵ When describing that day, Jabir shares the following account:

"On the day of Badr, we were observing the prayer with God's Messenger. At one point, he smiled. At the completion of the prayer, we asked, 'O Messenger of God, we saw you to smile during the prayer.' He said, 'Mika'il passed by me, with dust on his wings, having just returned from pursuing the people (on the battlefield). When he smiled at me, I smiled back.'" Ebû Ya'lâ, *Müsned* 4/49; Heysemî, *Mecmaü'z-Zevâid* 6/283

¹⁴⁶ Enfâl 8/44

¹⁴⁷ Müslim, *Cihâd* 30 (1779); Ahmed İbn-i Hanbel, *Müsned* 21/22 (13296)

¹⁴⁸ İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 1/371

words, “O my Lord, the All-Living, the Self- Subsisting One (by Whom all else subsist)!” It is remarkable that this state continued until the moment the Meccan army left Badr.

By means of such a stance, God’s Messenger personally demonstrated the importance of connection with one’s Lord in order for the fulfillment of the promised victory. It was as though he said, to those who saw him on that day and all those who would subsequently witness this scene, “They have allied against you to destroy you completely and are advancing upon you with resources that you cannot possibly overcome. If you seek to survive unscathed, then this is the door to which you need to turn and the true source of appeal. If you do not fail in your servanthood to God, then He will watch over His servant. Those who display enmity to a servant with such consciousness of servitude to Him will have God to contend with. And the lot of one who wages war against God is utter ruin!”¹⁴⁹ Indeed, God declares in a sacred tradition (hadith qudsi) expressing exactly this meaning:

“Whosoever shows enmity to one of My friends (someone devoted to Me), I shall be at war with him.”¹⁵⁰

The meaning of this sacred tradition is clear: there is no doubt that one who touches a person God declares to be His friend gets burnt.

Badr is the finest example in this regard. The enemies of God who rejected all the Prophet’s offers and thought of nothing but bloodshed came up against an incalculable ruin and devastation. For them Badr was a battle that had as good as ended before it had even begun, for they had so readily come crashing down like rotten sycamores. It was as if those they could not see were coming and finishing them of one by one. It was as though they faced an unseen army, and this army had devastated the Quraysh that had shaken and stirred Divine wrath into action.¹⁵¹ The Muslim army that they had hitherto belittled and underestimated had doubled in size in their eyes. They recalled the fate of Abraha’s army. But it was all too late.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁹ This without a doubt vividly illustrates just how necessary is belief for a believer who is subjected to similar ordeals, and how indispensable is 'conversation with the Beloved.'

¹⁵⁰ Buhârî, Rikâk 38 (6502)

¹⁵¹ Suhayl ibn 'Amr, who was taken captive at Badr and was to return to Mecca after paying his ransom, describes the extraordinariness at Badr as follows: "On the day of Badr, I saw men dressed in white on piebald horses, whom none could withstand. They were killing and taking prisoners." Vâkîdî, *Megâzî* 87

Similarly, in describing that day, 'Abd al-Rahman ibn 'Awf first relates that he saw two people fighting on either side of God's Messenger, and that a third subsequently came, protecting him from danger. Vâkîdî, *Megâzî* 89

In one of his conversations with Gabriel, who had appeared to him in the form of Dihya al-Kalbi on the day of Badr, God's Messenger asked, "Which angel was it who said 'Uqdum, khayrdum,' on the day of Badr?" To which Gabriel replied, "All of those with whom I am acquainted among the inhabitants of the heavens."

Sa'ib ibn Abi Hubaysh, who was one of those taken captive that day, swore that it was no mortal who had captured him. "Then who did?" they asked him. To which he replied: "When the Quraysh were defeated, I was defeated with them. A tall man clad in white, riding a piebald horse (filling the area) between the heavens and the earth, overtook me, and he tied me with a rope. 'Abd al-Rahman ibn 'Awf came and found me bound. He called out to the soldiers, "Who captured this man?" There was no one to claim that he had captured me. He took me to the Messenger of God. The Messenger of God said, 'O Ibn Abi Hubaysh, who captured you?' I said, 'I do not know,' for I did not want to inform him of what I saw. The Messenger of God said, 'One of the gracious angels captured you.'" Vâkîdî, *Megâzî* 90

¹⁵² At the end of fighting, Gabriel came to the Messenger of God and said, "O Muhammad, my Lord has sent me to you and He commanded me not to leave you until you are satisfied. Are you satisfied?"

The Meccan army fleeing in great fear left in its wake seventy dead and seventy prisoners of war. And what is more, most of the dead were from their leadership cadre.

Recovery Process

Badr had transpired and finished despite the reluctance of God's Messenger. From this point on, hatred, animosity, and bitter hostility had culminated in Mecca in everyone, young and old, man and woman. All the bridges had been destroyed, and all the fruits of Prophetic endeavor acquired through blood, sweat and tears, eradicated. Fifteen years of effort were squandered away because of the ambition and obstinacy of the Abu Jahls of the age and, on top of that, this ambition and obstinacy had in turn consumed themselves. As for those left behind, a hostility the likes never seen before had reared its ugly head. They declared that they would not avail themselves of earthly pleasures until they exacted revenge, and swore that they would not approach their wives, nor seek shelter in the shade, until they made the Muslims pay the price for Badr.

These people, for whose deliverance from the Fire God's Messenger had grieved himself almost to death, had now come even closer to the Fire, and the bonds that he had established to reach out to them had also been destroyed. The cost of Badr had been high indeed for the Meccans.

No doubt God's Messenger too was deeply saddened by this. This is precisely why he had not wanted to confront them for fifteen long years, and it was always him who pulled back so as not to sever the ties that were ready to snap in a climate of conflict. He had given warning, sent envoys and conveyed a great many messages, but he could not prevent father from facing son and brother from facing brother. And now, there was a completely new situation at hand.

So what did God's Messenger do from this moment on? He saw to protecting the lifeless bodies of these men who had come to kill him along with his Companions, bury them in the sands of Badr, feast and make merry above their graves, but who themselves had died instead. He did not leave their bodies to waste, but buried them all at Badr,¹⁵³ even personally overseeing the burial of twenty-four of them, all leaders of the Quraysh. In doing so, he called out to each of them by name, as if to say, "What good was it!" His purpose in addressing them thus was in all likelihood his sadness at the eternal departure of these men — for a big nothing — who had fallen prey to their greed and ambition.

But why did God's Messenger do this? What was the meaning of his actions? Why as the term *Ahl al-Qalib* (People of the Well) used in reference to this incident and why was emphasis not placed on the philosophical facet of the issue?

To begin with, even at a point where all the bridges had been burnt, everything positive had turned bitter, visions were shaken and dreams shattered, and where relationships had hit rock bottom, God's Messenger made steps to rebuild everything anew, again allowed his boundless heart to speak, demonstrated that a believer can never fall no matter how shaken they may be, and showed in his own person that this storm too would ultimately be weathered.¹⁵⁴ From the

The Messenger of God replied, "Yes." He then told God's Messenger that he could now leave Badr. *Vākidi, Megāzī* 111

¹⁵³ Buhārī, *Salāt* 109; Muslim, *Cihād* 107

¹⁵⁴ At a time where the headlines in the Turkish press call for 'execution', where there is an all-out attack, and where every means is resorted to in the campaign to discredit him, it would prove useful to examine the following