

quest for expiation with twofold exertion and endeavor. For instance, Suhayl declared: “By God, however I have exerted myself alongside the polytheists, I will exert myself at least to the same degree in the cause of Islam. Whatever wealth I spent while with the polytheists, I will put forth at least an equal measure in charity. Perhaps in this way, I can hope to atone for all the wrong I have done.”<sup>565</sup>

### **Living for Others**

In Mecca, which had until only yesterday been hellbent on killing, a life oriented to living for others had begun. Those who saved themselves went in pursuit of another to save them also, and strove to allow those who could not see this Sun of Mercy open their eyes to him. This was, in any case, parallel to the Messenger’s stance. There were many who had indeed come to him, but for those who broke away stood the question of eternal loss. This was one of the key matters incessantly on his agenda in days that he lived so fully in Mecca. His eyes sought them, he inquired after them to their family and relatives, and he sent people after them. In relation to those he waited upon for thirteen years, for whom he concerned himself for another eight years in Medina, and to whom he finally came in all humility as a result of their inability to comprehend the language of his call, he did not take the approach: “I have done what I needed to do. What else can I do, they shouldn’t have gone!” He viewed no one as ‘casualties of education’. Indeed, he had all the Meccans in his sights. He was to reach those who ran away as a result of the influence of their negative preconditioning also, he was to sit and speak with them, and was to, at the very least, free them of their emotionality and thus allow them to exercise their preference on the basis of their own volition.

### **‘Utba and Mu’attib**

After Conquest, God’s Messenger called his uncle and asked, “O ‘Abbas, where are your nephews ‘Utba and Mu’attib? I do not see them.” His manner in inquiring after them was imbued with the all-embracing nature of mercy and compassion. Whereas ‘Utba and Mu’attib were the two sons of Abu Lahab, who was lost for all eternity and whose destruction was confirmed in the Qur’an. In addition, one of them had fallen for the empty promises of the Quraysh years earlier and had divorced one of the daughters of God’s Messenger, thus abandoning her. “O Messenger of God,” ‘Abbas replied, “they have disappeared from sight, together with some other Meccan polytheists.” The Messenger of God called out to ‘Abbas once more in the same tone:

“Go and bring them to me.”

At the behest of God’s Messenger, ‘Abbas investigated and inquired, until he eventually found Abu Lahab’s two sons in the valley of ‘Urana. He sat with them and spoke with them at length. He described the air of festivity experienced in Mecca after their departure and then called them to the warm climate of the Sun of Mercy, saying: “The Messenger of God invites you.” Before long, ‘Utba and Mu’attib hastened to return with him back to Mecca.

Filled with delight at the arrival of Abu Lahab’s sons, the Messenger of God stood up, took their hands, gave each of them his arm, and led them to the Ka’ba. He stood with them at length at Multazam, or the area between the door of the Ka’ba and the Black Stone. ‘Abbas too had

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<sup>565</sup> Buhârî, *Târîh* 4/103; İbn-i Hacer, *İsâbe* 3/214

come and was following God's Messenger. At one point, he said, "O Messenger of God, may God make you forever joyful! I see joy in your face."

"Yes," God's Messenger replied in complete contentedness. "I had asked God for these cousins of mine, and He gave them to me."

'Utba and Mu'attib, whom the Prophetic mercy had embraced, shortly after began to wholeheartedly and in spite of their father Abu Lahab, proclaim, "There is no deity but God, and Muhammad is His Messenger!" The two brothers were to make such progress from the moment they took their place amidst the halos around this sun, that they were going to be two of the approximately eighty people present and standing their ground at the fiercest stage of Hunayn which was experienced just days later.<sup>566</sup>

### **Harith ibn Hisham**

Abu Jahl's brother Harith ibn Hisham was also among those who fled on the day of Conquest. Abu Talib's daughter Umm Hani' had rushed after and caught up to him, granting him protection and, as such, rescuing him from the hands of her brother 'Ali. She then came to the presence of God's Messenger, wanting to secure the protection that she had granted to Harith who had breathed hatred and enmity for the past twenty one years. When God's Messenger saw that she was exerting herself in the same sensitivity, he said, "We give protection to those you give protection and we give security to those you give security."<sup>567</sup> Even an iceberg melted away in the presence of the Sun of Mercy. This vanishing was only in relation to hatred and animosity to be sure; on the contrary, the autumn of his life and turned into spring, and Harith ibn Hisham who was near death was being reborn also.

He was undoubtedly the staunchest of Abu Jahl's brothers in unbelief, and was Abu Jahl's full brother. He was as important and eminent a figure as to have poems penned in his name. His tribe held him in high esteem and failed not in respect for him. He had fought against Islam at such places as Badr, Uhud, and Khandaq, and was himself present wherever his brother Abu Jahl held the post of flagship. He served as Abu Jahl's marshal, so to speak, in the torture and persecution of his brothers Salama and 'Ayyash, and was indeed again the one who accompanied Abu Jahl all the way to Quba' to take 'Ayyash back to Mecca for continued persecution.

When time eventually came for Mecca's conquest, he too wanted to offer resistance, but upon seeing that his efforts were in vain, opted to go into hiding instead.

As for now, Harith was experiencing a true conquest in relation to his inner world. Whatever hang-ups and habits remained from Abu Jahl, he left them all behind, drew a thick line over his past, and set foot in a brand new world. Like every new convert who noticed the difference, he too was to henceforward live a most careful and pure life.<sup>568</sup>

Harith was one of those who thrust himself onto the battlefield at Hunayn straight after Conquest. Whilst fighting against the Hawazin, he was at the same time wielding his sword against the dark world of twenty-one years in which his brother Abu Jahl served as standard

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<sup>566</sup> Ibn-i Sa'd, *Tabakât* 4/44, 45; Ibn-i Hacer, *İsâbe* 2/1230

<sup>567</sup> Buhârî *Salât* 4 (357); Müslim, *Salâtu'l- Müsâfirîn* 13 (336); Ebû Dâvûd *Cihâd* 167 (2763); Ahmed Ibn-i Hanbel, *Müsned* 44/460 (26892); Hâkim, *Müstedrek* 4/45, 53

<sup>568</sup> Ibn-i Hacer, *İsâbe* 1/334-335; İbnü'l-Esir, *Üsüdü'l-Gabe* 1/644-645; Ibn-i Abdilberr, *İstîâb* 1/179-180

bearer. He was ultimately to join the forces at Yarmuk along with his other brother ‘Ayyash ibn Abi Rabi’a and his nephew ‘Ikrima ibn Abi Jahl, where he was martyred. He was one of the four fallen soldiers who was not to have even single drop of water after the battle, in the story told famously of self-sacrifice and preferring others to oneself.<sup>569</sup>

### Wahshi

Another one of those who fled on the day of Mecca’s conquest was Wahshi who had killed the Messenger’s uncle and milk brother Hamza with the guarantee of manumission. When he learned of God’s Messenger’s conquest of Mecca, he feared for his life and resorted to taking flight. In actual fact, he did not know precisely what darkness this flight entailed and while he wanted to escape, turned down the chance that had come knocking on his door. Fortunately for him, however, there was a compassion that held one who falls by the hand, and God’s Messenger sent some of his Companions to him also. He sent these envoys with a letter containing, by way of invitation, the Qur’anic verse: “Except he who gives up his way in repentance and believes (without associating partners with God), and does good, righteous deeds – such are those whose (past) evil deeds God will efface and record virtuous deeds in their place (and whose faculties which enabled the evil deeds He will change into enablers of virtuous deeds). God is All-Forgiving, All-Compassionate.”<sup>570</sup> While Wahshi felt a pang pierce through his heart upon receiving the Messenger’s letter of invitation, he wanted complete assurance of this abstract invitation, and replied saying: “O Messenger of God, I have committed an offense well nigh equivalent to unbelief. Will God turn my evil deeds into virtuous deeds?” Grieved and at the same time hopeful in the response to come from Wahshi, God’s Messenger sent a second letter to his uncle’s killer. This time, he wrote the verse which reads: “Indeed God does not forgive that partners be associated with Him; less than that He forgives to whomever He wills (whomever He has guided to repentance and righteousness as a result of his choosing repentance and righteousness by his free will). Whoever associates partners with God has indeed strayed far away (from the Straight Path).”<sup>571</sup> Moved by this second call and his heart softened even further, Wahshi sought an even more specific guarantee, with his reply this time being to the effect of: “O Messenger of God, God has made the forgiveness mentioned in the verse contingent upon His Will. What will I do if He does not will so for me?” Upon this, God’s Messenger sent a third letter that would give Wahshi even more hope, saying, “O My servants who have been wasteful (of their God-given opportunities and faculties) against (the good of) their own souls! Do not despair of God’s Mercy. Surely God forgives all sins. He is indeed the All-Forgiving, the All-Compassionate.”<sup>572</sup> By means of this God’s Messenger as though sought to say: “O one who has led his life in waste and vain, who brought Badr, Uhud, and Khandaq to a ruin for the sake of his own interests, and who fought against the Muslims even at Mecca’s conquest! You must not despair of God’s infinite mercy. No matter the gravity or greatness, the sins of the wrongdoers

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<sup>569</sup> Ibn-i Sa‘d, *Tabakât* 2/153; Mizzî, *Tehzîbü ’l-Kemâl* 5/296; Ibn-i Abdilberr, *İstîâb* 3/1084

<sup>570</sup> Furkan 25/70

<sup>571</sup> Nisâ 4/116

<sup>572</sup> Zümer 39/53

are even more trifling than the floating bubbles foam to the ocean, when compared with God's boundless mercy."<sup>573</sup>

Soon after the three successive letters of invitation that he received, Wahshi came to Mecca once more and attained a brand new peace and tranquility in the presence of God's Messenger. From hereon in, there was to be a new Wahshi, one who carried with him the lance that he thrust into Hamza's chest, in order to bring those who rebelled against God's cause to their knees. Indeed, he was to drive this lance right through the chest of prophet pretender Musaylima the Liar (al-Kadhhab). By knocking down a man who was the 'father of lies' with the very same spear he used to martyr one of the best of men, he was to deem his expiation complete.<sup>574</sup>

### Safwan ibn Umayya

Even if in a fluster he exclaimed, "Never shall we allow Muhammad to enter Mecca,"<sup>575</sup> Safwan ibn Umayya who encountered his old friend Khalid ibn Walid at Khandama, at the latter's direction of entry into the city during the Conquest, he soon realized that they could not resist and took to fleeing. In his sights was Abyssinia. To this end, he fled to Jeddah, where he waited for a ship on which he could set sail to Yemen.

Meanwhile, 'Umayr ibn Wahb had come to God's Messenger and said, "O Messenger of God, Safwan ibn Umayya is the lord of his people, but he has left fleeing from you to cast himself to a land beyond the sea. Will you give him a promise of safety?"<sup>576</sup>

The man who uttered these words was a man whom Safwan ibn Umayya had hired and sent to Medina to assassinate God's Messenger. Convening after the Battle of Badr, they resolved that the sole thing that would put them at ease was to have God's Messenger killed. Safwan ibn Umayya then offered to discharge all his debt and take care of his family, and send the son of his paternal uncle 'Umayr to Medina for the task. So much confidence did Safwan have in him that he consoled the grief-stricken Meccans who had stopped eating and drinking in their sorrow telling them that very soon news would arrive from the direction of Medina to give them solace.<sup>577</sup> However, before long, he was devastated with the news that his uncle's son who had gone to Medina to kill, had instead defected. He had been disappointed yet again.

Everyone had a wish, but it was always His will that prevailed. What fell to yesterday's heavyweights today was to escape and 'Umayr, who was then in the position of serving their self-interests, was now doing his utmost to find Safwan and reach out to him. This endeavor was one

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<sup>573</sup> Gülen, Hidayet Mektupları: 2 (14.08.2000 Zaman Gazetesi); tr.fgulen.com/content/view/3238/86

<sup>574</sup> Vakıdî, *Megâzî* 579; İbn-i Sa'd, *Tabakât* 7/293; İbn-i Esîr, *Üsdü'l-Gâbe* 5/410; İbn-i Abdilberr, *İstîâb* 3/53

<sup>575</sup> Safwan and those like him from the Hudhayl, Aslam, Banu Bakr, and Quraysh laboring under the delusion of resistance, had also rolled up their sleeves wanting to mount a resistance against the approaching forces, to prevent their entry into Mecca. However, when push came to shove, the people coming together for this purpose were seen to be a small minority and, at the same time, this picture was one that completely obliterated any hope that those in positions of leadership had entertained.

<sup>576</sup> İbn Hişâm, *Sîre* 5/81; Taberî, *Târîh* 3/175

<sup>577</sup> İbn Hişâm, *Sîre* 1/390, 391

that was in line with the wishes of God’s Messenger and in great happiness he stated, “The son of your uncle shall be safe.”

‘Umayr was on top of the world and he immediately set off with the amnesty he received from God’s Messenger, to Jeddah – three days’ distance away. What is more, he was going there for the Safwan ibn Umayya who had severed all connection with him from the day that he had embraced Islam. Accompanying him on the journey was his son Wahb, who was taken prisoner at Badr and later released.

When they reached Jeddah, Safwan was on the verge of boarding the vessel, and he was intercepted by ‘Umayr ibn Wahb. Seeing his cousin ‘Umayr and Wahb from a distance made him uneasy. “Alas!” he exclaimed. “Do you see who has come?” He pressed his slave to hurry so that they could disappear from sight as soon as possible. His slave was more discerning. “It is ‘Umayr ibn Wahb who comes,” he said, as if to indicate there was no need for any concern. “What is ‘Umayr ibn Wahb to me?” he scolded.

“By God, his sole concern was to kill me, and now he comes to do just that! He has already supported Muhammad against me before!”

A person was enemy to what they did not know, and Safwan was today under the influence of his suppositions like he always was until now, and spoke as the victim of his groundless fears. Meanwhile, ‘Umayr had approached. In all his unaffectedness, he called out, “O Abu Wahb!” ‘Umayr was extremely careful not to further startle an already tremulous Safwan. “May I be your ransom,” he exclaimed. “I come to you just now from the best of people, the most righteous, the most forbearing and the most excellent in honoring the ties of kinship. May my father and mother be your ransom! Fear God and whatever you do, do not destroy yourself. Look, I have brought you an assurance of protection from God’s Messenger.”

“Woe be to you,” Safwan retorted. “Be off with you, and be gone from my sight!”

On the one hand stood an affectionate heart rushing rushing from place to place for weeks on end with the ideal of letting others live, while on the other, stood a hardened heart knocking back the opportunity that came his way. But ‘Umayr was not one to give up easily, and he said with the same delicacy, “O Safwan, may my mother and father be your ransom! I come to you from the best of people, the most righteous, the most forbearing and the son of your paternal uncle.” His strength is your strength, his honor your honor, and his dominion your dominion.”

Safwan took a deep breath before such a sincere invitation, and finally said what he had been unable to say until now: “I fear that I will be killed.”

Ignorance was precisely such a thing. There was no light in the world of a bat which deemed the dark of night its canopy. Whereas with the sunrise, the darkness had retreated to its own cloister, leaving a crystal clear and luminous world on the other side. Seizing an opportunity nevertheless, ‘Umayr assured him that there was no reason for him to fear, saying, “He is too forbearing and generous for that!”<sup>578</sup> But Safwan could not overcome his doubts and the dialog between them dragged on. His last words were: “I will not return until you bring me a sign that I can recognize.”<sup>579</sup>

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<sup>578</sup> Taberî, *Târîh* 3/175; Sâlihî, *Sübülü'l-Hüdâ* 5/254

<sup>579</sup> Vâkıdî, *Megâzî* 573; Sâlihî, *Sübülü'l-Hüdâ* 5/254

If nothing else, ‘Umayr’s efforts allowed him to leave an open door. True friendship was revealed at such times as these. Anyone could be there during the good times, but true friendship was a chivalry that was shown at times where one was left alone to face their demons. The human being who God created as a noble creature was worth all the effort in the world. Despite the distance of three days’ travel,<sup>580</sup> he would fulfill his cousin’s request. Saying, “Don’t you dare go anywhere until I bring you what you ask for,” ‘Umayr left Jeddah for Mecca.

With bated breath he came to the presence of God’s Messenger. “O Messenger of God,” he said. “I reached Safwan informing him of your protection, but he hesitated without seeing a sign from you, and refused to come.”

This was ‘Umayr’s way of requesting such a token from God’s Messenger so that he could go back with it. Seeing ‘Umayr who put aside his own personal spiritual advancement for the sake of saving another person at the edge of the abyss, God’s Messenger removed the turban he had been wearing when he conquered Mecca,<sup>581</sup> and gave it to him. The faithful friend was as happy as if it were bestowed upon him, and taking the Messenger’s turban, made for Jeddah once more, to see Safwan.

‘Umayr ibn Wahb traveled for approximately another eighty kilometers to Jeddah with the turban of God’s Messenger. He went immediately to Safwan ibn Umayya and handed over to him the turban that the Messenger of God had given to him. Safwan again enumerated his fears, one by one. He had, however, softened with all the earnestness and effort that he saw from his friend, as well as with the turban that he had brought with him. He could no longer remain indifferent to ‘Umayr’s invitation, after he had put everything on the line for him. He changed his course and they all went back to Mecca together.

When they reached the Ka’ba the Messenger of God was leading the Afternoon Prayer, and they stood waiting. What an extraordinary sight this was – more forceful than the words of the most eloquent rhetoricians, sincere and perfect in composition. To the Mecca he had deserted had come a complete regularity and order. Safwan stood and watched, and as soon as the Messenger of God completed his prayer, Safwan shouted, “O Messenger of God, ‘Umayr ibn Wahb came to me with your turban and asserted that you invited me here. If this is a matter with which you are satisfied, grant me two months.”

He was still afraid. This was probably the reason he did not come down from his mount. He would escape at the first sign of trouble and save himself.

Reading his concerns, God’s Messenger said, “Come down, Abu Wahb.” The Sun of Mercy was calling a ice-cold, unfeeling heart to his warm and accepting atmosphere that was capable of melting even icebergs. But Safwan said, “No,” to this call also. “By God, not until you make this matter clear to me.”

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<sup>580</sup> The distance between Mecca and Jeddah today is approximately 90 kilometers. At the time, this distance could only be traversed in three days. For more speedy and stronger riding animals, this time could be reduced to two days. Given that ‘Umayr traversed the same distance four more times, this equates to a total time of between 8 and 12 days, and this is vital with respect to demonstrating the sacrifice that he made at the time. Leaving the Messenger of God, who was experiencing one jubilation within another, in Mecca, he himself sweat blood in pursuit of a runaway.

<sup>581</sup> Vâkîdî, *Megâzî* 573; Taberî, *Târih* 3/175; Sâlihî, *Sübûlü’l-Hüdâ* 5/254. There are also mentions in some narrations of God’s Messenger having given a piece of his shirt or his cloak. Halebî, *Sîre* 3/42

Thereupon, God's Messenger said, "Rather, you will have four months."<sup>582</sup>

Safwan who had quivered in fear until that moment with the thought that all of this might be a ploy to capture him, was now calm. He took a deep sigh of relief. Instead of embarking upon an Abyssinia venture in which he did not know what he was to face, he received safe conduct or quarter to his own land for four months, and would spend this time without fear, to make up his own mind and come to a final decision. There was no need for him to fear, for he was now safe. The first sign of this trust was his dismounting the animal from which he refused to come down until this time, and his approaching God's Messenger.<sup>583</sup> Now Safwan, too, had entered the warm and soothing climate of God's Messenger and had begun letting himself go to its gravitational attraction.

From this day forth, Safwan traveled as he pleased through Mecca. During this time, his wife Fakhita had also embraced Islam and wanted her husband too to become acquainted with its beauty as soon as possible. She took an eager interest in her husband and tried her utmost to prevail upon him. She had even insisted upon this and put pressure on him to this end, but this troubled Safwan, as he was not a man to be pressured. He became irritated by his wife's excessive urging and, referring to God's Messenger, said, "What is it to you? Are you more benevolent than him? I said, 'Grant me two months,' and he gave me four months time instead!"<sup>584</sup>

### Hind

Hind, one of the leading players of Uhud, withdrew into her shell in the face of the developments in Mecca and locked herself in her house, as despite everything that happened in the past, her sons and daughters, and now her husband Abu Sufyan, had changed ranks. On top of that, even the people with whom she came together and planned and took up arms and went to the front line had today changed, and she was left in isolation and all alone. With the course of events of the Conquest on top of the hatred and animosity she already harbored from the very beginning, Hind exploded with anger and had all but become explosive in the wake of these developments over which she had completely lost control. Each minute-by-minute report she heard was enough to send her mad, for journey to the Sun continued at full speed. Even Ramla, the daughter of her uncle Shayba who was killed at Badr, and Fatima the daughter of her brother Walid who was also killed at Badr, had also become Muslim, and this she could not stomach. She said:

"Whilst God has poured forth such misfortune upon us, one after the other, in Mecca and from around Hajun,

How is it that you share the same religion with those who killed your father,  
And still sit with them?

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<sup>582</sup> Vâkidî, *Megâzî* 573; İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 2/262; Taberî, *Târîh* 3/175; Beyhakî, *Delâil* 5/97; İbnü'l-Esîr, *Üsdü'l-Gâbe* 3/24; Sâlihî, *Sübülü'l-Hüdâ* 5/254

<sup>583</sup> İbn-i Hişâm, *Sîre* 5/81; Abdurrezzak, *Musannef* 7/169, 170

<sup>584</sup> Şenâvî, *Hayâtü's-Sahâbiyyât* 426, 427