

Hudhaafah ibn Jumh ؓ.

- ◆ 'Aamir ibn Rabee'ah, who was from the tribe of 'Anz ibn Waail, and who was allied to the family of Al-Khattaab ؓ.
- ◆ Suhail ibn Baidaa, whose full name is Suhail ibn Wahb ibn Rabee'ah ibn Hilaal ibn Uhaib ibn Dabbah ibn Al-Haarith ؓ.
- ◆ Abu Sabrah ibn Abee Ruhm ibn 'Abdul-'Uzzah ibn Abee Qais 'Abd-Wudd ibn Nadr ibn Maalik ibn Hisl ibn 'Aamir ؓ.

These are the Female Members of the Travelling Party

- ◆ Ruqayyah ؓ, daughter of the Prophet ﷺ.
- ◆ Sahlah bint (daughter of) Suhail ibn 'Amr ؓ, one of the children of 'Aamir ibn Luai Sahlah ؓ was travelling with her husband, Abu Hudhaifah ؓ; while in Abyssinia, she gave birth to his son, Muhammad ibn Abu Hudhaifah ؓ.
- ◆ Umm Salamah bint Abu Umayyah ibn Al-Mugheerah ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar ibn Makhzoom ؓ. She was travelling with her husband, Abu Salamah ؓ.
- ◆ Lailah bint Abu Hathahmah ibn Hudhaafah ibn Ghaanim (ibn 'Aamir) ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Auf ibn 'Ubaid ibn 'Uwajj ibn 'Adee ibn Ka'ab ؓ. She was travelling with her husband, 'Aamir ibn Rabee'ah ؓ.
- ◆ Umm Kulthoom bint Sahl ibn 'Amr ibn 'Abd-Shams ؓ. She was travelling with her husband, Abu Sabrah ibn Abu Ruhm.^[1]

It seems that they did not travel as one group, for it is related that 'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan ؓ and his wife, Ruqayyah (daughter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ) ؓ, were the first among them to migrate. Ya'qoob ibn Sufyaan ؓ related that, "After (Prophet) Loot ؓ, 'Uthmaan ؓ was the first to perform migration with

^[1] *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah* (3/ 96, 97), *Seerah Ibn Hishaam* (1/344-352), and *Al-Hijrah Fil Qur'an* (pgs. 292-294).

his family.”^[1]

It is interesting to note that not a single one of the migrants was a slave, even though it was the slaves – such as Bilaal ؓ, Khabbaab ؓ, and ‘Aamir ؓ – who were tortured more severely than anyone else. In fact, most of those who migrated were from the noble classes of Quraish society; true, they were persecuted for their beliefs, but no one was persecuted more severely than slaves. Therefore, had fleeing from harm been the only reason for the migration, Muslim slaves would have been the first to migrate once the opportunity presented itself to them. Ibn Ishaq and other historians discussed in great detail Quraish’s persecution of Muslim slaves, but not a single one of them mentioned the name of any Muslim slave among the list of those who migrated to Abyssinia.

Hence the migration was prompted by reasons other than that of fleeing from hardship. It is important to note that those who went weren’t from a single clan; rather, every, or at least almost every, clan of the Quraish had at least one member who migrated to Abyssinia. This reality might have served to protect them, had the Quraish been able to convince An-Najaashee to extradite his Muslim guests, since every clan would have it in their best interests to protect the life of one of their members. Another benefit of them being from various clans was that their departure gave pause for thought to every member of the Quraish, in that it was their severe treatment that forced their relatives to leave their homeland. It is related that, years later, ‘Umar ibn Al-Khattaab’s heart softened towards Muslims when he ؓ met outside of Makkah a female Muslim who was migrating to Al-Madeenah. Finally, as Sayyid Qutub mentioned in *Adh-Dhilaal*, Muslims were intent on spreading the message of Islam outside of Makkah as well; perhaps, they surely felt, their *Da’wah* efforts would reap more blessed fruits in Abyssinia than they did in Makkah.

^[1] *As-Sunnah* by Ibn ‘Aasim, pg. 592, and *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah* (3/67). Also, refer to *Fathul-Baaree*, in the explanation of *Hadeeth* number: 3872.

Why Muslims Returned To Makkah From Abyssinia

The false story of Al-Gharaaneeq

Some historians and *Mufasssiroon* ascribe the return of the Muslims to Makkah from Abyssinia to a myth that has found currency mainly in the books of Orientalists, who intentionally try to circulate it so that they can make the claim that it is an established incident in the Prophet's biography. It is a myth because it is based on unauthentic narrations.

According to the myth, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was sitting down one day beside the Ka'bah, and he ﷺ began to recite *Soorah An-Najm*, until he ﷺ reached the saying of Allah ﷻ:

﴿أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ اللَّاتَ وَالْعُزَّىٰ ۝١٩ وَمَنَاةَ الثَّالِثَةَ الْأُخْرَىٰ ۝٢٠﴾

"Have you then considered Al-Laat, and Al-'Uzzaa (two idols of the pagan Arabs), And Manaat (another idol of the pagan Arabs), the other third?" (Qur'an 53: 19, 20)

Then, it is falsely claimed, he ﷺ recited, "These are the higher Al-Gharaaneeq (Gharaaneeq is the plural of Gharnooq, a crane bird; here, the idols of the polytheists – which the polytheists claim grant them intercession – are being compared to birds that soar high up in the sky), and indeed, their intercession is hoped for." To this, the polytheists responded, "Never before this day has he spoken well about our gods, and indeed, we know that it is Allah Who provides sustenance, Who gives life, and Who causes death; yet it is our gods that intercede (on our behalf) with Him." Then, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ reached the Verse of prostration, he ﷺ and His Companions ﷺ performed prostration – and so did all of the polytheists, with the exception of an old man, who raised a handful of pebbles to his forehead and performed prostration on them. It is claimed that the polytheists then treated the Messenger of Allah ﷺ well and refrained from harming the Muslims. News of this incident reached the Muslims who were in Abyssinia, and so feeling that they could now peacefully and safely worship

Allah ﷻ alongside the Quraish, they returned to Makkah.

It is further claimed that when the Quraish said to the Prophet ﷺ, "Will you not give our gods a share (in your religion), so that we can then support you," the Prophet ﷺ returned to his home and remained there until the evening. Jibreel ﷺ then went to him and recited to him *Soorah An-Najm*. Jibreel ﷺ then said, "And have I come to you with these two words," by which he meant, "These are the higher *Gharaaneeq*, and their intercession is hoped for." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ became very sad and afraid of his Lord, and Allah ﷻ then revealed to him this Verse:

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَّسُولٍ وَلَا نَبِيٍّ إِلَّا إِذَا تَمَنَّى أَلْقَى الشَّيْطَانُ فِي أُمْنِيَّتِهِ فَيَنْسَخُ اللَّهُ مَا يُلْقِي الشَّيْطَانُ ثُمَّ يُحْكِمُ اللَّهُ ءَايَتِهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ٥٢﴾

"Never did We send a Messenger or a Prophet before you, but; when he did recite the Revelation or narrated or spoke, Shaitaan (Satan) threw (some falsehood) in it. But Allah abolishes that which Shaitaan (Satan) throws in. Then Allah establishes His Revelations. And Allah is All-Knower, All-Wise." (Qur'an 22: 52)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then resumed disparaging their gods, and they resumed persecuting him ﷺ and the Muslims. That, in summary, is the myth, which is not based on authentic narrations. In *Al-Fath*, Imam Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) speaks at length about this issue; he even, supposing some parts of this story to be true, mentioned plausible interpretations that shed a clearer light on what happened. According to one such interpretation, it was *Shaitaan* (Satan) who the polytheists heard uttering the two above-mentioned phrases. This interpretation is supported by the above-mentioned Verse, in which Allah ﷻ makes it clear that it is *Shaitaan* (Satan) who "Threw (some falsehood) in it." Also, Imam Ibn Hajar, as well as others, pointed out that it is impossible for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to have uttered such false words as are ascribed to him in the aforementioned myth.

The true reasons that prompted Muslims to return to Makkah

Three months after Ja'far ؓ and his companions ؓ arrived in Abyssinia, a great change occurred in Makkah, a change that made Muslims much more sanguine regarding the prospect of spreading Islam within Makkah. That change was brought about when, within the span of a few days, two strong and fearless men embraced Islam: Hamzah ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib ؓ, uncle of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ؓ. At first, Hamzah ؓ embraced Islam out of loyalty to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, but shortly thereafter Allah ﷻ opened up his heart to Islam, upon which he ؓ remained firm until he attained martyrdom during the Battle of Uhud - may Allah be pleased with him. Hamzah ؓ was strong and was much feared on the battlefield. When he ؓ embraced Islam, the Quraish knew that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had obtained an additional protector, and so they lessened the intensity with which they persecuted him. 'Umar ؓ, who embraced Islam a few days later, was also strong and brave. Muslims felt that they had gained honor and protection with the Islam of Hamzah ؓ and 'Umar ؓ, so much so that they went about Makkah openly declaring their faith. Ibn Mas'ood ؓ said, "Verily, the Islam of 'Umar ؓ was a conquest, his migration (to Al-Madeenah) was a victory, and his caliphate was a mercy (to the Muslims). Verily, we would not pray beside the Ka'bah until 'Umar ؓ embraced Islam. Then, when he embraced Islam, he fought with the Quraish and then prayed beside the Ka'bah, and we prayed (there) with him."^[1]

Ibn 'Umar ؓ reported that when 'Umar ؓ embraced Islam, he ؓ said, "Which member of the Quraish is quickest in spreading news," or in other words: Who among the Quraish is the biggest gossipmonger? Someone said that he was a man named Jameel ibn Ma'mar Al-Jumahee. 'Umar ؓ went to meet him, and 'Umar's son, 'Abdullah ؓ, followed him to see what would happen.

^[1] *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hishaam (1/365).

When he met Jameel, 'Umar ؓ said, "O Jameel, did you know that I have indeed embraced Islam and have entered into the fold of Muhammad's religion?" No sooner did 'Umar ؓ finish his question than Jameel stood up, dragging his robe as he hastily walked away. 'Umar ؓ followed Jameel, and 'Abdullah ؓ followed 'Umar ؓ. Jameel was of course heading for the *Masjid*, for the Quraish congregated in their various social gatherings around the Ka'bah. As soon as he reached the Ka'bah, Jameel called out as loudly as he possibly could, "Lo! The son of Al-Khattaab (i.e., 'Umar ؓ) has forsaken his religion." 'Umar ؓ called out from behind Jameel, "He has lied; rather, I have embraced Islam and have testified that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah ﷻ and that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger." The Quraish attacked him, but he fought back. All by himself, 'Umar ؓ fought them and continued to fight them until close to nightfall, at which time everyone was exhausted, and the fight ended.

In short, the situation of the Muslims changed for the better after both Hamzah ؓ and 'Umar ؓ embraced Islam. Muslims were now for the first time able to pray beside the Ka'bah; furthermore, they left the house of Al-Arqam ibn Abee Al-Arqam – which hitherto served as their secret meeting place – and went about Makkah openly declaring their faith. The Quraish no longer persecuted Muslims as brutally as they did before. News of such changes must have reached the Prophet's Companions ؓ in Abyssinia, either by way of a messenger or by way of seamen who passed through Jeddah, which is situated near Makkah.

To be sure, the exiled Muslims in Abyssinia became overjoyed upon hearing news of positive developments in Makkah; consequently, they desired to return, which should come as no surprise, for Allah ﷻ has instilled into human beings an inherent love of their homeland. And in the case of the Muslims in Abyssinia, they not only longed to see their homeland and be with their families, but also they longed to be near the Ka'bah and in the company of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

Though it is true that the situation of the Muslims improved greatly with the Islam of Hamzah ؓ and 'Umar ؓ, Quraish's leaders didn't take the new developments sitting down. Instead, they plotted new strategies to fight Islam, strategies that showed cunning on the one hand, and brutality on the other. Those strategies culminated in the siege and economic embargo that we have hitherto discussed in this work. Therefore, with renewed attacks from the Quraish, some of the Prophet's Companions ؓ migrated to Abyssinia for a second time. This time around, however, many more Companions ؓ made the journey.

The second Migration to Abyssinia

After the Muslim exiles returned to Makkah from the first migration to Abyssinia, they found that, though their arrival home was preceded by some positive developments, the situation had again deteriorated. Their fellow clansmen inflicted them with constant torture, as if to punish them for having left in the first place. And so the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave them permission to migrate to Abyssinia for a second time.

Ibn Ishaq and others related that either 82 or 83 men made the journey the second time around – either 82 or 83 depending on whether 'Ammar ibn Yaasir ؓ was among them. 18 women made the journey as well; of these, 11 were members of the Quraish. Their children traveled with them as well, and some of the women gave birth to children during their sojourn in Abyssinia.

The Leaders of the Quraish Seek to Obtain the Extradition of their fellow Tribesmen from Abyssinia

When they heard about how the Prophet's Companions ؓ had found a safe haven in Abyssinia, the leaders of the Quraish became more frustrated than perhaps ever before. They were not content to allow the Muslims to have a moment's peace, never mind constant peace in a foreign land. And so they plotted a scheme to bring back their fellow tribesmen, a scheme that completely backfired, that led to a poignantly beneficial

discussion between An-Najaashee and Ja'far ibn Abee Taalib ؓ, and that ended with An-Najaashee embracing Islam and the Muslims being permanently welcome to live in peace in Abyssinia. Umm Salamah bint Abu Umayyah ibn Al-Mugheereah ؓ, wife of the Prophet ﷺ, said, "When we stopped to reside in the land of Abyssinia, we lived alongside the best of neighbours, An-Najaashee. We safely practiced our religion, and we worshipped Allah ﷻ without consequently being harmed. And we did not hear anything that we disliked. When news of our situation reached the Quraish, they conspired to send two strong men to deal with us. They planned to give An-Najaashee gifts from the merchandise that would catch his eye in Makkah. The best thing that they would take to him from Makkah was leather, and so they gathered a great deal of leather for him. Furthermore, they planned to give gifts to every single one of An-Najaashee's ministers. With the command to execute this plan, the Quraish sent 'Abdullah ibn Abee Rabee'ah ibn Al-Mugheerah Al-Makhzoomee and 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas ibn Waail As-Sahmee. They (the leaders of the Quraish) gave them these instructions: 'Give each minister his gift before you speak to An-Najaashee regarding them (the Prophet's Companions ؓ). Then present to An-Najaashee his gifts, and then ask him to surrender them (the Prophet's Companions ؓ) to you, and make sure he does so before he speaks to them.' The two of them then left until they reached An-Najaashee; meanwhile, we were with him, in the best of homes and with the best of neighbours. Before speaking to An-Najaashee, they (the two emissaries of the Quraish) gave every single minister his gift. And to each minister they said, 'Verily, foolish youths from among us have inclined to come to the country of your king; they have abandoned the religion of their people, and they have not entered into the fold of your religion. Instead, they have come with a newly invented religion, one that neither we nor you know. The noblemen of their people, from their fathers and uncles, have sent us to the king, asking that he send them back. So when we speak to the king regarding their situation, advise him to surrender them to us and to not speak to them, for indeed, their people are best suited to deal with them, and they are

most knowledgeable about that which they find blameworthy in them.' The ministers said, 'Yes (we will do as you ask).' The two of them then proffered to the king their gifts, which he accepted from them. They then said to him, 'O king, verily, foolish youths from among us have inclined to come to your country; they have abandoned the religion of their people, and they have not entered into the fold of your religion. Instead, they have come with a newly invented religion, one that neither we nor you know. The noblemen of their people, from their fathers and uncles and fellow clansmen, have sent us to you, asking that you send them back. For indeed, they (the noblemen of the Quraish) are best suited to deal with them, and they are most knowledgeable about that which they find blameworthy in them and that concerning which they reproach them.' 'Abdullah ibn Abu Rabee'ah and 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas disliked nothing more than for An-Najaashee to hear what they (i.e., the Prophet's Companions ﷺ) had to say. The king's ministers, who were gathered around him, said, 'O king, these two have spoken the truth. Their people are best suited to deal with them, and they are most knowledgeable about that which they find blameworthy in them, so surrender them to these two (men). Let these two take them back to their country and to their people.' An-Najaashee became angry and said, 'No, by Allah. To the contrary, I will not surrender them to these two, and I do not fear the plotting of a people who have become my neighbours, have settled down in my country, and have chosen me (to grant them refuge) over every other person – at least I will not do so until I summon them and ask them concerning that which these two say about them. If they are as these two say, I will surrender them to these two, and I will send them back to their people. But if they are otherwise (i.e., if they are not as these two men claim), then I will protect them from these two, and I will be a good neighbour to them, so long as they remain a neighbour to me.'"^[1]

^[1] Related by Ahmad (5/290), who said, "Its chain is authentic"; *Hadeeth* number: 22498.

A Heartfelt discussion between Ja'far ؑ and An-Najaashee

An-Najaashee then summoned the Prophet's Companions ؓ. When his messenger informed the Prophet's Companions ؓ that they were to appear before the king, they gathered together to discuss what they should do. One of them asked, "What will you say to the man (i.e., An-Najaashee) when you go to him?" They all agreed on what they would say to him: "By Allah, we will say what our Prophet ﷺ taught us and commanded us with, regardless of the consequences." Meanwhile, An-Najaashee called for his priests, who gathered around him with their scrolls spread out before them. When the Muslims arrived, An-Najaashee began by asking them, "What is this religion for which you have parted from your people? You have not entered into the fold of my religion, nor the religion of any person from these nations (i.e., from the nations of the world)."

Umm Salamah related, "The person among us who would speak to him was Ja'far ibn Abee Taalib ؑ, who then said, 'O king, we were an ignorant people: we worshipped idols, we would eat from the flesh of dead animals (i.e., animals that died not through slaughtering, but due to some other cause), we would perpetrate lewd acts, we would cut off family ties, and we would be bad neighbours; the strong among us would eat from the weak (i.e., would oppress the weak and eat from their labour). We remained upon that state until Allah sent to us a Messenger, whose (noble) lineage, truthfulness, trustworthiness, and chastity we already knew (to be impeccable). He invited us unto Allah – to believe in His Oneness and to worship Him; to abandon all that we and our fathers worshipped besides Allah ﷻ, in terms of stones and idols (and all else besides). He ﷺ commanded us to speak truthfully, to fulfill the trust, to join ties of family relations, to be good to our neighbours, and to refrain from forbidden deeds and from shedding blood. And he ﷺ forbade us from lewd acts, from uttering falsehood, from (wrongfully) eating the wealth of an orphan, from falsely accusing chaste women of wrongdoing. And he ﷺ ordered us to worship Allah alone and to not associate any

partners with Him in worship; and he commanded us to pray, to give *Zakaat* (compulsory charity), and to fast.' He enumerated for An-Najaashee the teachings of Islam. (He said,) 'And we believe him and have faith in him. We follow him in what he came with. And so we worship Allah alone, without associating any partners with Him in worship. We deem forbidden that which he has made forbidden for us, and we deem lawful that which he made permissible for us. Our people then transgressed against us and tortured us. They tried to force us to abandon our religion and to return from the worship of Allah to the worship of idols; they tried to make us deem lawful those abominable acts (and things) that we used to deem lawful (during the days of ignorance). Then, when they subjugated us, wronged us, and treated us in an oppressive manner, standing between us and our religion, we came to your country, and we chose you over all other people. We desired to live alongside you, and we hoped that, with you, we would not be wronged, O king.' An-Najaashee said to Ja'far ؓ, 'Do you have with you any of that which he (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ) came with from Allah?' Ja'far ؓ said, 'Yes.' 'Then recite it to me,' said An-Najaashee. Ja'far ؓ recited for him the beginning of the Chapter: *Kaaf-ha-Yaa-'Ain-Sad*. By Allah, An-Najaashee began to cry, until his beard became wet with tears. And when his priests heard what Ja'far ؓ was reciting to them, they cried until their scrolls became wet (with tears).' An-Najaashee then said, 'By Allah, this and what Moosa ؑ came with come out of the same lantern (i.e., come out from the same source). Then by Allah (he said turning to Quraish's two emissaries), I will never surrender them to you, and henceforward they will not be plotted against and tortured (by me sending them back to their people).''^[1]

Another attempt to Create a Rift between An-Najaashee and his Muslim Guests

Describing what happened after the aforementioned discussion between An-Najaashee (may Allah have mercy on him) and Ja'far

^[1] *Musnad Imam Ahmad* (1/202, 203).

ibn Abee Taalib ؓ, Umm Salamah ؓ said, "When both 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas and 'Abdullah ibn Abee Rabe'e'ah left the presence of An-Najaashee, 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas said, 'By Allah, tomorrow I will present to him (i.e., An-Najaashee) (information) about them with which I will pull up by the roots their very lives.' 'Abdullah ibn Rabe'e'ah, who was the more sympathetic of the two towards us, said, 'Do not do so, for they have certain rights of family relations, even if they have opposed us.' 'Amr said, 'By Allah, I will inform him that they claim that 'Eesa (Jesus) ibn Maryam ؑ is a slave.' He went to the king on the following day and said, 'O king, verily, they have strong words to say about 'Eesa ibn Maryam ؑ. Call them here and ask them (to tell you) what they say about him.' An-Najaashee sent for them in order to ask them about 'Eesa ؑ. Nothing similar to this befell us ever before. The group (of Muslims) gathered together and said to one another, 'What will you say about 'Eesa when he asks you about him?' They said, 'By Allah, we will say about him that which Allah says and that which our Prophet ﷺ came with, regardless of the outcome. When they entered into his presence, he said to them, 'What do you say about 'Eesa ibn Maryam?' Ja'far ibn Abee Taalib ؓ said, 'We say about him that which our Prophet ﷺ came with – that he is the slave of Allah, His Messenger, a spirit created by Him, and His Word ("Be!" – and he was), which He bestowed on Maryam (Mary), the virgin, the *Al-Batool* (one who dedicates oneself to worship and forsakes marriage).' An-Najaashee struck his hand on the ground and took from it a stick. He then said, 'Eesa ibn Maryam did not go beyond what you said even the distance of this stick (i.e., what he ؑ said and what you say is the same).' When he said this, his ministers spoke out in anger, to which he responded, '(What I said is true) even if you speak out in anger, by Allah. (Turning to the Muslims, he said) Go, for you are safe in my land. Whoever curses you will be held responsible. Then whoever curses you will be held responsible. And I would not love to have a reward of gold in return for me hurting a single man among you. (Now speaking to his ministers or guards:) Return to these two (men) their gifts, since we have no need of them. For by Allah,

Allah did not take from me bribe money when He returned to me my kingdom, so why should I take bribe money (for going against His command, for giving up these Muslims, etc.) The two (emissaries) left, defeated and humiliated; and returned to them were the things they came with. We then resided alongside An-Najaashee in a very good abode, with a very good neighbour.”^[1]

An-Najaashee embraces Islam

An-Najaashee believed in the Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ, and he embraced Islam. But knowing that his people were firmly set upon their false and misguided ways, and were intransigently clinging to their false beliefs, An-Najaashee kept his faith hidden from them. Abu Hurairah ؓ narrated that, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ announced the death of An-Najaashee on the very same day that he died (so the Messenger of Allah ﷺ found out about his death through revelation). He took his Companions ؓ to the place of prayer and lined them up. And he made four *Takbeers* (*Takbeer* is to say, *Allahuakbar* – Allah is the Greatest) over him (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ performed the funeral prayer over An-Najaashee).”^[2] In another narration, Jaabir ؓ said, “When An-Najaashee died, the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Today, a righteous man has died, so stand and pray over your brother, Ashamah (An-Najaashee was the title of every king of Abyssinia, just as Caesar was the title of every Roman emperor; the name of this particular An-Najaashee, or king, was Ashamah).’”^[3] According to most historians, An-Najaashee – may Allah have mercy on him – died in the year 9 H; however, some historians maintain that he died in the year 8 H, prior to the conquest of Makkah.

^[1] *Musnad Imam Ahmad* (1/203). The narrators of this are all narrators of *As-Saheeh*, and the *Hadeeth* number is: 1740.

^[2] Related by Bukhaaree, the Book of Funeral Prayers, chapter, “Making four *Takbeers* over the Deceased”; *Hadeeth* number: 1333.

^[3] Related by Bukhaaree, the Book of the *Ansaar’s* Merits, chapter “The Death of An-Najaashee”; *Hadeeth* number: 3888.

Lessons and Morals

- 1) A believer puts the needs of his soul before the needs of his body; he strives to fulfill his soul's needs, even if doing so must come at the expense of his body's needs and desires. Consider, for example, the Prophet's Companions ﷺ and how they remained steadfast upon their beliefs, even though they paid a heavy price for doing so by being tortured and persecuted. For them, peace of mind and the expectation of receiving reward from Allah ﷻ were of greater importance than being safe from torture, hardships, and persecution. It is through such sacrifices that religious and political movements succeed, and the masses are saved from darkness and misguidance.
- 2) The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was extremely merciful towards his Companions ﷺ. Knowing that he ﷺ could not save them from persecution in Makkah, he ﷺ searched out for other means of securing their safety and freedom, which is why he ﷺ told them to go to Abyssinia and to An-Najaashee, in whose presence "no one is wronged." As such, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was sending a message to Muslim leaders of all generations: They should, with wisdom and farsightedness, find means of protecting those under them and of finding safe havens for Muslims who are being persecuted in their own land.
- 3) The presence of the Prophet's cousin, Ja'far ﷺ, his son-in-law, 'Uthmaan ﷺ, and his daughter, Ruqayyah ﷺ, among the Muslim migrants established an important principle: The close relatives of a leader must brave dangerous circumstances just as other people do. If the relatives of a leader and those from the wealthy classes are kept at a safe distance from danger, while common or poor Muslims face dangerous circumstances head on, then true brotherhood among Muslims cannot be achieved.
- 4) If one fears for his religion, then it is legislated in Islam to

leave one's homeland, even when that homeland is a superior place, such as Makkah, and when one's destination is not a stronghold of Islam, such as Abyssinia. It is interesting to note that Abyssinia was inhabited by Christians who worshipped 'Eesa ﷺ and who did not say that 'Eesa ﷺ is the slave of Allah ﷻ, as becomes clear from a close reading of Umm Salamah's narration. Allah ﷻ praised those who migrated to Abyssinia when He ﷻ said: "And the first to embrace Islam. Here, Allah ﷻ praised them even though they were travelling away from the Inviolable House of Allah in order to live in a land of disbelief; this is because they migrated to safeguard their religion and to be able to worship Allah ﷻ in complete freedom. The ruling that applied to the Prophet's Companions ﷺ applies to Muslims from all generations: Whenever evil becomes widespread in a country, whereby one is not able to practice Islam in safety, one must, if one is able to, travel to another country in which he can worship Allah ﷻ without fearing persecution for doing so. That is the kind of migration that will continue to remain legislated until the Day of Resurrection. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ فَأَيْنَمَا تُولُوا فَثَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝۱۱۵﴾

"And to Allah belong the east and the west, so wherever you turn yourselves or your faces there is the Face of Allah (and He is High above, over His Throne). Surely! Allah is All-Sufficient for his creatures' needs, All-Knowing." (Qur'an 2: 115)

- 5) When doing so is necessary, it is permissible for Muslims to enter into the protection of non-Muslims, regardless of whether the protector is a Christian, such as An-Najaashee, or a polytheist, such as those who granted protection to Muslims who returned from Abyssinia. We know that, throughout his entire life, Abu Taalib, a die-hard polytheist, protected and supported the Prophet ﷺ. And when the Prophet ﷺ returned from At-Taaif, he entered Makkah under the protection of Mut'im ibn 'Adee. Obviously, however, one

may enter under the protection of a non-Muslim only if doing so does not require one to compromise one's religion. When Abu Taalib asked the Prophet ﷺ not to make him take on more than he could handle and not to speak disparagingly about the idols of the Quraish, the Prophet ﷺ reconciled himself to the idea of foregoing Abu Taalib's protection, for he ﷺ outright refused to remain silent about anything that he ﷺ was Islamically required to speak about.

- 6) That the Prophet ﷺ chose Abyssinia proves that he ﷺ was well-informed about current affairs. The Prophet ﷺ knew which empires were corrupt and which were not; and he ﷺ knew which rulers were oppressive and which were just. Based on that knowledge, he ﷺ chose the best possible place for his Companions ﷺ, Abyssinia. The lesson for Muslim leaders from all centuries is that they must not delude themselves into thinking that they live in a vacuum; they live in a world that is inhabited by other peoples; they must base their strategies upon that reality, and to do so, they must be well-informed about current affairs.
- 7) For various reasons, the Quraish wanted to obtain extradition of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ from Abyssinia. One of the main reasons was that they felt that, having found a safe haven in a foreign land, the Muslims threatened their future interests. That is why today, and during any period wherein Muslims are very weak, no sooner do Muslims try to find a safe haven that they can call their own country, than the polytheists make every effort possible to stop them. And in this regard, Muslims must not underestimate those who would wish to destroy them. Consider the detailed planning of the Quraish: They sent valuable gifts to An-Najaashee and his ministers, they agreed beforehand on the words they would speak to accompany those gifts, and they sent 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas, who was a friend of An-Najaashee. From this we learn that it is never wise to underestimate our enemies.

- 8) When the messenger of the king informed the Prophet's Companions ﷺ that they were being summoned by the king, they did not panic or become afraid. Rather, they applied an important Islamic principle, which is that Muslims should mutually consult one another in affairs that concern them all. The minds of many people working together are better than the minds of many people working as individuals, often at cross-purposes. Moreover, they displayed the wonderful fruits of the Prophet's training, in terms of how they all agreed to speak the truth, regardless of what happened as a result. They firmly resolved to present Islam with honour, even if that would lead to their destruction.
- 9) Ja'far ibn Abee Taalib ﷺ was wisely chosen to lead the Muslims in Abyssinia and to speak on their behalf to An-Najaashee, for someone of at least equal intelligence to 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas was needed to debate him before the king. Ja'far ﷺ was an ideal representative of the Muslims for various reasons. First, having lived with the Prophet ﷺ under the same roof, Ja'far ﷺ was very close to him, and probably knew him ﷺ better than any other Muslim in Abyssinia. Second, Ja'far ﷺ was eloquent, the exact quality that was needed in presenting the Muslims' case to An-Najaashee. Third, Ja'far ﷺ was of a very noble lineage, and so An-Najaashee could not be led to believe that a rebellion in Makkah was being orchestrated by runaway slaves or members of the lower classes. Ja'far ﷺ was from the children of Haashim, and the children of Haashim had a nobler lineage than anybody else from the Quraish. Fourth, Ja'far ﷺ was the cousin of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, a fact that surely made An-Najaashee confident that Ja'far ﷺ was truthfully conveying the message of the Prophet ﷺ. Finally, Ja'far's character was, like his lineage, very noble indeed. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ once said to Ja'far ﷺ, "You have resembled me in my physical appearance and in my character."^[1] In short, Ja'far ﷺ epitomized the ideal

^[1] Related by Bukhaare, the Book of Reconciliation; *Hadeeth* number: 2269.

ambassador, one that is endowed with eloquence, knowledge, good manners, patience, bravery, and wisdom.

- 10) When you are dealing with someone who is cunning, you have to send a person who is at least of equal intelligence, a person who can outwit him. For example, if a non-Muslim wants to debate religious issues, Muslims should send to him someone of at least equal intelligence, someone who is knowledgeable about Islam and the non-Muslim debater's religion, and, just as importantly, someone who is eloquent enough to express his ideas clearly. In this context, let us study 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas's tactics and how Ja'far ibn Abee Taalib ؓ responded to them. 'Amr began by giving An-Najaashee a sense of how things had become chaotic in Makkah, and of how the Quraish had become a divided people as a result, 'Amr claimed, of the Prophet's *Da'wah*. As an official emissary of the Quraish, 'Amr hoped to gain the sympathy of a ruler who surely knew all too well the effects of dissent and inner strife within a country. 'Amr then continued to speak ill of the Prophet's Companions ؓ, insinuating (in narrations other than those that I have mentioned) that, just as they had sown dissension among the Quraish, they were capable of creating much mischief in Abyssinia. Had it not been for their close friendship and the close ties between the king and the Quraish, 'Amr implied that he would not have taken the trouble to warn the king about Quraish's runaways. And of course 'Amr remembered to mention that the Prophet's Companions ؓ did not share the same beliefs as An-Najaashee, in that they did not bear witness to the divinity of 'Eesa (Jesus) ibn Maryam ؑ. They even, 'Amr pointed out, did not respect An-Najaashee, for whereas everyone in his presence performed prostration to him, they remained standing in upright positions. It was now up to Ja'far ؓ to refute all of 'Amr's claims, and Ja'far ؓ rose to the occasion, speaking at once with heart and with the rhetorical skill of a seasoned ambassador. In his speech to the king, Ja'far ؓ did the following:

- ◆ He ﷺ enumerated the faults of pre-Islamic ignorance, intending thereby to convince An-Najaashee that the Quraish were a decadent and corrupt people. And in doing so, he ﷺ concentrated on those faults that could be remedied only through Prophethood and revelation from Allah ﷻ.
- ◆ Ja'far ﷺ then contrasted Quraish's corrupt ways with the wonderful and noble character of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who was known among the Quraish for his noble lineage, his truthfulness, his trustworthiness, and his chastity. He ﷺ was, therefore, ideally suited to the duties of Prophethood.
- ◆ Ja'far ﷺ expounded on the wonderful teachings of Islam, which are in harmony with the teachings of previous Prophets ﷺ – such as forsaking the false worship of idols, speaking truthfully, being trustworthy, joining ties of family relations, being good to one's neighbour, avoiding the wrongful spilling of blood, establishing prayer, and giving charity. It was very appropriate to mention these teachings, since An-Najaashee and his priests, being deeply immersed in Christian beliefs and practices, would recognize in them the teachings of past Prophets ﷺ, going back to 'Eesa and Moosa ﷺ.
- ◆ Perhaps most importantly, Ja'far ﷺ exposed Quraish's vile policy of persecuting Muslims simply because they refused to worship idols and stood firm in their worship of Allah alone.
- ◆ Ja'far ﷺ praised An-Najaashee for his good qualities: That he was a just ruler and that no one was wronged in his presence.

Ja'far ﷺ pointed out that, from all of mankind, the Muslims chose to seek An-Najaashee's help; this clearly refuted 'Amr's claim that the Muslims had no respect for An-Najaashee, and at the same time, it instilled into An-Najaashee a sense of responsibility and duty towards his Muslim guests. Having made the above-mentioned points, Ja'far ﷺ was appealing to An-Najaashee's mind, heart, and sense of justice, and he successfully refuted all of 'Amr's claims.

When An-Najaashee later asked him to recite some of the

Qur'an, Ja'far ﷺ chose the best Chapter possible considering both the situation and his audience. He ﷺ chose *Soorah* (Chapter) *Maryam* (Mary), which discusses Maryam ﷺ and 'Eesa ﷺ, and which made An-Najaashee (may Allah have mercy on him) and his priests cry so much that their beards and scrolls became soaked in tears. Ja'far ﷺ explained that Muslims do not worship 'Eesa ibn Maryam ﷺ or consider him to be a god of any sort. That being the case, Ja'far ﷺ made it clear that Muslims don't attack the chastity of Maryam ﷺ, as do members of another religion, but instead honour her, saying that Maryam ﷺ was a chaste and pure virgin who dedicated herself to the worship of Allah ﷻ and that her son, 'Eesa ﷺ, is Allah's Word (Allah ﷻ said, "Be!" – and he was) and a soul created by Allah ﷻ, which He ﷻ bestowed upon Maryam ﷺ. And much to the chagrin of his ministers, An-Najaashee agreed with everything that Ja'far ﷺ said.

In the end, An-Najaashee weighed what he heard and became convinced that Ja'far ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ were truthful; he resolved upon a firm course: No matter what the consequences, he (may Allah have mercy on him) would support Muslims and their cause.

- 11) The attitude of Ja'far ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ represented a practical application of the Prophet's saying, "Whosoever seeks the pleasure of Allah, while displeasing people in the process, then Allah will suffice him, so that he does not need financial help from people. And whosoever seeks the pleasure of people, while displeasing Allah in the process, then Allah will entrust him to people (so that they will harm him)."^[1] Ja'far ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ sought the pleasure of Allah ﷻ, even though it seemed very likely that, by doing so, they would incur the wrath of their Christian hosts. In the end, Allah ﷻ provided them with the

^[1] *Sunan At-Tirmidhee*, the Book of Az-Zuhd, *Tuhfatul-Ahwadhee* (7: 97), *Saheeh Al-Jaamai' As-Sagheer* (5973).

help and support of An-Najaashee, who also took a big risk by speaking the truth, since he knew fully well that his people might consequently start a rebellion against him.

- 12) Some Christians were true Monotheists, but they kept that fact hidden, fearing reprisals from their coreligionists. One such example was An-Najaashee, who kept secret his true faith to save his life and his kingdom. But when he was then tested through the arrival of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ, he outwardly displayed his true faith, seeking the Pleasure of Allah ﷻ, regardless of the outcome.
- 13) One of the lessons we learn from the Companions' migration to Abyssinia is that, until clear proofs are established for one's benefit, one is excused for one's ignorance. Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said, "When the prayer of a resident (one who is not travelling) was increased (in the number of units) after the Prophet ﷺ migrated to Al-Madeenah, there were those who were far away from him, such as those who were in Makkah, or those who were in Abyssinia. They continued to pray two units (until news reached them about the increase of units), and the Prophet ﷺ did not order them to repeat the prayers (they performed that were two units short of the newly legislated four-unit prayer)."^[1] Imam Adh-Dhahabee (may Allah have mercy on him) said, "No one sins until he has knowledge and until the proof is established (upon him). Some prominent Companions (of the Prophet ﷺ) were in Abyssinia while (the legislations of) obligatory deeds and forbidden deeds were being revealed to the Prophet ﷺ. News of those legislations reached them only months later; regarding those legislations, they were excused because of their ignorance (concerning those issues), but only until news of revelation reached them."^[2]
- 14) The primary migration of the Muslims during the lifetime of the

^[1] *Al-Fataawah* (22/43).

^[2] *Al-Kabaair*, pg. 12.

Prophet ﷺ, and the migration that truly changed the course of Islamic history, was the migration of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ to Al-Madeenah. Allah ﷻ praised those of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ who migrated to Al-Madeenah; that notwithstanding, those who migrated to Abyssinia are similarly praiseworthy – even though they joined the Prophet ﷺ in Al-Madeenah only after the conquest of Khaibar – for they performed two migrations, one to Abyssinia, and one to Al-Madeenah. And they remained behind in Abyssinia only because they were needed there. Abu Moosa Al-Ash'aree ﷺ, one of those who migrated to Abyssinia, said: "Asmaa bint 'Umais ﷺ – who had arrived with us (from Abyssinia) – entered upon Hafsah ﷺ, wife of the Prophet ﷺ, to visit her. Asmaa ﷺ was among those who had migrated to An-Najaashee. While Asmaa ﷺ was with Hafsah ﷺ, 'Umar ﷺ entered upon Hafsah ﷺ. When he saw Asmaa ﷺ, 'Umar ﷺ said, 'Who is this?' 'Asmaa bint 'Umais,' said Hafsah. 'Umar ﷺ said, 'She is the Abyssinian? The one who traveled by sea (to get to Abyssinia)?' Asmaa ﷺ said, 'Yes.' 'Umar ﷺ said, 'We performed *Hijrah* (migration to Al-Madeenah) before you did, and so we have a greater right to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ than you do.' Becoming angry, Asmaa ﷺ said, 'No, by Allah. You were with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who would feed the hungry among you and admonish the ignorant among you; meanwhile, we were far away and detested (i.e., perhaps meaning that some Christians in Abyssinia detested them, for it is related that a small rebellion took place against An-Najaashee after he declared his faith in Islamic Monotheism; the rebellion was quickly quelled and stability was restored) in the land of Abyssinia. And we were in that situation for the sake of Allah and His Messenger. By Allah, I will neither eat food nor have anything to drink until I mention what you said to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. We would be harmed and we were afraid, and I will mention that to the Prophet ﷺ and ask him about it. By Allah, I will not lie, stray from the truth, or add to it (i.e., to what you said, or to the severity of the situation we endured).' When the Prophet ﷺ

came, Asmaa ؓ said, 'O Prophet of Allah, verily 'Umar says such and such (she mentioned what he had said).' The Prophet ﷺ asked, 'And what did you say to him?' She ؓ said, 'I said such and such to him.' The Prophet ﷺ said, 'He has no greater right to me than all of you do. He ؓ and his Companions ؓ have a single migration (that they performed); but as for you, the people of the boat, you have two migrations (that you have performed).' Asmaa (later) said, 'I then saw Abu Moosa ؓ and the people of the boat (i.e., those who had migrated to Abyssinia), coming to me in groups and asking me about this *Hadeeth* (i.e., about what the Prophet ﷺ had told her). And there was nothing in the world that made them happier or that was more important to them than what the Prophet ﷺ said to them (i.e., about them).'"^[1]

- 15) 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas ؓ, one of the two emissaries sent by the Quraish to seek the extradition of the Prophet's Companions ؓ, later embraced Islam. To be sure, the fact that the Prophet's Companions ؓ migrated to Abyssinia had a tangible and positive influence on 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas ؓ. Many narrations indicate that 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas ؓ embraced Islam at the hands of An-Najaashee (may Allah have mercy on him); this view, Ibn Hajar said^[2], is the most widely held of the two views in the matter. If it is true that 'Amr ؓ embraced Islam at the hands of An-Najaashee, then it is, as Az-Zarqaanee pointed out^[3], a unique occurrence in Islamic history, for it did not otherwise occur that a Companion of the Prophet ﷺ embraced Islam at the hands of someone who wasn't a Companion (An-Najaashee is not officially referred to as a Companion because he never actually met or saw the Prophet ﷺ). However, some narrations indicate that 'Amr ؓ embraced Islam at the hands not of An-Najaashee (may Allah have mercy on him), but of Ja'far ibn Abee Taalib ؓ.

^[1] Related by Bukhaaree (4230, 4231), and Muslim (2503).

^[2] Refer to *Al-Hijrah Al-Oolah Fil-Islam* (pg. 167).

^[3] Refer to *Sharh Al-Mawaahib* (1/271).

- 16) While some of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ were in Abyssinia, one among them, Umm Habeebah ﷺ, married the Prophet ﷺ. The actual marriage contract took place while she was in Abyssinia, a fact that is established in the books of *Sunnah*. Abu Daawood related in his *Sunan* with an authentic chain that Umm Habeebah ﷺ was married to 'Ubaidullah ibn Jahsh ﷺ, who died in the land of Abyssinia. An-Najaashee then married her off to the Prophet ﷺ, gave her 4000 (units of a currency that is not explicitly mentioned in the narration), and sent her to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ with Shurahbeel ibn Hasanah ﷺ.^[1]

This marriage points to how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would take care of his followers in Abyssinia. Umm Habeebah ﷺ had lost her husband and was left all alone; the Prophet ﷺ not only consoled her for her loss, but further honoured her by offering to marry her. In terms of how the Prophet ﷺ took care of female migrants, Umm Habeebah ﷺ is not the only example we have. Earlier on, the Prophet ﷺ similarly consoled and honoured Saudah ﷺ. When Saudah ﷺ returned to Makkah from Abyssinia with her husband, As-Sakraan ibn 'Amr ﷺ, the latter died. When Saudah's period of waiting ended, the Prophet ﷺ sent for her and proposed to her. Saudah ﷺ chose Haatib ibn 'Amr ibn 'Abd-Shams ibn 'Abd-Wudd, a member of the same clan, to give her hand in marriage to the Prophet ﷺ. Saudah ﷺ was the first woman that the Prophet ﷺ married after the death of Khadeejah ﷺ. The Prophet's marriages to both Saudah ﷺ and Umm Habeebah ﷺ wonderfully illustrate how the Prophet ﷺ married women for reasons that pertained to the spreading of Islam and to the taking care of bereaved Muslim women. Perhaps one of the aims of marrying Umm Habeebah ﷺ was to lessen the severity of her clan's enmity towards Islam – she was from the Banu Umayyah clan – and of their leader in particular, Abu Sufyaan, who was Umm

^[1] *Saheeh Sunan Abu Daawood* by Al-Albaanee – may Allah have mercy on him (2/396); *Hadeeth* number: 2107.

Habeebah's father. It is not a rare occurrence in the *Seerah* that the Prophet ﷺ tried to win over the hearts of the Quraish, so long as the means he ﷺ used did not clash with Islamic values or laws.

- 17) Some researches have listed some of the potential reasons why the Prophet ﷺ did not himself migrate to Abyssinia. Some of those reasons are as follows:
 - ◆ It is established (in a narration we will come across later on in this work, *In Sha Allah*) that the Prophet ﷺ saw in a dream the land to which he ﷺ was going to migrate. That land, he ﷺ saw, was filled with date-palm trees and was situated between *Harratain* (two areas of land that are replete with volcanic rock). And of course, Abyssinia did not fit that description.
 - ◆ In terms of its geographical location, Abyssinia was not strategically suited as a stronghold from which Islam could spread to the various parts of Arabia and the rest of the world.
 - ◆ The native Christian dwellers of Abyssinia were not going to allow Islam to spread on a widespread scale in their country; nor were the Romans, who were leaders of all Christians at the time, going to allow Abyssinia to fall into the control of Muslims. Therefore, it was not practicable for the Prophet ﷺ to migrate to Abyssinia and spread from there the message of Islam; Al-Madeenah and Arabia were best suited for that purpose.
- 18) The migration to Abyssinia had the effect of lowering the status of the Quraish within the Arabian Peninsula. Arabs in general prided themselves in providing shelter to strangers and being generous to their guests; in fact, they competed to outdo one another in those regards. Now, here were outsiders from Abyssinia providing shelter to strangers who had been harmed, persecuted, and expelled by their own people – the Quraish. This certainly had the effect of lowering the status of the Quraish in the eyes of more than a few Arabs.

The Year Of Grief, And The Trial Of At-Taaif

The Year Of Grief

1) The Death of Abu Taalib

Abu Taalib died during the end of the tenth year of the Prophet's *Da'wah*, shortly after the end of the hitherto discussed three year siege and embargo; it is quite likely that the harsh conditions of living under a siege and an embargo had a deleterious effect on Abu Taalib's health. The Quraish honoured Abu Taalib, but his loyalties were divided. On the one hand, he was a die-hard polytheist who remained loyal to the ways of his forefathers; and on the other hand, he loved the Messenger of Allah ﷺ a great deal, so much so, in fact, that he supported him and protected him from his fellow *Qurashee* noblemen until his dying breath.

When Abu Taalib was on his deathbed, breathing his final breaths, the leaders of the Quraish visited him, and so did the Prophet ﷺ. The former tried to convince him to remain steadfast upon the religion of his forbears, saying, "Do you wish to turn away from the religion of 'Abdul-Muttalib?" Meanwhile, the Prophet ﷺ was trying to convince Abu Taalib to embrace Islam, saying, "Say: None has the right to be worshipped but Allah. On the Day of Resurrection, I will testify with it (with the phrase of Islamic Monotheism) for you." Abu Taalib said, "Were it not for

the fact that the Quraish would dishonour me for it, saying that it was only restlessness that made me say it, I would have given you delight by saying it." Allah ﷻ then revealed the Verse:

﴿إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ
بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ۝٥٦﴾

"Verily, You (O Muhammad ﷺ) guide not whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills. And He knows best those who are the guided." (Qur'an 28: 56)

The beliefs of the Quraish were too deeply entrenched in Abu Taalib's mind for him to now discard them. Like many old men, Abu Taalib found it hard to change his way of thinking. Making matters worse, his compeers from Quraish's nobles were present while he was dying, instilling fear into him by threatening to disgrace his name if he accepted Islam.^[1]

2) The Death of Khadeejah ﷺ

Khadeejah ﷺ died in the same year that Abu Taalib died, about three years before the Prophet ﷺ migrated to Al-Madeenah. With the death of Abu Taalib and then of Khadeejah ﷺ, two of his closest supporters, the Prophet ﷺ went through a tough period of sadness. Through crises and emergencies, Abu Taalib was always there as an external supporter, fending off the attacks of the Quraish; and Khadeejah ﷺ was always there as a more personal supporter, consoling and encouraging the Prophet ﷺ through all of his hardships.

Once Abu Taalib died, the Quraish became more brazen in their persecution than ever before: now even common members of the Quraish began to persecute the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ had no helper left save Allah ﷻ, yet he ﷺ continued to invite people to Islam, and as a result had to put up with hardships that are hard to imagine. When the situation reached its nadir, the Prophet ﷺ

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah As-Saheehah* by Al-'Umaree (1/184).

decided to move away from his homeland, to present his message to people outside of his tribe, hoping for their support and readiness to believe in and accept the message that he came with from Allah ﷻ. And so the Prophet ﷺ went to At-Taaif, the closest city to Makkah.

The Prophet's journey to At-Taaif

In inviting his people to Islam, the Prophet ﷺ followed the way of previous Prophets ﷺ and Messengers ﷺ, such as Nooh ﷺ, who spent "a thousand years less fifty years" (Qur'an 29: 14) inviting his people to Islam. Throughout those long years, Nooh ﷺ worked consistently and patiently, repeating his message over and over again, using various means to reach out to his people. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ أَنْ أَنْذِرْ قَوْمَكَ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ① قَالَ يَقَوْمِ إِنِّي لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُبِينٌ ② أَنْ أَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاتَّقُوهُ وَأَطِيعُوا ③ يَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ مِنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُخْرِجَكُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ④ إِنَّ أَجَلَ اللَّهِ إِذَا جَاءَ لَا يُؤَخَّرُ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ⑤ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُ قَوْمِي لَيْلًا وَنَهَارًا ⑥ فَلَمْ يَزِدْهُمْ دُعَائِي إِلَّا فِرَارًا ⑦ وَإِنِّي كُلَّمَا دَعَوْتُهُمْ لِتَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ جَعَلُوا أَصْوَعًا ⑧ أَصْلَعُهُمْ فِيءَ ءَاذَانِهِمْ وَاسْتَغْشَوْا ثِيَابَهُمْ وَأَصْرُوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا اسْتِكْبَارًا ⑨ ثُمَّ إِنِّي أَعْلَنْتُ لَهُمْ وَأَسْرَرْتُ لَهُمْ إِسْرَارًا ⑩﴾

"Verily, We sent Nooh (Noah) to his people (saying): "Warn your people before there comes to them a painful torment." He said: "O my people! Verily, I am a plain warner to you, That you should worship Allah (Alone), be dutiful to Him, and obey me. He (Allah) will forgive you of your sins and respite you to an appointed term. Verily, the term of Allah when it comes, cannot be delayed, if you but knew." He said: "O my Lord! Verily, I have called my people night and day (i.e., secretly and openly to accept the doctrine of Islamic Monotheism). But all my calling added nothing but to (their) flight (from the truth). And verily!

Every time I called unto them that You might forgive them, they thrust their fingers into their ears, covered themselves up with their garments, and persisted (in their refusal), and magnified themselves in pride. Then verily, I called to them openly (aloud); then verily, I proclaimed to them in public, and I have appealed to them in private.” (Qur’an 71: 1-9)

Despite the long duration of his mission, Nooh ﷺ never stopped trying to convince his people to embrace Islam; his resolve never weakened, nor did he tire of resorting to different means to convince his people of the truth. He ﷺ invited them by day and by night, and he ﷺ preached to them both in public and in private.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ too invited people by day and by night, both in public and in private. He ﷺ informed people about previous nations; he explained certain aspects of Islam through the mention of parables; he both warned and gave glad tidings; in short, he ﷺ did all that he could to convince his people of the truth. Then, when remaining among his people became too difficult to bear, he ﷺ went to Taaif, and later to Al-Madeenah, always continuing to invite others to Islam.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was looking for a new place from which to spread the message of Islam. He ﷺ was looking for help from the Thaqeef tribe in At-Taaif, but instead of helping him, they sent out their children and foolish ones to pelt him with stones. After being on the receiving end of such harsh treatment, the Prophet ﷺ did not rest for even a short while; in fact, he ﷺ even performed *Da’wah* on his way back from Taaif. For on his way back, the Prophet ﷺ met ‘Addaas, who was a Christian. The Prophet ﷺ invited ‘Addaas ﷺ unto Allah ﷻ, and the latter embraced Islam. In regard to the Prophet’s trip to At-Taaif, Al-Waaqidee said that it took place in Shawaal, in the tenth year of Prophet Muhammad’s Prophethood. Al-Waaqidee mentioned that the Prophet ﷺ stayed in At-Taaif for a period of ten days.^[1]

^[1] *Tabaqaat Ibn Sa’d* (1/221), the author of which was relating from *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah As-Saheehah* (1/185).

Why the Messenger of Allah ﷺ chose At-Taaif

At-Taaif was of great strategic importance to the Quraish, so much so, in fact, that the leaders of the Quraish had ambitions to take control of it. Prior to the advent of Islam, the Quraish made attempts to annex At-Taaif; in the process, they took control of the valley of Wajj, desiring it for its trees and vegetation. The native dwellers of At-Taaif, the Thaqeef tribe, began to fear the Quraish, and so they allied themselves to them and added to the alliance the children of Daus. As a result of the close ties between the residents of At-Taaif and Makkah, many rich inhabitants of Makkah owned property in At-Taaif, and they would spend time there during the hot summer season. Among Quraish's subtribes, Banu Haashim and 'Abd-Shams in particular had close relations with the people of At-Taaif. And the children of Makhzoom had shared financial interests with members of the Thaqeef tribe.

The Prophet ﷺ chose At-Taaif for an important strategic reason, for if he ﷺ would be able to find support there, Quraish's financial and political interests would be directly threatened. In fact, had Thaqeef lent their support to the Prophet ﷺ, the Quraish would perhaps have become isolated in the Arabian Peninsula. The strategically sound choice of At-Taaif proves that the Prophet ﷺ strove to establish a Muslim country, for to have a country is one of the greatest of means for a nation to spread its religion. When the Prophet ﷺ reached At-Taaif, he ﷺ went directly to the central authority of the Thaqeef.

Where was the Leadership of the Thaqeef Based?

At-Taaif was controlled not by one individual or group but by an alliance of two groups: Banu Maalik and Al-Ahlaaf. These two groups gained control of At-Taaif by dint of their early settlement there. They enjoyed complete control of At-Taaif, both politically and economically, yet they did not have enough power to defend At-Taaif from foreign invaders. Of all Arab lands, At-Taaif was perhaps the most fertile and rich, and so it attracted the attention of any tribe that had the ability to conquer it. The residents of At-

Taaif therefore feared every nearby tribe that was powerful enough to defeat them in battle; those tribes were the Hawaazin, the Quraish, and Banu 'Aamir.

To protect themselves, the leaders of At-Taaif formed alliances and signed peace treaties; it was the very same tactic that the Quraish resorted to in order to ensure control over Makkah. Banu Maalik strengthened their ties with the Hawaazin, and Al-Ahlaaf formed an alliance with the Quraish.

To be sure, the Prophet ﷺ was fully aware of these fragile alliances, fragile because the people of At-Taaif did not form them out of loyalty, but because they feared the Hawaazin and the Quraish. He ﷺ also knew that the leadership of At-Taaif was not in the hands of a single person or tribe, but was distributed among two tribes, by virtue of an agreement between them. Each one of those two tribes was allied to a stronger outside tribe. If the Prophet ﷺ would be able to win over one of those two tribes, the entire power balance in the region would shift. And in particular, if he ﷺ would be able to win over the Al-Ahlaaf, who were allied to the Quraish, he ﷺ would achieve a tremendous victory. And it was not an impossible goal, for the Al-Ahlaaf were allied to the Quraish not so much out of religious loyalty as out of fear.

Given the above-mentioned political realities, the Prophet ﷺ, upon entering At-Taaif, went directly not to the children of Banu Maalik, who were allied to the Hawaazin, but to the children of 'Amr ibn 'Umair, the leaders of the Al-Ahlaaf who were allied to the Quraish. In his *As-Seerah*, Ibn Hishaam said, "When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ reached At-Taaif, he ﷺ headed to a group of people from the Thaqeef who were, in those days, the chiefs and nobles of the Thaqeef (Tribe). They were three brothers: 'Abd Yaa-Lail ibn 'Amr ibn 'Umair, Mas'ood ibn 'Amr ibn 'Umair, and Habeeb ibn 'Amr ibn 'Umair ibn 'Uqdah ibn Gheerah ibn 'Auf ibn Thaqeef. With one of them was a woman from the Quraish – more particularly, from the children of Jumh. The children of 'Amr (the three brothers and their relatives) were very cautious and very afraid (of the Quraish and other Arab tribes), and so they didn't

answer the invitation of the Messenger ﷺ. Instead, they acted extremely foolishly, showing bad manners to the Messenger ﷺ. And so, having lost hope of finding any goodness in Thaqeef, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood up to leave them and said to them, 'If you will do what you are doing (i.e., if you will disbelieve in Islam), then keep my matter a secret.'"^[1] The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not want his people to find out about his *Da'wah* efforts in At-Taaif, for knowledge thereof would arouse their anger and their desire for retribution. The Prophet ﷺ wanted to keep his *Da'wah* efforts a secret from the Quraish, and he ﷺ, as in other instances, was very cautious and careful about his movements and actions. In regard to his trip to At-Taaif, the Prophet ﷺ did the following:

- ◆ He ﷺ left Makkah on foot, so that no one who might see him would think that he intended to leave Makkah. Had the Prophet ﷺ left on horseback, he would have provoked his people's suspicion and interest; and the leaders of the Quraish would probably have attempted to stop him from leaving.
- ◆ For more than one reason, the Prophet ﷺ chose Zaid ؓ to accompany him on his journey. First, Zaid ؓ was the adopted son of the Prophet ﷺ, so if anyone saw the Prophet ﷺ and Zaid ؓ together on one of the roads that left Makkah, that person's suspicion would not be aroused. Second, the Prophet ﷺ knew that he ﷺ could trust Zaid ؓ, whom he knew for his sincerity, trustworthiness, and truthfulness. The Prophet ﷺ therefore knew that Zaid ؓ would not spread the secret of their intended destination. Finally, the Prophet ﷺ knew that he could rely on Zaid ؓ as a travel companion. And Zaid ؓ proved to be a most helpful and caring travel companion, for when the people of At-Taaif were pelting the Prophet ﷺ with stones, Zaid ؓ acted as a shield, getting hit himself in order to protect the Prophet ﷺ. As a result of his selfless and valiant effort to protect the Prophet ﷺ, Zaid ؓ suffered a fracture.

^[1] *Seerah Ibn Hishaam* (2/72).

- ◆ When the leaders of At-Taaif answered the Prophet's *Da'wah* with derision and disbelief, the Prophet ﷺ did not become angry or answer in like manner; instead, he ﷺ asked them to keep his visit a secret. This was an important precautionary step on his part, for if the Quraish came to know about his visit, they wouldn't stop short at deriding him and disbelieving in him; they would also increase the intensity with which they persecuted him ﷺ.

A heartfelt Supplication

The children of 'Aamir were a treacherous people; instead of keeping their meeting with the Prophet ﷺ a secret, they let loose their foolish ones and their slaves, who went after the Prophet ﷺ, cursing him and pelting him with stones. As a result, the Prophet's heels bled, his shoes became bloodstained, and his pure blood poured down onto the ground of At-Taaif. The crowd continued to pursue their victims until they forced the Prophet ﷺ and Zaid ؓ to seek refuge in a nearby garden that belonged to 'Utbah and Shaibah, the two sons of Rabee'ah – both of whom were at the time present inside of their garden. It was only then that the crowd returned to At-Taaif.

The Prophet ﷺ and Zaid ؓ rested under the shade of a tree; meanwhile, the two sons of Rabee'ah, who were hidden from the view of the Prophet ﷺ and Zaid ؓ, watched them from a distance and saw what the people of At-Taaif had done to them.

During this moment of sadness and pain, the Prophet ﷺ made the following supplication to his Lord, a supplication that is full of faith, contentment, and a strong desire to please Allah ﷻ:

"O Allah, to You do I complain of the weakening of my strength, of my few options, of the way people humiliate me, O Most-Merciful of the merciful ones. You are the Lord of the weak ones, and You are my Lord. To whom will You entrust me? To a distant (stranger) who will show me an unwelcoming face, or to an enemy, whom You have given control over my situation? If You are not angry with me, then I do not mind, though safety from

You is easier for me. I seek refuge with the Light of Your Face, which brings light to darkness, and upon which the affairs of the world and the Hereafter become right – from Your anger descending upon me, or Your displeasure befalling me. I will continue to seek Your Pleasure, until You become pleased (with Me). And there is neither might nor power except with You.”^[1]

Through this supplication, we can get a sense of the depth of the Prophet’s faith. His sole desire was to please Allah ﷻ. He ﷺ did not become sad because he ﷺ wanted to protect himself from harm or because he ﷺ wanted peace and comfort; to the contrary, he ﷺ found pleasurable any inconvenience or hardship he ﷺ was subjected to for the sake of Allah ﷻ. At the same time, he ﷺ feared that he might have been negligent in some way when it came to spreading Islam, and that Allah ﷻ might be displeased with him. The Prophet’s chief aim, therefore, was to please Allah ﷻ. So if he ﷺ had to endure hardships in order to achieve Allah’s Pleasure and be saved from Allah’s anger, then he ﷺ welcomed hardships, for in that case, hardships became a form of blessing from Allah ﷻ.

The Prophet ﷺ ended his supplication by saying a wonderfully profound phrase that he ﷺ taught his Companions ﷺ to say: “There is neither might nor power except with Allah ﷻ.” In that phrase, the word *Hawl* is loosely translated as meaning ‘might’; what it specifically means, however, is a change from one state to another. Therefore, nothing changes from one state to another in the universe except by the permission of Allah ﷻ. Among the meanings of this phrase is that a believer does not change from a condition of distress to one of comfort, or from a condition of fear

^[1] In *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah As-Saheehah* (1/186), Dr. Al-‘Umaree expressed the view that this *Hadeeth* is weak; however, Ibraaheem Al-‘Alee maintains that it is authentic, explaining that there is another *Hadeeth* that testifies to it and hence strengthens it. He mentioned it in his book, *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* (pg. 136). Dr. ‘Abdur-Rahmaan ‘Abdul-Hameed Al-Birr, professor of *Hadeeth* and its sciences in Azhar University, is of the view that, through its various chains, the *Hadeeth* is strong and acceptable. He discussed its chains in his book, *Al-Hijrah An-Nabawiyah Al-Mubaarakah*, pg. 38.

to one of safety, except by the will and permission of Allah ﷻ; furthermore, the believer has no strength to face hardships and endure difficulties, unless Allah ﷻ helps him.

Supplication is one of the greatest forms of worship. A Muslim often faces circumstances that are difficult to bear, or problems that he does not know how to solve. The only option he has to get out of his difficulties is to turn to Allah ﷻ and supplicate to Him. After the Prophet ﷺ was treated harshly and despicably by the people of At-Taaif, he ﷺ turned to Allah ﷻ and made the above-mentioned supplication. No sooner did he ﷺ finish invoking Allah ﷻ than Allah ﷻ answered his supplication by sending to him Jibreel ﷺ and the Angel of the Mountains.

The Prophet's Mercy and Compassion

Even in harsh circumstances, the Prophet ﷺ displayed compassion and mercy. When a person is treated in a brutal and despicable manner, he becomes hardened by that treatment, and as a result becomes cynical; not so regarding the Prophet ﷺ, for it was his mercy and not his anger that he ﷺ displayed in such circumstances.

'Aishah ؓ, the Mother of the Believers, related that she once asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, "Has a day come upon you that was harder than (the day of) Uhud (i.e., the Battle of Uhud)?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "I had to face what I faced from your people, and the worst treatment I received from them took place on the day of Al-'Aqabah, when I presented myself to Ibn 'Abd Yaa-Lail ibn 'Abd Kulaal (from Thaqeef, from the people of At-Taaif). He did not accept what I invited him to, and so I left in the direction that faced me in a distressed state. I did not come back to myself (i.e., I did not realize where I was or where I was going, so sad was I) until I was at Qarn Ath-Tha'aalib (it is a place that is today called As-Sail Al-Kabeer; it is the Meeqaat – place to stop and enter into the inviolable state of being a pilgrim – for the people of An-Najd). I then raised my head, only to see that a cloud was giving me shade. I looked and saw in it (i.e., in that cloud) Jibreel, who then

called me and said, 'Allah has indeed heard what your people said to you, and what they responded to you (when you invited them to Islam). Allah has indeed sent to you the Angel of the Mountains (i.e., the Angel whom Allah appointed over the mountains) so that you can order him to do whatever you want to them (i.e., if you want, the Angel of the Mountains will crush them with mountains).' The Angel of the Mountains then called me and extended greetings of peace to me. He then said, 'O Muhammad,' after which he said, 'It is as you please. If you want me to make Al-Akhshabain (two mountains in Makkah) fall upon them (i.e., upon the people of Makkah) (then that is what I will do).'" The Prophet ﷺ said to him, "I instead hope that Allah will bring out from their progeny those who will worship Allah alone, without associating anything (i.e., any partner) with Him."^[1]

What the Prophet ﷺ was afflicted with on the Day of Uhud was perhaps physically harder upon him; but in his mind and heart, the Day of At-Taaif was more severe and more intense. So immersed was the Prophet ﷺ in distress that he ﷺ walked from At-Taaif to Qarn Ath-Tha'aalib, completely oblivious to all that was around him.

Bringing About Change in a People

The Angel of the Mountains suggested crushing the people of Makkah with two mountains, a form of destruction that was applied on previous disbelieving nations, such as the people of Nooh, 'Ad, Thamood, and Loot. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿فَكُلًّا أَخَذْنَا بِذُنُوبِهِ فَمِنْهُمْ مَن أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِ حَاصِبًا وَمِنْهُمْ مَن أَخَذَتْهُ
الْصَّيْحَةُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَن خَسَفْنَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَن أَغْرَقْنَا وَمَا
كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَكِن كَانُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾﴾

"So We punished each (of them) for his sins, of them were some on whom We sent Hasiban (a violent wind with shower of stones)

^[1] Related by Bukhaaree, the Book of the Beginning of Creation, chapter, "When One of You Says: 'Aamee'"; *Hadeeth* number: 3231.

[as the people of Loot (Lot)], and of them were some who were overtaken by As-Saihah [torment – awful cry, etc. (as Thamood or Shu'aib's people)], and of them were some whom We caused the earth to swallow [as Qar'un (Korah)], and of them were some whom We drowned [as the people of Nooh (Noah), or Fir'aun (Pharaoh) and his people]. It was not Allah Who wronged them, but they wronged themselves.' (Qur'an 29: 40)

Another suggestion was offered as well: That the Prophet ﷺ continue on his *Hijrah* (migration), steering a course far away from the people of Makkah and At-Taaif; the former forced him to leave, and the latter forsook him. It was Zaid ibn Haarithah ؓ who made this second suggestion. Ibn Al-Qayyim said, "When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ found no helper in At-Taaif, he ﷺ returned to Makkah, feeling sad; and with him was his freed slave, Zaid ibn Haarithah ؓ. The Prophet ﷺ then invoked Allah ﷻ with a supplication that is famously known (it is mentioned in a previous section), after which his Lord ﷻ sent to him the Angel of the Mountains, who asked the Prophet ﷺ to command him to crush the people of Makkah with Al-Akhshabain – two mountains between which lies Makkah. The Prophet ﷺ said, 'No, rather I will proceed slowly (and patiently and deliberately) with them. Perhaps Allah will bring out from their progeny those who will worship Him, without associating any partner with Him.' (Without entering Makkah immediately) the Prophet ﷺ sojourned at Nakhlah for a number of days. Zaid ibn Haarithah ؓ said to him, 'How can you enter upon them when they (i.e., the Quraish) have forced you to leave. And you went out seeking help, but you were not helped (i.e., by the people of At-Taaif).' The Prophet ﷺ said, 'O Zaid, indeed Allah will provide relief and a way out from (the situation) you see (right now). And indeed, Allah will support and help His religion, and will grant victory to His Prophet.'"^[1]

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ refused both to have his people

^[1] *Zaad Al-Ma'ad* (2/46).

destroyed and to continue on his migration in search of another land. His vision of the future was guided by the light of *Eemaan* (faith). In spite of the apparent dangers that surrounded him, the Prophet ﷺ chose to reenter Makkah and continue his mission there. Even if his people were going to disbelieve in him, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ hoped that their progeny would take a different course, that they would worship Allah ﷻ alone. And so the Prophet ﷺ had clearly set his eyes on the future, which, however, in no way meant that he ﷺ was forgetting about or neglecting the present.

The Prophet ﷺ decided to enter Makkah, even though the prevailing circumstances indicated that reentry into his homeland was going to be neither easy nor safe. To be sure, news of what took place in At-Taaif reached Makkah's leaders. Knowledge of the Prophet's *Da'wah* activities in At-Taaif was going to have two potentially dangerous effects on the already volatile situation in Makkah. First, Quraish's leaders were surely going to be furious and frustrated, for the Prophet ﷺ was now looking for a safe haven outside of Makkah. If he ﷺ were to find one, they surely felt, he ﷺ would potentially gather forces to attack them. Fear of that eventuality was certainly going to cause panic among Quraish's leadership, panic that would incite them to assassinate the Prophet ﷺ. Second, the Quraish probably saw the events of At-Taaif as a great defeat of the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims, which would possibly have the effect of making them even more brazen in their persecution of the Muslims.

In *Zaad Al-Ma'aad*, Ibn Al-Qayyim wrote, "After the people of At-Taaif refused to believe in and help the Prophet ﷺ, and after he left At-Taaif, the Prophet ﷺ went to Hira. From there, he ﷺ sent for Al-Akhnas ibn Shareeq, asking that he grant him protection. Al-Akhnas replied, 'I am an ally (of the Quraish, and not one of its core members), and an ally cannot grant protection.' The Prophet ﷺ then sent for Suhail ibn 'Amr (with the same request). Suhail answered, 'Verily, the children of 'Aamir (of which he was a member) cannot grant protection over the children of Ka'ab.'

Next, the Prophet ﷺ sent for Mut'im ibn 'Adee, chief of the Banu Naufal ibn 'Abd Manaaf tribe (i.e., subtribe); to Mut'im, the Prophet ﷺ sent a messenger, a man from the Khuzaa'ah, with the message, 'Shall I enter into your protection?' Mut'im replied, 'Yes,' after which he summoned his children and his people. He said to them, 'Attire yourselves in armour and station yourselves around the corners of the House (i.e., the Ka'bah), for indeed, I have granted my protection to Muhammad.' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ and Zaid ibn Haarithah entered (Makkah), heading straight for the Inviolable *Masjid*. (There in front of the Ka'bah) Mut'im ibn 'Adee sat up straight on his mount and called out, 'O people of Quraish, I have indeed granted my protection to Muhammad, so let no one among you make a move to harm him.' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ went to *Ar-Rukn* (one of the corners of the Ka'bah) and embraced it. He ﷺ prayed two units of prayer, and then he returned to his home. Throughout (those tense minutes or hours), Mut'im ibn 'Adee and his children surrounded him, with their weapons (in hand), until he ﷺ entered his house."^[1]

Al-Akhnas and Suhail's answers to the Prophet's request were dubious at best. For had they not been able to provide protection to the Prophet ﷺ, he ﷺ would not have asked them to do so; after all, the Prophet ﷺ was fully aware of the customs and norms of his people. Az-Zarqaanee pointed out^[2] that Suhail's excuse is particularly suspect, for his grandfather, 'Aamir, was the brother of Ka'ab, and their father was Luai; therefore, they were both of equal status, making it possible and acceptable for each to grant protection over the refusal of the other.

The Prophet's method of entering Makkah changed what could otherwise have been an unmitigated disaster. Rather than immediately enter Makkah and risk death, the Prophet ﷺ procured the protection of a tribal chieftain and entered Makkah under the protection of armed men; meanwhile,

^[1] *Zaad Al-Ma'ad* (2/47).

^[2] *Muha*.

Quraish's leaders watched without being able to do anything about the situation.

Just as he helped bring an end to the hitherto discussed embargo and siege, Mut'im, a non-Muslim, helped the Prophet ﷺ enter Makkah. Yet some historians suggest that his motives were not altogether altruistic.

How so? The Prophet ﷺ chose a man from the Khuzaa'ah tribe to be his messenger to Mut'im. This was a subtle and profoundly wise strategy that the Prophet ﷺ employed, for there was a long and intense history between Mut'im's tribe, the Prophet's grandfather, and the Khuzaa'ah tribe. Mut'im was the leader of the Banu Naufal clan, which was previously headed by a man named Naufal. Naufal was an enemy of 'Abdul-Muttalib, grandfather of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Their enmity began when Naufal usurped some land that belonged to 'Abdul-Muttalib. Of course, Naufal's actions did not sit well with 'Abdul-Muttalib, and so the latter tried to arouse his clan against Naufal, but no one showed any real interest to help him. 'Abdul-Muttalib then wrote to his uncles (in Al-Madeenah) from the Khazraj; his letter consisted of a poem, in which he explained his situation and his need of their help. They responded to his plea for help; a large group of them traveled to Makkah and went to the courtyard of the Ka'bah, taking their weapons along with them. When Naufal saw them, he said, "It must be for some evil purpose that these (people) have come." They spoke to him about the situation and he became afraid, so afraid, in fact, that he forthwith returned to 'Abdul-Muttalib his land.

When the children of Khazraj came to the help of 'Abdul-Muttalib, the people of the Khuzaa'ah, who had become strong and powerful, said among themselves, "By Allah, we have never seen anyone in this valley who has a handsomer face, more complete manners, and a greater degree of forbearance than this person (i.e., 'Abdul-Muttalib). His uncles from the Khazraj have indeed helped him, and we too have given birth to him (a figure of speech, meaning: we too are related to him, for he is descended

from our forbears), just as they gave birth to him. His grandfather, 'Abd-Manaaf, was indeed chief of the Khuzaa'ah. If we show obedience to him, he will help us and form an alliance with us. We would consequently benefit from him and his people, and he would benefit from us." And so the leaders of the Khuzaa'ah went to 'Abdul-Muttalib and said, "O Abul-Haarith (i.e., 'Abdul-Muttalib), we have indeed given birth to you, just as people from Banu An-Najjaar (i.e., the Khazraj) have given birth to you (i.e., our forbears are your forbears, just as the forbears of Banu An-Najjaar are your forbears); furthermore, we are (your) neighbours. The passing of days has destroyed what malice there once was in the hearts of some of us against the Quraish. So come and we will ally ourselves to you." Their offer greatly pleased 'Abdul-Muttalib, who hastened to accept it; it was not, however, an alliance that included all of Quraish's sub-tribes; refraining from joining the alliance were the clans of Banu Naufal and 'Abd-Shams.

This story points to a historically deep-rooted enmity between the Khuzaa'ah and the Quraish. Generations earlier, the Khuzaa'ah had ruled Makkah; but then Qusai ibn Kilaab gathered members of the Quraish from various locations. Thus having brought unity to the Quraish, Qusai led his people in a war against the Khuzaa'ah, a war that ended in favour of the Quraish. The people of the Khuzaa'ah were expelled from Makkah, and Qusai partitioned Makkah into four districts, one district for each subtribe of the Quraish. Ever since that time, the Khuzaa'ah harboured deep hatred towards the Quraish. So when relations became strained between the Quraish and 'Abdul-Muttalib, the Khuzaa'ah formed an alliance with 'Abdul-Muttalib in order to punish and weaken the Quraish. What their delegates had said was a lie; the passing of days had not destroyed their malice and contempt for the Quraish, but rather preserved, if not intensified, it. That the Banu Naufal and 'Abd-Shams clans did not join in the alliance proves that it was not in their favour.

Now, for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to have sent a man from the

Khuzaa'ah to the leader of the Banu Naufal clan must have rekindled memories in Mut'im's mind about the above-mentioned historical events. Mut'im must have been reminded, by the arrival of the Khuzaa'ee messenger, of the alliance that was previously formed between 'Abdul-Muttalib and the Khuzaa'ah, an alliance that was opposed to his clan.

And so we can see what a brilliant move it was on the Prophet's part to send a man from the Khuzaa'ah. The Prophet ﷺ was sending a message that he ﷺ was not alone, that he could possibly do what his grandfather, 'Abdul-Muttalib, had done, in terms of forming an alliance with the Khuzaa'ah or seeking help from the Khazraj. Therefore, Mut'im decided to protect the Messenger of Allah ﷺ not just out of kindness, but also in order to protect his tribe. And the Quraish remained silent when the Prophet ﷺ entered Makkah not just because they were afraid of the Banu Naufal, but also because they were afraid of the Khuzaa'ah and Khazraj tribes.

We must not, however, forget that Mut'im was among those who brought an end to the oppressive embargo. And though, after the fact, we might search out for ulterior motives in Mut'im's actions, the Prophet ﷺ did not do so, but instead characteristically remembered his kind services. The Prophet ﷺ knew the danger to which Mut'im exposed himself and his children, all for the sake of protecting him. And that is why, on the Day of Badr, the Prophet ﷺ said the following words about the seventy prisoners that the Muslims captured: "Had Al-Mut'im ibn 'Adee been alive and spoken to me (i.e., interceded to me) concerning these foul ones, I would have left them for him (i.e., without taking ransom money for their release)."^[1]

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ clearly distinguished between those non-Muslims who showed enmity to Islam and who fought against it, and those non-Muslims who supported Islam and were at peace with it. After all, it is not befitting for a Muslim, never

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree* (4023).

mind a Prophet, to forget and deny the kind actions of others. The poet of the Prophet ﷺ, Hassaan ibn Thaabit ؓ, composed verses in which he praised Mut'im. The fact that the Prophet ﷺ did not reproach Hassaan ؓ for doing so coupled with the fact that the Prophet ﷺ himself praised Mut'im in the above-mentioned *Hadeeth*, clearly proves that, in Islam, the kind actions of people should be recognized and praised, even if those people are non-Muslims.

In regard to how the Prophet ﷺ procured the protection of Mut'im, we see how the Prophet ﷺ used the customs and norms of his society for the benefit of Islam. The Prophet ﷺ looked at individual disbelievers not as simpletons who all had the same motives, but as complex beings whose interconnectedness with other people made them have various, and sometimes conflicting, motives. Based on that understanding, the Prophet ﷺ was able to enter Makkah and continue spreading the message of Islam.

The Story of 'Addaas, the Christian, and of the Jinns who Embraced Islam

The Prophet's journey to At-Taaif reaped some blessed fruits, for the Prophet's message reached a young Christian youth named 'Addaas ؓ, who embraced Islam; and it also reached seven jinns, who embraced Islam and then returned to their fellow jinns in order to invite them to Islam.

The Story of 'Addaas ؓ

After the Prophet ﷺ invited the people of At-Taaif to Islam, they chased him out of their city and forced him to seek shelter in a garden that belonged to 'Utbah ibn Rabee'ah and Shaibah ibn Rabee'ah, two of Makkah's nobles. At the time, both 'Utbah and Shaibah were present in their garden, and though they were situated in a position from which they could see the Prophet ﷺ, the Prophet ﷺ did not see them (at least that is what is apparent from the narration). Upon seeing the Prophet's condition, 'Utbah and Shaibah's hearts softened towards him; they called for

'Addaas, a Christian slave of theirs, and said to him, "Take a bunch of these dates and put them in this tray; then go with the tray to that man and tell him to eat from it." 'Addaas did as he was told, and when he reached the Prophet ﷺ, he said, "Eat." When the Prophet ﷺ placed his hand in the tray, he ﷺ said, "In the Name of Allah," after which he ate. 'Addaas fixed his gaze directly on the Prophet's face and said, "By Allah, the people of these lands do not speak as you have just spoken." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "And from what country are you, O 'Addaas? And what is your religion?" 'Addaas said, "I am a Christian, and I am a man from the people of Neenawaa."

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "From the town of the righteous man, Yunus ibn Mattah?" 'Addaas said, "And what makes you know about Yunus ibn Mattah?" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "He is my brother. He was a Prophet, and I am a Prophet." 'Addaas ﷺ moved closer to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and began to kiss his head, his hands, and his feet." Meanwhile, though they could not hear the conversation that was taking place, 'Utbah and Shaibah clearly saw 'Addaas honouring the Prophet ﷺ by kissing his head, hands, and feet. One of the two brothers said to the other, "As for your servant, he (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ) has corrupted him against you."

When 'Addaas ﷺ returned to 'Utbah and Shaibah, they said, "Woe upon you, O 'Addaas! Why did kiss that man's head, hands, and feet." 'Addaas ﷺ said, "O my masters, there is nothing on earth that is better than he is; he has indeed informed me about a matter that none know about except for a Prophet." They said to him, "Woe upon you, O 'Addaas! Do not let him make you turn away from your religion, for indeed, your religion is better than his religion."^[1]

One is blessed even when one practices the most basic and easy of Islam's teachings. Just by mentioning Allah's Name before eating, the Prophet ﷺ attracted 'Addaas to Islam. 'Addaas ﷺ was in fact

^[1] *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* (pgs. 136, 137).

greatly moved by the Prophet's words, for he never before heard anyone in Arabia mention Allah's Name before eating. When one mentions Allah's Name before eating, or when one performs any Islamic practice, he distinguishes himself from those polytheists that are in his presence. Some polytheists will look at him, and one, or a few or more, of them might ask about that practice. Once a polytheist's attention has been piqued, a fruitful dialogue can take place, in the course of which the Muslim can present to him the teachings of Islam. Therefore, as Muslims, we should never hesitate to establish Islamic practices under any circumstances, but particularly when we are in the company of non-Muslims.

'Addaas's faith in the Prophethood of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was strong. Years later, when Shaibah and 'Utbah were preparing to go out to fight the Muslims in what was to become known as the Battle of Badr, they ordered 'Addaas to accompany them. 'Addaas said to them, "It is that man whom I saw in your garden that you want to fight? By Allah, the mountains would not rise up against him." They said, "Woe upon you, O 'Addaas. He has indeed bewitched you with his tongue."^[1]

'Addaas earlier said to his two masters, "There is nothing on earth that is better than he is," a statement that was a great consolation for the Prophet ﷺ. Even if the Prophet's own people harmed him, a stranger from Iraq – more particularly, from Neenawaa – believed in him and honoured him. Allah decreed for a man from a distant land to come to Arabia and believe in Allah and His Messenger, while the closest of people to the Messenger disbelieved in him.

Jinns of Nusaibeen

When the Prophet ﷺ was returning from At-Taaif, having had lost hope of finding any goodness in the people of Thaqeef, he stopped at An-Nakhlah. There, he stood in the darkness of the night to pray. As he was praying, a group of jinns passed by,

^[1] Refer to *Subul-Al-Huda War-Rashaad* (2/578).

jinns that Allah ﷻ mentioned in the Noble Qur'an. They were a total of seven jinns, and they were from the inhabitants of Nusaibeen. They listened closely to the recitation of the Messenger ﷺ, and they continued to do so until he ﷺ completely his prayer. They then returned to their people, warning them about the Hereafter. Those seven jinns believed in and answered the call of what they heard being recited. And Allah ﷻ told their story to the Prophet ﷺ, saying:

﴿وَإِذْ صَرَفْنَا إِلَيْكَ نَفَرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقُرْآنَ فَلَمَّا حَضَرُوهُ قَالُوا أَنصِتُوا فَلَمَّا قُضِيَ وَلَّوْا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِمْ مُّنْذِرِينَ ۖ﴾ (٢٩) قَالُوا يَنْقُومَنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا كِتَابًا أُنْزِلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَىٰ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْحَقِّ وَإِلَى طَرِيقٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٣٠﴾

"And (remember) when We sent towards you (Muhammad ﷺ) Nafran (three to ten persons) of the jinns (quietly) listening to the Qur'an, when they stood in the presence thereof, they said: "Listen in silence!" And when it was finished, they returned to their people, as warners. They said: "O our people! Verily! We have heard a Book (this Qur'an) sent down after Moosa (Moses), confirming what came before it, it guides to the truth and to a Straight Path (i.e., Islam)." (Qur'an 46: 29, 30)

Those jinns descended upon the Prophet ﷺ while he ﷺ was reciting the Qur'an. Upon hearing him, they said to one another, "Listen in silence!" The Prophet's message, which was rejected by the people of At-Taaif, was then passed on to the dwellers of another world, the world of the jinns. They learned about Islam from the Prophet ﷺ, and then returned to their fellow jinns as preachers (Du'aat), just as Abu Dharr Al-Ghaffaaree ؓ, At-Tufail ibn 'Amr ؓ, and Dimaad Al-Azdee ؓ returned to their respective peoples as preachers (Du'aat). Allah ﷻ related what the Muslim jinns said to their fellow jinns:

﴿يَنْقُومَنَا أَجِيبُوا دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ وَآمِنُوا بِهِ، يَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ مِّنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُجِرَكُمْ مِّنْ عَذَابِ أَلِيمٍ﴾ (٣١)

“O our people! Respond (with obedience) to Allah’s Caller (i.e., Allah’s Messenger Muhammad ﷺ), and believe in him (i.e., believe in that which Muhammad ﷺ has brought from Allah and follow him). He (Allah) will forgive you of your sins, and will save you from a painful torment (i.e., Hellfire).” (Qur’an 46: 31)

Concerning the said jinns, Verses of the Qur’an were revealed that will continue to be recited until the Day of Resurrection:

﴿قُلْ أَوْحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّهُ اسْتَمَعَ نَفَرٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَقَالُوا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا قُرْآنًا عَجَبًا ۝١
يَهْدِي إِلَى الرُّشْدِ فَآمَنَّا بِهِ وَلَنْ نُشْرِكَ بِرَبِّنَا أَحَدًا ۝٢ وَأَنَّهُ تَعَلَّىٰ جَدُّ رَبِّنَا مَا اتَّخَذَ
صَنِيعَةً وَلَا وَلَدًا ۝٣ وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ يَقُولُ سَفِيهُنَا عَلَى اللَّهِ شَطَطًا ۝٤ وَأَنَّا ظَنَنَّا أَن لَّنْ
نَقُولَ الْإِنسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا ۝٥ وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ رِجَالٌ مِّنَ الْإِنسِ يَعُوذُونَ بِرِجَالٍ مِّنَ
الْجِنِّ فَزَادُوهُمْ رَهَقًا ۝٦ وَأَنَّهُمْ ظَنُّوا كَمَا ظَنَنْتُمْ أَن لَّنْ يَبْعَثَ اللَّهُ أَحَدًا ۝٧ وَأَنَّا لَمَسْنَا
السَّمَاءَ فَوَجَدْنَاهَا مُلْتَأَمَةٌ فَكُنَّا أَكْثَرُ شَكًّا ۝٨ وَأَنَّا كُنَّا نَقْعُدُ مِنْهَا مَقْعِدًا
لِّلشَّمْعِ فَمَن يَسْتَمِعِ الْآنَ يَجِدْ لَهُ شِهَابًا رَّصَدًا ۝٩ وَأَنَّا لَا نَدْرِي أَشَرُّ أُرِيدَ يَمَنَ فِي
الْأَرْضِ أَمْ أَرَادَ بِهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ رَشَدًا ۝١٠ وَأَنَّا مِنَّا الصَّالِحُونَ وَمِنَّا دُونَ ذَلِكَ كُنَّا طَرَائِقَ
قَدَدًا ۝١١ وَأَنَّا ظَنَنَّا أَن لَّنْ نُّعْجِزَ اللَّهَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَن نُّعْجِزَهُ هَرَبًا ۝١٢ وَأَنَّا لَمَّا
سَمِعْنَا الْهُدَىٰ ءَامَنَّا بِهِ فَمَن يُؤْمِنُ بِرَبِّهِ فَلَا يَخَافُ بَخْسًا وَلَا رَهَقًا ۝١٣﴾

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “It has been revealed to me that a group (from three to ten in number) of jinns listened (to this Qur’an). They said: “Verily! We have heard a wonderful Recital (this Qur’an)! It guides to the Right Path, and we have believed therein, and we shall never join (in worship) anything with our Lord (Allah). And exalted be the Majesty of our Lord, He has taken neither a wife, nor a son (or offspring or children). And that the foolish among us [i.e., Iblis (Satan) or the polytheists amongst the jinns] used to utter against Allah that which was wrong and not right. And verily, we thought that men and jinns would not utter a lie against Allah. And verily, there were men among mankind who took shelter with the masculine among the jinns,

but they (jinns) increased them (mankind) in sin and disbelief. And they thought as you thought, that Allah will not send any Messenger (to mankind or jinns). And we have sought to reach the heaven; but found it filled with stern guards and flaming fires. And verily, we used to sit there in stations, to (steal) a hearing, but any who listens now will find a flaming fire watching him in ambush. And we know not whether evil is intended for those on earth, or whether their Lord intends for them a Right Path. There are among us some that are righteous, and some the contrary; we are groups each having a different way (religious sect, etc.). And we think that we cannot escape (from the punishment of) Allah in the earth, nor can we escape (from the punishment) by flight. And indeed when we heard the Guidance (this Qur'an), we believed therein (Islamic Monotheism), and whosoever believes in his Lord shall have no fear, either of a decrease in the reward of his good deeds or an increase in punishment for his sins." (Qur'an 72: 1-13)

Here was the Prophet ﷺ, in the world of mankind, not able to enter Makkah; and within Makkah, Muslims were constantly being tortured. But then a new victory was granted to the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims in another world. For imagine the effect the story of the Muslim jinns had on the Prophet's Companions ﷺ; they felt that they were not alone, but instead that beings from another world were engaged in the same struggle that they were involved with in their world – the struggle between *Tawheed* (Islamic Monotheism) and *Shirk* (polytheism, to associate partners with Allah in worship).

Months after the first meeting took place between the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the jinns, a second delegation of jinns, longing to see the Prophet ﷺ, returned and listened to the speech of their Lord. 'Alqamah (may Allah have mercy on him) related that he once asked Ibn Mas'ood ؓ, "Did anyone among you witness, with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the night of the jinn (i.e., the night during which the jinn first came to listen to the Qur'an being recited by the Prophet ﷺ)?"

'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood ؓ said, "No, but we were with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ one night, when we lost him, and then began to search out for him both in valleys and mountain-passes. We said (among ourselves), 'He has been flown away (by jinns), or he has been assassinated.' We spent the worst night that any people have ever spent. In the morning, he came to us from the direction of Hira. We said, 'O Messenger of Allah, we lost you, searched out for you, but could not find you. And we spent the worst night that any people have ever spent.' He ﷺ said, 'A host from the jinns came to me, and I went with him (to his fellow jinns). And I recited for them the Qur'an.' He then took us with him and showed us their traces and the vestiges of their fires. They had asked him for provision (sustenance), and he ﷺ had said to them, 'For you is every bone that falls in your hands and over which Allah's Name has been mentioned; it will be as plentiful as the most plentiful of meat; and every dung from the feed of your animals.' And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said (to us), 'So do not clean yourselves with those two objects (after relieving yourselves), for both of them (bones and the dung of livestock) are the food of your brothers.'"^[1]

The above-mentioned story represented a great victory for Islam in the world of jinns, a victory that was a harbinger for good things to come in the world of human beings. For after a short while passed, the Prophet ﷺ met with delegates from Al-Madeenah who expressed readiness to make their city a stronghold of Islam.

Commenting on the meeting that took place between the Prophet ﷺ and some jinns, Dr. Al-Bootee wrote, "What concerns us from all of this is that every Muslim must believe in the existence of jinns – that they are living beings whom Allah ﷻ ordered to worship Him, just as He ﷻ ordered us to do the same. We must believe in them, even though we cannot see them; Allah ﷻ made them in such a way that makes it impossible for us to see them

^[1] Related by Muslim, in the Book of Prayer, chapter, "Reciting out Loud in the Morning, and Reciting (the Qur'an) to jinns"; *Hadeeth* number: 450.

with the ability of sight that He ﷻ has endowed us with. It is a known fact that our eyes can see only certain types of things in the world. The existence of jinns is established in narrations that are related in *Mutaawaatir* form (a *Mutawaatir* narration is one that is related by so many people from so many people in each chain of the narration, that it is impossible for them to all have colluded upon a lie); information about jinns has been related to us in both the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. The existence of jinns, therefore, is a matter that every Muslim must know about; to disbelieve in their existence is, by extension, to disbelieve in news that has come to us in *Mutawaatir* form from Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ. An intelligent person should not fall into the mistake that is the commonest sign of the ignorant person, and that is to claim that he believes only in that which is verifiable through the senses. He goes on to boast that he does not believe in the existence of jinns because he has neither seen them nor sensed them. Such an ignorant person will go on to disbelieve in many things for one reason only: he cannot see them. An established rule in knowledge is: 'Just because I don't sense something does not mean that it does not exist.' So if you are looking for something and don't find it, that does necessitate either that thing's existence or non-existence."^[1]

Now that we have discussed matters that relate to the world of jinns and human beings, it behooves us to discuss another world – the world of the heavens and of the angels, to which the Prophet ﷺ made his miraculous night journey, a journey that is one of a kind in the annals of history, and that will remain one of a kind until the Day of Resurrection.

^[1] Refer to *Fiqh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah*, pgs. 105, 106.

***Al-Israa Wal-Mai'raaj* (The Prophet's
Miraculous Night Journey First To
Jerusalem And Then To The Heavens)
The Greatest Bestowal Of Honours**

As long as he was alive, Abu Taalib prevented the Quraish from harming the Prophet ﷺ. True, Abu Taalib was merely one man and one man can only do so much, but in a tribal society like that of the Quraish, individual chieftains were highly respected. And given that Abu Taalib was a respected chieftain, the Quraish did not want to lose him or go against him, and so the Prophet ﷺ was relatively safe from their harm. But as soon as Abu Taalib died, his protection went with him, and the Quraish began to persecute the Prophet ﷺ with impunity – even common members of the Quraish joined in their leaders' onslaught against the Prophet ﷺ.

As for the Prophet's wife, Khadeejah ؓ, everything she said and did consoled and comforted the Prophet ﷺ throughout all of his difficulties. When she died only a few months after the death of Abu Taalib, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ lost her comforting presence.

Then when the Quraish became more vile and harsh in their persecution, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went to At-Taaif, hoping for help and support from its people, but receiving instead a hostile and harsh welcome from them and their leaders. Not only did they reject the Prophet's message, they also sent a messenger

to Quraish's leaders, informing them about the Prophet's *Da'wah* efforts in At-Taaif. As a result, the only way the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was able to enter Makkah was under the protection of a disbelieving man. Based on all of these sad events, the year in which they occurred became known as the Year of Grief. But then relief came to the Prophet ﷺ in the most unexpected of forms – a miraculous night journey to Jerusalem and to the heavens.

There were many purposes behind that night journey. First, Allah ﷻ wanted to give the Prophet ﷺ a chance to see some manifestations of His Almighty Power, so that the Prophet's heart could become filled with trust in Him ﷻ, and so that the Prophet ﷺ could increase in strength, strength that he ﷺ would need to continue in his struggle against the polytheists of Makkah and beyond. For the same purpose, Moosa ﷺ too was made to see some of Allah's Greater Signs. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قَالَ أَلْقِهَا يَمُوسَىٰ ۚ ١٩ فَالْقَنَاقِظَ إِذَا هِيَ حَيَّةٌ تَسْعَى ۚ ٢٠ قَالَ خُذْهَا وَلَا تَخَفْ ۚ سَنُعِيدُهَا سِيرَتَهَا الْأُولَىٰ ۚ ٢١ وَاضْمُمْ يَدَكَ إِلَىٰ جَنَاحِكَ تَخْرُجُ بَيَاضًا مِّنْ غَيْرِ سُوءٍ ۚ ٢٢ لِّزُنُورِكَ ۚ ٢٣﴾

“(Allah) said: “Cast it down, O Moosa (Moses)!” He cast it down, and behold! It was a snake, moving quickly. Allah said: “Grasp it, and fear not, We shall return it to its former state, – “And press your (right) hand to your (left) side, it will come forth white (and shining), without any disease as another sign. That We may show you (some) of Our Greater Signs.” (Qur'an 20: 17-22)

After Moosa's heart became immersed in the appreciation of those signs, Allah ﷻ said to him:

﴿لِّزُنُورِكَ ۚ ٢٣﴾

“That We may show you (some) of Our Greater Signs.” (Qur'an 20: 23)

In the journey of *Israa* and *Mai'raaj*, Allah ﷻ showed His

Messenger ﷺ those Greater Signs, in preparation for the Prophet's migration and for the great struggles that were to come afterwards. During *Israa* and *Mai'raaj*, the Prophet ﷺ saw much from the unseen world, such as angels, the heavens, Paradise, the Hellfire, and so on.

In the Noble Qur'an, the Prophet's night journey to Jerusalem is discussed in *Soorah Al-Israa*, while his consequent ascension to the heavens is discussed in *Soorah An-Najm*. In *Soorah Al-Israa*, Allah ﷻ mentioned the wisdom behind the Prophet's miraculous night journey:

﴿لَنُرِيَهُ مِنْ ءَايَاتِنَا إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ ۝١﴾

"In order that We might show him (Muhammad ﷺ) of Our Ayaat (proofs, evidences, lessons, signs, etc.)." (Qur'an 17: 1)

And in *Soorah An-Najm*, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿لَقَدْ رَأَى مِنْ ءَايَاتِ رَبِّهِ الْكُبْرَى ۝٥﴾

"Indeed he (Muhammad ﷺ) did see, of the Greater Signs, of his Lord (Allah)." (Qur'an 53: 18)

Speaking about the lessons and morals we can learn from the Prophet's miraculous night journey, Abul-Hasan An-Nadawee, may Allah have mercy on him, said, "*Al-Israa* (the Prophet's night journey) was not simply a one of a kind incident, during which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw the Greater Signs, and during which the Prophet ﷺ saw with his own eyes the dominions of the heavens and the earth; beyond these things, the Prophet's night journey involved many profound meanings and far-reaching wisdoms. Chapters *Al-Israa* and *An-Najm*, which were revealed with information about *Al-Israa*, announced that Muhammad ﷺ is the Prophet of both *Qiblahs* (Jerusalem and Makkah), that he is the Imam of the east and the west, that he is the inheritor of the Prophets that came before him, and the Imam of the generations that were to come after him. During the Prophet's journey, Makkah and Jerusalem were juxtaposed (showing a strong

relationship and link between the two), as were the Inviolable House (in Makkah) and *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsaa* (in Jerusalem). Also during that journey, the Prophets prayed behind him, a unique occurrence that announced the comprehensive-ness of his message, the lastingness of his leadership (and Prophethood), and the humanity of his teachings, which are right and applicable during all times and in all places.”^[1]

The Story Of *Al-Israa* And *Al-Mai'raaj*

Anas ibn Maalik ؓ reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “*Al-Buraaq* was brought to me; it is a white-coloured, tall beast – larger than a donkey and smaller than a mule. It moves its hoof with a single stride to the farthest point that it can see. I rode on it until I reached Jerusalem; once there, I tied it to the very same ring (of *Masjid Al-Aqsaa*’s door) to which the Prophets would tie (their riding animals). I then entered the *Masjid* and prayed in it two units; I then left. Next, Jibreel ؑ came to me with a vessel of alcohol and a vessel of milk. I chose the milk, and Jibreel ؑ said, “You have chosen *Al-Fitrah* (i.e., Islam, uprightness).”^[2]

In another narration, the Prophet ﷺ spoke to Maalik ibn Sa’sa’ah ؓ about his night journey, saying, “While I was in *Al-Hateem* (i.e., *Al-Hijr*, the northern side of the *Ka’bah*) – and perhaps he ؓ said, ‘*Al-Hijr*’ (the person who is in doubt here is *Qataadah*, one of the narrators of this *Hadeeth*) – lying down, one who comes (i.e., *Jibreel* ؑ) came to me and split me lengthwise – He said, ‘And I heard him say: And he split (the speaker here, ‘I,’ refers to *Qataadah*, and the one he is talking about, ‘him,’ refers to *Anas*, two narrators of the *Hadeeth*) – what is between this and this.” The narrator said, “And I said to *Jaarood*, who was beside me, “What does he mean by this.” He said, “From the lower part of his neck until his pubic hair. And I heard him say, ‘From his upper chest until his pubic hair.’”

^[1] Refer to *Al-Asaas Fis-Sunnah* (1/292).

^[2] Related by Muslim, the Book of *Eemaan*, chapter, “The Night Journey of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to the Heavens”; *Hadeeth* number: 162.

The Prophet ﷺ said, "He then removed my heart, after which a basin made of gold and filled with *Eemaan* (faith) was brought to me. My heart was washed and then filled (with *Eemaan* and wisdom). (My chest) was then put (i.e., sown) back together. A white-coloured beast was then brought to me; it was smaller than a mule but bigger than a donkey." Al-Jaarood asked Anas ؓ, "O Abu Hamzah, it is *Al-Buraaq* (that the Prophet ﷺ was referring to)?" Anas ؓ said, "Yes."

The Prophet ﷺ said, "I was made to ride it, and Jibreel set off with me, until he reached the closest heaven. He asked for it (i.e., the door to the lowest heaven) to be opened. It was said, 'Who is this?' He answered, 'Jibreel.' It was said, 'And who is with you.' Jibreel said, 'Muhammad.' It was said, 'And has he been sent for?' Jibreel said, 'Yes.' It was said, 'Welcome is he! Indeed, a blessed comer has come!' He then opened the door."

The Prophet ﷺ said, "When I reached (inside), in it (i.e., the lowest heaven) was Adam. He (i.e., Jibreel ؑ) said, 'This is your father, Adam, so extend greetings of peace to him.' I extended greetings of peace to him, and he returned the greetings, after which he said, 'Welcome to a virtuous son and a righteous Prophet.' Then Jibreel ascended with me until he reached the second heaven. He asked for it (i.e., for its door) to be opened, and it was said, 'Who is this?' He said, 'Jibreel.' 'And who is with you?' it was said. Jibreel said, 'Muhammad.' It was said, 'And has he indeed been sent for?' Jibreel said, 'Yes.' It was said, 'Welcome to him. Indeed, a blessed comer has arrived.' He (i.e., the doorkeeper) opened (the door to that heaven). When I reached (inside), (I saw) Yahyaa and 'Eesa, and they are the sons of aunts (i.e., the mother of each one of them is the aunt of other; hence their mothers are sisters). Jibreel said, 'These are Yahyah and 'Eesa, so extend greetings of peace to them.' I gave them greetings of peace, and they returned them and then said, 'Welcome to a virtuous brother and a righteous Prophet.'"

The Prophet ﷺ said, "Then I was taken above to the third heaven. He asked for it to be opened, and it was said, 'Who is this?' He

said, 'Jibreel.' It was then said, 'And who is with you?' He said, 'Muhammad.' 'Has he indeed been sent for?' it was said. 'Yes,' said Jibreel. It was said, 'Welcome to him. Indeed, a blessed comer has arrived.' He opened (the door to the third heaven), and when I reached inside, Yousuf was there. Jibreel said, 'This is Yousuf, so give him greetings of peace.' I extended to him greetings of peace; first, he responded, and then he said, 'Welcome to a virtuous brother and a righteous Prophet.' Next, I was taken above until Jibreel reached the fourth heaven. When Jibreel asked for it (i.e., its door) to be opened, it was said, 'Who is this?' He said, 'Jibreel.' 'And who is with you?' it was said. Jibreel said, 'Muhammad.' 'And has he indeed been sent for?' it was said. Jibreel said, 'Yes.' It was said, 'Welcome he is indeed! A blessed comer has indeed arrived,' and he (the doorkeeper of the fourth heaven) opened (the door to the fourth heaven). When I reached inside, Idrees was there, and Jibreel said, 'This is Idrees, so extend greetings of peace to him.' I gave him greetings of peace, and he returned them and then said, 'Welcome to a virtuous brother and a righteous Prophet.' Then I was taken above until Jibreel reached the fifth heaven. When Jibreel asked for it to be opened, it was said, 'Who is this?' He said, 'Jibreel.' It was said, 'And who is with you?' He said, 'Muhammad.' It was said, 'And has he indeed been sent for?' He said, 'Yes.' It was said, 'Welcome he is indeed! Verily, a blessed comer has arrived.' He (i.e., the doorkeeper of the fifth heaven) then opened (the door to the fifth heaven). When I reached (inside), Haaron was there, and Jibreel said, 'This is Haaron, so extend greetings of peace to him.' I gave him greetings of peace, and he returned them and then said, 'Welcome to a virtuous brother and a righteous Prophet.' Then I was taken above until Jibreel reached the sixth heaven. When Jibreel asked for it (i.e., its door) to be opened, it was said, 'Who is this?' he said, 'Jibreel.' It was said, 'And who is with you?' He said, 'Muhammad.' It was said, 'And has he indeed been sent for?' Jibreel said, 'Yes.' He (i.e., the doorkeeper of the sixth heaven) said, 'Welcome he is indeed! Verily, a blessed comer has arrived.' When I reached (inside), Moosa was there, and Jibreel said, 'This

is Moosa, so extend greetings of peace to him.' I gave him greetings of peace, and he returned them and then said, 'Welcome to a virtuous brother and a righteous Prophet.' When I left him, he cried, and it was said to him, 'What makes you cry?' He said, 'I cry because a youth that was sent after me will have more people from his nation enter Paradise than will enter it from my nation.' Next, I was raised to the seventh heaven. When Jibreel asked for it (i.e., the door of the seventh heaven) to be opened, it was said, 'Who is this?' He said, 'Jibreel.' It was said, 'And who is with you?' He said, 'Muhammad.' It was said, 'And has he indeed been sent for?' Jibreel said, 'Yes.' He (i.e., the doorkeeper of the sixth heaven) said, 'Welcome he is indeed! And a blessed comer has indeed come!' When I reached (inside), Ibraaheem was there, and Jibreel said, 'This is your father, so extend greetings of peace to him.' I gave him greetings of peace, and he returned them and then said, 'Welcome to a virtuous son and a righteous Prophet.' Then *As-Sidratul-Muntahaa* (lote-tree of the utmost boundary, beyond which none can pass) was brought near to me. Its fruits were like the large jars of Hajar (because the jars of a place called Hajar are large, they are used proverbially to signify anything that is large; Hajar is a town in Bahrain), and its leaves were like the ears of elephants. Jibreel said, 'This is *Sidratul-Muntahaa*.' And there were four rivers, two internal and two external. I said, 'O Jibreel, what are these two?' He said, 'As for the internal ones, they are two rivers in Paradise. And as for the external ones, they are the Nile and the Euphrates.' Then *Al-Bait Al-Ma'moor* (a house of worship for the angels) was brought near to me. Then a vessel of alcohol, a vessel of milk, and a vessel of honey were brought to me. I took the milk, and he (i.e., Jibreel) said, 'It is the *Fitrah* (i.e., the religion of Islam, uprightness) that you and your nation are upon.' Next, made compulsory upon me were fifty prayers for each and every day. I then returned and passed by Moosa, who said, 'What were you commanded with?' I said, 'I was commanded to perform fifty prayers each and every day.' He said, 'Verily, your nation is not able to perform fifty prayers every single day. By Allah, I have indeed had experience with people

who came before you, and I have had the most difficult of experiences with the Children of Israel. So go back to your Lord and ask Him to decrease (the number of prayers) for your nation.' And so I returned, and He (i.e., Allah ﷻ) reduced it (the number of obligatory prayers) for me by ten. I returned to Moosa, and he said the same thing as he had said before. And so I returned (to my Lord), and He reduced it for me by ten. Next, I returned to Moosa, and he said the same thing again. And so I returned (to my Lord), and He decreased it for me by ten. I returned to Moosa, who repeated the same message. I returned (to my Lord), and I was ordered to perform ten prayers every single day. I went back (to Moosa), who again said the same thing. And so I returned, and this time I was ordered to perform five prayers every single day. When I returned again to Moosa, he said, 'What were you commanded with?' I said, 'I was commanded to perform five prayers every single day.' He said, 'Verily, your nation is not able to perform five prayers every single day. I have indeed had experience with people who came before you, and I have had the most difficult of experiences with the Children of Israel. So return to your Lord, and ask Him to reduce (the number of obligatory prayers) for your nation.'"^[1]

The Prophet ﷺ said to Moosa ﷺ, "I asked my Lord until I have become shy; rather, I am pleased, and I do submit.' When I left, a caller called out, 'I have finalized My legislated obligatory duty (i.e., people will get 50 rewards for praying five times a day), and I have made lighter (the duty of prayer) for My slaves (i.e., they have to perform 5 prayers in actuality, though they receive for them fifty rewards).'"

In *Ash-Shifaa*, Al-Qaadee 'Iyaadh mentioned that *Al-Israa Wal-Mai'raaj* took place one year before the Prophet's migration to Al-Madeenah.^[2] When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned from his blessed journey, he ﷺ informed his people about it. In a gathering

^[1] Related by Bukhaaree, in the Book "The Merits of the *Ansaar*," chapter, "*Al-Mai'raaj*"; *Hadeeth* number: 3887.

^[2] Refer to *Ash-Shifaa Bi-Ta'reef Huqooq Al-Mustafaa* (1/108).

that consisted, among others, of Al-Mut'im ibn 'Adee, 'Amr ibn Hishaam, and Al-Waleed ibn Al-Mugheerah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Verily, last night I prayed *Al-'Eesha* in this *Masjid*; I also prayed in it in the early morning. Between those two times, I went to Jerusalem, and a group of Prophets were raised for me. Included among them were Ibraaheem, Moosa, and 'Eesa. I led them in prayer, and I spoke to them."

In a mocking tone, 'Amr ibn Hishaam said, "Describe them to me." The Prophet ﷺ said, "As for 'Eesa, he is above medium height, but less than tall. He has a broad chest, ruddy complexion (literally, the Prophet ﷺ said, 'his blood is apparent'), and wavy hair. He is hirsute, and is covered by *Suhbah* (whiteness that is mixed with redness); as if he is 'Urwah ibn Mas'ood Ath-Thaqafei (i.e., 'Eesa resembles him). As for Moosa, he is massive, brown, and tall, as if he is from the men of Shanooah. His teeth overlap one another, his lips are contracted, and his gums protrude outwards. As for Ibraaheem, then by Allah, both in appearance and in character, he resembles me more than any other person."^[1]

The people that were gathered said, "O Muhammad, describe Jerusalem for us." The Prophet ﷺ said, "I entered it at night, and I left it on the same night," explaining to them that he didn't see it well enough or long enough to be able to describe it. But then Jibreel ﷺ came to him, with a picture of Jerusalem on his wing. Seeing it clearly before him, the Prophet ﷺ began to say, "One of its doors is like this, in such and such place. Another of its doors is like this, in such and such place." In short, he ﷺ gave a detailed description of Jerusalem, and those among the Quraish who had visited Jerusalem sat there dumbfounded, not being able to correct or contradict anything he ﷺ said.

They then asked the Prophet ﷺ about a caravan of theirs that was heading back towards Makkah from the direction of Jerusalem. If the Prophet ﷺ had come back from Jerusalem, they explained, he surely should have seen their caravan and knew how far it was

^[1] Refer to *At-Taareekh Al-Islaamee* by Al-Humaidee (3/37).

from Al-Madeenah. And sure enough, the Prophet ﷺ had seen and even visited their caravan. The Prophet ﷺ said to them, "I came upon the caravan of the children of (such and such person) at Ar-Rauhaa; one of their she-camels had strayed, and they went out to search for it. And so when I reached their encampment, no one among them (i.e., the people of the caravan) was there. There was a cup of water, and I drank from it. So ask them about that (when they return)." They said, "This, by God, is indeed a sign!" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Then I reached the caravan of the sons of (such and such person). The camels bolted away from me, and among them a red camel knelt down; upon it was a saddlebag that had white stripes on it. I do not know whether the camel had a fracture or not, so ask them about that." They said, "This, by God, is indeed a sign!" The Prophet ﷺ continued to say, "Then I reached the caravan of the children of (such and such person) at At-Tan'eem; at the forefront of the caravan was a camel that was white, though it had some (spots or patches of) blackness in it. And here it is coming to you from Ath-Thaniyyah (a mountain road)."

Al-Waleed ibn Al-Mugheerah said, "A Magician." They went and looked, finding that everything about the caravans was in exact agreement with the Prophet's description. And the people of the caravans confirmed everything that the Prophet ﷺ had said: That, yes, water was missing; that, yes, camels had strayed; and so on. The people of the Quraish had earlier said, "This, by God, is indeed a sign," indicating that they would believe in him if what he said was true. But once they knew with certainty that what he said was true, they accused him of soothsaying. They said, "Al-Waleed ibn Al-Mugheerah was truthful concerning what he said."^[1]

The Prophet's miraculous night journey ended up being a difficult test for certain people who had believed in the Prophet's *Da'wah*, a test that some of them failed, for they ended up apostatizing. And

^[1] *Al-Mataalib Al-'Aaliyah* by Al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar (4/201-204); *'Uyoon Al-Athar* (1/140-142); and Ibn Hishaam, who was relating from Umm Hanai ؓ (2/11).

some people went to Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ؓ and said, "Will you not go to your companion (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ)? He claims that he made a journey during the night to Jerusalem!" Abu Bakr ؓ said, "And did he say that?" They said, "Yes." Abu Bakr ؓ said, "If he said that, then he ﷺ has spoken the truth." Amazed by his words, they said, "Do you really believe him when he says that he went during the night to Jerusalem and came back before the morning?" Abu Bakr ؓ said, "Yes, I indeed believe him concerning that which is more amazing than that. I believe him about news from the heavens, which comes in the morning or at the end of the day." Because of the stance that Abu Bakr ؓ took during the trial and test that followed the Prophet's miraculous night journey, he was named "As-Siddeeq (the 'Truthful One')." ^[1]

Morals and Lessons

- 1) Every trial or tribulation is followed by some form of relief or reward. The three years that followed the seventh year of the Messenger of Allah's Prophethood were replete with trials and hardships for the Prophet ﷺ. First, he ﷺ, his followers, and even his fellow clansmen were besieged in a mountain pass that belonged to Abu Taalib. Second, the Prophet ﷺ lost in the span of a few months his uncle, Abu Taalib, his greatest protector from humankind, and his wife, Khadeejah ؓ, his human source of comfort. Third, the Quraish took advantage of Abu Taalib's death, taking it as a sign that they could persecute and harm the Prophet ﷺ more severely than ever before. And fourth, the people of At-Taaif, to whom the Prophet ﷺ went seeking their support and help, rejected the Prophet's message and treated him in a vile and despicable manner. Yet, despite all of these hardships, the Prophet ﷺ continued on course, patiently inviting people to Islam, not minding the hardships he had to continually face. It was then

^[1] Related in *Al-Mustadrak* (3/62). Al-Haakim said, "This *Hadeeth* has an authentic chain." And Adh-Dhahabee concurred with Al-Haakim's grading of the *Hadeeth*.

that the time was ripe for a great reward and consolation, one that took the form of a blessed and miraculous night journey first to Jerusalem and then upwards to the unseen world of the heavens. For the Prophet's patience and efforts, Allah ﷻ rewarded and honoured him with a journey during which the Prophet ﷺ spoke directly to Allah ﷻ, without any intermediary or messenger. Perhaps the Angels best expressed the honour that was being bestowed on him when the angel doorkeepers of each heaven exclaimed, "And has he indeed been sent for?" Angels knew that human beings were not admitted into the heavens and that the Prophet's arrival and entry was a one of a kind occurrence. And so the gatekeepers were expressing astonishment and amazement at Allah's great bestowal of honour upon the Prophet ﷺ.

- 2) The Prophet's miraculous night journey was a precursor of a new stage in the Prophet's *Da'wah*, for it occurred shortly before the Prophet's migration to Al-Madeenah. That new stage in the Prophet's *Da'wah* involved the establishment of a Muslim country.

Now, to be sure, Allah ﷻ wanted the foundations of that country to be strong and firm; and the Prophet's night journey helped achieve that end. For Allah ﷻ made the night journey a test for the Muslims, to purge from their ranks those who had doubts and those whose hearts were diseased, and to make firm the believers who were sincere and strong in their faith.

- 3) As Muslims, we should be sure of our faith, so sure that we are willing to speak the truth even when we are afraid that others will make fun of us. Consider the faith and bravery of the Prophet ﷺ, who openly described an event to the disbelievers that their perverse and limited minds could not even imagine, never mind accept. Even with the certainty of rejection and mockery from his people, the Prophet ﷺ spoke

without hesitation or fear, setting an ideal example for his nation, in terms of openly speaking the truth in front of the people of falsehood.

- 4) Not only did Allah ﷻ bestow honour upon the Prophet ﷺ with a miraculous night journey, but also He ﷻ provided him with clear proofs when he returned to Makkah, proofs that were sufficiently impressive to make Quraish's leaders believe. But they were arrogant, and they disbelieved. Among those proofs are the following:
 - ◆ The Prophet ﷺ gave a vivid and detailed description of Jerusalem though he never visited it before. Some members of the Quraish had visited Jerusalem and had seen *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsaa*. Through Jibreel ﷺ, Allah ﷻ enabled the Prophet ﷺ to see a picture or hologram of sorts of *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsaa*, so that he could be able to describe it to the polytheists. Those among them that had visited the area of Ash-Sham (Syria and surrounding regions) admitted that the Prophet ﷺ had given an exact description of Jerusalem.
 - ◆ The Prophet ﷺ informed them about one of their caravans that was heading back to Makkah and that had reached Ar-Rawhaa; he ﷺ told them about the camel that had strayed and about the water he drank from the cup or canteen. When the people of that particular caravan returned, they confirmed everything that the Prophet ﷺ had said about them.
 - ◆ The Prophet ﷺ then informed them about a second caravan that he had come across, about how its camels had bolted away, and about the description of one of its camels in particular. When the members of that caravan returned, they too confirmed everything that the Prophet ﷺ said about them.
 - ◆ And finally, the Prophet ﷺ told them about a third caravan that he passed by at Al-Abwaa and about the camel that was at its forefront. He ﷺ also told them that, as he was describing it to them, the caravan was approaching Makkah from the mountain pass of At-Tan'eem. Though they had to wait to

confirm the Prophet's story regarding the previous two caravans, Quraish's leaders were able to confirm his information regarding this last caravan immediately. And so they went to the outskirts of Makkah and saw for themselves that what the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had told them was true.

All of the above-mentioned proofs were irrefutable; in no way could the polytheists accuse him of lying, so they resorted to the only accusation that came to their minds, saying that he ﷺ was a soothsayer. It was not that they really believed in what they were saying; it was merely that they were too arrogant to admit the truth.

- 5) After the Prophet ﷺ, the person who shined most after *Al-Israa Wal-Mai'raaj* was Abu Bakr ؓ. When the polytheists told him that the Prophet ﷺ had just informed them about his night journey – and Abu Bakr ؓ had not yet heard about it – he ؓ did not in the least hesitate or waver in his faith, but instead immediately said, "If he said that, then he ﷺ has spoken the truth. I indeed believe him concerning that which is more amazing than that. I believe him about news from the heavens, which comes in the morning or at the end of the day." This statement sheds light not only on Abu Bakr's strong faith, but also on his understanding and wisdom, for he intelligently compared the night journey with the coming down of revelation from the sky – in that he believed in both the latter and the former. For if Allah ﷻ, Who is over all things able, sends revelation down to the Prophet ﷺ in an instant, He ﷻ can of course enable the Prophet ﷺ to journey to the heavens and back in a single night. Yes, Abu Bakr ؓ understood that such a journey is strange or highly implausible for a common man, but not so for the Messenger of Allah ﷻ. Based on Abu Bakr's response, he ؓ truly deserves the title, *As-Siddeeq*.
- 6) In regard to all miracles, matters from the unseen world, or anything else, as long as we have an authentic report from the Prophet ﷺ, we must believe in what he ﷺ said without

thinking up false interpretations. Therefore, when we read about how the Prophet's chest was split open and how his heart was washed, we must believe in the literal occurrence of both, for Allah is All-Powerful and is over all things able. We show weakness in faith when, in the absence of proof, we try to interpret matters of the unseen world that come to us through authentic knowledge from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

Therefore, since there is no proof to the contrary, we believe with certainty that the Prophet ﷺ made the night journey both in spirit and in body. We outright reject the claim of those who say that it was a journey of the soul; or in other words, a dream. Had the night journey been a dream, it would not have been a miracle, and Quraish's leaders would not have disbelieved in it, for there is nothing extraordinary about such a dream. Furthermore, Allah ﷻ established the reality of the Prophet's journey in clear and unambiguous language:

﴿سُبْحَنَ الَّذِي أَسْرَىٰ بِعَبْدِهِ﴾

"Glorified (and Exalted) be He (Allah) [above all that (evil) they associate with Him] Who took his slave (Muhammad ﷺ) for a journey." (Qur'an 17: 1)

"Slave" in this verse refers comprehensively to the Prophet's body and soul.

- 7) That the Prophet ﷺ led the Prophets ﷺ in prayer proves that they submit to and agree upon his leadership; also, that they submit to the fact that the laws of Islam abrogate the laws that were sent down with all previous Prophets. In this there is a clear message for non-Muslims from the People of the Book: That they should accept what their Prophets have accepted, by following the Seal of Prophets, the Prophet ﷺ who was sent to all of mankind, and whose *Shariah* is binding and applicable until the Day of Resurrection.
- 8) In the Prophet's miraculous night journey, a clear and strong

link is established between *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsaa* in Jerusalem and *Al-Masjid Al-Haraam* in Makkah. That link has far-reaching implications for Muslims, such as the following:

- ◆ Jerusalem is of great importance to Muslims. It is one of the three inviolable *Masjids*; it is the place to which the Prophet ﷺ was taken on his night journey; and it was the *Qiblah* of the Muslims throughout the Makkan era of the Prophet's biography. All Muslims should therefore love *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsaa*, which is both blessed and sanctified.
- ◆ The link that is established in the Prophet's journey and elsewhere instills a sense of responsibility in Muslims towards *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsaa* – the responsibility to keep it pure from all forms of polytheism and safe from falling into the hands of the enemies of Islam.
- ◆ The link also instills into Muslims the sense that a threat to *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsaa* is a threat to *Al-Masjid Al-Haraam*, and an attack on *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsaa* is the precursor to an attack on *Al-Masjid Al-Haraam*. This principle is not an imagined one, but rather is established through historical fact. During the crusades, Arnaat, ruler of the Al-Kurk kingdom, sent some of his people on a mission to desecrate the grave of the Prophet ﷺ and to remove his corpse from the Prophet's *Masjid*. More recently, the Portuguese tried to accomplish what the crusaders before them failed to accomplish: To enter with their army into Makkah and Al-Madeenah. But the strong resistance of the Mamaaleek and 'Uthmaaniyoon prevented them from reaching their infernal goal.

After the War of 1967, during which the Jews took control of Jerusalem, Israeli leaders expressed their desire to eventually take control of the Arabian Peninsula – first and foremost the city of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and Khaibar.

After the Israeli army entered Jerusalem, David Ben Gurion gave a fiery speech, in which he said, "We have taken control over Jerusalem, and we are on our way to Yathrib (i.e., Al-

Madeenah).”^[1] Golda Mayer, another Israeli leader, said after the beginning of the occupation of Jerusalem, “I indeed smell the odour of my grandparents in Al-Madeenah and Al-Hijaaz (Makkah, Madeenah, Taaif, etc.); and those are our lands that we will indeed take back.”^[2] Israeli leaders then drew up a map of their anticipated country, which extends, they believe, from the Euphrates until the Nile. That area includes the Arabian Peninsula, Jordon, Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Yemen, Kuwait, and all of the Gulf countries. After their victory in 1967, they distributed the map of that anticipated country throughout parts of Europe.^[3]

- 9) It is interesting to note that Allah ﷻ mentions in *Soorah Al-Israa* the actual story of *Al-Israa* in only a single Verse. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿سُبْحَنَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَا الَّذِي بَارَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِنْ آيَاتِنَا إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ ①﴾

‘Glorified (and Exalted) be He (Allah) [above all that (evil) they associate with Him] Who took his slave (Muhammad ﷺ) for a journey by night from Al-Masjid-Al-Haraam (at Makkah) to the farthest mosque (in Jerusalem), the neighbourhood whereof We have blessed, in order that We might show him (Muhammad ﷺ) of Our Ayaat (proofs, evidences, lessons, signs, etc.). Verily, He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.’ (Qur’an 17: 1)

The next Verses in the chapter shift from the topic of the Prophet’s night journey to a discussion about the Children of Israel – in particular, the Jews. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَأَتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلْنَاهُ هُدًى لِّبَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ أَلَّا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْ دُونِي وَكِيلًا ② ذُرِّيَّةَ مَنْ حَمَلْنَا مَعَ نُوحٍ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا عِبَادًا شَاكِرِينَ ③ وَقَضَيْنَا إِلَى بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ فِي الْكِتَابِ لَتُفْسِدُنَّ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَّتَيْنِ وَلَنَعْلَنَ عُلُوًّا كَبِيرًا ④﴾

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Abu Faaris (pg. 314).

^[2] Ibid.

^[3] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Abu Faaris (pg. 215).

فَإِذَا جَاءَ وَعْدُ أُولَئِهِمَا بَعَثْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ عِبَادًا لَنَا أُولَى بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ فَجَاسُوا خِلَالَ الدِّيَارِ
وَكَانَ وَعْدًا مَفْعُولًا ⑤ ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَا لَكُمُ الْكَرَّةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَمْدَدْنَاكُمْ بِأَمْوَالٍ
وَبَنِينَ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ أَكْثَرَ نَفِيرًا ⑥ إِنْ أَحْسَنْتُمْ أَحْسَنْتُمْ لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَإِنْ أَسَأْتُمْ
فَلَهُمْ فَإِذَا جَاءَ وَعْدُ الْآخِرَةِ لِيَسُفُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَلِيَدْخُلُوا الْمَسْجِدَ كَمَا دَخَلُوهُ
أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَلِيُتَبِّرُوا مَا عَلَوْا تَتْبِيرًا ⑦ ﴿

"And We gave Moosa (Moses) the Scripture and made it a guidance for the Children of Israel (saying): "Take not other Me as (your) Wakil (Protector, Lord, or Disposer of your affairs, etc.). O offspring of those whom We carried (in the ship) with Nooh (Noah)! Verily, he was a grateful slave." And We decreed for the Children of Israel in the Scripture, that indeed you would do mischief on the earth twice and you will become tyrants and extremely arrogant! So, when the promise came for the first of the two, We sent against you slaves of Ours given to terrible warfare. They entered the very innermost parts of your homes. And it was a promise (completely) fulfilled. Then We gave you once again, a return of victory over them. And We helped you with wealth and children and made you more numerous in man-power. (And We said): "If you do good, you do good for your ourselves, and if you do evil (you do it) against yourselves." Then, when the second promise came to pass, (We permitted your enemies) to make your faces sorrowful and to enter the mosque (of Jerusalem) as they had entered it before, and to destroy with utter destruction all that fell in their hands." (Qur'an 17: 2-7)

In *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah*, Ibn Katheer said, "By order of the king of Persia^[1], Bakhtansar began a campaign to destroy the Jewish kingdom. He and his army "entered the very innermost parts of (Jewish) homes," forcing the Children of Israel to flee in all directions. Some of them settled in Al-Hijaaz (the area that

^[1] Dr. Farsat Mar'ee, Professor of History in the University of Sanai, is of the view that Bakhtansar was Kaldaanee and not Persian, and that the order he received was from the king of Kaldaan.

consists, among other places, of Makkah, At-Taaif, and Al-Madeenah); some of them settled in Yathrib (i.e., Al-Madeenah); some of them settled in Waadee Al-Qura; and Shurdhumah went to Egypt. The Persian assault on and destruction of the Jewish kingdom took place in the sixth century prior to the beginning of the Christian calendar – in the year 597.

As for the second destruction that is referred to in the above-mentioned Verses, it took place in the year 70 of the Christian calendar. After the previous destruction, the Jews managed to rebuild their kingdom. But then it was the Romans, and not the Persians, that attacked the Jews. This occurred when the Roman general Titus destroyed the Aurshaleem Temple. Subjected to political and religious persecution from the Romans, the Jews were forced to flee in different directions. Some of them traced the migration route of their first grandparents, by making their way to the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula.^[1]

The Jews, therefore, had a strong presence in the Arabian Peninsula by the time the Prophet ﷺ was sent to mankind. Just as the Prophet ﷺ was well-prepared to deal with the Quraish, he ﷺ was similarly prepared to deal with the Jews. For the Jews were not simply a historically important nation, like the people of 'Ad and Thamood, whose stories were related for guidance and reflection, and whose significance was limited to the past; rather, they were a nation whose presence was still, during the Prophet's lifetime, strong and palpable within Arabia itself. Beyond being of economic significance in the Peninsula, the Jews had status on an intellectual level as well – for among them were scholars, who had with them information about past generations and books that were passed down from Prophets ﷺ.

Soorah Al-Israa dealt with one aspect of the wars that took place between the Romans, the Persians, and the Jews; soon afterwards, *Soorah Ar-Room* was revealed, and it too discussed the same struggles that were taking place on the international stage. Allah ﷻ said:

^[1] *Ibn Khuldoon* (2/206).

﴿الْم ١ غَلَبَتِ الرُّومُ ٢﴾ فِي أَدْنَى الْأَرْضِ وَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ غَلَبِهِمْ سَيَغْلِبُونَ
 ٣ فِي بَضْعِ سِنِينَ لِلَّهِ الْأَمْرُ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمِنْ بَعْدُ وَيَوْمَئِذٍ يَفْرَحُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ
 ٤ يَنْصُرُ اللَّهُ يَنْصُرُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ٥ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ لَا
 يُخْلِفُ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ٦ يَعْلَمُونَ ظَهْرًا مِنَ الْحَيَاةِ
 الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ عَنِ الْآخِرَةِ هُمْ غَافِلُونَ ٧﴾

“Alif-Lam-Mim. [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur’an, and none but Allah (Alone) knows their meanings]. The Romans have been defeated. In the nearer land (Syria, Iraq, Jordan, and Palestine), and they, after their defeat, will be victorious. Within three to nine years. The decision of the matter, before and after (these events) is only with Allah, (before the defeat of Romans by the Persians, and after, i.e., the defeat of the Persians by the Romans). And on that Day, the believers (i.e., Muslims) will rejoice (at the victory given by Allah to the Romans against the Persians). With the help of Allah, He helps whom He wills, and He is the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful. (It is) a Promise of Allah (i.e., Allah will give victory to the Romans against the Persians), and Allah fails not in His Promise, but most of men know not. They know only the outside appearance of the life of the world (i.e., the matters of their livelihood, like irrigating or sowing or reaping, etc.), and they are heedless of the Hereafter.” (Qur’an 30: 1-7)

The polytheists of the Quraish wanted the Persians to defeat the Romans, since they had in common with the Persians the worship of idols. Meanwhile, the Muslims wanted the Romans to come out victorious because they were People of the Book, because they were closer to Islam than were the polytheists of Persia. Furthermore, in the Qur’an, it was stated in clear and unambiguous terms that the Romans would defeat the Persians. Ibn ‘Attiyyah, however, has another view on the matter, one that should not be discounted outright, but should rather be contemplated. He asserted that the main reason why the Muslims rejoiced on hearing of the Romans’ victory wasn’t that

the Romans were People of the Book, or that their victory would prove the truthfulness of the Qur'an, but rather that, from a strategic point of view, a victory for the Romans was in the best interests of the Muslims. Ibn 'Atiyyah wrote, "What is closer to the truth in the matter is that the Muslims wanted the weaker enemy to win, for if the greater and stronger enemy were to win, they would become a more formidable foe (for the Muslims in the future). Reflect on this point, while you keep in mind that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ wanted his religion to reign supreme over (the religions of) all other nations."^[1]

What Ibn 'Atiyyah was alluding to was that, if the Romans, the lesser power, came out as victors, the Muslims would benefit in two ways. First, the Persian Empire would obviously become weaker. And second, even though the Romans would come out as victors, they would have used up a lot of their resources in doing battle with the Persians, and so they too would become weaker. And that would pave the way for the Muslims to defeat them in the near future – and that actually occurred not many years later with the fall of the Byzantine Empire, the eastern wing of the Roman Empire. In short, when the Romans came out as victors over the Persians, the way was opened for the Muslims to become a new global power, while the existing two global powers were suffering from a sharp decline.^[2]

- 10) The very special night of *Al-Israa* and *Mai'raaj* was chosen as the night during which the five daily prayers were made obligatory; this, as Ibn Katheer mentioned, "Points to the care that was taken to show the honour and greatness of prayer."^[3] When we contemplate the importance of prayer, we should remember, among other things, that it was legislated on the blessed night of *Al-Israa Wal-Mai'raaj*, and that, before the Prophet ﷺ died, it was one of the last things that he ﷺ advised us about.

^[1] *Tafseer Ibn 'Atiyyah* (11/425).

^[2] Refer to *Usool Al-Fikr As-Siyaasee* (pg. 158).

^[3] *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* (3/23).

- 11) When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was asked about whether he saw his Lord during *Al-Mai'raaj*, he ﷺ said, "Light, so how could I see Him (i.e., His veil is light, so how could I see Him?)?"^[1]
- 12) During *Al-Israa Wal-Mai'raaj*, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw a great deal of the unseen world – such as matters concerning the past, angels, the heavens, and even the future. The Prophet ﷺ saw, among other things, the evil consequences of many societal ills. Some societal ills and their consequences which he witnessed that night are as follows:
 - ◆ The Prophet ﷺ saw punishment being meted out to backbiters. When, during that night, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw people eating corpses, Jibreel informed him about them, saying, "These are the ones that eat the flesh of people (i.e., backbiters)."^[2]
 - ◆ He ﷺ witnessed people being punished for wrongly eating the wealth of orphans. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw men with lips that were big like the lips of camels; in their hands were pieces of fire that were like stones. They would cast them into their mouths, and the pieces would then come out of their buttocks. Jibreel ﷺ informed the Prophet ﷺ about them, saying, "These are the ones who wrongfully eat the wealth of orphans."^[3]
 - ◆ Regarding the punishment for those who eat from the proceeds of usury, the Prophet ﷺ passed by, during his night journey, a group of people whose stomachs were like houses, and inside of them were snakes. From the outside, their insides could be seen. Jibreel ﷺ said to the Prophet ﷺ, "These are the eaters of usury."^[4]

^[1] Related in *Muslim*, the Book of *Eemaan*, chapter, "Concerning His Saying, 'Light, so How Could I see Him'"; *Hadeeth* number: 178.

^[2] *Al-Fath Ar-Rabbaanee*, by As-Saa'aatee (20/255). As-Saa'aatee said, "Al-Haafiz Ibn Katheer declared that its chain is authentic."

^[3] *Seerah Ibn Hishaam*, chapter, "The Story of *Al-Mai'raaj*."

^[4] *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* (4/274).

- ◆ Other narrations^[1] mention the punishment of fornicators, of people who refuse to pay *Zakaat*, of speakers who cause *Fitnah*, and of people who are negligent and carefree when it comes to being trustworthy.^[2]
- ◆ The Prophet ﷺ also saw people being rewarded for good deeds. For example, during *Al-Mai'raaj*, he ﷺ passed by a group of people who planted on the same day as they harvested; and as soon as they finished harvesting, things returned to being as they previously were. Jibreel ﷺ said, 'These are *Al-Mujaahidoon* (those who fight and struggle) in the way of Allah. Their good deeds are multiplied 700 times. And whatever they spend (for the cause of Allah) is replaced (for them).'^[3]
- ◆ The Companions رضي الله عنهم understood the importance of *Al-Masjid Al-Aqsaa* and their duties towards it. For a while, it was in the control of the Romans; then the Muslims conquered it during the caliphate of 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab رضي الله عنه. Jerusalem then remained a place of peace and safety until five centuries later when the crusaders conquered it and wreaked havoc on it and its inhabitants. They continued to do so until about a century later, when the Muslims freed it under the military leadership of Salaahud-Deen Al-Ayyoobee (may Allah have mercy on him). Now again, Jerusalem has been violently and brutally taken away from Muslims; who now will free it? Indeed, we belong to Allah, and to Him is our return.

^[1] All of the narrations that are related in regard to the punishments the Prophet ﷺ witnessed during *Mai'raaj*, are from a *Hadeeth* that is related from Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudree رضي الله عنه. Narrations of the *Hadeeth* are found in the books of *Tafseer* and in *Seerah Ibn Hishaam*; however, the *Hadeeth* is not related authentically from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and it is related in neither *Saheeh Bukhaaree* nor *Saheeh Muslim*. And Allah ﷻ knows best.

^[2] *Tafseer At-Tabaree* (15/7), and *Al-Fath Ar-Rabbaanee* (20/257).

^[3] Refer to *Al-Khasaa'is Al-Kubraa* (1/171), and *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Abu Faaris (pg. 220).



**The Prophet ﷺ Seeks Support
From Other Tribes, And The
Companions ﷺ Later Begin
Migrating To Al-Madeenah**



1

The Prophet ﷺ Seeks Support From Other Tribes

After the Prophet ﷺ returned from At-Taaif, he ﷺ began to present himself to various tribes during the *Hajj* season. He ﷺ would go to each tribe, explain Islam to its members, and ask them to protect and help him ﷺ, so that he could freely and safely convey the message of Islam. And the Prophet ﷺ would do the same during trading seasons, when different tribes would congregate in specific marketplaces.

Accompanying the Prophet ﷺ during his visits to various tribes was Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ؓ, who was especially useful, since he ؓ was perhaps the most knowledgeable man alive regarding the genealogy and history of Arab peoples; with that knowledge, he ؓ knew the strong and weak points of each tribe.

Their mission was not simply to invite people to Islam, but also to gain the protection of militarily formidable tribes. And so they sought out the leaders of the strongest tribes in Arabia. Since they were asking for help and protection, they needed to know something about each tribe and its military capabilities, so before asking for help, Abu Bakr ؓ would ask them a number of questions: How many people are in your tribe? What are your defensive capabilities? How skilled are you at fighting?

Al-Miqreezee said, "Then the Prophet ﷺ would present himself to the tribes (of Arabia) during the days of the (*Hajj*) season and invite them to Islam. Those tribes were as follows: Banu 'Aamir,

Ghassaan, Banu Fazaarah, Banu Murrah, Banu Haneefah, Banu Saleem, Banu 'Abs, Banu Nasr, Tha'labah ibn 'Iqaabah, Kandah, Kalb, Banu Al-Haarith ibn Ka'ab, Banu 'Uthrah, Qais ibn Al-Khateem, and Abu Al-Yusr Anas ibn ibn Abee Raafai'. Al-Waaqidee discussed in great detail information about each of these tribes. It is said that the Prophet ﷺ began with Kindah, inviting them to Islam. Then he ﷺ went to Kalb; then to Banu Haneefah; then to Banu 'Aamir. He ﷺ would say (to them), 'Who is the man who will carry me to his people and protect me, so that I can convey the message of my Lord? For indeed, the (people of the) Quraish have prevented me from conveying the message of my Lord.' Meanwhile, Abu Lahab would follow him around and say to the leaders of tribes, 'Do not listen to him, for indeed, he is a liar.'"^[1]

In inviting tribes to Islam, the Prophet ﷺ was subjected to rejection as well as both mental and physical abuse. When tribal leaders would reject the Prophet's message, they didn't do so in a polite manner or with an apologetic tone; rather, they would say, for example, "His people know him best. How can the same person who corrupts his people be good for us?" And they would then force him to leave. The rumours that the Quraish were spreading of course did not help matters; in fact, the rumours they spread gained currency among various tribal chieftains.

Mudrik ibn Muneeb related from his father, who related from his father ؓ, that, "I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ during the period of ignorance (i.e., while I was still a non-Muslim), and he would say, 'O people, say: None has the right to be worshipped but Allah, and you will be successful.' Some among them spit in his face; others among them poured dirt over him; and yet others among them cursed him. Then, in the middle of the day, a young girl came with a very large cup of water and washed his face and hands. He ﷺ said, 'O my daughter, do not fear defeat or humiliation for your father.' I asked, 'Who is she?' They (the

^[1] *Imtaa' Al-Asmaa'* by Al-Miqreezee (1/30, 31).

people that were present with him) said, 'Zainab, daughter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.' And she was a beautiful young girl."^[1]

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would invite people of other tribes during heavy trading seasons or during the *Hajj* season, Abu Jahl and Abu Lahab – may Allah curse them both – would take turns following the Prophet ﷺ around and trying to discredit him in the eyes of his audience. And so the Prophet ﷺ had to suffer ill-treatment both at their hands and at the hands of the people he was inviting to Islam.

Counteracting The Effects Of Abu Jahl And Abu Lahab's Smear Campaign

It was hard enough to convince leaders of Arab tribes to embrace the truth; what made matters even worse was that Abu Jahl and Abu Lahab would follow the Prophet ﷺ when he visited different tribes, and they would speak lies about him to tribal leaders. To counteract their efforts to discredit him, the Prophet ﷺ employed the following strategies:

1) He ﷺ would set nocturnal appointments with tribal chieftains

So that no one from the Quraish could follow him and prevent him from conveying the message of Islam, the Prophet ﷺ would visit leaders of other tribes during the dark hours of the night. We know that, in the end, this strategy worked, for it is related that the Messenger ﷺ met with the Aus and Khazraj tribes (the two tribes of Al-Madeenah) at night; and then later, he ﷺ met them again at night for the first and second pledges of Al-'Aqabah.

2) He ﷺ would visit tribal leaders in their homes

The Prophet ﷺ went directly to the abodes of the Kalb, Banu Haneefah, and Banu 'Aamir tribes. He ﷺ did so in such a manner

^[1] Refer to *Al-Maihnah Fil-'Ahd Al-Makki* (pg. 53).

as to prevent the Quraish from following him or interfering with his *Da'wah* efforts.

3) He ﷺ took helpers along with him

Abu Bakr ؓ and 'Alee ؓ accompanied the Prophet ﷺ during some of his visits to other tribes. The Prophet ﷺ took them with him perhaps because he ﷺ did not want tribal leaders to think that he was alone and had no helpers or followers from Quraish's nobility. On the other hand, Abu Bakr ؓ was particularly helpful in that he was very knowledgeable regarding the lineage and history of Arab peoples. His knowledge helped the Prophet ﷺ learn more about the tribes he was visiting, which in turn would help him choose the best tribe to bear the duties of spreading Islam to the rest of Arabia and beyond.

4) He ﷺ first ascertained the military capabilities of each tribe

Practically, it would be of little help if a tribe of 15 men agreed to take in the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ؓ, for such a tribe could be of no match to Quraish's military capabilities. And so, before even asking for a particular tribe's help, the Prophet ﷺ would ask its leaders about their defensive capabilities and military strength. In other stages of his *Da'wah*, the Prophet ﷺ was primarily concerned with inviting people to Islam; in this particular stage, he ﷺ also wanted to find a tribe that could provide safety, support, and protection to himself ﷺ and his Companions ؓ.

Negotiations With Banu 'Aamir

We know that the Prophet ﷺ did his research before asking a tribe for help and support; in this regard, the tribe of Banu 'Aamir is a good example. Both the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr ؓ, through researching the matter, came to know that Banu 'Aamir was a militarily strong tribe that consisted of many members. In fact, it was one of only five Arab tribes that, during war, never had any of its women captured and taken as slaves. Furthermore, Banu

'Aamir was never under the rule of a foreign king and never had to pay tribute to a foreign power. Therefore, it was comparable in strength to the Quraish and the Khuzaa'ah.

Also, the Prophet ﷺ knew that there was a longstanding feud between the Banu 'Aamir tribe and the Thaqeef tribe of At-Taaif. If the people of Thaqeef refused to embrace Islam, they would have a lot to think about if their bitter enemies, the members of a very strong tribe, embraced Islam.

Authors of *Seerah* books related that when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went to the tribe of Banu 'Aamir and invited its people to Islam, a man among them named Baiharah ibn Firaas said, "By Allah, if I were to take with me this young man from the Quraish, I would use him to eat up the Arabs (i.e., I would use him to fight against and become victorious over the Arabs)." He then said to the Prophet ﷺ, "Suppose that we follow you upon your affair (i.e., upon Islam), and suppose that Allah ﷻ then makes you victorious over those who oppose you, will the matter (of leadership and rule) return to us after you (die)?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "The matter rests with Allah; He places it (leadership, rule) wherever He pleases." Baiharah said, "Will you make our throats targets for Arabs, for the cause of us protecting you, and then when Allah makes you victorious, the matter (of leadership and rule) will be given to those other than us? We have no need of your affair (i.e., of Islam, of following you, of protecting you, etc.)." And thus did they refuse to help and support him.^[1]

Negotiations With The Tribe Of Banu Shaibaan

According to one narration, 'Alee ibn Abee Taalib ؓ said, "When Allah ﷻ ordered His Prophet ﷺ to present himself to Arab tribes, he left (to go and visit one of them), and I went with him. Then we went to another gathering, over which there was an aura of calmness and gravity. Abu Bakr ؓ came and extended greetings of peace, after which he ؓ said, 'Who are these people?' They (i.e.,

^[1] Refer to *Seerah Ibn Hishaam* (2/38).

those whom he asked) said, '(The tribe of) Shaibaan ibn Tha'labah.' Abu Bakr ﷺ turned to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said, 'May my mother and father be sacrificed for you; these are the noblest of people, and among them is Mafrooq, who is best among them in speech and in looks.' Mafrooq had two braids that fell down to (his upper chest). Of all his people, Mafrooq was seated closest to Abu Bakr ﷺ. Abu Bakr ﷺ said, 'How many are you?' Mafrooq said, 'We are more than one thousand in number, and (an army of) one thousand is not defeated because it is lacking in numbers.' Abu Bakr ﷺ said, 'And how strong are you (in battle)?' Mafrooq said, 'We are never as angry as we are when we meet (our enemy for battle), and we never fight as fiercely as we do when we are angry. We prefer good horses to children, and weapons to pollen. As for victory, it comes from Allah: He ﷻ grants it to us one time, and He ﷻ grants it against us (i.e., to our opponents) the next time. Perhaps you are the brother of Quraish?' Abu Bakr ﷺ said, 'If it has reached you that he is indeed the Messenger of Allah, then here he is.' Mafrooq said, 'O brother of Quraish, to what do you invite us?' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'I invite you to testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah alone, Who has no partner, and that I am indeed the slave of Allah and His Messenger. I also invite you to grant me shelter and to support me. For indeed, the Quraish has indeed united against (the religion of) Allah, and has disbelieved in Allah's Messenger ﷺ. Having renounced the truth, they have taken to falsehood alone. And Allah is the All-Rich, *Al-Hameed* (the One Who is deserving of all praise).' Mafrooq said, 'O brother of the Quraish, to what else do you invite? For by Allah, I have not heard speech that is better than this.' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then recited this Verse:

﴿قُلْ تَعَالَوْا أَتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا
وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ مِنْ إِمْلَاقٍ نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكُمْ
وَأَيَّاهُمْ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنٌ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا
الْنَفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّيْتُكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٥﴾﴾

"Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): "Come, I will recite what your Lord has prohibited you from : Join not anything in worship with Him ; be good and dutiful to your parents ; kill not your children because of poverty – We provide sustenance for you and for them ; come not near to Al-Fawahish (shameful sins, illegal sexual intercourse, etc.) whether committed openly or secretly, and kill not anyone whom Allah has forbidden, except for a just cause (according to Islamic law) . This He has commanded you that you may understand ." (Qur'an 6: 151)

Mafooq said, 'By Allah, you have invited to the noblest of manners and the best of deeds. Those people that have disbelieved in you and have united against you have lied and are false.' Mafooq then returned the matter (i.e., the decision thereof) to Haani ibn Qabeesah, saying, 'And this is Haani, our *Shaikh* (leader), and the one among us who is responsible for our religion.' Haani then said, 'I have heard your speech, O brother of Quraish. Yet I indeed feel that us leaving our religion and following your religion after a single meeting you have had with us, is to take a shameful view of things, and shows shortsightedness concerning the outcome (of that decision). Indeed, stumbling (and erring) is the concomitant of hastiness. And we do indeed dislike forcing an agreement on those (among us) we have left behind. So instead, we will return (to our people), and you will return (to yours), and we will study the matter.' As if he wanted the participation of Al-Muthannah ibn Haarithah, Haani said, 'And this is Al-Muthannah, our *Shaikh*, and the one who is in charge of us during war.' Al-Muthannah – who later embraced Islam – said, 'I have indeed heard your speech, O brother of Quraish. My answer concerning what you said – concerning us leaving our religion and following yours – is the same answer that Haani gave. We chose as residence territory that lies between two As-Sariyyaan; one of them is Al-Yamaamah, and the other is As-Simaamah.' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to him, 'What are these two As-Sariyyaan?' Al-Muthannah said, 'The rivers of Kisra (Kisra was the emperor of Persia) and the waters of

the Arabs. As for our territory that lies beside the rivers of Kisra, then anyone who makes a mistake there (i.e., a mistake against the emperor) is not forgiven, and his excuses are not accepted. The only reason why we are allowed to reside there is that Kisra has taken a covenant upon us: We may not do anything new (that displeases him), and we may not give refuge to someone (whom he deems to be) subversive. And, O brother of Quraish, I feel that this matter which you are inviting us to is one that kings detest. If you want us to give you shelter and support you in the territory that lies along the waters of the Arabs, then we will do so.' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'You have not answered in an ill manner, for you have spoken with truthful eloquence. Verily, the religion of Allah ﷻ will be supported only by those who guard it from all directions. Now, suppose that only a short period of time passes before Allah ﷻ makes you inherit their (i.e., the people of Persia) lands and homes, and makes you take to bed their women – will you then glorify, worship, and exalt Allah?' An-No'maan ibn Shareek said, 'We will at least grant you that.'"^[1]

Lessons and Morals

The help that the Prophet ﷺ was seeking was of a very specific kind, was based on certain conditions, and was sought out in a specific manner; in these regards, keep the following points in mind:

- ◆ The Prophet ﷺ began actively to seek help outside of Makkah only after Abu Taalib's death, when the Quraish began to persecute him with a great deal of severity. This is because a person who invites others to Islam cannot properly achieve his aims when he is constantly being persecuted and terrorized.
- ◆ The Prophet ﷺ began actively to seek help outside of Makkah not based on a conclusion that he ﷺ arrived at through his own reasoning, but instead based on a command from Allah ﷻ.

^[1] Refer to *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah* (3/142, 143, 145), and in it are additions that are not recorded by As-Saalihee, in *Subul-Ar-Rashaad* (2/596, 597).

- ◆ That the Prophet ﷺ went to tribal leaders and not to common tribesmen was specific and unique to the situation, for it was only tribal leaders who could help ensure his protection. This in no way means that the poor and weak should be neglected; throughout his life, the Prophet ﷺ invited the poor, the weak, the rich, and the strong to Islam. However, in this particular situation, the Prophet ﷺ needed the help of someone strong who could defend him from the Quraish.
- ◆ It is clear from the Prophet's *Seerah* that the Prophet ﷺ sought help and support from other tribes for two main reasons: First, to protect those who wanted to convey the message of Islam; and second, to pave the way for the Prophet ﷺ to take over the leadership of the tribe he ﷺ wanted help from, based on the principles of the message he ﷺ was spreading.
- ◆ The Prophet's negotiations with the Banu 'Aamir clan highlight an important aspect of the Prophet's *Da'wah*. The leaders of Banu 'Aamir seemed prepared to help the Prophet's *Da'wah*; they were even excited about their future prospects with the Prophet ﷺ among them. Nonetheless, the Prophet ﷺ effectively rejected their offer, refusing to give any guarantee whatsoever that, as a reward for their help, one among them would be handed the reins of leadership in the future. This is because Islamic propagation simply means inviting people unto Allah ﷻ. And so the basic prerequisites of one who believes in Islam and is willing to support it, are that he is sincere to Allah ﷻ and that the only thing he wants is to please Him ﷻ. These prerequisites, and not political ambitions, are the reasons for which he makes sacrifices in the first place. Or in other words, when one volunteers to promote the cause of Islam, one must do so, not for a worldly, ulterior motive, but for the sake of Allah ﷻ only. Even on a smaller scale, anyone who wants to promote Islam – whether monetarily or otherwise – must not stipulate a reward that comes in the shape of a job or any other worldly profit. It is a dangerous sign indeed, and a negative indication about one's character,

when one shows concern not for Islam, but for personal gain. Yahyaa ibn Mu'aadh Ar-Raazee said, "When you smell the desire of leadership in a person, then know that he will not be successful."^[1] In the short term, the Prophet ﷺ could have benefited greatly from the Banu 'Aamir tribe – through the achievement of safety and strength. But the Prophet ﷺ was not looking at the short-term, and he ﷺ was not looking for people whose hearts were tainted by corrupt and ambitious motives for self-gain.

- ◆ In another sense as well, the Prophet ﷺ was not looking for just anybody to protect and support him. He ﷺ wanted a tribe that was not restricted by a treaty with a foreign power, especially one that ran contrary to the principles and goals of Islam, and one that exposed Islam, Muslims, and the tribe in question to near certain destruction. After all, in the case of Banu Shaibaan, their treaty was not with a tribe of lesser, equal, or slightly greater strength, but rather with one of the superpowers of that era, the Persian Empire.

And at any rate, partial protection would not have solved anything. For if Kisra were to try and capture the Prophet ﷺ or send forces to fight him and his Companions ﷺ, Banu Shaibaan was not willing to stand up to Kisra and fight against his forces.

- ◆ True, Banu Shaibaan did not in the end provide shelter for the Prophet ﷺ; nonetheless, they acted truthfully and honourably and respectfully, which is much more than can be said about the other tribes the Prophet ﷺ visited. The leaders of Banu Shaibaan spoke candidly, telling the Prophet ﷺ about the forces they had at their disposal. And rather than cover up their true motives by showing disdain for the Prophet's message, they calmly told the Prophet ﷺ their weak and vulnerable situation vis-à-vis the Persian Empire.

^[1] Refer to *Al-Jihaad Wal-Qitaal Fis-Siyaasatush-Shar'iyyah* (1/412).

Allah ﷻ decreed that, about 10 or more years later, it would be the Banu Shaibaan tribe who, after they became Muslims, would be the first to fight against the very kings they once feared. During the caliphate of Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ؓ, it was Al-Muthannah ibn Haarithah ؓ who led the Muslim armies that conquered Iraq. And Muthannah's people – Banu Shaibaan – were among the bravest fighters in the wars that took place against the Persians. When they were non-Muslims, the people of Banu Shaibaan feared the Persians a great deal – so much so that they never even thought about fighting them. And it was their fear of the Persians that made them reject the Prophet's *Da'wah*, even though they were convinced of its truthfulness. In this context, we should appreciate the greatness of Islam, through which Allah ﷻ raises true Muslims in this world, making them leaders on earth and dwellers of Paradise in the Hereafter.

Positive Developments In Al-Madeenah

Jaabir ibn ‘Abdullah Al-Ansaaree ؓ said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stayed in Makkah for ten years, following people to their homes, to ‘Ukkaadh (a famous marketplace), to Majannah, and to Minnah during the seasons (of *Hajj*) – saying all along, ‘Who will shelter me? Who will help me, so that I can convey the message of my Lord, and in return for that he will have Paradise?’ He ﷺ would do this to the degree that a man would come out from Yemen or Mudar, and his people would go to him and say, ‘Beware of the young man of the Quraish. Do not let him allure you.’ He (the person from Yemen or Mudar) would walk among his men, and they would point to him (i.e., to the Prophet ﷺ) with their fingers. And this situation continued until Allah ﷻ sent us to him from Yathrib (i.e., Al-Madeenah). We provided him with shelter, and we believed in him. A man from among us would go out (to him in Makkah) and believe in him. And he (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ) would teach him the Qur’an. That man would return to his family members, who would embrace Islam because he embraced Islam. And this continued until no house from the houses of the *Ansaar* remained without having in it a group of Muslims, who openly declared and practiced their Islam.”^[1]

^[1] *Musnad Ahmad* (3/322, 323-339), with a *Hasan* chain.

Early Contacts With The *Ansaar* During The *Hajj* And '*Umrah* Seasons

1) The Islam of Suwaid ibn As-Saamit ؓ

Whenever the Prophet ﷺ heard that an Arab of status and ranking was visiting Makkah, he ﷺ would go to him and invite him to Islam. So when Suwaid ibn As-Saamit, brother of Banu 'Amr ibn 'Auf, visited Makkah for *Hajj* or for '*Umrah*, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went to him, for Suwaid was known among his people as *Al-Kaamil* (the complete one),' based on his bravery, his poetry, his honour, and his lineage. After the Messenger of Allah ﷺ presented Islam to him, Suwaid said, "Perhaps that which is with you is similar to that which is with me?" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked, 'And what is with you?' Suwaid said, "The Scroll of Luqmaan." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Present it to me." After Suwaid presented it to him, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Verily, this speech is good, but that which is with me is better than this: It is Qur'an (i.e., that which is recited) that Allah ﷻ has revealed to me; it is guidance and light." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ recited the Qur'an to him and invited him to Islam, and he was not far from accepting it. He said to the Prophet ﷺ, "Verily, this speech is good," after which he left Makkah and returned to his people in Al-Madeenah. Shortly after this occurred, Suwaid was killed by the Khazraj. His people were convinced that Suwaid had embraced Islam before dying, and they would afterwards say about him, "We feel that, when he was killed, he was a Muslim." Suwaid died on the Day of Bu'aath, during a fierce battle that took place between the various tribes of Al-Madeenah. At any rate, there is nothing to indicate that Suwaid ibn As-Saamit ؓ actually invited his fellow tribesmen to Islam. And Allah ﷻ knows best.

2) Iyaas ibn Mu'aadh ؓ

Abu Al-Haisar ibn Raafai' was the head of a delegation that

visited Makkah prior to the Prophet's migration to Al-Madeenah. The delegates were from the Banu 'Abdul-Ashhal clan, and among them was Iyaas ibn Mu'aadh ؓ. Their purpose for visiting Makkah was to form an alliance with the Quraish against people from the Khazraj tribe. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ heard about their arrival, he ﷺ went to them and said, "Do you want that which is better than the purpose for which you have come?" They said, "And what is that?" He ﷺ said, "I am the Messenger of Allah. Allah ﷻ has sent me to (His) slaves for me to invite them to worship Allah, without associating anything (i.e., any partner) with Him; and He has sent down to me the Book (i.e., the Qur'an)." The Prophet ﷺ went on to explain Islam to them, and to recite part of the Qur'an to them. Iyaas ibn Mu'aadh, who was still a young man, said to his fellow delegates, "This, by Allah, is better than that for which you have come." Abu Al-Haisar took a handful of dirt and used it to strike his face. He then said to the Prophet ﷺ, "Leave us alone, for upon my life, we have come for a purpose other than this." Iyaas remained silent, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood up and left them. Shortly after the delegates returned to Al-Madeenah, the Bu'aath war took place between the Aus and Khazraj tribes. In the early stages of that war, Iyaas ibn Mu'aadh ؓ was killed. But his fellow clansmen who were with him when he was dying said, "Until he died, he indeed continued to say, 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allah; Allah is the Greatest; all praise is for Allah; and How perfect Allah is!'" They had not the least shred of doubt that he had died a Muslim.

The Native Dwellers Of Al-Madeenah Begin To Embrace Islam

The first palpable change in Al-Madeenah occurred when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ met a group of delegates from the Khazraj tribe. The meeting occurred during *Hajj* season, at 'Aqabah in Minaa. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ began the unplanned meeting by asking them, "Who are you?" They said, "We are members of

the Khazraj (tribe).” Knowing that the Khazraj lived in Al-Madeenah alongside Jewish tribes that had settled there, the Prophet ﷺ asked, “You are from the allies of the Jews.” They said, “Yes.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Will you not sit down so that I can speak to you.” They said, “Yes,” and so they sat down together and the Prophet ﷺ invited them to Islam and recited to them the Qur’an.

Though they had never met the Prophet ﷺ, what he invited them to was familiar to them, and so was he. For years, the Jewish inhabitants of Al-Madeenah threatened them, saying that a Prophet in Arabia was about to appear and that, when he did appear, the Jews would follow him and would, with his help, destroy the Aus and Khazraj tribes.

After the Prophet ﷺ presented Islam to them, they said to one another, “O people, by Allah, you know that he is indeed the Prophet that the Jews threatened you about, so do not let them beat you to him.” They answered the Prophet’s *Da’wah* and entered the fold of Islam, and they told the Prophet ﷺ about how the two native tribes of Al-Madeenah – the Aus and the Khazraj – were constantly at war with each other. “And hopefully Allah will unite them through you,” they said. “We will go to them and invite them to your affair (i.e., to Islam). Then if Allah unites them through you, there will be no man who will be stronger and more honourable than you.” This delegation consisted of six men, all of whom embraced Islam: Abu Umaamah ibn As’ad ibn Zuraarah ؓ, ‘Auf ibn Al-Haarith ؓ, Raafai’ ibn Maalik ؓ, Qutbah ibn ‘Aamir ؓ, ‘Uqbah ibn ‘Aamir ؓ, and Jaabir ibn ‘Abdullah ibn Riaab ؓ.^[1] When they returned to Al-Madeenah, they mentioned the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to their people and invited them to Islam. Islam spread quickly, so that very shortly thereafter the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was being spoken about in every single house of Al-Madeenah.

The six delegates mentioned above were the forerunners of Islam

^[1] Refer to *Sharh Al-Mawaahib* by Az-Zarqaanee (1/361).

in Al-Madeenah. Not only did they embrace Islam, but also each one of them took a covenant upon himself that he would invite his people to Islam. True to their word, they all fulfilled the terms of that covenant. Beginning with their families and moving on to fellow clansmen, they preached the message of Islam.

That first meeting with Al-Madeenah's inhabitants was, unlike many meetings with leaders of other tribes, completely unplanned by the Prophet ﷺ. It was a meeting that Allah ﷻ decreed to be of great importance in the course of the Prophet's *Da'wah*; furthermore, it was a pivotal moment in human history.

In the briefest of moments, those six delegates went from being blind idol-worshippers to pure Islamic Monotheists. And the long months of searching for the right tribe to support the cause of Islam finally came to a fruitful end. Islam was now going to be a force to be feared in Arabia, and soon all over the world.

It is important to note that the above-mentioned meeting that took place at Al-'Aqabah involved no pledge of allegiance. They were only six in number, and, though they embraced Islam, they probably did not feel that it was their right to make a covenant on behalf of their people without first returning to them and discussing the matter with them.

The First Pledge of Al-'Aqabah

One year after the first meeting took place between the Prophet ﷺ and delegates from the Khazraj, another delegation came, one that consisted of twelve men, ten from the Khazraj and two from the 'Aus. That ten members of the Khazraj came while two members of the 'Aus came indicates two points: First, the *Da'wah* efforts of the previous year's delegates were concentrated mainly among the Khazraj; and second, Muslims among the Khazraj made a breakthrough by convincing some members of the 'Aus to embrace Islam; and thus a new phase of harmony and unity between the two tribes had begun in earnest.

Again, the delegates met the Prophet ﷺ at Al-'Aqabah, but this

time around, they made a pledge, one that is remembered as the First Pledge of Al-'Aqabah. 'Ubaadah ibn As-Saamit ؓ, a member of the Khazraj tribe, later said, "I was among those who were present at the First Al-'Aqabah (pledge). We were twelve men, and we gave the Messenger of Allah ﷺ the pledge of women (i.e., a pledge that does not involve a promise to fight); and that was before fighting was made obligatory upon us. We pledged to not associate partners with Allah in worship; to not cheat or fornicate; to not kill our children; to not come up with falsehood that we fabricate between our hands and feet (scholars have suggested various interpretations of this phrase, one of them being that the heart is intended, since it lies between one's hands and legs, and since the tongue interprets what is in a person's heart); and to not disobey him regarding something good (to which he commands us). (He ﷺ said,) 'If you live up to these (conditions), then you will have Paradise. But if you perpetrate any of those (sins), then your affair is with Allah ﷻ: If He wills, He will forgive (you); and if He wills, He will punish (you).'"^[1] The articles of the above-mentioned pledge are the very same that are found in the pledge that women would give later on, which is why it became known as "The Pledge of Women."^[2]

The Prophet ﷺ sent one of his Companions ؓ, Mus'ab ibn 'Umair ؓ, back with the delegates, instructing him to teach them the Qur'an and about the teachings of Islam. Because Mus'ab ؓ became famous quickly in Al-Madeenah as a teacher of the Qur'an, the people there gave him the title, *Al-Muqree* (the reciter, or the one who teaches recitation). Mus'ab ؓ was needed in Al-Madeenah to preach Islam, to be sure, but for another reason as well: to lead people in Prayer. True, the Aus and the Khazraj were now living in harmony under the banner of Islam; but still, they

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, the Book of Punishments, chapter, "Legal Punishments are Atonements for those Upon Whom They are Executed"; *Hadeeth* number: 1709.

^[2] Refer to *Al-Ghurabaa Al-Awwaloon* (pg. 185).

were new to Islam and they had fought against one another for many long and bitter years. Their leaders therefore feared that if a man from the Aus was chosen to lead prayer, members of the Khazraj would become angry, and vice-versa. And so it was appropriate for an outsider, one of the Prophet's Companions from Makkah, to come and lead people in prayer, so as to avoid any disputes.

The Prophet ﷺ chose Mus'ab ibn 'Umar ؓ based on his many good qualities. Mus'ab ؓ was upright and enthusiastic; he ؓ had memorized much of the Qur'an; he had good manners and strong faith; he was wise; and he ؓ had tact and charisma. Within a matter of months, Mus'ab ؓ was able to spread Islam to most of Al-Madeenah's houses. Through personal, face-to-face *Da'wah* efforts, he ؓ garnered the support of important leaders of Al-Madeenah, such as Sa'd ibn Mu'adh ؓ and Usaid ibn Hudair ؓ. When these two Madanee leaders embraced Islam, many others from their people did the same.

During at least the early part of his stay in Al-Madeenah, Mus'ab ibn 'Umar ؓ was a guest of As'ad ibn Zuraarah ؓ. Mus'ab ؓ played a vital role in spreading Islam throughout Al-Madeenah. He ؓ would invite the chief of a clan to Islam, that chief would embrace Islam, and then all of his fellow clansmen would follow suit. As a *Daa'ee* (caller to Islam) in Al-Madeenah, Mus'ab ؓ was a practical, real-life translation of this Verse of the Qur'an:

﴿ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ﴾ (١٢٥)

"Invite (mankind, O Muhammad ﷺ) to the Way of your Lord (i.e., Islam) with wisdom (i.e., with the Divine Inspiration and the Qur'an) and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better. Truly, your Lord knows best who has gone astray from His Path, and He is the Best Aware of those who are guided." (Qur'an 16: 125)

The Story Of How Usaid Ibn Hudair ؓ And Sa'd Ibn Mu'aadh ؓ Embraced Islam

The two native tribes of Al-Madeenah were the Aus and the Khazraz; but as with the Quraish, each of these tribes was divided into various subtribes or clans. One such subtribe was called Banu 'Abdul-Ashhal, and it was headed by two chieftains: Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh ؓ and Usaid ibn Hudair ؓ.

When Sa'd and Usaid, who were still polytheists, heard of Mus'ab ibn 'Umair ؓ and his *Da'wah* activities, Sa'd said to Usaid, "May you have no father! Go to these two men (referring to Mus'ab ؓ and As'ad ibn Zuraarah ؓ) who have come to our homes to make fools of the weak ones among us. Drive them away and forbid them from coming to our homes. Had I not been as close to As'ad ibn Zuraarah as you know me to be, I would have taken care of the matter for you. As'ad is my cousin, and I cannot show hostility towards him." Usaid took his spear and began to search out for Mus'ab ؓ and As'ad ؓ. When the latter two saw him, As'ad ibn Zuraarah ؓ said, "He is the chief of his people, and he is coming to you. So be true to Allah when you deal with him." Mus'ab ؓ replied, "If he sits down, I will speak to him."

Seeing his targets, Usaid went to them and then stood over them in an insulting manner. Without introducing himself or greeting either Mus'ab ؓ or As'ad ؓ, Usaid gruffly said, "What has brought you here? And why do you make fools of the weak ones among us? Leave us if you value your lives!" Mus'ab ؓ became neither angry nor frightened. With the attitude of one who is calm and sure of the truthfulness of his message, Mus'ab ؓ said, "Will you not sit down and listen. If you are pleased with the matter (I will now explain to you), then accept it. And if you dislike it, then we will stop doing that which you dislike?"

"You have spoken justly," said Usaid, after which he drove his spear into the ground and sat down beside Mus'ab ؓ and As'ad ؓ. Mus'ab ؓ spoke to Usaid about Islam and recited to him the Qur'an. Mus'ab ؓ and As'ad ؓ are related to have later said

about Usaid ؓ, "By Allah, we saw Islam (i.e., a readiness to embrace Islam) in his face even before he spoke, in terms of the brightness and easygoingness (we read on his features)."

When Mus'ab ؓ was done explaining Islam to Usaid, the latter said, "How wonderful and beautiful this speech is! How does one do if one wants to enter into this religion?" They said, "Take a shower and purify yourself and your garment; then bear witness to the testimony of truth (i.e., none has the right to be worshipped but Allah); and then pray."

Usaid immediately took a shower and purified his garments; he ؓ then bore witness to the testimony of truth, after which he ؓ stood up and performed two units of prayer.

When Usaid ؓ completed his prayer, he said to Mus'ab ؓ and As'ad ؓ, "Indeed, I have left behind a man named Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh. If he follows you both, then no one from his people will remain behind (rather, they will all follow what he does). I will indeed send him to you now."

Pulling his spear out of the ground, Usaid ؓ got up and returned to Sa'd and his people, who were, upon Usaid's arrival, gathered together in their place of assembly. When Sa'd saw Usaid approaching, he said, "I swear by Allah, Usaid ibn Hudair ؓ has come to you with a face that is different from the one he had when he left you (a while ago)!"

When Usaid ؓ stood before the gathered crowd, Sa'd ؓ said, "What did you do?" Usaid ؓ said, "I spoke to the two men, and by Allah, I saw nothing wrong with them. I forbade them (from spreading their ideas), and they said, 'We will do whatever pleases you.' But then I was told that the children of Haarithah (another subtribe in Al-Madeenah) are headed towards As'ad ibn Zuraarah ؓ in order to kill him. They are doing so because they have found out that he is your cousin, and they want to show you that they have broken their covenant with you."^[1]

Sa'd ؓ stood up feeling mixed emotions: On the one hand, he was

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Abu Shuhbah (1/442).

furious with the children of Haarithah; and on the other hand, he was afraid for his cousin's life. Taking up his spear in his hand, he turned to hurry away, but first he angrily said to Hudair ؓ, "I don't think that you have taken care of anything!"

When Sa'd reached As'ad ؓ, he found that both As'ad ؓ and Mus'ab ؓ were safe and sound; he then realized that Usaid ؓ had mentioned the children of Haarithah only so that he would go to As'ad ؓ and listen to what he and Mus'ab ؓ had to say. Nonetheless, he stood over them disparagingly and said to As'ad ibn Zuraarah ؓ, "By Allah, O father of Umaamah, had it not been for the fact that you and I are related, you would not have held such hopes from me. Do you (think it fair to, or do you dare to) come into our homes with that which we dislike?"

Prior to Sa'd's arrival, As'ad ؓ had seen him approaching and said, "By Allah, coming to you now is the chief of the people he has left behind. If he follows you, then no two people among them will differ among themselves (rather, they will all be united as Muslims)."

After Sa'd finished addressing As'ad ؓ, Mus'ab ؓ said to Sa'd, "Will you sit down and listen? If you are pleased with the matter (I will present to you), and if you desire (to follow it), then accept it. And if you dislike it, then we will stop doing that which you dislike." Sa'd ؓ said, "You have spoken justly," after which he drove his spear into the ground and sat down. Mus'ab ؓ presented Islam to him, and recited to him the Qur'an. Moosa ibn 'Uqbah ؓ later recounted that Mus'ab ؓ had recited the first part of *Soorah Az-Zukhruf*. Also, Mus'ab ؓ and As'ad ؓ later on said about their meeting with Sa'd ؓ, "By Allah, we knew (a readiness to embrace) Islam in his face even before he spoke, in terms of the radiance and easygoingness (of his features)."

Like Usaid ؓ had done, Sa'd ؓ asked Mus'ab ؓ and As'ad ؓ, "What do you do if you want to submit and enter the fold of this religion?" They said, "Take a shower and become purified, and purify your two garments (i.e., your upper and lower garment). Then bear witness to the testimony of truth; and after that, perform two units of prayer." Sa'd ؓ forthwith got up to take a

shower and purify his garments. When he finished doing that, he bore witness to the testimony of truth; and after that, he performed two units of prayer.

After he finished praying, Sa'd ؓ took his spear and returned to where his people were assembled. As Sa'd ؓ approached them, they saw him and said, "We swear by Allah, Sa'd has returned to you with a face that is different from the one he had when he left you (a short while ago). When Sa'd ؓ stood over them, he ؓ said, "O children of 'Abdul-Ashhal, what do you know about my status among you?" They said, "You are our chief, the best among us in judgment, and the most blessed leader we have." Sa'd ؓ said, "Then it is forbidden for the men and women among you to speak to me until you believe in Allah and His Messenger." Sa'd ؓ later said, "By Allah, by nightfall, every single man and woman in the houses of Banu 'Abdul-Ashhal entered the evening as a Muslim."

As'ad ؓ and Mus'ab ؓ returned to the former's home and continued to invite people to Islam. Not before long, every house in Al-Madeenah (to the exclusion of the districts that were inhabited by Jewish tribes) had in it men and women who had embraced Islam. One notable exception was a man named 'Amr ibn Thaabit ibn Waqsh ؓ, who was known as Al-Usairam and who delayed embracing Islam until the Day of Uhud. Having never performed a single prostration for Allah ﷻ, 'Amr ibn Thaabit ؓ embraced Islam on the day of the Battle of Uhud and was martyred on that very same day. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said about him ؓ that he was from the dwellers of Paradise (may Allah be pleased with him). Ibn Ishaq related with an acceptable chain that Abu Hurairah ؓ used to say, "Tell me about a man who entered Paradise without ever having performed even a single prayer." If the person or people he ؓ was talking to did not know the answer, Abu Hurairah ؓ would say, "Usairam Banu 'Abdul-Ashhal (i.e., 'Amr ibn Thaabit ibn Waqsh ؓ)."^[1]

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Abu Shuhbah (1/444) and to *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* (pg. 291). The *Hadeeth* is also related in *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, in the Book of *Jihaad* and *As-Siyyar* (*Hadeeth* number: 2808).

Lessons and Morals

- 1) There were many factors that helped promote the spread of Islam in Al-Madeenah; among them are the following:
 - a) Allah ﷻ instilled an inherent sense of modesty, gentleness, and moderation in the people of the Aus and Khazraj. Whereas the people of Makkah were arrogant and intransigent, the people of the Aus and Khazraj were humble and flexible, qualities that they shared with their ancestors from Yemen. For when a delegation from Yemen visited Al-Madeenah, the Prophet ﷺ said, "The people of Yemen have come to you; they indeed have gentle and soft hearts."^[1] Both the Aus and Khazraj tribes are originally from Yemen; their great grandparents had emigrated from it centuries earlier.^[2] And Allah ﷻ praised the native dwellers of Al-Madeenah, saying:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شَحْنَ نَفْسِهِ فَاُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩﴾﴾

"And those who, before them, had homes (in Al-Madeenah) and had adopted the faith, – love those who emigrate to them, and have no jealousy in their breasts for that which they have been given (from the booty of Banu An-Nadeer), and give them emigrants preference over themselves, even though they were in need of that. And whosoever is saved from his own covetousness, such are they who will be the successful." (Qur'an 59: 9)

- b) Bitter wars, such as "The Day of Bi'aath," had taken place between the Aus and Khazraj tribes; these wars led to the death of many of their elder chieftains who, like the elder chieftains of the Quraish and Thaqeef, would likely have opposed and not supported the Prophet's *Da'wah*. With the

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of *Al-Maghaazee*, chapter, "The Arrival of Al-Ash'ariyyoon and the people of Yemen"; *Hadeeth* number: 4388.

^[2] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Abul-Hasan An-Nadwee (pg. 154).

death of Al-Madeenah's elders through long years of war, both the Aus and Khazraj tribes were headed by a new generation of fresh and young leaders, people who were flexible and willing to embrace the truth. Furthermore, Al-Madeenah was in a state of political chaos; no one leader or group of leaders existed who could rule and control all of Al-Madeenah's inhabitants; they thus needed someone who would unite them and help heal the wounds of past division. 'Aishah ؓ said, "The Day of Bi'aath (i.e., the War of Bi'aath) was a matter that Allah ﷻ presented to His Prophet ﷺ. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ arrived (in Al-Madeenah), after they had become divided and their nobles had been killed and injured. Allah presented it (i.e., the War of Bi'aath) to His Messenger ﷺ, as a means of making them enter into the fold of Islam."^[1]

- c) Being the neighbours of three Jewish tribes, the people of the Aus and Khazraj had knowledge – albeit limited in scope – about past Prophets and divinely revealed religion. Conversely, the people of the Quraish lived nowhere near People of the Book – Jews and Christians – which made them more close-minded than their counterparts in Al-Madeenah. At best, certain members of the Quraish gathered, through their travels or through meeting visitors from foreign lands, scattered reports about divinely revealed religion.

In short, the Quraish never gave much thought to Jews and Christians, since members of both faiths were such a distant reality to them. On the other hand, dealing with Jews was a daily reality for the Aus and Khazraj; they were neighbours, and alliances were always shifting. Sometimes, the Jews of Al-Madeenah would join up with the Khazraj to fight against the Aus; and sometimes, they would join up with the Aus to fight against the Khazraj. And the Jews would threaten both the Aus and the Khazraj about a Prophet whose time to appear was near at hand; they claimed that they would follow him, and would,

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of Merits, chapter, "The Merits of the *Ansaar*"; *Hadeeth* number: 3777.