Muhammad ﷺ

A Biography of the Prophet



Maulana
Wahiduddin Khan

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A BIOGRAPHY OF THE PROPHET

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Preface

After the Quran, the most authentic source of religion is the Hadith of the Prophet ﷺ. It is said that Hadith is a collection of eight branches of knowledge. This has been expressed in verse as follows:

> "Seerah, manners, tafsir, beliefs, tribulations,
> signs of the Last Day, rulings, and virtues."

Thus, one part of the Hadith is called Seerah (the biography of the Prophet ﷺ).

In this book, I have aimed to write a simple narrative of the Prophet's life so that it is easy for everyone to read and understand. While putting this work together, I mainly referenced two classical Arabic sources: *Sirat al-Nabi* by Ibn Hisham and *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Kathir.

I first started writing this book in 1976. At that time, I was able to cover the period up to the *Hijrah* (migration),

but then I had to stop. The second attempt began on December 29, 1986. By November 1989, I had finished the remaining part, and I also started typing it. However, for certain reasons, I had to pause the work again.

The third attempt to organize and finish the book started in early 1999, and by September 1999, the work was done. Thanks to God, the final lines were written on September 10, 1999.

New Delhi, 6 August 2003

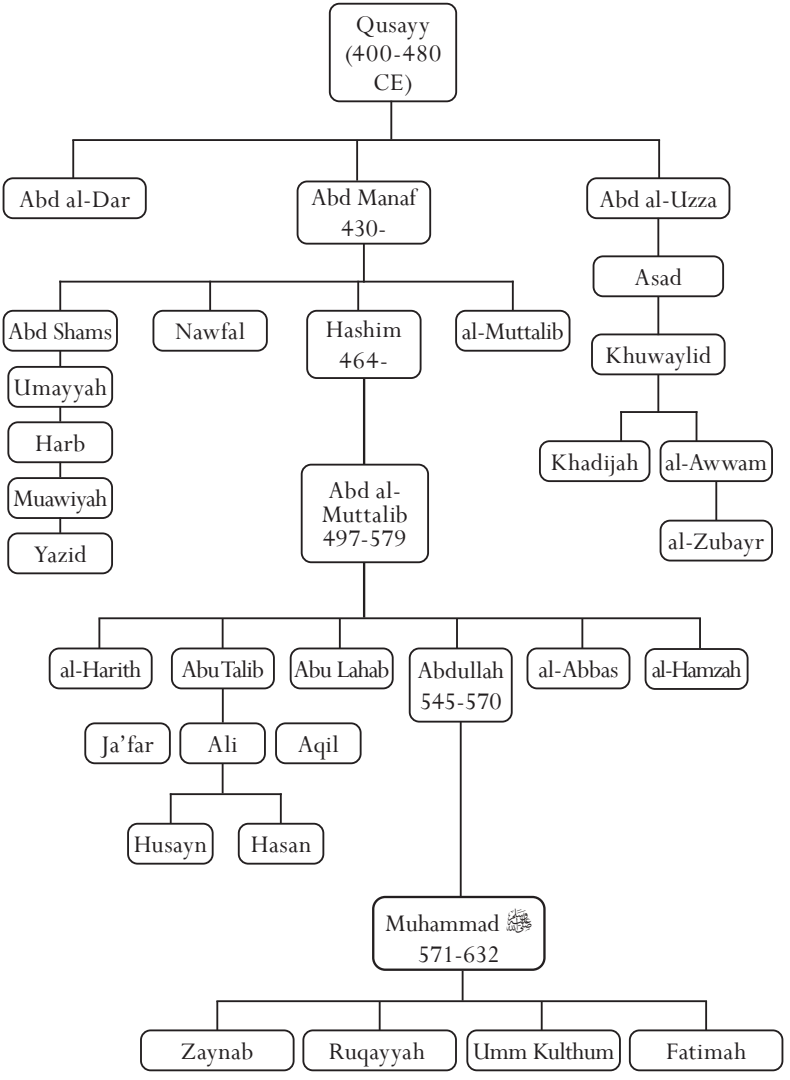
Wahiduddin

Timeline of the Prophet's ﷺ Life

- 22 April 571 CE (9 Rabi‘ al-Awwal, Year of the Elephant)-Birth of the Prophet ﷺ
- 12 February 610 CE (9 Rabi‘ al-Awwal, 41st year)–First Revelation (Prophethood begins)
- 22 March 617 CE (27 Rajab, 10th year of Prophethood)–Night Journey & Ascension (*Mi‘raj*)
- 12 September 622 CE (Safar, 13th year of Prophethood)–Migration (*Hijrah*)
- 16 September 622 CE (1 Rabi‘ al-Awwal, 13th year of Prophethood)–Departure from Cave Thawr
- 27 September 622 CE (12 Rabi‘ al-Awwal, 1 AH)–Arrival in Madinah
- 16 March 624 CE (17 Ramadan, 2 AH)–Battle of Badr
- 21 March 625 CE (6 Shawwal, 3 AH)–Battle of Uhud
- 23 March 627 CE (28 Shawwal, 5 AH)–Battle of *Ahzab* (Confederates)
- March 628 CE (Dhu‘l-Qa‘da, 6 AH)–Treaty of Hudaybiyyah

- 14 May 628 CE (1 Muharram, 7 AH)–Letters to Kings and Rulers
- June 628 CE (End of Muharram, 7 AH)–Battle of Khaybar
- April 629 CE (Dhu'l-Qa'da, 7 AH)–'Umrat al-Qada
- 12 January 630 CE (20 Ramadan, 8 AH)–Conquest of Makkah
- 1 February 630 CE (11 Shawwal, 8 AH)–Battle of Hunayn
- 3 February 630 CE (13 Shawwal, 8 AH)–Battle of Ta'if
- Oct–Dec 630 CE (Rajab–Ramadan, 9 AH)–Battle of Tabuk
- 9 March 631 CE (9 Dhu al-Hijjah, 10 AH)–Farewell Pilgrimage (Hajjat al-Wada')
- 25 May 632 CE (12 Rabi' al-Awwal, 11 AH)–Passing of the Prophet ﷺ

Family Tree of the Prophet of Islam



Early Background

The Prophet of Islam, Muhammad ﷺ, was from the lineage of Prophet Abraham (عليه السلام). The era of Abraham is estimated to be around 2160–1985 BCE. Nearly four thousand years ago, he left his homeland of Iraq and settled his younger son, Ishmael (Isma'il), in the uninhabited region of *Hijaz* (Arabia).

When Ishmael grew up, he married a virtuous woman from the Jurhum tribe. Through this union, a new generation was born and raised in the desert environment. This community embodied noble human qualities in their purest form because they were untouched by the influences of urban civilization. Living in a natural environment made them truthful, courageous, brave, and free-spirited. For this reason, they were more receptive to the truth than the more urbanized nations of their time.

Abraham would sometimes visit this family during his missionary travels to check on their well-being. When Ishmael grew up, Abraham and he built a small house in Makkah dedicated solely to worshiping the One God. This was the Kaaba, the first house on earth built exclusively for the worship of God. Abraham entrusted its care to Ishmael

and prayed to God for the prosperity and continuation of Ishmael's descendants.

Many generations later—about sixty in total—'Abd al-Muttalib was born into this lineage. The clan was known as Quraysh, which held a position of great distinction and respect among all the tribes of Arabia. Within this lineage appeared many remarkable figures such as 'Adnan, Nadr, Fihr, and Qusayy ibn Kilab.

Qusayy, in his era, was given custodianship of the Kaaba. This greatly boosted his prestige. He made many important reforms. Before him, the Quraysh families were scattered across different regions, but Qusayy united them around the Kaaba in Makkah, provided them with houses, and organized them into a small yet important political community. From that point, the historical prominence of Quraysh began.

The Kaaba was the main sanctuary for all of Arabia. During the pilgrimage season, thousands would come to visit. Before Qusayy, there was no proper way to host these pilgrims. Qusayy announced that their hospitality was a duty of Quraysh. He set aside a special fund for this, providing food and water to the pilgrims.

After him, his descendants continued this noble service. As custodians of the Kaaba, the Quraysh gained unmatched honour and reverence throughout Arabia. Although looting and robbery were common in Arabia

and most trade routes were dangerous, the caravans of Quraysh were protected because of their role as caretakers of the Kaaba and servants of pilgrims. As a result, they could carry out trade peacefully, moving goods safely from one region to another.

'Abd al-Muttalib, the grandfather of the Prophet ﷺ, carried out many important tasks while overseeing the Kaaba. His greatest achievement was rediscovering and restoring the Well of Zamzam, which had been buried and forgotten for a long time. Reopening it greatly increased his honour and fame.

'Abd al-Muttalib had ten sons, five of whom were well-known:

- 'Abdullah: the father of the Prophet ﷺ.
- Abu Talib: he did not embrace Islam, but he protected and supported the Prophet ﷺ for many years.
- Hamzah: he later embraced Islam and became one of its courageous defenders.
- 'Abbas: he also embraced Islam and played an important role in its service.
- Abu Lahab: he was known for his hostility and opposition to Islam.

Among them, 'Abdullah, the father of the Prophet ﷺ, was regarded as the ideal example of Arab nobility and virtue. He married Aminah bint Wahb, the daughter of Wahb

ibn ʻAbd Manaf, leader of the Zuhrah tribe. Aminah was considered one of the most honourable women of Quraysh for her lineage and character. From this noble union was born Muhammad ibn ʻAbdullah ibn ʻAbd al-Muttalib ﷺ, the personification of the highest human qualities.

Before the Prophet's birth, his father ʻAbdullah passed away. As a result, Muhammad ﷺ was born an orphan in Rabiʻ al-Awwal, on April 22, 571 CE. When news of his birth reached ʻAbd al-Muttalib, he happily took the newborn to the Kaaba, offered prayers of gratitude, and prayed for him. On the seventh day, ʻAbd al-Muttalib performed the *ʻAqiqah* (sacrifice) and named the child Muhammad. The Quraysh, unfamiliar with this new name, wondered why he had chosen it. ʻAbd al-Muttalib explained: "I have named him Muhammad so that he may be praised by the whole world." Among the noble families of Arabia, it was common to entrust newborns to women from desert tribes to raise them in the open, healthy environment and help them acquire the purest form of the Arabic language. The Bedouins, living away from cities and towns, were known for the purity of their language. Following this tradition, the infant Muhammad ﷺ was placed in the care of Halimah bint Abi Dhu'ayb of the Banu Saʻd ibn Bakr tribe, famously known as Halimah al-Saʻdiyyah.

Halimah herself narrates: "I set out from my village with some women of my tribe in search of nursing infants whom

we could take with us. I was riding a weak donkey, and after a difficult journey, we reached Makkah. Every woman among us was offered Muhammad, but when they heard he was an orphan, they declined. We used to hope for generosity from a child's father, but with Muhammad being fatherless, no one expected such help from his mother or grandfather. Thus, none of them agreed to take him."

Halimah continues: "In the end, each woman who came with me had found a child to nurse—except me. When it was time to return, I said to my husband: 'By God, I do not like to go back empty-handed without a baby to nurse. I will go and take that orphan child.' My husband replied: 'There is no harm in doing so. Perhaps God will bless us through him.'

So, I went back to his house and brought him with me. At that moment, I did it for no reason other than that I had found no other child."

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ remained with Halimah al-Sa'diyyah for about two years and some months. This was a time of immense blessing for her household. After this period, she returned him to his mother in Makkah.

Ibn Ishaq narrates that Muhammad ﷺ lived under the special care and protection of God while with his mother Aminah and his grandfather 'Abd al-Muttalib. God was nurturing him in the best manner, preparing him for the lofty station he was destined to reach.

When he was six years old, his mother Aminah passed away. Afterwards, Muhammad ﷺ was placed under the guardianship of his grandfather ʻAbd al-Muttalib ibn Hashim, one of Makkah's most respected leaders.

ʻAbd al-Muttalib had a rug laid out for him near the Kaaba, where no one else was allowed to sit. But whenever young Muhammad ﷺ approached and sat on it, if someone tried to move him, ʻAbd al-Muttalib would say:

> "Leave my son alone. By God, he is meant for greatness."

When the Prophet ﷺ turned eight years old (eight years after the Year of the Elephant), his grandfather ʻAbd al-Muttalib also passed away.

After this, Muhammad ﷺ came under the care of his uncle Abu Talib. Abu Talib was a merchant, and once, while preparing for a trade journey to Syria, the young Muhammad ﷺ expressed a desire to accompany him. Despite his young age, Abu Talib, out of love and compassion, allowed him to join the caravan.

The caravan stopped in the town of Busra in Syria, where a Christian monk named Bahira lived in a monastery. Bahira had studied the ancient scriptures and knew that a prophet was destined to emerge from Arabia. When he saw Muhammad ﷺ, he recognized in him the signs of prophethood described in the books.

Bahira invited the caravan for a meal and, after observing the boy closely, asked Abu Talib: "What is your relation to this child?"

Abu Talib replied: "He is my son."

Bahira said: "He cannot be your son. His father must no longer be alive."

When Abu Talib confirmed that Muhammad's father had indeed passed away before his birth, Bahira said: "Take your nephew back to his homeland and protect him from the Jews. By God, if they recognize him as I have, they will surely seek to harm him."

Ibn Ishaq reports that Muhammad ﷺ entered his youth under the direct protection of God, safeguarded from the impurities of the Age of Ignorance. By the time he reached maturity, he was already renowned among the people of Makkah for his exemplary character, dignity, and nobility. He never engaged in indecency or broke a promise. So much so that the people of Makkah came to call him *al-Amin* (the Trustworthy).

When the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ reached the age of 25, he received a marriage proposal from a noble widow of Quraysh, Khadijah bint Khuwaylid. At the time, Khadijah was 40 years old. She was one of the most respected and wealthy women of Makkah, belonging to a family of merchants. She herself conducted trade through agents, giving them her goods to sell and sharing the profits with them.

When Khadijah first learned of Muhammad's honesty and trustworthiness, she said:

> "Take my goods to Syria with my servant Maysarah, and I will pay you more than I pay others."

The Prophet ﷺ agreed. He sold the merchandise in Syria and, upon returning to Makkah, handed over the profits to Khadijah. She was astonished, for the profits were double what she usually earned.

Impressed by his integrity, noble character, and dignified personality, Khadijah was deeply moved. Soon afterwards, she sent him a marriage proposal. After consulting his uncle, the Prophet ﷺ accepted it. Khadijah thus became the first woman he married. During her lifetime, he married no other woman until after her passing.

All the Prophet's children were born to Khadijah, except his son Ibrahim, who was from Maria al-Qibtiyyah and passed away in infancy. His sons did not survive beyond childhood, but his daughters Zaynab, Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthum, and Fatimah (رضي الله عنهن) lived into the time of Islam, all of them embracing the faith and later migrating with him to Madinah.

When the Prophet ﷺ was about 35 years old, the Quraysh decided to reconstruct the Kaaba. They demolished the old structure and began rebuilding it with new stones.

When the walls were raised to the level where the Black Stone (*Hajar al-Aswad*) was to be placed, a fierce dispute broke out. Each clan wanted the honour of lifting the sacred stone into its place. None was willing to concede this privilege to the other, and the quarrel escalated to the brink of violence. This tense situation continued for nearly five days.

> Finally, Abu Umayyah ibn al-Mughirah, an elder of the Quraysh, proposed that the matter should be decided by the first person to enter the sanctuary the following day. They all agreed to his proposal.

Many events from the life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ before his Prophethood are recorded in the books of Seerah. A few of them are briefly mentioned here.

In ancient Arabia, three men—Fadl ibn Fudala, Fadl ibn Wada'ah, and Fudayl ibn Harith—entered into a mutual agreement. Since each of their names began with Fadl, the pact became known as *Hilf al-Fudul* (The Pact of the Virtuous). Ibn Hisham narrates some poetry by Zubayr ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib about this agreement. One of his lines says:

> "The Fudul swore together and pledged, that no oppressor would be allowed to remain in the valley of Makkah."

After the death of these men, the pact gradually faded.

When the Prophet ﷺ was around 15 years old, a tribal war broke out between Quraysh and the tribe of Qays. This was known as *Harb al-Fijar* (the Sacrilegious War). It caused widespread unrest and insecurity in Makkah. People then felt the need to revive the old pact of justice.

It is said that a man from Yemen once came to Makkah and sold goods to al-'As ibn Wa'il al-Sahmi. However, al-'As did not pay him the full amount. The man recited verses lamenting his oppression, which stirred the conscience of the Quraysh. In response, Zubayr ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib gathered people at the house of 'Abdullah ibn Jud'an.

After discussion, they resolved to renew the pact. They pledged that if anyone in Makkah was wronged—whether a resident or a foreigner—they would stand together to support the oppressed and ensure that justice was done, forcing the oppressor to return the rights he had taken.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ himself participated in this agreement before his Prophethood. He later said:

> "I was present in the house of 'Abdullah ibn Jud'an when the pact was made. I would not exchange my part in it for the finest red camels. If I were invited to such a pact in Islam, I would surely accept it." (*Al-Tabaqat Al-Kubra*, Vol. 1, p. 103)

At that time, similar moral and reformist alliances also existed among the Arabs. For example, once the clan of Banu 'Abd al-Dar and their supporters gathered at the

Kaaba and swore an oath that they would never abandon each other and would always defend one another. (*Al-Tabaqat al-Kubra*, Vol. 1, p. 63)

The Prophet ﷺ did not abolish such noble agreements of the pre-Islamic era. Rather, he affirmed and strengthened them. He said that any agreement made in the Age of Ignorance (*Jahiliyyah*) to promote justice was only reinforced further by Islam.

The next morning, the first to enter the Kaaba was none other than Muhammad ﷺ. When the Quraysh saw him, they cried out with relief:

> "This is *al-Amin* (the Trustworthy)! We are content with his decision."

At their request, the Prophet ﷺ asked for a cloth to be brought. He placed the Black Stone in the centre of the cloth and instructed that the chief of each clan hold one corner. Together, they lifted it up to the required height. Then, Muhammad ﷺ himself took the stone with his blessed hands and set it into its proper place.

Thus, the Kaaba was rebuilt, and the crisis was resolved peacefully through his wisdom.

Before receiving Prophethood, the Messenger of God ﷺ engaged in trade.

'Abdullah ibn Abi Hamsa narrates: "I once entered into a business deal with the Messenger of God ﷺ before he was commissioned as a Prophet. I still owed him some amount.

I said, 'Please wait here, I will return shortly with the money.' But when I went home, I forgot. After three days, I remembered my promise and rushed back to the spot. To my amazement, I found him still there, waiting for me. He did not scold me. He simply said: 'You have caused me inconvenience. I have been waiting for you here for three days.'" (*Sunan Abi Dawud*, Hadith No. 4996)

'Abdullah ibn Sa'ib reports: "I used to trade together with the Messenger of God ﷺ during the days of ignorance (before Islam). Later, when I met him in Madinah, he said to me: 'Do you recognize me?' I replied, 'Of course! You were my trade partner, and what an excellent partner you were! You never deceived me, nor did you ever quarrel.'" (*Musnad Ahmad*, Hadith No. 15500)

Abu Hurairah ﷺ narrates: The Messenger of God ﷺ said: "There was no Prophet except that he tended sheep." The Companions asked: "Even you, O Messenger of God?" He replied: "Yes, I used to herd the sheep of the people of Makkah for a few *qirats* (coins)."

Jabir ibn 'Abdullah ﷺ adds: "We were once with the Messenger of God ﷺ in the valley of Zahran. People began picking the fruits of the Arak tree. The Prophet ﷺ said: 'Choose the black ones, for they are better.' We asked: 'O Messenger of God, how do you know this?' He replied: 'Yes, I too was a shepherd. There has never been a Prophet except that he herded sheep.'" (*Sunan Ibn Majah*, Hadith No. 2149)

The Prophet ﷺ undertook another journey to Syria when he was about 25 years old. At that time, the Quraysh would often trade on the basis of *mudarabah* (a profit-sharing arrangement). During one such trip, he had a disagreement with a man over a transaction. The man said:

> "Swear by al-Lat and al-'Uzza (*idols*), and I will accept your word."

The Prophet ﷺ replied: "I have never sworn by *al-Lat* or *al-'Uzza*. Whenever I happen to pass by them, I deliberately turn away and avoid them."

Even before receiving revelation, the Prophet ﷺ remained far from idolatry, corruption, and immoral practices.

Ibn Hisham transmits the words of Ibn Ishaq: "Thus the Messenger of God ﷺ grew up while God was protecting and guarding him, shielding him from the filth of ignorance. God wished to honour him and make him His Prophet. By the time he reached maturity, he was the most noble of his people in manliness, the finest in character, the most honourable in lineage, the best in neighbourliness, the most forbearing, the most truthful in speech, the most trustworthy, and the farthest removed from bad habits. Because of this, the people of Makkah named him al-Amin (the Trustworthy)." (*Sirah Ibn Hisham*, Vol. 1, p. 197)

The Beginning of Prophethood

When Prophet Muhammad ﷺ reached the age of forty, God sent revelation to him and made him His Messenger. The first sign of his Prophethood was through true dreams: whatever he saw in his sleep would come true exactly as he had seen it. During this period, God placed love of solitude in his heart, and nothing was more beloved to him than retreat and reflection.

Just about three miles from Makkah was the Cave of Hira, where he would spend long hours in contemplation and worship.

One night in the month of Ramadan, while he was in the cave, the Angel Jibril (Gabriel) came to him with a message from God. The Prophet ﷺ was asleep when Jibril awakened him and said: "*Iqra*' (Read/Recite)."

He replied: "I am not one who can read."

Jibril embraced him three times until he was overwhelmed, and then recited to him the opening verses of al-'Alaq, Chapter 96 of the Quran.

The Prophet ﷺ returned home, shaken, and told his wife Khadijah رضي الله عنها the entire incident. She comforted him and said: "Rejoice! By the One in Whose hand is Khadijah's soul, I have hope that you are the Prophet of this nation."

Khadijah رضي الله عنها having witnessed his truthfulness, integrity, and noble character for years, did not hesitate for a

moment. She immediately believed in him and became the first Muslim.

After this, Khadijah wrapped herself in a shawl and went to her cousin Waraqah ibn Nawfal, who had embraced Christianity and studied the Torah and Gospel. When she related the Prophet's experience in the cave, Waraqah said:

> "By the One in Whose hand is Waraqah's soul, if what you say is true, then the same great angel who came to Moses has now come to Muhammad. Without doubt, he is the Prophet of this nation. Tell him to remain steadfast."

Later, when Waraqah himself heard the Prophet ﷺ describe the event, he warned:

> "Your people will reject you, they will persecute you, and even fight against you. But if I live until that time, I will surely stand by you." (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith No. 4953)

Soon, the Prophet ﷺ began to announce his Prophethood and call people to Islam. The people of Makkah rejected him, mocked him, and caused him great distress. Saddened, he would return home, where Khadijah رضي الله عنها would comfort and encourage him. She proved to be the most devoted companion during those difficult years.

On one occasion, Angel Jibril came to the Prophet ﷺ and said: "Convey to Khadijah the greetings of peace from her Lord."

In another narration, the Prophet ﷺ said: "I have been commanded to give Khadijah glad tidings of a palace of pearls in Paradise, where there will be neither noise nor hardship."

This was in contrast to the worldly suffering she endured—neighbours disturbing them with noise, and enemies placing thorns in their path.

Among the early chapters revealed was Surah al-duha. Its final verses carried profound comfort for the Prophet ﷺ:

"He found you lost, and guided you. He found you in need, and made you self-sufficient. So do not oppress the orphan. Do not scold the beggar. And proclaim the blessings of your Lord." (93:7-11)

Ibn Hisham explains the last command—"Proclaim the blessings of your Lord"—as referring to the gift of Prophethood. The Prophet ﷺ was commanded to declare openly the favour of God, invite people to it, and make it known.

Thus, he began quietly sharing the message with those he trusted. Gradually, the call to Islam spread more widely.

The Early Days of Prayer and the First Muslims

When prayer was first made obligatory upon the Messenger of God ﷺ, each prayer consisted of two units (*rak'ahs*). Later, God increased them to four units while at home, but during travel the prayer remained in its original form of two rak'ahs.

When the command of prayer was revealed, the Angel Jibril (*Gabriel*) came to the Prophet ﷺ in Makkah. Jibril performed ablution (*wudu'*) in front of him, and the Prophet ﷺ observed and did the same. Then, together they performed prayer. Upon returning home, the Prophet ﷺ taught the method of wudu' and prayer to his wife Khadijah رضي الله عنها, just as Jibril had taught him.

Conditions in Makkah were harsh, so whenever the time of prayer arrived, the Prophet ﷺ would quietly go to the valleys outside Makkah, and 'Ali would accompany him. There, they would pray in secret. One day, while they were praying, Abu Talib happened upon them. Surprised at seeing them engaged in a new form of worship, he asked:

> "My nephew, what is this new religion you have taken up?"

The Prophet ﷺ explained that God had appointed him as His Messenger and invited Abu Talib to accept the message. Abu Talib replied:

> "My nephew, I cannot abandon the faith of my forefathers. But, by God, I will never allow any harm to come to you as long as I live."

Another early Muslim was Zayd ibn Harithah, the freed servant of the Prophet ﷺ. He loved the Prophet so deeply that when his father once came to take him back, the Prophet ﷺ gave him the choice: stay with me, or return to your father. Zayd chose to remain with the Messenger

of God ﷺ. When Prophethood was declared, Zayd immediately confirmed his truth and prayed with him.

Abu Bakr ibn Abi Quhafah was among the Prophet Muhammad's close acquaintances before the beginning of his mission. Known for his gentle character, he was widely respected in Makkah and had extensive social contacts through his work as a merchant.

When Abu Bakr came to meet the Prophet, he asked about the reports circulating in Makkah—that the Prophet had rejected the traditional gods of the Quraysh and criticized the beliefs of their forefathers.

The Prophet told him that he was a messenger of God and invited him to worship the One God alone and obey Him without associating any partner with Him. He then recited some verses of the Quran.

Abu Bakr accepted the message immediately and acknowledged the Prophet's mission without hesitation. The Prophet later recalled that while others had shown some degree of hesitation when first invited to Islam, Abu Bakr had accepted it as soon as it was presented to him.

The Prophet was greatly pleased by his acceptance. Abu Bakr, in turn, began introducing Islam to people he knew. His personal reputation, gentle manner, and wide circle of relationships enabled him to reach many individuals.

Through his efforts, several prominent figures of Makkah entered into the fold of Islam in the early period, including

Uthman ibn Affan, Zubayr ibn al-Awwam, Abd al-Rahman ibn Awf, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, and Talhah ibn Ubaydullah.

Abu Bakr's acceptance of Islam was therefore significant not only because of the readiness with which he responded to the Prophet's message, but also because he soon became an effective means of introducing it to others.

From then on, the Prophet ﷺ and his companions began privately calling individuals to abandon idol worship and worship God alone. Slowly, the number of Muslims began to grow. Ibn Hisham records by name many of those who embraced Islam in these early years. Among them was Fatimah bint al-Khattab, whose acceptance later became the cause of 'Umar ibn al-Khattab's رضي الله عنه conversion.

Also among the first Muslims was Suhaib al-Rumi رضي الله عنه. About him, the Prophet ﷺ said:

> "Suhaib is the forerunner among the Romans."
> (*Seerat Ibn Hisham*, Vol. 1, p. 262)

Every year during the Hajj season, Arabs from across the peninsula gathered in Makkah. The Prophet ﷺ would move among them, presenting the message of Islam. He also attended the major fairs at 'Ukaz, Majinnah, and Dhu al-Majaz, where he called people to worship God alone.

As his message became more widely known, the Quraysh mocked and ridiculed him. When this failed to stop him, their opposition became more severe, and they began to subject him to physical harm.

One painful incident occurred when two of the Prophet's daughters, who had been married to the sons of Abu Lahab, suddenly returned home carrying their belongings. They told their parents:

> "Our husbands have divorced us."

When Khadijah ﵂ asked them why, they replied:

> "Our husbands said they did so at the insistence of their father, Abu Lahab, and their mother, Umm Jamil. They pressured them, saying: 'It is not right for the daughters of Muhammad to remain in Abu Lahab's household.'"

Persecution in Makkah

One day, the Messenger of God ﷺ was struck so severely with stones by the Quraysh that when he returned home, his body was bleeding profusely. The following day, the pain and weakness were so great that he could not even go to the Kaaba for prayer. The Muslims gathered there without him, and while they were in prostration, the Quraysh attacked them. Among those injured was Harith, the son of Khadijah ﵂ from her previous marriage. Harith was the first man to be martyred in the cause of Islam. He was killed while in prostration in the sanctuary of the Kaaba.

Abu Lahab and his wife, despite being close relatives and from the nobility of Quraysh, became some of the

Prophet's worst tormentors. They would throw stones into his house, incite children to pelt his home, and even cast the carcasses of dead animals and filth into his doorway. Abu Lahab's wife, Umm Jamil, would scatter thorns along his path so that his feet would bleed. It was rare for the Prophet ﷺ to return from the Kaaba without blood on him, for the Quraysh would mercilessly hurl stones at him.

Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas رضي الله عنه recalls that during this period, communal worship in the Kaaba became impossible. Nor could Muslims gather safely anywhere else, for Quraysh kept constant watch. If they prayed in someone's house, the neighbours would see and attack them. Eventually, the Muslims devised a strategy: they would slip outside the city, gather in remote valleys to worship, and then select a different location for the next day, lest Quraysh discover their meeting place.

Among those who later came to Islam was Abu Dharr al-Ghifari, who lived in the desert dwellings of the tribe of Ghifar. He was already a seeker of truth.

According to Ibn 'Abbas رضي الله عنه, when Abu Dharr heard that a man had arisen in Makkah claiming Prophethood and receiving revelation from the heavens, he said to his brother Unays: "Go to Makkah. Find out about this man who says, 'I am the Messenger of God.' Listen to his words and bring me news."

Unays went to Makkah, met the Prophet ﷺ, and returned with a report. He told his brother:

> "When I arrived in Makkah, I found Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah. Some people were calling him a liar, others a sorcerer, others a poet or soothsayer. But I am a poet myself and have heard the speech of soothsayers. His words are nothing like theirs. I measured his speech against poetry, and it is not poetry. By God, he is truthful. I saw him enjoining goodness, forbidding evil, and calling to noble character. I heard from him words that are unlike any poetry." (*Fath al-Bari*, Ibn Hajar, Vol. 7, p. 174)

This only increased Abu Dharr's longing to meet the Prophet ﷺ himself. He prepared his camel, filled a water skin, carried some provisions, and set out for Makkah.

When he arrived, the first person he met was 'Ali ibn Abi Talib ؓ, who took him to the Prophet ﷺ. Abu Dharr listened to the Prophet's message with a heart already inclined to truth, and immediately recognized his sincerity. Without hesitation, he recited the shahadah and embraced Islam.

Soon after, Abu Dharr went to the Kaaba, performed prayer, and openly declared his Islam. The Quraysh were enraged. They beat him so violently that he collapsed to

the ground. ‘Abbas ibn ‘Abd al-Muttalib ﷺ intervened to save him.

The Prophet ﷺ then advised him:

> “Return to your people. Invite them to Islam. Stay there until you hear that God has given me victory. Then come back to me.”

Abu Dharr returned to his tribe. His brother Unays immediately accepted Islam, followed by their mother. Then, through his persistent call, nearly half of the Ghifar tribe embraced Islam within a few years.

Opposition and the Open Call to Islam

When the Messenger of God ﷺ openly began calling the people of Makkah to the worship of one God, they felt threatened. They realized that he was declaring their ancestral idol-worship to be false and baseless. From that moment, their opposition intensified, and a period of trials and persecution began.

On one occasion, the Prophet ﷺ went with Abu Bakr ﷺ to the Kaaba. The Muslims gathered in its courtyard, and soon a large number of Quraysh joined them. Abu Bakr stood up to speak, but the Quraysh grew furious and attacked. ‘Utbah ibn Rabi‘ah struck Abu Bakr so severely that his face was covered in blood. Surrounded on all sides,

Abu Bakr was beaten unconscious until his family members arrived and carried him home with great difficulty.

Gradually, a small group of Muslims gathered around the Prophet ﷺ—men and women, young and old. Yet the fear of Quraysh remained strong. For prayer, they would slip outside Makkah to the mountain passes, praying in secret.

Among the earliest Muslims was Arqam ibn Abi al-Arqam رضي الله عنه, who offered his house on the hill of Safa. Isolated from the crowded quarters of Makkah, it became the first centre of Islam. For nearly three years, Dar al-Arqam served as the base for teaching, meetings, and the training of new Muslims.

For the first three years, the Prophet ﷺ spread his message quietly, through personal contact. Then, revelation came commanding him to expand:

> "And warn your nearest relatives." (Quran, 26:214)

The Prophet ﷺ invited the clan of Banu Hashim to a meal—around forty people attended, with the arrangements handled by 'Ali ibn Abi Talib رضي الله عنه. After they ate, the Prophet ﷺ said:

> "I bring to you what is best for both this world and the next. I do not know of any man among the Arabs who has brought his people something better. Who among you will support me in this cause?"

The gathering fell silent. Finally, young ʻAli ﷺ stood up and said:

> "Though my eyes are sore, my legs weak, and I am the youngest here, still, O Messenger of God, I will stand by you."

Soon after, another command came:

> "Then proclaim openly what you have been commanded." (Quran, 15:94)

One companion narrates: "When I was young, I went with my father to Mina. We saw a crowd gathered in one place. I asked my father what it was about. He said: 'It is a man who has abandoned the religion of his people (*a sabi'*).'

I looked and saw the Messenger of God ﷺ. He was calling people to the oneness of God, while those around him mocked and ridiculed him."

The Early Call to Islam

For the first three years of his mission, the Prophet Muhammad presented the message of Islam quietly, speaking mainly to people he knew personally. Later, when he was instructed to proclaim the message openly, he used a familiar Arab custom to address the people of Makkah.

In those days, when someone needed to warn people of an urgent danger, such as an approaching enemy, he would climb to a high place and call out. One day, the Prophet climbed Mount Safa near Makkah and called the different

clans of the Quraysh by name. Hearing the familiar warning call, people gathered around him.

When they had assembled, he asked, "If I told you that an army was waiting behind this hill and was about to attack you, would you believe me?"

They replied that they would, saying that they had always known him to be truthful (*Dala'il al-Nubuwwah* by al-Bayhaqi, Vol. 2, p. 181).

The Prophet then told them that death would be followed by resurrection and accountability before God. He called upon them to worship the One God alone and warned them of the consequences of rejecting the truth.

The people listened, but his uncle Abu Lahab reacted angrily. He said, "Is this what you called us here for?" He then tried to discourage the others from listening, and the gathering dispersed.

After this public declaration, the Prophet's message became a subject of discussion throughout Makkah. The Quraysh increasingly came to see him as someone challenging their inherited religious beliefs and calling people to a new way of faith.

The gathering at Safa thus marked a turning point in the Prophet's mission. His message had moved from private communication to public proclamation, and opposition from the Quraysh became more open.

These events show that the Prophet ﷺ was above all concerned with saving people from eternal failure and guiding them towards God's mercy. God describes this state in the Quran:

> "Perhaps you would destroy yourself with grief because they do not believe." (Quran, 26:3)

Mu'awiyah ibn Haydah al-Qushayri narrates: "I came to the Messenger of God ﷺ and said: 'O Messenger of God, I had sworn by my fingertips more times than I can count that I would never meet you nor accept your religion. Yet here I am, and I ask you—by God the Almighty—what has your Lord sent you with?'

The Prophet ﷺ replied: 'With the religion of Islam.'

I asked: 'And what is Islam?'"

He said: 'That you say: I have submitted myself wholly to God, single-mindedly devoted to Him; that you establish prayer; that you give zakah; and that every Muslim is sacred to another Muslim—Muslims are brothers and supporters of one another. And when a person embraces Islam after shirk, none of his deeds are accepted until he separates himself from the polytheists.'

Then the Prophet ﷺ added: 'What need would I have to seize you by the waist and drag you away from the Fire, except that my Lord has commanded me to call you, and He will ask me: Have you conveyed My message to My servants? I will say: Yes, my Lord, I conveyed it. So let those present carry this message to those absent.'

Hearing this, Mu'awiyah ibn Haydah accepted Islam.

Amr ibn Abasah was among those who had become dissatisfied with the religious practices of pre-Islamic Arabia. He found no meaning in idol worship and was searching for a more convincing understanding of faith.

After some time, he heard that a man had appeared in Makkah with a new message. He travelled there and learned that the Prophet Muhammad was presenting his message quietly because of the hostility of the Quraysh.

When Amr finally met the Prophet, he asked who he was. The Prophet replied that he was a messenger of God. Amr then asked what message God had given him.

The Prophet explained that people should worship the One God without associating any partner with Him, reject idol worship, maintain good relations with relatives, avoid bloodshed, and help establish peace and security.

Amr was impressed by what he heard. He said that the message was good and declared his belief in the Prophet.

He then asked who was supporting him at that time. The Prophet replied that a free man and a slave were with him, referring to Abu Bakr and Bilal.

Amr expressed his desire to remain with the Prophet, but the Prophet advised him to return home for the time being. The situation in Makkah was still difficult, and Amr would not yet be able to support him effectively. He was told to return when circumstances had changed and the

Prophet's position had become stronger. Amr therefore returned home after accepting the message.

This incident offers a clear picture of the Prophet's approach in the early period. His message was direct and practical: belief in one God, rejection of idol worship, care for family ties, protection of human life, and the promotion of peace and security.

Then the Quran commanded the Prophet: "Warn your nearest relatives." (26:214) He invited about forty members of Banu Hashim, called them to the oneness of God and asked who would support his mission. When no one responded, Ali stood up and said, "O Messenger of God, I will support you." The Prophet replied, "You, Ali—yes, you, Ali." (*Musnad al-Bazzar*, Hadith No. 456)

Dimad, from the tribe of Azd Shanu'ah, once came to Makkah for pilgrimage. There he sat with a gathering that included Abu Jahl, 'Utbah ibn Rabi'ah, and Umayyah ibn Khalaf. They were speaking ill of the Prophet ﷺ.

Abu Jahl said: "This man (*Muhammad*) has divided our community. He has called us fools, declared our forefathers misguided, and insulted our gods."

Umayyah added: "There is no doubt he is possessed."

Dimad thought to himself: "Perhaps Muhammad is afflicted by madness. Since I know how to treat such conditions, I should seek him out."

He searched for him on the first day but could not find him. The next day, he saw the Prophet ﷺ praying near the Station of Abraham (*Maqam Ibrahim*). When the prayer finished, Dimad approached and said:

> "O Muhammad, I am skilled in treating such afflictions. If you permit, I can try to cure you—perhaps God will grant you healing."

The Prophet ﷺ did not respond to his offer. Instead, he said:

> "All praise is due to God. We seek His help. Whomever God guides, none can mislead; and whomever He leaves astray, none can guide. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except God, alone without partner."

He repeated these words three times.

Dimad was struck by their power and said: "By God! I have heard the words of soothsayers, magicians, and poets. Never have I heard anything like this. Give me your hand so I may pledge allegiance."

There and then, Dimad accepted Islam.

Another man, Husayn, was an elder whom Quraysh deeply respected. They approached him, saying: "Please speak with this man (Muhammad). He insults our gods and dishonours our religion, even though his father was a noble man."

So Husayn went with them to the Prophet ﷺ and said: "What is this we hear from you? You insult our gods, while your own father was a good man."

The Prophet ﷺ calmly asked him: "Tell me, Husayn, how many gods do you worship?"

Husayn replied: "Seven—six on earth and one in the heavens."

The Prophet ﷺ asked: "When harm befalls you, whom do you call upon?"

Husayn answered: "The One in the heavens."

The Prophet ﷺ asked again: "And when your wealth is in danger, whom do you call upon?"

Husayn said: "The One in the heavens."

The Prophet ﷺ said: "Then the One who answers your prayers is the only true God—yet you associate others with Him."

Husayn later said: "I realized then that I had never spoken to anyone like him before."

The Prophet ﷺ invited him: "O Husayn, accept Islam and you will be saved."

Husayn hesitated: "But what of my family? What should I tell them?"

The Prophet ﷺ replied: "Say: 'O God, I seek Your guidance. Rectify my affairs for me, and grant me knowledge that benefits me.'"

Husayn repeated the supplication, and before leaving the Prophet ﷺ, he too accepted Islam.

Before the Hijrah, a delegation from the tribe of Khazraj in Madinah came to Makkah. Their intention was to seek an alliance with Quraysh. Among them was a young man named Iyas ibn Mu'adh.

When the Messenger of God ﷺ heard of their arrival, he went to their camp and sat with them. He said: "Shall I not tell you of something far better than the purpose for which you have come?"

They asked, "What is that?"

The Prophet ﷺ replied: "I am the Messenger of God. He has sent me to call His servants to worship Him alone, without associating partners with Him. He has revealed to me His Word."

He then recited portions of the Quran to them.

Iyas, though still a youth, was moved and said to his people:

> "By God, this is better than the matter for which you have come here!"

But Anas ibn Rafi', one of the elders, scooped up a handful of dust and threw it towards Iyas' face, saying:

> "Leave this! We came here for something else entirely."

Iyas fell silent. The Prophet ﷺ then departed, and the delegation completed their business and returned to Madinah.

Soon after reaching home, Iyas ibn Mu'adh fell ill and passed away. Those who attended him at his deathbed reported that his last words were "*La ilaha illallah, Allahu Akbar, Subhanallah*"—testifying to the faith he had quietly accepted from the Messenger ﷺ.

According to 'Abdullah ibn Ka'b ibn Malik, after the Prophet ﷺ was given Prophethood, he spent three years calling secretly to Islam. Then, for nearly ten years, he openly called people to the Oneness of God.

After the death of Abu Talib, his protective uncle, the Prophet ﷺ would attend the great seasonal markets of 'Ukaz, Majannah, and Dhu al-Majaz, as well as the camps of visiting tribes during Hajj, inviting them to Islam. He would also say:

> "Who will give me protection so that I may convey the message of my Lord? For whoever supports me, God will grant him Paradise in return."

But tribe after tribe declined to accept his offer. No one agreed to guarantee him protection.

When he approached Banu 'Amir ibn Sa'sa'ah, they treated him harshly. He left them while they were throwing stones at him.

He then approached Banu Muharib ibn Khusafah, where he met an elderly man over a hundred years old. The Prophet ﷺ invited him to Islam and asked for protection to deliver God's message. The old man replied:

> "Your own people know your situation better than we do. By God, whoever takes you away with him will have brought the worst thing to his people in the eyes of all who gather for Hajj. Spare us from this matter."

Abu Lahab, the Prophet's uncle, was present. After the Prophet ﷺ left, he said to the old man:

> "If everyone here were to respond to him as you have, he would soon abandon this new religion of his."

Abdullah ibn Wabisah al-Absi relates from his father that during the pilgrimage season, the Prophet Muhammad came to their encampment near Masjid al-Khayf at Mina. He was riding a camel, with Zayd ibn Harithah seated behind him.

The Prophet spoke to them about belief in the One God and presented the message of Islam. They had already heard that during the pilgrimage season he would visit different Arab tribes and speak to them about his message. He stood before them and addressed them, while they listened in silence without giving any response.

Among them was Maysarah ibn Masruq al-Absi. After hearing the Prophet, he urged his people to take his words seriously and offer him their support. He said that, in his view, the Prophet's message would eventually spread far beyond Makkah.

His tribesmen, however, dismissed the suggestion and told him not to speak of something that none of them was prepared to support.

Seeing that Maysarah had responded positively, the Prophet encouraged him to follow the message himself. Maysarah replied that what he had heard was good and convincing, but he feared opposition from his tribe. A person, he explained, depended greatly on the support of his own people, and it was difficult to stand apart from them.

The incident shows one of the difficulties the Prophet faced during the early years in Makkah. Some people could appreciate the strength of his message, yet social loyalties and fear of isolation prevented them from acting on what they recognized. In Maysarah's case, the obstacle was not hostility to the message, but the pressure of tribal ties.

Among the Prophet Muhammad's close male relatives, Ali ibn Abi Talib was the first to accept Islam. He was about ten years old at the time and was living in the Prophet's household.

One day, during the early period of Prophethood, Ali entered the house and found the Prophet and Khadijah performing prayer. When they had finished, he asked what they had been doing.

The Prophet explained that this was the religion God had chosen and that he had been sent to convey its message. He invited Ali to believe in the One God, associate no partner with Him, and worship Him alone.

Ali replied that he had never heard anything like this before and wanted to consult his father, Abu Talib, before making a decision. Since the Prophet had not yet begun openly proclaiming his mission, he asked Ali to keep the matter private if he was not ready to accept it.

After reflecting on what he had heard, Ali accepted Islam a few days later. He began praying with the Prophet and affirmed the message that had come to him from God.

Ali was thus among the earliest members of the Prophet's household to accept Islam. Despite his young age, he responded to the message at the very beginning of the Prophet's mission and remained closely associated with him thereafter.

'Uthman ibn 'Affan ﷺ narrated: "I once went to visit my aunt, Arwa bint 'Abd al-Muttalib, when she was ill. The Prophet ﷺ was also there. I began to look at him intently, for word of his Prophethood was already spreading.

The Prophet ﷺ noticed me staring and asked, 'What is it, 'Uthman?'

I said, 'I am amazed. You were once held in the highest esteem among us, yet now you are accused and slandered in ways I do not understand.'

The Prophet ﷺ recited verses of the Quran to me. When he rose to leave, I followed him, and there I embraced Islam."

The Quraysh gathered in Dar al-Nadwa (the tribal parliament) to discuss what should be done to stop the spread of Islam. ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab, in his zeal, said: “I will kill Muhammad and rid Makkah of his mischief.” ‘Umar was a man of firm resolve. He was so tall that after the migration, when a mosque was built in Madinah and ‘Umar entered it, his head struck the ceiling.

A man from the tribe of Banu Malik ibn Kinana reported that he saw the Messenger of God walking in the market of Dhu al-Majaz, saying: “O people, say: *La ilaha illa Allah* (there is no god but God), you will succeed.” Abu Lahab would throw dust on him and say: “Beware of him, lest he turn you away from your religion. He wants you to abandon your gods.” But the Messenger of God paid no attention to his words.

Abu Sufyan once headed towards his fields, with his wife Hind on a horse. Their son Mu‘awiyah, who was then a young boy, rode ahead on a donkey. At that moment, Muhammad appeared in their path. Abu Sufyan said: “Mu‘awiyah, get down so that Muhammad may ride.” Mu‘awiyah said: “I dismounted, and the Messenger of God rode my donkey and went ahead of us for a short time. Then he turned towards us and said: ‘O Sufyan ibn Harb, O Hind bint ‘Utbah, by God, you will surely die. Then you will be raised again. Whoever is righteous will enter Paradise, and whoever is evil will go to Hell.’”

Abu Sufyan asked, "Have you finished speaking?" He replied, "Yes." Then he got off the donkey, and I got back on. His mother Hind said to Abu Sufyan, "Was it for this sorcerer that you made my son get off?" Abu Sufyan said, "By God, he is not a sorcerer, and he is not a liar."

Abu Jahl had a maidservant named Sumayyah. When Abu Jahl learned that she had embraced the new religion, he told her to abandon it. Sumayyah said: "I will not abandon Muhammad's religion." Abu Jahl bound her and flogged her so severely that her condition worsened.

By this time, Abu Bakr had already bought and freed six slaves. He went to Abu Jahl and offered one hundred dinars for her freedom. When he refused, Abu Bakr said, "I will give you one hundred and fifty dinars." Even then, Abu Jahl would not agree. Abu Bakr said, "Name any price, and I will pay it." But Abu Jahl refused to sell Sumayyah at any price.

Sumayyah also worked as a midwife. The Quraysh women whom she had helped at the time of childbirth all pleaded with Abu Jahl not to harm her, but he ignored their request. He flogged Sumayyah so severely that her body was covered in wounds. She lost the strength to move, yet she continued to say: "I will not abandon Muhammad's religion." Finally, one day, Abu Jahl brought Sumayyah near the Kaaba, and in front of everyone he asked: "Will you abandon Muhammad's religion or not?" When she

refused, Abu Jahl thrust his spear into her chest until it came out through her back.

In this way, Sumayyah became the first female martyr (*shahidah*) in Islamic history.

The Acceptance of Islam

In Makkah, two men were recognized for their leadership qualities: Amr ibn Hisham (Abu Jahl) and Umar ibn al-Khattab. The Messenger of God ﷺ prayed: "O God, strengthen Islam through Umar ibn al-Khattab or through Abu Jahl ibn Hisham" (*Al-Mu'jam al-Kabir of Tabarani*, Hadith No. 11657). A few days later, Umar ibn al-Khattab became a dedicated follower of Islam.

Before this, Umar was a fierce opponent of the Prophet and his mission. One day, he became so enraged that he decided to kill the Prophet. With a sword in hand, he left his house. On the way, he met Nu'aym ibn Abdullah, who asked him, "Umar, where are you going this afternoon?" Umar replied, "I am going to kill Muhammad. This man has caused division among the Quraysh. He has called our minds foolish, insulted our religion, and reviled our gods."

Nu'aym said, "O Umar, by God, you have deceived yourself. Do you think you can kill Muhammad, and the sons of Abd Manaf will let you walk the earth afterward? First, take care of your own family." Umar asked, "What do you mean?" Nu'aym replied, "Your sister Fatimah and your brother-in-law Sa'id ibn Zayd have accepted Muhammad's religion. It would be better for you to deal with them first."

On hearing this, Umar became even more furious and went straight to his sister's house. His sister and brother-in-law were both at home, where Khabbab, a Muslim, was teaching them the Quran. When they heard Umar approaching, Khabbab quickly hid himself. As soon as Umar entered, he confronted them and said, "I have heard that you have both become Sabeans"—by which he meant that they had abandoned the religion of their forefathers. His brother-in-law replied, "Umar, what should we do if the religion of our forefathers is not true and another religion is?" This reply made Umar even angrier, and he began beating his brother-in-law. When his sister tried to intervene, Umar turned on her and struck her until blood began to flow from her face. She then said firmly, "Son of Khattab, do whatever you wish. We have chosen to follow Islam, and we will not turn back."

Seeing his sister bleeding, Umar's anger subsided and his conscience was awakened. He asked her to show him the book they were reading. At this point, Khabbab emerged from hiding. They had been reading from Surah Ta-Ha. A copy of the written verses was handed to Umar, and he began to read. Each verse touched his heart, until he exclaimed, "How beautiful and noble is this speech!" (*Sirah Ibn Hisham*, Vol. 1, p. 345).

At that time, the Messenger of God ﷺ was with his companions in the house of al-Arqam. At Umar's request, Khabbab took him there. Umar knocked on the door, and

a Muslim looked out and saw him standing with his sword hanging from his shoulder. He told the Prophet that Umar was at the door with a sword. Hamzah said, "Let him in. If he has come with good intent, we will welcome it. If with bad intent, we will kill him with his own sword."

When Umar entered, the Prophet rose to meet him, pulled him by his cloak, and asked, "O son of al-Khattab, what has brought you here? By God, it seems you will not stop until God sends down His punishment upon you." Umar replied, "O Muhammad, I have come to believe in God and His Messenger, and to affirm what you have brought from God." Hearing this, the Prophet exclaimed, "*Allahu Akbar*!" The people inside then knew that Umar had accepted Islam.

After his conversion, Umar went to the Kaaba, where the Quraysh were gathered, and publicly declared his acceptance of Islam. Some people tried to attack him, but Umar, being a strong man, pushed them aside and loudly proclaimed the truth of Islam.

Hamzah ibn Abd al-Muttalib, the Prophet Muhammad's uncle, accepted Islam in the sixth year of Prophethood.

One day, the Prophet was passing near Mount Safa when Abu Jahl, whose name was Amr ibn Hisham, insulted and mistreated him. The Prophet did not respond and quietly continued on his way. A servant woman of Abdullah ibn Jud'an witnessed the incident.

Soon afterwards, Hamzah returned from hunting, carrying his bow. The woman told him what had happened and reproached him for allowing his nephew to be treated in this way. Angered by the news, Hamzah went in search of Abu Jahl and found him sitting near the Kaaba among a group of Quraysh.

Hamzah struck Abu Jahl on the head with his bow, injuring him, and declared that he followed the same religion as Muhammad (*Al-Mu' jam al-Kabir* by al-Tabarani, Hadith No. 2926). Some of Abu Jahl's companions rose to confront Hamzah, but Abu Jahl stopped them, admitting that he had seriously insulted Hamzah's nephew earlier that day (*Seerat Ibn Hisham*, Vol. 1, p. 292).

Hamzah's declaration had been made in a moment of anger and family loyalty. Later, however, some people of Makkah criticized him for abandoning the religion of his forefathers. Their words caused him to reflect deeply, and he spent a restless night.

The next morning, Hamzah went to the sanctuary of the Kaaba and prayed to God for guidance. He asked that, if Muhammad's path was true, God should give him certainty and remove his doubts.

He then went to the Prophet and spoke openly about his state of mind. The Prophet explained the message of Islam to him and spoke of accountability, Paradise, and Hell.

Hamzah became convinced of the truth of the message and accepted Islam with full conviction.

He affirmed that the Prophet was truthful and declared that no worldly possession could persuade him to abandon the faith he had now accepted.

Hamzah's conversion thus began with an instinctive defence of his nephew, but it became a deliberate and deeply considered acceptance of Islam through reflection, prayer, and conviction.

In this way, people in Makkah gradually began to accept Islam, one by one. Some had never been satisfied with idol worship; when they heard the Prophet call for monotheism, it resonated with their own hearts, and they immediately believed. Some, during their travels to Syria and Palestine, had heard Christian scholars talk about a coming prophet in Arabia; when they met the Prophet and listened to his words, they recognized him as that awaited Messenger and embraced Islam. Others saw dreams in which the Prophet was saving them from a pit of fire; when they met him, the truth became clear, and they believed.

In the early years, this was the pattern. For various reasons, people were drawn to the Prophet. Once their hearts testified that he was truly sent by God, they accepted faith and became his followers. Over time, individuals in Makkah and nearby areas started to believe until a substantial group gathered around him.

Public Preaching

Gradually, many men and women embraced Islam until the religion spread throughout Makkah and became widely discussed. At this point, God commanded His Messenger to openly declare the teachings of Islam. According to Ibn Ishaq, the Messenger of God ﷺ had quietly preached on an individual basis for three years. After this period, Surah al-Muddaththir (Chapter 74) instructed the Prophet to begin conveying the message of monotheism publicly and without hesitation.

The opposition of the Makkah idolaters became stronger. At that time, the Messenger of God was instructed to avoid direct confrontation and instead turn away (Quran, 15:94). As a result, he and his followers would go to the valleys outside Makkah to pray in secret, hidden from the people.

Ibn Ishaq recounts that when the Messenger of God openly proclaimed Islam to his people, just as God had commanded him, they did not initially turn away from him. But once he started speaking against their idols and criticizing them, they took his message seriously and began to treat him as an outsider. They united in opposition and hostility against him—except for the few whom God saved through Islam, who remained small in number and kept their practice hidden.

Although Abu Talib, the Prophet's uncle, did not personally convert to Islam, he fully supported it during this time. He remained steadfast in defending and protecting him.

When the Quraysh saw that the Messenger of God continued to speak out against their idols—which they deeply resented—and that Abu Talib was firmly supporting him and would not hand him over under any circumstances, the leading chiefs of Quraysh gathered and went to Abu Talib. Among them were Utbah, Shaybah, Abu Sufyan, Abu al-Bukhtari, al-Aswad, Abu Jahl, al-Walid, and al-As.

They told Abu Talib: "Your nephew has insulted our gods, spoken against our religion, called our wise men foolish, and declared our ancestors misguided. Now either you stop him from speaking this way, or don't stand in our way, because you follow the same religion as we do. Leave him to us, and we will handle him ourselves."

Abu Talib listened calmly, responded wisely, and sent them away. The Messenger of God remained committed to his mission, inviting people to the religion of God. As a result, relations between him and the idolaters became even more strained. His name was frequently mentioned among the Quraysh, and they provoked each other against him.

Once again, the chiefs of Quraysh returned to Abu Talib and said: "O Abu Talib, in age, lineage, and status, you hold a special rank among us. We already told you to restrain your nephew, but you have not done so. By God, we cannot tolerate our forefathers being insulted, our wise men being mocked, and our gods being reviled. Either

you stop him, or we will fight him—and you must not interfere—until one side is destroyed."

After they left, Abu Talib felt profound distress over his people's hostility and their separation from him. At the same time, he could not bear the thought of handing over the Messenger of God to them or leaving him behind. When the Quraysh departed, Abu Talib called for the Prophet and said: "My nephew, your people came to me and said such and such things. So, have mercy on me and on yourself. Do not put upon me a burden I cannot carry."

The Messenger of God ﷺ worried that his uncle's opinion might have changed and that he could withdraw his protection and hand him over to the Quraysh. The Prophet said to Abu Talib:

> "O my uncle, by God, if they were to place the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left hand on condition that I abandon this mission, I would never abandon it until God makes it prevail or I perish in the effort."

Tears welled in his eyes as he spoke, and he began to weep. Then he rose to leave. As he turned back, Abu Talib called him and said:

> "My nephew, come here. Go and say whatever you want. I swear to God, I will never hand you over to them, no matter the cost."

The Quraysh realized that Abu Talib would not abandon the Prophet or hand him over, and that he was willing to stand against his entire tribe on this issue. Then they approached him with Amarah ibn al-Walid ibn al-Mughirah and said:

> "O Abu Talib, here is Amarah ibn al-Walid, the strongest and most handsome of the Quraysh. Take him as your son; he will be yours. In return, hand over your nephew—the one who opposes your religion and the religion of your forefathers, who has divided your people and called your wise men fools—so that we may kill him. We are giving you one man in exchange for another."

Abu Talib responded: "By God, what a terrible bargain you propose! You give me your son to feed and raise for you, while you take my son to kill him? By God, this will never happen."

At this, Mut'im ibn 'Adi said: "O Abu Talib, by God, your people have offered you fair terms. They have spared no effort to avoid what you dislike. It seems you refuse to accept anything from them."

Abu Talib replied, "By God, they haven't been fair to me. But you've decided to side with your people against me. So, go ahead and do whatever you want."

Meanwhile, some members of the Quraysh accepted Islam through the Prophet. When the Quraysh leaders saw this, they stirred their tribes against those new Muslims. Each tribe then turned on the believers within their own ranks, tormenting them and trying to force them to abandon their faith. But God protected His Messenger through Abu Talib.

When Abu Talib saw what the Quraysh were doing to the Muslims among Banu Hashim and Banu al-Muttalib, he stood up and called everyone to support the Prophet just as he was doing. All of Banu Hashim rallied around him in defence of the Prophet—except Abu Lahab, who refused to join them.

Later, a group of Quraysh gathered with al-Walid ibn al-Mughirah, the eldest among them, as Hajj approached. Al-Walid said:

> "O people of Quraysh, the season of Hajj is approaching, and delegations from all over Arabia will soon arrive. They have already heard about your companion (the Prophet). Decide on one stance regarding him, so that you do not contradict each other. If your words differ, they will cancel each other out."

They said: "You speak, Abu 'Abd Shams, and we will follow your opinion."

Al-Walid replied: "No, you speak, and I will listen."

They said: "We will say he is a soothsayer."

Al-Walid said: "No, by God, he is not a soothsayer. We have seen soothsayers, and his speech is nothing like their murmuring or rhymed prose."

They said: "Then we will say he is mad."

Al-Walid replied: "No, he is not mad. We have seen the insane. His words are not marked by fits, spasms, or whispers of madness."

They said: "Then we will call him a poet."

Al-Walid said: "He is not a poet. We know all forms of poetry, and his words are nothing like them."

They said: "Then we will say he is a sorcerer."

Al-Walid replied: "He is not a sorcerer. We have seen sorcerers and their spells. His words are nothing like their incantations or knots."

The people asked: "Then what shall we say, Abu 'Abd Shams?"

Al-Walid said: "By God, there is sweetness in his speech. Its root is deep, its branches are fruitful. Whatever you say about him will be exposed as false. The closest thing to the truth is to say he is a sorcerer, for he brings words that separate a man from his father, brother, wife, and family."

So the Quraysh agreed on this and departed.

When the season of Hajj arrived and people came from different regions, the Quraysh would sit along the roads. Whoever passed by, they would warn him about the Prophet and tell him stories about him. After Hajj, when people returned to their towns, they carried news about the Messenger of God with them. In this way, his reputation spread across Arabia. The religion that at first was known only to a few in Makkah was now heard of by tribes all over the land.

Initially, when the Prophet started calling people in Makkah to worship one God, his approach was to meet with people he already knew—relatives and close friends—and say: "God has appointed me as His Messenger. I invite you to believe in me and thus become worthy of God's Paradise." Some accepted his message, while others dismissed it as unimportant.

Later, he started approaching more people. Whenever he learned that a group had gathered or that visitors had come from outside Makkah to see the Kaaba, he would go to them and share his message. On one occasion, he met Abu Sufyan and Hind. He told them: "By God, you will die. Then you will be raised again. Those who have done good deeds will enter Paradise, and those who have done evil deeds will enter Hell." But they did not believe in him at that time.

After this, he started attending larger gatherings. Wherever people assembled—whether at the Kaaba, seasonal fairs, or busy markets—he would go to them, call them to monotheism, and recite portions of the Quran. Sometimes he would proclaim: "O people, say there is no god but God, and you will succeed" (*Musnad Ahmad*, Hadith No. 16022). Very rarely, however, did anyone listen seriously and accept his message.

The Last Attempt

At that time, among the Muslims of Makkah, only one person could step outside his house openly without fear—and that was the Prophet himself. As usual, one day he entered the Kaaba to pray. Abu Jahl arrived, carrying a camel's entrails filled with blood and filth. Among the Arabs, one form of punishment for criminals was to tie such entrails, full of blood or water, around the person's head so that his face was enclosed within them. The lower part of the organ, like a pouch, would be tied tightly around the neck, blocking the mouth and nose, causing the person to suffocate and die.

That day, Abu Jahl and his companions carried out this same act against the Prophet. They entered the Kaaba quietly and placed the camel's entrails over his head so that his face was trapped inside. Then Abu Jahl tied the end tightly around his neck like the mouth of a pouch.

The Prophet struggled in vain to free himself. A Qurayshi woman watching the scene was moved to pity. She could not bear to see him thrashing helplessly, but she was too afraid of Abu Jahl to help. Instead, she rushed to the Prophet's home and told his daughter Ruqayyah, "Run quickly to save your father! If you delay, you will not find him alive."

Crying, Ruqayyah hurried to the Kaaba. As soon as Abu Jahl and the others saw her, they stepped back. She untied the entrails, freed her father's head and face, and wiped him clean with her garment. The Prophet was unable to move for nearly an hour. Finally, supported by his daughter Ruqayyah, he slowly made his way home.

Starting the next day, Prophet Muhammad resumed going to the Kaaba as if nothing had happened. When the Quraysh saw this, they came up with another plan. One day, a man named Uqbah entered the Kaaba barefoot, holding a cloth. As the Prophet was in prostration, Uqbah suddenly threw the cloth over his head and hit him hard, resulting in blood on his nose and mouth. After a struggle, the Prophet managed to break free from Uqbah's grip and went home, his face covered in blood.

Why was it that, despite such hatred, the people of Makkah did not try to kill him outright with the sword? The reason lay in the tribal system of the time. The Quraysh were divided into ten clans, one of which was the clan of Hashim, to which the Prophet belonged. If members

of the other nine clans killed him, tribal custom required that they either pay blood money to the Hashim clan or be prepared for war against them. Because of this, they didn't dare kill him directly.

Finally, they agreed on a plan: the leaders of Quraysh would approach Abu Talib, the Prophet's uncle, and request that he expel Muhammad from his clan. To compensate for this, they suggested that Abu Talib could adopt one or two young men from another clan. If Abu Talib declared that Muhammad no longer belonged to the clan, then, according to tribal law, his blood would be considered lawful.

The Quraysh representatives went to Abu Talib and presented their proposal. Abu Talib replied: "As for me, I tell you plainly—I will not accept Islam. I will die upon the religion of my ancestors. But I cannot turn my nephew away so that you may kill him. However, I promise you that I will speak to him. Maybe I can persuade him to give up this new faith. Come back tomorrow."

When Abu Talib spoke to the Prophet, he received a firm reply: "O uncle, from the day I began this mission, I have relied on no one but God. If you wish to expel me from the clan, then do so." Abu Talib then told the Quraysh: "I will not expel Muhammad from my clan. But as long as I live, I will also not accept his religion."

When the Quraysh realized they couldn't succeed with Abu Talib, they decided to approach Muhammad directly.

The Quraysh leaders gathered and agreed that the most suitable person to confront him would be someone known as the greatest magician, soothsayer, and poet among them. They all agreed that Utbah ibn Rabi'ah was the best choice for this role.

Accordingly, Utbah approached the Prophet and said: "O Muhammad, are you better than your father Abdullah?" The Prophet did not reply. Utbah asked again: "Are you better than your grandfather Abdul Muttalib?" Once more, the Prophet remained silent. Then Utbah continued: "If you admit that they were better, then they worshipped the very gods you now condemn. And if you claim that you are better, then tell us plainly, so that we may hear your reasoning. By God, we have never known any man to bring more misfortune to his people than you. You have divided our community, disgraced our religion, and shamed us among the Arabs, so much so that the word has spread everywhere that Quraysh has produced a sorcerer. By God, we are waiting for a cry of battle to ring out, and as soon as it does, we will fall upon each other with swords and perish.

Then Utbah said: "If it is wealth you seek, we will shower you with so much that you will be the richest man in Quraysh. If it is possession by a spirit, we will spend our treasures to find you a cure. If it is marriage you desire, we will marry you to any woman of Quraysh you choose. If it is kingship you want, we will make you our king."

The Prophet listened quietly. When Utbah finished, the Prophet asked, "Have you said all you wanted to say?" Utbah replied, "Yes." Then the Prophet recited from the beginning of Surah Fussilat (41). When he reached verse 13, Utbah put his hand on the Prophet's back and said, "Enough, enough." Then he asked, "Do you have anything else to say?" The Prophet replied, "No."

Utbah went home and didn't visit the others. Abu Jahl, hearing this, said: "By God, I think Utbah has been won over by Muhammad and now enjoys his food." He then went with others to Utbah's house.

Abu Jahl said: "O Utbah, we have come because we believe you have sided with Muhammad. If you need anything, we will gather so much wealth for you that you won't need Muhammad's food."

Hearing this, Utbah became angry and replied: "You know very well that I am the wealthiest man among Quraysh. By God, Muhammad gave me an answer that was neither magic, nor poetry, nor soothsaying. It was such speech that my ears had never heard before. I was left with no reply. And you know full well that Muhammad never lies. I fear that a punishment from heaven may fall upon you."

Afterwards, the Quraysh one day summoned the Prophet and made certain demands of him. They said:

> "You know that among all people, none live in a more restricted town than we do. We lack abundant water, and no one endures a harder

> life than us. So pray to the Lord who sent you, that He remove these mountains confining us, expand our land, and cause rivers to flow through our city as they do in Syria and Iraq.

And revive some of our ancestors who have passed away—especially Qusayy ibn Kilab, because he was our elder and a truthful man. Then we will ask him whether what you say is true or false. If he confirms your truthfulness, and if you perform the things we have asked of you, then we will believe you and acknowledge the rank you claim before God, and we will know that you are indeed His Messenger, as you say."

The Messenger of God ﷺ replied: "I have not been sent to you with such things. I have only come with what God has sent me, and I have conveyed it to you. If you accept it, it will be your share in this world and the Hereafter. If you reject it, then I will wait for God's judgement until He decides between me and you."

The Quraysh then said: "If you will not do this for us, then at least do it for yourself. Ask your Lord to send an angel with you who will confirm your words. And ask Him to grant you a garden, a palace, and treasures of gold and silver, so that you will be free from the labours in which we see you engaged. For you walk in the markets as we do, and you seek livelihood as we seek livelihood. If this is done, we will know your rank before your Lord, and that you are truly a Messenger, as you claim."

The Prophet ﷺ said: "I am not someone who does such things, nor am I one to ask my Lord for them. God has sent me only as a messenger of good news and a warning. If you accept what I have brought, it will be your reward in this life and the next. And if you reject it, I will wait for God's judgement until He decides between me and you."

The Quraysh said: "Then bring down a piece of the sky upon us, as you claim that if your Lord wills, He can do so. We will never believe until you do this."

The Prophet replied: "That is for God to decide. If He wills to do that to you, then He will."

The Quraysh said: "O Muhammad, did your Lord not know that we would sit with you and ask you the questions we have asked, and demand from you the things we have demanded? Then He could have answered first, and told you what He would do with us in this matter."

Finally, they said:

> "We are not willing to believe your words. We have learned that the teachings you present are given to you by a man from Yamamah named al-Rahman. By God, we will never believe in al-Rahman. O Muhammad, we have made our excuse before you. By God, we will not leave until either you destroy us or we destroy you."

Some of them even said: "We worship the angels, and they are the daughters of God. Therefore, we will not believe in you until you bring God and the angels before us."

When the Quraysh said these things to the Messenger of God ﷺ, he got up and walked away. Abdullah ibn Abi Umayyah, the son of his aunt ʻAtikah bint ʻAbd al-Muttalib, also stood up with him. He said:

> "O Muhammad, your people have made requests to you, but you did not accept them. Then they asked you for things that, if granted, would have shown them the rank and position you claim with God, so they might recognize you, believe in you, and follow you. But you did not do that either. Then they asked you to seek certain benefits for yourself from your Lord, so that people would recognize your distinction with God, yet you did not do that. Finally, they demanded that you bring upon them some of the punishment with which you threaten them, but you could not do that either."

"By God, I will never believe in you—until you bring a ladder reaching up to heaven, climb upon it before my very eyes, ascend to the heavens, and return with a written book for yourself, accompanied by four angels who testify that you are truly what you claim to be. And by God, even if you did that, I still don't think I would believe you." (*Ibn Hisham*, Vol. 1, p. 298)

The Messenger of God ﷺ then returned to his family, feeling sorrowful and grief-stricken. He had gone to his

people with hope, but that hope was not realized. Instead, they grew even more distant from him.

The Migration to Abyssinia

Despite the opposition from the Quraysh chiefs, Islam kept spreading in Makkah. Every day, news would spread that someone had embraced Islam. This angered the leaders of Makkah, and they started to persecute the Muslims in many ways. At this point, the Messenger of God told his followers to leave Makkah and go elsewhere.

They asked: "Where should we go?" The Prophet ﷺ pointed with his hand towards Abyssinia and said: "In Abyssinia, there is a just king. No one is wronged under his rule."

Following this instruction, the believers began to leave Makkah. In Rajab, during the fifth year of Prophethood, the first group set out for Abyssinia. It consisted of eleven men and five women. They quietly slipped out of Makkah and made their way to the coast at Jeddah, where two merchant ships were ready to sail to Abyssinia. They paid five dirhams as fare and boarded.

When the people of Makkah found out about this, they sent men to capture the Muslims, but by the time they reached the port, the ships had already sailed. Shortly after, another group of Muslims followed, larger in number. In this second migration, eighty-six men and seventeen women travelled to Abyssinia.

When Quraysh saw that the Muslims were living peacefully in Abyssinia, free to practice their faith without interference, they convened once more to scheme. They decided to send ʻAmr ibn al-ʻAs and Abdullah ibn Abi Rabiʻah with gifts and offerings for the Negus, the king of Abyssinia. They also planned to give gifts to the king's courtiers and close attendants to earn their favour and support before the king.

Accordingly, ʻAmr ibn al-ʻAs and Abdullah ibn Abi Rabiʻah travelled to Abyssinia. They first presented gifts to the king's courtiers and close associates, then spoke with them, urging support for their request before the king. They said:

> "Some foolish youths among us have abandoned their ancestors' religion and taken refuge in your land. They are neither followers of our religion nor yours. Instead, they have created a new religion unfamiliar to both of us. Our people have sent us here to bring them back. Therefore, we ask you to recommend to the king that he hand them over to us."

The courtiers agreed, and then ʻAmr ibn al-ʻAs and ʻAbdullah ibn Abi Rabiʻah appeared before the Negus. As was customary, they bowed to him and presented their gifts. They said: "Some of our people have abandoned the

religion of their ancestors and sought refuge in your land. Their own people have sent us here to bring them back."

As agreed, the courtiers supported them, saying that these people should be handed over. 'Amr and 'Abdullah wanted the Negus to deliver the Muslims to them without even speaking to them. But when they pressed this, the Negus became angry. He said: "I cannot decide this matter without first hearing them."

He instructed one of his men to summon the Muslims to his court.

The Muslims discussed among themselves: "The Negus is a Christian king. How should we address him?" They agreed: "We will say only what our Prophet has taught us."

When they entered, they greeted him peacefully but did not bow in prostration as was customary. They were asked why they hadn't bowed. Ja'far ibn Abi Talib, speaking on their behalf, said: "We do not prostrate to anyone except God. Our Messenger has taught us so."

The Negus asked: "Then what is this religion you have chosen, besides Christianity and idol-worship?"

Ja'far rose and said: "O King, we used to be a people given to shirk. We worshipped idols, ate carrion, mistreated our neighbours, permitted what was forbidden, and shed each other's blood. We knew nothing of what was lawful and unlawful. Then God sent us a Messenger from among

ourselves, whose truthfulness and trustworthiness we knew. He commanded us to honour family ties, support our neighbours, speak the truth, return trusts, refrain from falsehood, and not consume the wealth of orphans. He commanded us to worship God alone, without partners, to fast for His sake, and to give zakat.

We believed in him and followed what he brought from God. But our people oppressed us, tortured us, and tried to force us back into the old religion. When their cruelty became unbearable, we left our homeland and came here, hoping that in your land we would not be wronged."

The Negus was moved by Ja'far's words. He said: "Recite some of the words your Prophet has brought from God."

Ja'far recited the opening passages of Surah Maryam, which speak about Jesus عليه السلام. When the Negus heard them, his eyes overflowed with tears until his beard was wet. He said:

> "This speech and the speech brought by Jesus both come from the same source."

He then turned to the Quraysh delegation: "Go back. By no means will I hand these people over to you."

But the delegation did not give up. The next day they returned and said: "These people speak terrible things about Jesus, son of Mary. Ask them what they say about him."

The Negus again summoned the Muslims and asked them. Ja'far replied:

> "We say only what our Prophet has told us—that Jesus is God's servant and Messenger, His word, and His spirit."

The Negus picked up a straw from the ground and said:

> "By God, Jesus was no more than what you have said—not even as much as this straw beyond it."

His courtiers were angered, but he paid them no heed. He said to the Muslims:

> "Go, live in peace. Even if I were offered a mountain of gold, I would not harm you."

He then ordered that all the gifts brought by the Quraysh be returned. The court was dismissed. The Muslims departed in joy, while the Quraysh delegation left humiliated and disgraced.

After this, the Muslims lived peacefully and safely in Abyssinia. When the Prophet ﷺ migrated from Makkah to Madinah, most of them, upon hearing the news, left Abyssinia and travelled to Madinah. The rest arrived later with Ja'far ibn Abi Talib ﷺ during the 7th year of Hijrah, around the time of the conquest of Khaybar.

Reports state that the Negus affirmed the Prophethood of the Messenger of God ﷺ. He recited the testimony of faith before the Muslims, taking them as witnesses. When the Muslims prepared to return to Madinah, he provided

them with provisions and travel expenses. He told them, "When you reach your Prophet, ask him to pray for my forgiveness." When this message reached the Prophet, he immediately rose, performed ablution, and prayed three times: 'O God, forgive the Negus.'" (*Musnad al-Bazzar*, Hadith No. 1328)

As long as the Muslims stayed in Abyssinia, they lived with dignity and safety. The Negus cared for their well-being. Once, he called them together and asked, "Is anyone here troubling you?" They answered, "Yes." The Negus then ordered that anyone who harmed a Muslim must pay four dirhams in compensation, which would be given to the Muslim. Then he asked, "Is that enough?" They replied: "No." So he increased it to eight dirhams and had it announced publicly.

The Muslims in his land became his supporters. At that time, an enemy attacked the kingdom of the Negus. This deeply saddened the Muslims, who prayed earnestly for his success and victory. When they heard that the Negus had defeated his enemy, they rejoiced and thanked God.

The Boycott

When the Quraysh found out that some Muslims had left Makkah for Abyssinia, they directed their anger at those who stayed behind. The main instigator was Abu Jahl. If the Muslim was from a noble family, he would say to

him, "Are you not ashamed to abandon the religion of your ancestors?" If he was a merchant, Abu Jahl would threaten him: "No one in this city will buy from you, and anyone owing you money will not pay you back." If the Muslim was from the common people, Abu Jahl would flog him and try to humiliate him.

The Quraysh also tried to persuade the king of Abyssinia to hand over the Muslims, but they failed. They then attempted to persecute the Muslims harshly to force them back to the old religion, but that also failed. Next, they tried to pressure the Prophet's clan, Banu Hashim, to withdraw their support so they could kill him. However, the honour of Banu Hashim prevented them from abandoning their kinsman, and the Quraysh leaders could not succeed in their goal.

Finally, in 616 CE, they agreed to boycott the family of the Prophet ﷺ. They wrote a decree and hung it on the wall of the Kaaba. It was an official proclamation that stated:

1. No resident of Makkah may speak to any Muslim man or woman.
2. No resident of Makkah may touch the body of a Muslim (not even shake hands).
3. No resident of Makkah may buy anything from a Muslim, nor sell anything to them.
4. No resident of Makkah may marry a Muslim woman, nor give a woman in marriage to a Muslim.

5. Anyone indebted to a Muslim is absolved of repayment.
6. This decree will remain in force until Muhammad gives up his religion, or his clan, Banu Hashim, withdraws their support so that the Quraysh can kill him.

This pact was written by Mansur ibn 'Ikrimah, wrapped in wax cloth, and hung inside the Kaaba. So, in 616 CE, the Prophet ﷺ and all his followers had to leave Makkah. However, Banu Hashim did not stop supporting him. They also left Makkah with the Prophet ﷺ. Among them was his uncle Abu Talib, who stayed a polytheist until he died. They all took refuge in a mountain pass called Shi'b Abi Talib. The only member of Banu Hashim who did not go with them was Abu Lahab.

Outside Makkah, the surrounding hills were completely barren. There were no trees, and not even grass grew there. Throughout the year, not a single bird was seen there, since birds only go where there is greenery and water. According to the decree, Muslims could not buy any food or drink from the people of Makkah. If a caravan happened to pass through the route of Shi'b Abi Talib, the Muslims tried to buy something from them. They endured terrible hunger there. When children cried out in hunger, their voices echoed off the rocky cliffs and spread far and wide.

The only thing that kept them from dying was that fighting was banned for four months each year. During those months, the Muslims could enter the city and get some basic supplies. They also collected the hides of sacrificial animals brought by pilgrims to the Kaaba, dried them, and during the other months, boiled and ate them. Lady Khadijah, who had once been the wealthiest woman in Makkah, now lived in that valley with the Prophet ﷺ in such hardship.

The Prophet ﷺ and his companions stayed in the valley for three years. By then, Lady Khadijah's home had only a single cooking pot and a water jar. One day, the jar broke. Unable to buy a new one, she patiently bore it. Later, when a craftsman happened to pass by, she gave him the broken jar to repair. In her hunger and poverty, Lady Khadijah became ill. Without medicine or treatment, she passed away in 619 CE, after the Muslims had returned from the valley. At that time, they didn't even have cloth for a shroud, so she was buried in her own garment. A few days later, the Prophet's uncle, Abu Talib, also died. When news reached his brother, Abu Lahab, people said, "Your brother is dying." He went to Abu Talib and said, "Swear that you did not accept Muhammad's religion and that you are dying on the faith of your ancestors." Abu Talib declared that he was indeed dying on the religion of his ancestors.

This boycott caused not only physical suffering but also economic collapse. Muslim businesses were wiped out entirely. Abu Bakr and other Muslim traders lost their trade, and all their wealth was destroyed.

History records that during this time, some people in Makkah felt conscience-stricken against such injustice. For example, one day Lady Khadijah's nephew, Hakim ibn Hizam, was carrying grain with his servant for his aunt. On the way, Abu Jahl stopped him and tried to seize it. Just then Abu al-Bukhturi happened to pass by. He said to Abu Jahl, "This man is taking food for his aunt. Why do you stop him?" Abu Jahl began to argue with him as well. Abu al-Bukhturi, being a hot-tempered man, struck Abu Jahl on the head with a camel's bone.

There were also others in Makkah whose conscience rebuked them against this injustice. Hisham ibn 'Amr al-'Amiri was the first to take initiative. He gathered some friends and went to the Kaaba, where the leaders of Quraysh were present. Among them was Zuhayr, a grandson of 'Abd al-Muttalib, who began the conversation.

> "O people of Makkah! What kind of justice is this, that we eat and drink freely while our relatives, Banu Hashim and Banu Muttalib, perish in hunger? By God, I will not rest until this pact is torn apart."

> "You cannot touch this pact—you are lying!" shouted Abu Jahl.
>
> "You are the liar," replied 'Zam'ah ibn al-Aswad. "When this pact was written, you did not even take our opinion!"
>
> Both Abu al-Bukhturi and Mut'im ibn 'Adi supported them. As a result, the agreement once believed to be unanimous became contested among the Quraysh.

At that time, another incident happened that decided the issue. In hot climates, termites are common, and they often consume wood and paper. After three years, termites had eaten away the scroll, erasing the entire text except for the name of God, with which the document had started. When this was found out, everyone was filled with fear, and they agreed that the boycott of Banu Hashim should come to an end.

This event occurred in the tenth year of Prophethood. When the Muslims emerged from the valley after many years of hunger, they were very weak. Their cheekbones were prominent, and the sun had darkened their skin.

Although the boycott officially targeted Banu Hashim and Banu Muttalib, it also indirectly affected other Muslims. They suffered hardships as well until the boycott ended. After three years, the Muslims left the valley and returned to Makkah.

During those three years, the Muslim economy was completely ruined. Their businesses were gone. It was once said about Abu Bakr that he had wealth similar to Qarun's (*Korah*). But by then, he was left with only five thousand dirhams. When the Muslims came out of Shi'b Abi Talib after such a long time of hunger and thirst, they were totally weakened.

Abu Lahab, driven by family honour, had earlier agreed to end the boycott of the Prophet ﷺ, yet his hostility towards Islam continued to prompt him against the Prophet. He decided that the Prophet should be expelled from the clan of Banu Hashim. According to a plan, he once called together the people of his clan for a meeting. When they gathered, he asked the Prophet, "I want to know your views about our forefather 'Abd al-Muttalib. Will he be in Paradise or Hell?" The Prophet replied, "Those who die as polytheists, even if they are close relatives of a Prophet, cannot be saved from Hell." Abu Lahab then inquired about his brother Abu Talib, "Was he forgiven or not?" The Prophet answered, "No." In this manner, Abu Lahab listed the names of various family elders, and each time the Prophet ﷺ said that a polytheist would not be forgiven. This was a direct command from God with no exceptions.

In ancient Arabia, ancestors were highly valued. Until now, although the Prophet had introduced a new religion, he had not spoken openly about his ancestors. The family members were shocked to hear this. Acting as the clan

leader, Abu Lahab asked, "Do I have the right to expel Muhammad from the clan?" The people confirmed that he did, because under tribal custom, the Prophet was now considered guilty. A few days later, Abu Lahab officially announced the Prophet's expulsion.

In Makkah, when someone was cast out of his tribe, his blood became unprotected—anyone could kill him or enslave him. After being expelled, the Prophet ﷺ was left completely alone. Abu Lahab had thus abandoned him to a barren wilderness. This happened at a time when the two people who had been his earthly supports under the sky—Khadijah and Abu Talib—had already passed away.

Now his enemies could kill him without fearing retaliation. At that time, some men from the Banu Hanifah tribe came to Makkah to perform 'Umrah. The Quraysh bribed one of them with money to kill the Prophet. When the Prophet learned of this, he left Makkah at night with Zayd ibn Harithah and headed towards *Ta'if*.

Ta'if lies south of Makkah at an elevation of about 1,800 metres above sea level. It was lush and green, so many wealthy Makkans built gardens and houses there. Because its people were prosperous, they also had time for learning. The only trained physician in northern Arabia, al-Harith ibn Kaladah—who studied medicine from the Persians—lived there. The famous Arab astrologer, 'Amr ibn Umayyah, also lived there. The name "*Ta'if*" means "enclosed" or "walled," and it was indeed a fortified city.

The tenth year of Prophethood is called the "Year of Sorrow" (*'Am al-Huzn*) in Islamic history because, after the boycott ended in Shi'b Abi Talib, both Abu Talib and Khadijah died in the same year, about a week apart.

In old Makkah, Abu Talib was the Prophet's main protector and supporter. Until his final moments, he defended the Prophet against his enemies, even joining him in the tough valley during the boycott. However, he never accepted Islam.

When death approached Abu Talib, the Prophet ﷺ came close to him and said, "O uncle, say just once, 'There is no god but God,' so that I may intercede for you before God." But Abu Jahl and 'Abdullah ibn Abi Umayyah, who were also present, said, "Abu Talib, will you abandon the religion of 'Abd al-Muttalib?" So Abu Talib did not say the words. His final statement was: "I die upon the religion of 'Abd al-Muttalib" (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith No. 1360).

The passing of Khadijah weighed heavily on the Prophet ﷺ. She was not only his wife but also his true companion in every sense. After her death, he felt as if he had been left completely alone in the world.

After the Death of Abu Talib

According to Arab tribal customs, after the death of Abu Talib, the Banu Hashim clan needed to appoint a new leader. Traditionally, this right was passed to Abu Lahab,

Abu Talib's brother. His becoming the head of Banu Hashim created an even bigger problem for the Prophet. Abu Lahab now planned to force him out of the clan, which meant complete vulnerability: once a person was expelled, anyone could kill him without fear of retribution from his tribe.

The people of Makkah had earlier demanded the same—that Banu Hashim disown the Prophet so that they might kill him. But Abu Talib, the former chief, had never agreed to this; instead, he went with his nephew into the valley, enduring hardships until he died. This was no small matter, because in Arabia, every individual was part of a tribe, and life outside it was impossible. Abu Lahab expelled the Prophet ﷺ from Banu Hashim, cutting him off from all human support, as if casting him into a barren desert. Separated from his tribe, he was left completely alone. In earlier days, whenever he suffered, Khadijah would tend to his wounds and Abu Talib would comfort him. But now Khadijah and Abu Talib were both gone.

At this point, the Prophet ﷺ approached the tribes who visited Makkah during the pilgrimage season. He visited their camps individually, asking for their protection so he could carry on his mission.

He approached Banu 'Amir, but they stoned him. He went to Banu Muharib, but they, fearing Abu Lahab, refused him support. At the fair of 'Ukaz, he went to Banu Kindah and said: "I call you to God alone, without partners, and I ask

you to protect me as you would protect your own lives." (*Dala'il al-Nubuwwah*, Abu Nu'aym al-Isfahani, Hadith No. 222). But they paid no attention. Another tribe responded, "We will not drive you away, but neither will we believe in you." (*Sirah Ibn Kathir*, Vol. 2, p. 161) None of the tribes was willing to offer him protection.

The people of Ta'if were wealthy, living from agriculture, gardens, and moneylending—reportedly charging up to 100% interest. At that time, Ta'if was home to northern Arabia's only Arab physician, al-Harith ibn Kaladah, who had studied medicine from the Persians, as well as the famous astrologer 'Amr ibn Umayyah. The word "Ta'if" means "enclosure," and the city was indeed the only walled settlement in Arabia.

Among the city's leading men were three brothers—'Abd Yalil, Mas'ud, and Habib. The Prophet ﷺ thought that if they accepted his message, the entire town would follow. He first went to them. But all three gave crushingly harsh replies.

One said, "Has God found no one else but you to dishonour the Kaaba by making you a Prophet?"

Another said, "Could God not find anyone besides you to appoint as a Messenger?"

The third said, "If you are truly a Prophet, then speaking to you is beneath us; and if you are lying, then addressing you is disgraceful for us."

Disheartened, the Prophet ﷺ left Ta'if. The leaders then incited the town's boys to chase him. They hurled insults and stones. At that time, only Zayd ibn Harithah was with him. He tried to shield the Prophet with his cloak, yet the Prophet's body was bloodied, until the blood filled his sandals. Whenever he collapsed from exhaustion, Zayd would lift him up, but as he walked again, the mob would shower him with more stones and abuse.

The leaders of Ta'if dared to treat him so brutally because they knew he had been cast out of Banu Hashim and no longer had tribal protection.

By evening, when the boys of Ta'if finally left him, the Prophet ﷺ found shelter in the vineyard of two brothers, 'Utbah and Shaybah, who were Makkans. There, exhausted and wounded, he prayed words that fully expressed the depth of his state:

> "O God, to You alone I complain of my weakness, my lack of resources, and the humiliation I face before people. O Most Merciful of the merciful."
> (*Sirah Ibn Hisham*, Vol. 1, p. 420)

The owners of the garden felt pity for him and sent their Christian slave, 'Addas, with a plate of grapes. The Prophet ﷺ took a grape, said: "*Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim*"—that is, "In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful"—and ate it. Surprised, since such words were not commonly used in that land, 'Addas asked where he had learned them. In reply, the Prophet ﷺ asked him,

"Where are you from?" He answered, "From Nineveh." The Prophet said: "From the same Nineveh where God sent His servant and Prophet, Yunus ibn Matta." Astonished, 'Addas asked, "Do you know Yunus ibn Matta?" The Prophet ﷺ replied, "Yes, he was my brother. He was a Prophet, and I too am a Prophet." Hearing this, 'Addas kissed the Prophet's hands and feet and embraced Islam on the spot.

After leaving Ta'if, the Prophet stayed near the cave of Hira', outside Makkah. To re-enter the city safely, he needed tribal protection, since he had been cut off from Banu Hashim. He first sent requests to Akhnas ibn Shurayq and Suhayl ibn 'Amr, but both refused. Finally, he turned to Mut'im ibn 'Adi, who had earlier helped annul the boycott pact against the Prophet's family. Mut'im immediately agreed, ordered his six sons to arm themselves, and brought the Prophet back into Makkah. The Prophet ﷺ first went to the Kaaba and performed Tawaf. Mut'im then publicly announced: "I have granted Muhammad protection. Beware—no one may harm him."

This protection allowed the Prophet ﷺ to live again in Makkah and continue his mission. Mut'im later died before the Battle of Badr, without having accepted Islam. The Prophet deeply respected him and once said: "If Mut'im ibn 'Adi were alive today and spoke to me on behalf of these captives (after Badr), I would release them for his sake." (*Sirah Ibn Kathir*, Vol. 2, p. 182)

Soon after returning, the Prophet ﷺ married Sawdah. She had gone to Abyssinia with her husband, but after he became a Christian there, she obtained a divorce and returned to Makkah. This marriage took place in the tenth year of Prophethood. Around this time, Abu Bakr requested the Prophet to marry his young daughter Aisha. She was only seven years old, so the Prophet initially declined due to her age, but eventually agreed under the condition that the marriage would be consummated later. Aisha was the first woman to be born into a fully Muslim household, with both parents as believers.

The experience of *Ta'if* was the harshest trial in the Prophet's life. Aisha later once asked him: "O Messenger of God, was there a day harder for you than the day of Uhud?" He replied: "Yes. I endured much from your people, but the hardest day for me was when I presented myself to 'Abd Yalil ibn 'Abd Kulal in Ta'if, and he gave me the worst reply."

He recalled: "I departed in grief until I reached Qarn al-Tha'alib. There I looked up and saw a cloud shading me. Within it was the angel Jibril, who called out, 'O Muhammad, God has heard what your people said to you and how they replied. He has sent to you the Angel of the Mountains; command him as you wish.' Then the Angel of the Mountains greeted me and said, 'I am at your command. If you wish, I will crush them between these two mountains.' But I replied: 'No. I hope that God

will bring forth from their descendants people who will worship Him alone and not associate anything with Him.'"

This journey to Ta'if took place three years before the Hijrah. On the way back, the Prophet ﷺ stopped at Nakhlah. Only Zayd ibn Harithah was with him, and the whole journey had been made on foot.

He was deeply troubled, wondering how he could return to Makkah. He feared that if news of what had happened in Ta'if reached the people of Makkah, they would become even bolder in their opposition.

It was during one of those nights, while the Prophet ﷺ was reciting the Quran in prayer, that a group of jinn passed by. They listened to the Quran attentively and were so moved that they accepted faith. When they returned to their own people, they began calling them to Islam. All this happened without the Prophet's knowledge. Later, God informed him of it through the Quran:

> "When We sent towards you a group of jinn, to listen to the Quran. When they attended it, they said, 'Be silent and listen.' Then, when it was finished, they returned to their people as warners. They said, 'O our people, indeed we have heard a Book revealed after Moses, confirming what came before it. It guides to the truth and to a straight path. O our people, respond to the caller of God and believe in him.

> God will forgive your sins and protect you from a painful punishment. But whoever does not respond to the caller of God will never escape on earth, nor will he have any protector besides Him. Such people are in clear error.'" (46:29–32)

This was glad news sent by God to His Messenger at just the right time: while some groups of humans were rejecting the Quran, others—like the jinn—were accepting it with such eagerness that they became its preachers the moment they believed.

The Beginning of Islam in Madinah

Before Islam, trade fairs were held in and around Makkah. The famous 'Ukaz fair began in the month of Dhu'l-Qa'da. After it ended, people would move to the Majinnah fair, which lasted three weeks. Then came the Dhu al-Majaz fair, held during the days of Hajj. The primary purpose of these gatherings was trade, but they also included poetry competitions, wrestling matches, and drinking feasts. Tribes from distant places attended.

The Prophet ﷺ began visiting these fairs. He would go to the encampments of different tribes and present to them the message of Islam. One of his companions later narrated—at a time when he himself had not yet accepted Islam:

> "I was in the marketplace of Dhu al-Majaz when I saw a young man dressed in two red Yemeni

> cloths. He was calling out in a loud voice: 'O people, say *La ilaha illa Allah* and you will succeed!' People were gathering around him to listen. I then noticed another man following him, throwing stones at his legs and ankles until they were bloodied, and shouting, 'O people, this man is a liar. Do not believe him!' I asked who they were. They told me: 'The young man is Muhammad, a Hashimite who claims to be a Messenger, and the other is his uncle, 'Abd al-'Uzza (Abu Lahab).'"

Thus the Prophet ﷺ carried on preaching at the fairs. On one such occasion, near Mina, he met a group from the Khazraj tribe of Madinah. He invited them to Islam. Unlike the people of Makkah, the men of Madinah listened attentively. Some of them accepted his call on the spot.

At that time, Madinah was known as Yathrib, located about 400 kilometres north of Makkah. Several Jewish tribes had long been settled in and around Yathrib. In the 6th century BCE, when the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar invaded Palestine, destroyed Jerusalem, and exiled the Jews, some of their tribes fled to Arabia and settled in places like Khaybar, Fadak, and Yathrib. Later, around 120 years before the birth of Christ, when Yemen was struck by the famous flood of Ma'rib (known in the Quran as Sayl al-'Arim), many Yemenites migrated to different lands. Among them

were two brothers, Aws and Khazraj, who came to Yathrib with their families. They lived there by farming and manual labour, and in time their numbers grew until the Aws and the Khazraj became two powerful Arab tribes.

For the Jews, these Arab tribes provided labour, and they also became the main customers in their moneylending and trade. Economically, the Jews were more advanced, but in numbers and physical strength, they were weaker. Whenever conflict broke out, the Jews would warn the Arabs: "According to our scriptures, a great Prophet is soon to appear. We will join him, and with his help we will defeat you just as the people of 'Ad and Iram were destroyed."

This was the background when, in the 11th year of Prophethood, the message of Muhammad ﷺ reached the people of Yathrib. A group from Aws and Khazraj had come to Makkah for 'Umrah. When they saw the Prophet and heard his words, they recalled what their Jewish neighbours often spoke of. One turned to another and said: "This must be the very Prophet the Jews have been telling us about."

That year, six men from Yathrib accepted Islam on the spot. The following year, in 621 CE, more people from Yathrib came to Makkah for the pilgrimage. By then, their number of Muslims had grown to twelve—ten from one tribe and two from another. They met the Prophet ﷺ at night in a mountain pass near Makkah called al-'Aqabah.

This meeting, known in Islamic history as the First Pledge of ʻAqabah, was a turning point. They pledged allegiance to the Prophet ﷺ on the following terms:

1. They would worship none but God.
2. They would not steal.
3. They would not commit adultery.
4. They would not kill their children.
5. They would not slander anyone with false accusations.
6. They would not disobey the Prophet ﷺ in righteous matters.

When these new Muslims prepared to return to Yathrib, the Prophet ﷺ sent two men with them to assist in teaching and spreading Islam: ʻAbdullah ibn Umm Maktum and Musʻab ibn ʻUmayr. On arriving in Yathrib, they stayed in the house of Asʻad ibn Zurarah, who had accepted Islam the year before.

The environment of Yathrib proved favourable for Islam. Living alongside the Jews, the Arabs there were already familiar with the concept of a coming Prophet. When they saw that this awaited Prophet had appeared not among Jews or Christians but within their own Arab people, they were overjoyed. They said: "Until now, we were inferior to the Jews because they possessed a revealed scripture while we had none. Now, by believing in this Arab Prophet, we too can become the people of a divine Book."

Islam spread rapidly in Yathrib. ʻAbdullah ibn Umm Maktum and Musʻab ibn ʻUmayr not only taught the new Muslims about Islamic practices, but also preached Islam among the general population. Their main method of teaching was to recite verses from the Quran, whose eloquence and power had a profound effect on the Arabs who understood its language.

One of Yathrib's chiefs was Usayd ibn Hudayr. He disliked the activities of these Muslim preachers. One day, armed with his sword, he went to them and said, "Why are you misleading our women and children? Leave here, otherwise it will not be good for you."

Musʻab ibn ʻUmayr calmly replied: "Listen to what we say. If you like it, accept it. If not, then reject it."

Usayd agreed to listen. Musʻab began reciting verses from the Quran, and Usayd was moved. He exclaimed, "How beautiful is this speech!" and immediately accepted Islam.

Another leader of Yathrib, Saʻd ibn Muʻadh, became angry when he heard that Usayd had converted. He went to confront Musʻab. Once again, Musʻab invited him to listen to the Quran, and after hearing it, Saʻd too embraced Islam. His entire clan, Banu Ashhal, followed him into Islam that very same day. By the end of 621 CE, nearly all of Yathrib—except the Jews—had become Muslim.

In the third year of missionary work in Yathrib (622 CE), the time of Hajj arrived. Seventy-five Muslims from

Madinah (including two women) came to Makkah to meet the Prophet ﷺ. They travelled with their tribes' pilgrimage caravan and secretly sent a message to the Prophet, arranging a nighttime meeting in the valley of al-'Aqabah. This event became known in Islamic history as the Second Pledge of 'Aqabah (Bay'at al-'Aqabah al-Thaniyah).

During this meeting, the Muslims of Yathrib discussed their local political situation. They explained that their tribes were divided over appointing a king. Though preparations had already been made to crown 'Abdullah ibn Ubayy—a local leader—even his own people were not united in supporting him. They said: "In these circumstances, since many of us have embraced Islam, if you migrate to Yathrib, the people will prefer following a Prophet rather than appointing a king. For you are not only a Prophet, but also from Quraysh, and your ancestor is buried here in Yathrib."

This was a delicate matter. Despite all his hardships, Muhammad ﷺ was still a member of the Quraysh. To migrate from Makkah to Yathrib meant severing ties with his tribe forever—something very serious in the tribal system of Arabia. The Prophet ﷺ asked them: "Are you prepared to make the pledge of al-nisa' (the pledge of protection)?" This meant a solemn promise to defend him just as they defended their own women and children.

Bara' ibn Ma'rur responded: "O Messenger of God, by the One who has sent you with the Truth, we pledge that we will protect you as we protect our wives and children. We are men of war and we will stand by you."

At this point, Abu'l-Haytham ibn al-Tayyihan stepped forward and raised a concern: "O Messenger of God, if we do this, our ties with the Jews will be broken. Promise us that you will never leave us and return to Makkah, abandoning us."

The Prophet ﷺ replied: "That will never happen. Your blood is my blood. You are mine, and I am yours. Your enemies are my enemies, your peace is my peace, and your war is my war."

After this reassurance, the pledge began. During the process, 'Abbas ibn 'Ubadah warned the group: "O people of Khazraj, do you know what you are pledging to? You are pledging to declare war against the entire world—Arabs and non-Arabs alike."

All of them responded: "Yes, we are ready for that. Our lives and our wealth are for God and His Messenger."

The Prophet ﷺ then appointed twelve representatives (*nuqaba'*) from among the Muslims of Yathrib and said to them: "You are guardians over your people."

Thus, a new kind of community came into existence—one that was completely different from the traditional Arab order. Its foundation was not family or tribal ties,

but faith and action. Because of this, it came to be called the Ummah, the Muslim community. The valley of al-'Aqabah, where the Prophet ﷺ took pledges from the people of Yathrib for two consecutive years, no longer exists in its original form, though a mosque still stands there as a memorial.

From this time, two new terms entered the vocabulary of Muslims: *Ansar* ("helpers") and *Muhajirun* ("migrants"). Ansar referred to the Muslims of Madinah, while Muhajirun referred to the Muslims of Makkah. Initially, "Ansar" was used only for those who had pledged allegiance to the Prophet in 621–622, but later it came to include all the Muslims of Madinah.

After pledging their allegiance, the Muslims of Yathrib left Makkah the next morning. Three days later, the Quraysh learned of what had happened and immediately dispatched fast riders on swift camels to capture them and bring them back. But since the Yathribites had taken a different route, the Quraysh failed to overtake them. They reached Madinah safely.

Following this, the Prophet ﷺ instructed the Muslims of Makkah to leave the city and migrate to Yathrib, where they could unite their strength. Groups of Muslims quietly began to depart in small numbers. The Quraysh, however, lay in wait for them. One of them, Hashim ibn 'As, was captured at the very moment of departure, chained, and

thrown into the desert outside the city. This was considered imprisonment at that time, since Makkah had no jails. (The first prison in Arabia was established in Kufa after the Prophet's death.) When the Ansar heard of this, they quickly dispatched riders on fast camels to Makkah. They broke Hashim's chains and carried him back to Madinah. By then his body was so emaciated that nothing was left but skin and bones.

When it became known that a wealthy Muslim from Banu Jash had migrated to Yathrib, Abu Sufyan seized his large house in Makkah. Another wealthy Muslim, Suhayb ibn Sinan al-Rumi, was stopped by the Quraysh. They said to him: "When you came to Makkah, you were a poor man. Here, through trade, you became wealthy. We will not let you leave with the fortune you made among us." Suhayb agreed, handed over all his wealth to them, and went empty-handed to Yathrib.

In this way, Makkah gradually became empty of Muslims. Only the Prophet ﷺ, his two closest companions—Abu Bakr and 'Ali—and a few poor and weak Muslims remained behind. These powerless believers are remembered in the Quran as those who prayed:

> "Our Lord, deliver us from this town whose people are oppressors." (Quran, 4:75)

The Migration to Madinah

By this time, the Quraysh realized they needed to take a final step, because the Islam they had once dismissed as

weak was now gaining new collective strength in Madinah. The Quraysh were divided into ten clans. Each clan had its own council, called al-Nadi, while the entire Quraysh shared a central council known as Dar al-Nadwah. It was in this council that the chiefs of every clan came together. When they learned that the migration of Muslims to Yathrib had taken a dangerous turn for them, they held a special meeting of Dar al-Nadwah in which all the chiefs participated.

The question was: how to deal with this new situation?

The first suggestion was to imprison Muhammad ﷺ as they had done with Hashim ibn 'As—that is, to chain him and leave him in the wilderness. But it was feared that the Muslims of Madinah would hear of it and, just as they had freed Hashim, they would come and free Muhammad ﷺ as well.

The second suggestion was to expel him from Makkah. But this was also rejected. They knew that if he left Makkah, he would certainly head to Yathrib, gather his strength there, and become an even greater threat.

At last, Abu Jahl put forward a third proposal: that Muhammad ﷺ be killed.

In ancient Arabia, killing a man was not considered religiously or morally shameful. The only consequence was financial, since the killer had to pay *diyah* (blood money) to the family of the victim. Even those who had previously supported the Prophet were persuaded to withdraw their

support. The council therefore made its final decision: Muhammad ﷺ must be killed. To prevent retaliation, it was agreed that men from all ten clans would participate in the killing, with even the chief of Banu Hashim included, so that the responsibility would be shared equally and no single clan could be blamed. A list of the assassins was prepared on the spot.

The Prophet had an aunt, Ruqayyah bint Abi Sayf. By God's help, she came to know of this secret plot. She learned that the Quraysh planned to surround the Prophet's house that very night, before dawn, and then attack him together, cutting him down with their swords. She quietly went to the Prophet ﷺ and warned him to take immediate action.

The Prophet went at once to the house of Abu Bakr and told him everything. Abu Bakr replied: "For this very purpose, I have kept ready two swift white camels. Please take one of them."

Abu Bakr's daughter, Asma', prepared some food for the journey and put it in a bag. Not finding any string to tie the mouth of the bag, she took off her waistband, tore it in two, tied the bag with one piece, and fastened the other around her waist again. Because of this, she became known in Islamic history as Dhat al-Nitaqayn—"the woman with two belts."

After this, the Prophet ﷺ went to his cousin 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, told him the whole situation, and said: "Tonight I

will leave this place. You should sleep on my bed, wrapped in my cloak. In this way the Makkans will think I am still inside the house." In addition, the Prophet ﷺ still held in trust the valuables that people of Makkah had deposited with him. He arranged that after his departure, 'Ali would return each of these belongings to their rightful owners.

The plan was as follows: after nightfall, the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr would leave Makkah and make their way to a cave on Mount Thawr. They would stay hidden there for a few days, because once the Quraysh realized he had escaped, they would scatter in all directions on fast camels in search of him. Only when the search died down would they emerge from the cave. At that point, the two swift camels would be brought to them, and they would ride quickly towards Yathrib.

That night, the chiefs of Makkah surrounded the Prophet's house. In Arab custom, storming into the private women's quarters was considered dishonourable, so they waited outside until morning, planning to kill him the moment he stepped out. At dawn, someone came out of the house—but it was not Muhammad ﷺ. It was his cousin, 'Ali ibn Abi Talib. When they realized the Prophet was not there, they rushed to the house of Abu Bakr. Finding only his daughter Asma' at home, they interrogated her. When she refused to give them any information, one of them slapped her face before leaving in anger.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and Abu Bakr set out from Makkah on foot and, after travelling about three miles, reached Mount Thawr, where they hid inside a cave. Abu Bakr's son 'Abdullah was tasked with staying in Makkah during the day, listening to what people were saying and planning, and then coming at night to inform them in the cave. Abu Bakr's servant, 'Amir ibn Fuhayrah, would spend the day grazing sheep in the area, then bring them near the cave at night to provide milk. Abu Bakr's daughter, Asma', would cook food and secretly deliver it to them after dark.

Meanwhile, the Quraysh launched a frantic search for the Prophet. It was announced in Makkah that anyone who captured Muhammad ﷺ would be rewarded with one hundred camels. Many mounted men scoured the desert, and some even passed right by the Cave of Thawr, but they never entered. It is said that after the Prophet entered the cave, a landslide blocked its entrance, making it impossible for anyone outside to suspect that human beings were inside.

The Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr remained in the cave for three days. Then, as planned, 'Abdullah ibn Uraiqit arrived with two white camels. Though not a Muslim, 'Abdullah was a trusted desert guide, skilled in lesser-known routes and well-versed in the geography of Arabia. They hired him for a fee to lead them safely to Madinah by unfamiliar paths. Mounting the camels, the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr set off. To avoid capture by pursuers, they avoided the main road and instead travelled along the seashore.

The two men travelled with bare feet and little clothing, their condition showing hardship. On the way, a man asked Abu Bakr, "Who are you?" Abu Bakr gave his own name. Then, pointing to the Prophet ﷺ, the man asked, "And who is this?" Abu Bakr replied, "He is a man who guides me to the path." (*Fada'il al-Sahabah* by Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Hadith No. 605)

At that time, Suraqah ibn Malik, chief of Banu Mudlij, was sitting in his tent when someone came and said, "O Suraqah, I have just seen two men riding white camels along the seashore. I think one of them is Muhammad." Tempted by the Quraysh's reward of one hundred camels, Suraqah mounted his horse with some men and followed the tracks until he caught sight of the travellers. Just as he spurred his horse to overtake the Prophet ﷺ, the animal stumbled and fell. Taking this as a bad sign, Suraqah drew lots with his arrows to see if he should attack, but the answer came negative. Realizing the truth, he dismounted and pleaded: "I feel certain that you are upon the truth. One day you will prevail over the Quraysh. Promise me that when that day comes, neither I nor my tribe will be harmed."

The Prophet ﷺ granted him safety and gave him a written guarantee of protection.

Finally, in September 622 CE, in the month of Rabi' al-Awwal, the thirteenth year of his prophethood, the

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ reached the outskirts of Yathrib and stopped at the village of Quba, just south of Madinah. This marked the beginning of the Islamic Hijri calendar.

Entry into Madinah

Quba' lies about three miles from Madinah. The Prophet ﷺ first stayed in a date-palm grove there. Both Muslim and Jewish residents of Quba' came to see him, but at first they did not know which of the two travellers was the Prophet. Since Abu Bakr was three years older, people thought he might be the Prophet. To avoid confusion, Abu Bakr held up his cloak—borrowed from Zubayr ibn al-'Awwam—as a shade over the Prophet, who was sitting under the scant shade of a palm tree. In this way, the people recognized who the Prophet was and, following Arab custom, they raised their voices to welcome him.

Kulthum ibn al-Hadm, chief of the Banu 'Amr ibn 'Awf, invited the Prophet ﷺ to his home. The Prophet replied: "We do not wish to burden anyone." Kulthum said, "There is a vacant room in my house, and no one lives there. You and Abu Bakr can stay in it. We will look after your camels and feed them." The Prophet accepted and stayed there. Soon, however, the number of visitors became so great that the room could not hold them. Then Sa'd ibn Khaythamah offered his house, which was larger. The Prophet ﷺ spent the day there receiving people, though at night he would return to Kulthum's house to sleep.

When the Prophet Muhammad migrated to Madinah, his first stop was at Quba, a settlement about three miles from the city. One of the leading families there was Banu Amr ibn Awf, whose chief was Kulthum ibn al-Hadm. The Prophet stayed at his house.

Soon after arriving, the Prophet decided to build a mosque at Quba. It was the first mosque established by the Muslims after the Hijrah. Land was offered for the purpose, but the Prophet did not accept it as a gift and instead acquired it by payment.

The construction was a collective effort. The Prophet himself took part in the work, carrying stones and helping prepare the mud mortar. Abu Bakr, Umar ibn al-Khattab, and the other Muslims also joined in. Umar, who had once belonged to one of the prominent families of Makkah, carried stones on his shoulders and brought containers filled with earth. According to the reports, the Prophet himself placed one of the first stones, after which the Companions continued the construction.

This mosque is generally identified with the one referred to in the Quran:

> "A mosque founded on piety from the very first day is more worthy for you to stand in. In it are people who love to purify themselves, and God loves those who purify themselves." (Quran, 9:108)

The Prophet remained at Quba for a few days, during which Muslims from Madinah came to meet him. Reports differ regarding the exact length of his stay, some mentioning four days and others approximately a week.

On Friday, he left Quba and continued towards Madinah. On the way, he stopped in the area of Banu Salim ibn Awf and offered the Friday prayer there before proceeding onward to Yathrib, which came to be known as Madinah.

The building of the mosque at Quba was thus one of the Prophet's first acts after the Hijrah. Its simple construction, collective effort, and the Prophet's own participation reflected the spirit of the new community that was beginning to take shape in Madinah.

At that time, the city was known by two names—Yathrib and Tayyibah. After the Prophet's arrival, it became Madinat an-Nabi (the City of the Prophet), later shortened to Madinah. When the Prophet ﷺ entered Madinah, its area covered about 30 square kilometres. Within it were 72 fortresses—59 belonging to the Jews and 13 to the Arabs. Two mountains, to the north and south, marked its boundaries, and they remain to this day. The population was roughly half Arab and half Jewish. Arabs worked mainly in farming, herding, and trade, while Jews earned their living through agriculture, jewellery-making, tanning, and trade in gems. Arabia had no currency of its own; Roman and Persian coins circulated in Makkah and

Madinah—the Roman coin was called the dinar Hiraqli and the Persian coin the dinar Kisrawi.

The mosque at Quba' was built facing Jerusalem. At that time, the Prophet ﷺ and his followers prayed towards Jerusalem, which gave the Jews hope that he might adopt their faith. Their hope was strengthened because the Quran spoke of their prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus—with the same respect they themselves did. But when the Prophet ﷺ declared Friday as the day of communal worship, the Jews were disappointed, for they had expected him to choose the Sabbath. Later, some Jewish scholars said to him, "If you wish to be a prophet, you must first be a Jew, for God speaks only through the Jewish people." The Prophet replied, "All nations are equal in God's sight. He bestows prophethood upon whomever He wills."

The Jews of Quba' did not embrace Islam. Only one Jew accepted the new faith—Salome, the man who had first seen the Prophet approaching Quba' and informed the people of his arrival.

When the Prophet's camel entered Madinah and stopped at a particular spot, the nearest house belonged to Abu Ayyub Khalid ibn Zayd, who was also related to the Prophet through his mother's side. Abu Ayyub warmly invited the Prophet to stay with him. The Prophet agreed, but on one condition: "I will stay in your house, but you

should not be responsible for providing my meals." Abu Ayyub replied, "O Messenger of God, what could you possibly eat that would be a burden to me?" The Prophet nevertheless insisted that he did not wish to impose on him, and Abu Ayyub accepted the condition.

The Prophet ﷺ stayed in Abu Ayyub al-Ansari's house for about seven months. The house had two storeys, with mud-brick walls and a palm-leaf roof. Out of respect, Abu Ayyub wanted the Prophet to live upstairs, but the Prophet chose the lower floor so that visitors could come and go easily. Abu Ayyub and his family lived upstairs. Once, a water jar broke in the upper room, and fearing that water might drip down and disturb the Prophet, Abu Ayyub and his wife quickly spread their only blanket over the spill to soak it up.

When the mosque was finished, small living quarters (*hujrah*) were built around it. The Prophet ﷺ then moved there with his family. During his stay with Abu Ayyub, the Prophet sent Zayd ibn Haritha and Abu Rafi' to Makkah with two camels and five hundred dirhams to bring his family to Madinah. The Prophet had four daughters: Fatimah, Umm Kulthum, Ruqayyah, and Zaynab. Ruqayyah had already migrated with her husband 'Uthman ibn 'Affan. The other two daughters—Fatimah and Umm Kulthum—along with the Prophet's wife Sawda bint Zam'a, Usamah ibn Zayd, and his mother Umm Ayman, all arrived safely. Zaynab, however, was prevented from leaving by her non-

Muslim husband Abu al-'As. Abu Bakr's son, 'Abdullah, also brought his sister Aisha and the rest of their family to Madinah.

Among those who migrated from Makkah were many with no home or shelter. For them, the Prophet built a shaded platform attached to the mosque, covered with palm branches. This structure became known as the Suffah, and its residents as the Ashab al-Suffah (People of the Veranda). It was both a shelter for the homeless and Islam's first school, where new Muslims were taught and trained.

Abu Hurayrah, who later became one of the most famous narrators of hadith, was among the Ashab al-Suffah. He recalled: "I saw seventy of the People of the Suffah, and not one of them had a full cloak to cover himself. Some only had a waistcloth, while others had a short piece of cloth that barely reached their knees or ankles. They would hold it with their hands so their modesty would not be exposed." Because of their poverty, they could not farm or trade. Some would gather firewood from the wilderness and sell it to buy food for themselves and their companions. At times, wealthier Muslims would send them meals.

Once, the Prophet ﷺ said to them:

> "O People of the Suffah, rejoice! Whoever among my community endures poverty with patience and gratitude as you do will be my companion in Paradise."

Over time, nearly four hundred different individuals lived in the Suffah at one point or another.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ first made a pact of brotherhood (*mu'akhat*) with his cousin 'Ali ibn Abi Talib. He said, "O 'Ali, let us agree that one day you earn our living and the next day I will earn it." 'Ali replied, "O Messenger of God, your presence in the mosque is necessary, so that you can oversee its affairs and answer the questions of the Muslims. I will work alone to provide for both of us." The Prophet accepted his suggestion.

Each morning, 'Ali went out in search of work. At that time, a wealthy man of Madinah was having a house built. 'Ali worked there hauling water for mixing mortar. The distance between the house and the well was such that, from morning till evening, he could not carry more than sixteen buckets. The wage for each bucket was one date. Thus, his daily earnings amounted to sixteen dates. Half of these—eight dates—he would give to the Prophet, and the remaining eight he kept for himself. For a long time, the two of them lived on just eight dates each day.

The Building of the Mosque in Madinah

When the Prophet Muhammad entered Madinah from Quba, the people were eagerly waiting to receive him. As his camel passed through the city, different families came

forward, took hold of its reins, and invited him to stay with them. The Prophet asked them to leave the camel free, saying that it would stop where it was meant to stop.

The camel continued on its way until it finally knelt at an open piece of land where no house stood. The Prophet asked who owned the land. He was told that it belonged to two young orphan boys, Sahl and Suhayl, who were under the guardianship of As'ad ibn Zurarah. The site was being used as a mirbad, a place where dates were spread out to dry.

The boys offered the land to the Prophet without payment, saying that they would seek their reward from God. The Prophet, however, declined to accept it as a gift and insisted on purchasing it. Reports differ regarding the exact price, but according to one account, Abu Bakr paid the amount on the Prophet's behalf.

At that time, neither Makkah nor Madinah had an independent coinage of its own. Coins of the Byzantine and Persian empires were in circulation. The dinar was a gold coin, and both Byzantine and Persian dinars were known in Arabia.

The site contained date-palm trees and some old graves. The Prophet ordered the trees to be cut and the ground to be cleared and levelled. Once the site had been prepared, construction of the mosque began.

The Prophet himself worked alongside the other Muslims. He helped carry bricks, stones, and other building materials, while others prepared the mud mortar and raised the walls. Seeing the Prophet personally engaged in the work, the Muslims were inspired to work with greater enthusiasm. They expressed the feeling that it would be wrong for them to remain idle while the Prophet himself was working (*Sirah Ibn Hisham*, Vol. 1, p. 148).

Talq ibn Ali, one of the Companions, later recalled that the Prophet assigned him the task of preparing mortar. When he asked whether he should also carry bricks, the Prophet told him to continue making mortar because he was skilled at it. The incident reflects the practical way in which the work was organized: each person contributed according to his ability.

The mosque itself was extremely simple. Its walls were made of unbaked bricks, its pillars from the trunks of date palms, and its roof from palm branches and leaves. The roof was later coated with mud. The mosque had three entrances and was approximately one hundred cubits in length and width. Its prayer direction initially faced Jerusalem, as the command to turn towards the Kaaba had not yet been given.

The construction took several months. The mosque that emerged was not an elabourate building; it reflected simplicity, collective effort, and practical need. The Prophet did not merely supervise the work but took part in the physical labour alongside his companions.

Several years later, after the conquest of Khaybar in 7 AH, the mosque was rebuilt and enlarged. By then, the original structure had deteriorated, and the growing Muslim community required more space. Once again, the Prophet personally took part in the construction.

Abu Hurayrah relates that during this rebuilding he saw the Prophet carrying several bricks against his chest. Thinking that the load was too heavy, Abu Hurayrah offered to carry them for him. The Prophet told him to take other bricks instead, adding that the true life was the life of the Hereafter (*Musnad Ahmad*, Hadith No. 8951).

The building of the mosque thus became one of the first major community projects in Madinah. It was constructed through shared labour, with the Prophet working alongside everyone else. Its structure was simple, but its role was central: it provided the emerging Muslim community with a common place for prayer, gathering, and community affairs.

Brotherhood (Mu'akhah)

When the Muslims of Makkah migrated to Madinah, they arrived as displaced people who had left behind their homes, property, and means of livelihood. Their rehabilitation therefore presented an immediate social and economic challenge. The Prophet Muhammad addressed this through an arrangement known as mu'akhah, the establishment of brotherhood.

About five months after the Hijrah, the Prophet paired members of the Muhajirun and the Ansar, taking into account their circumstances and compatibility. Ibn Ishaq reports that he asked his companions to become brothers in the way of God, two by two. He then took Ali ibn Abi Talib by the hand and said, "This is my brother" (*Sirah Ibn Hisham*, Vol. 1, p. 505).

Through this arrangement, the *Muhajirun* no longer remained strangers in Madinah. Each Muhajir was linked with an Ansari who helped him settle into his new surroundings. The Ansar welcomed the arrangement wholeheartedly. They had homes, land, orchards, and other resources, while many of the Muhajirun had arrived with little or nothing. The Ansar were therefore in a position to give, while the Muhajirun initially needed support.

The generosity of the Ansar was remarkable. They were prepared to share their homes, property, and means of livelihood with their new brothers. Anas ibn Malik reported that an Ansari did not consider himself more entitled to his wealth and property than his Muhajir brother.

One of the best-known examples is that of Sa'd ibn al-Rabi and Abd al-Rahman ibn Awf. Sa'd, a prosperous Ansari, offered to divide his wealth equally with Abd al-Rahman. He also expressed his willingness to make a personal sacrifice so that his brother could establish a family life

in Madinah. Abd al-Rahman, however, declined the offer and simply asked to be shown the way to the marketplace.

He went to the market of Banu Qaynuqa and began trading in butter and cheese. In time, he became financially independent and prospered greatly. On one occasion, when he came to the Prophet with traces of perfume on his clothes, the Prophet asked him about it. Abd al-Rahman explained that he had married an Ansari woman. The Prophet then advised him to hold a wedding feast.

This episode illustrates an important feature of mu'akhah. The arrangement was meant to support the Muhajirun during a temporary period of displacement until they could establish themselves economically. It was not intended to create permanent dependence. The Ansar offered generous assistance, while the Muhajirun worked towards rebuilding their lives through their own effort.

At first, the bond of *mu'akhah* was so strong that it even included a right of inheritance between the paired brothers, similar to that between blood relatives. Later, this provision was withdrawn, and inheritance was restricted to relatives by blood. The wider bond of brotherhood, cooperation, and mutual support, however, remained.

According to Ibn Sa'd, formal bonds of brotherhood were established between forty-five Muhajirun and forty-five Ansar, though other reports give different figures. Among the well-known pairs were:

Muhajir	Ansar
Abu Bakr ibn Abi Quhafah ﷺ	Kharijah ibn Zayd ﷺ
‘Umar ibn al-Khattab ﷺ	‘Itban ibn Malik ﷺ
Abu ‘Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah ﷺ	Sa‘d ibn Mu‘adh ﷺ
‘Abd al-Rahman ibn ‘Awf ﷺ	Sa‘d ibn al-Rabi‘ ﷺ
Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwam ﷺ	Aws ibn Thabit ﷺ
‘Uthman ibn ‘Affan ﷺ	Aws ibn Thabit ﷺ
Sa‘id ibn Zayd ibn ‘Amr ﷺ	Ubayy ibn Ka‘b ﷺ
Mus‘ab ibn ‘Umayr ﷺ	Abu Ayyub
	Khalid ibn Zayd ﷺ
Abu Hudhayfah ibn ‘Utbah ﷺ	‘Abbad ibn Bishr ﷺ
‘Ammar ibn Yasir ﷺ	Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman ﷺ
Abu Dharr al-Ghifari ﷺ	Mun‘ir ibn ‘Amr ﷺ
Salman al-Farsi ﷺ	Abu al-Darda’
	‘Uwaymir ibn Tha‘labah ﷺ
Bilal al-Habashi ﷺ	Abu Ruwayhah
	‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abd al-Rahman ﷺ
Hatib ibn Abi Balta‘ah ﷺ	‘Uwam ibn Sa‘idah ﷺ
Abu Marthad ﷺ	‘Ubadah ibn Thabit ﷺ
‘Abdullah ibn Jahsh ﷺ	‘Asim ibn Thabit ﷺ

'Utbah ibn Ghazwan ﷺ	Abu Dujanah ﷺ
Abu Salamah ibn 'Abd al-Asad ﷺ	Sa'd ibn Khaythamah ﷺ
'Uthman ibn Maz'un ﷺ	Abu al-Haytham ibn al-Tayyihan ﷺ
'Ubaydah ibn al-Harith ﷺ	'Umayr ibn al-Humam ﷺ
Safwan ibn Bayda' ﷺ	Rafi' ibn Ma'la ﷺ
Dhu al-Shimalayn ﷺ	Yazid ibn al-Harith ﷺ
Arqam ﷺ	Talhah ibn Zayd ﷺ
Zayd ibn al-Khattab ﷺ	Ma'n ibn 'Adi ﷺ

The support offered by the Ansar extended beyond accommodation. Abu Hurayrah relates that the Ansar proposed that their date-palm orchards should be divided between themselves and their Muhajir brothers. The Prophet did not accept this proposal. Instead, since the Muhajirun generally lacked experience in agriculture and horticulture, he suggested that the Ansar should continue to work the orchards while sharing the produce with the Muhajirun. The Ansar readily agreed.

Jabir describes the spirit in which this sharing was carried out. When an Ansari divided the date harvest, he would make two portions, one appearing smaller and the other larger. He would then allow his Muhajir brother to choose first. The Muhajir would naturally take what appeared to be the larger share, while the Ansari would keep the smaller one. In this way, the Ansar tried to give more

while allowing the Muhajir to feel that he had simply made his own choice.

The *Muhajirun* were deeply moved by such generosity. Some of them told the Prophet that they had never seen a people so generous in times of abundance or so helpful in times of hardship. They feared that the Ansar might receive all the spiritual reward. The Prophet reassured them that this would not be so, so long as they appreciated their benefactors and prayed for them.

This arrangement continued for several years. After the conquest of *Khaybar*, when the Muslims acquired agricultural resources of their own, the dependence of the Muhajirun on the Ansar diminished. The Prophet acknowledged that the Ansar had fully discharged their obligations and offered them a share in the newly acquired resources of Khaybar. The Ansar, however, reminded him that they had fulfilled their commitment in the hope of reward in the Hereafter. The Prophet assured them that this reward would be theirs (*Majma' al-Zawa'id*, Hadith No. 16526).

The institution of *mu'akhah* was not entirely new to Madinah. Reports indicate that the Prophet had established a similar arrangement earlier in Makkah. Some of those who accepted Islam there had become separated from their families because of their faith. The Prophet therefore linked them with other Muslims who still had family and

social support. Thus, for example, Zubayr ibn al-Awwam was paired with Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, Zayd ibn Harithah with Hamzah ibn Abd al-Muttalib, and Mus'ab ibn Umayr with Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas.

The Madinah arrangement, however, had a much wider social significance. The arrival of a large number of migrants created what would today be described as a refugee and resettlement problem. Instead of leaving the newcomers dependent on a central authority, the Prophet distributed responsibility throughout the community. Each settled household became a source of support for another person or family in need.

At the same time, *mu'akhah* was more than an economic arrangement. It demonstrated in practical terms that differences of wealth, origin, and social position need not become barriers between people. The established resident and the displaced migrant, the wealthy and the poor, were brought together in a relationship based on responsibility, mutual care, and shared faith.

The brotherhood between the Muhajirun and the Ansar thus provided an effective solution to an immediate social crisis while also establishing a model of community life. The Ansar gave generously, the Muhajirun worked towards self-reliance, and the bond between them helped transform a group of displaced migrants into integrated members of the society of Madinah.

The Constitution of Madinah

In Madinah, two major Arab tribes—Aws and Khazraj—were settled, along with several Jewish tribes who lived as minorities. Compared with the Arabs, the Jews were more advanced in knowledge. They were also traders, and therefore wealthier.

A small number of Jews recognized the Prophethood of the Messenger of God ﷺ and embraced Islam, but the majority opposed him and his religion. Their belief was that Prophets could only arise from the descendants of the Children of Israel. Since Muhammad ﷺ was from the descendants of Ishmael, they could not accept him as a Prophet.

The Messenger of God wished that, if they would not believe, at least the Muslims might be safe from their harm. For this purpose, he entered into a formal covenant with them, which came to be known as the *Sahifat al-Madinah* (the Charter of Madinah). This agreement was concluded five months after the *Hijrah*. It addressed matters of faith, property, mutual defence, and social responsibility. Its essence can be summarized as follows:

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Compassionate.

This is a written covenant from Muhammad, the unlettered Prophet, between the Muslims of Quraysh and Yathrib, and the Jews who live under their protection and wish to be allied with them. Each party shall remain upon

its own religion, yet all are bound by the following:

1. The established laws of blood-money (*qisas* and *diyah*) shall remain in force, administered with justice.
2. Every clan shall be responsible for paying ransom fairly for its own captives.
3. All parties shall unite against injustice, sin, or rebellion; no favouritism shall be shown, even if the wrongdoer is a close relative.
4. No Muslim may kill another Muslim in support of a disbeliever, nor assist a disbeliever against a Muslim in any way.
5. Jews who live under Muslim protection shall enjoy the Muslims' security. No injustice shall be done to them, nor will their enemies be aided against them.
6. No idolater or disbeliever may shelter a man of Quraysh against the Muslims, nor act as a barrier between Quraysh and the Muslims.
7. In time of war, the Jews must support the Muslims with their wealth and lives; they may not aid the Muslims' enemies.
8. If any enemy attacks Madinah, the Jews must stand alongside the Messenger of God ﷺ in its defence.
9. Any tribe that enters this pact may not withdraw from it without the permission of the Messenger of God.

10. No one may give shelter to or assist a mischief-maker. Whoever does so shall incur the curse and wrath of God; none of his deeds shall be accepted until the Day of Judgement.
11. If the Muslims enter into a peace agreement with an enemy, the Jews must be included in that treaty.
12. Whoever kills a Muslim, if witnesses testify against him, shall be subject to qisas, unless the family of the slain accepts blood-money.
13. Whenever a dispute arises in any matter, its final decision shall be referred to God and to Muhammad ﷺ:

    "And whatever you differ about in any matter, its return is to God, the Mighty and Majestic, and to Muhammad, the Messenger of God." (*Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, Ibn Kathir, Vol. 2, p. 322)

The Jewish tribes with whom this covenant was concluded included the three major groups living in and around Madinah: Banu Qaynuqa', Banu Nadir, and Banu Qurayzah.

Besides reconnaissance, the expeditions also had the purpose of invitation. Later the Prophet sent many detachments purely for the purpose of calling people to Islam.

Abdullah ibn Umar said that the Prophet called Abdullah ibn Awf and said, "Prepare yourself for the journey, for I am sending you on an expedition." Accordingly, Abdullah

ibn Awf set out with his companions and reached Dumat al Jandal, between Syria and Madinah. They invited the people to Islam for three days. On the third day al Asbagh ibn Amr al Kalbi, who was a Christian and the chief of his tribe, accepted Islam.

Al Bara said that the Prophet sent Khalid ibn al Walid to the people of Yemen to call them to Islam. He remained among them for six months, but none of them accepted Islam. When the Prophet came to know this, he sent them a letter. When the letter was read to them, the entire tribe of Hamdan accepted Islam. The news was brought to the Prophet, and when he heard it, he fell in prostration and said, "Peace be upon Hamdan, peace be upon Hamdan."

Ibn Ishaq said that the Prophet also sent Khalid ibn al Walid to Najran. Khalid ibn al Walid and his companions rode on their camels through their settlements, calling out, O people, accept Islam and you will be safe. After this tour of invitation, many of them accepted Islam.

After the Hijrah

After the Prophet Muhammad migrated to Madinah, one of the measures he adopted was to send small detachments towards the routes leading to Makkah. In the beginning, these expeditions consisted only of the Muhajirun, the Muslims who had migrated from Makkah. The Ansar were not included. The probable reason was that the Prophet did not want the existing conflict between the

Quraysh and the Muhajirun to extend prematurely to the Ansar. The books of Sirah specifically note regarding these expeditions: "There was not a single Ansari among them" (*Sirah Ibn Hisham*, Vol. 1, p. 591).

For thirteen years in Makkah, the Prophet had presented the message of monotheism. The Quraysh responded with persistent opposition and persecution, eventually making it impossible for him and his followers to remain there. He therefore migrated to Madinah, leaving behind his home and possessions. Yet even after his departure, the Quraysh did not abandon their hostility. They pursued him during the Hijrah and continued their hostile activities afterwards. There remained a constant danger that they might launch an attack on Madinah.

It was against this background that the Prophet began sending expeditions, known as Sariyya, to different areas. These expeditions were not, in general, intended to initiate fighting. This is borne out by the repeated statements in the early sources describing them. In one such account, the words occur: "there was no encounter and no fighting took place" (*Sirah Ibn Hisham*, Vol. 1, p. 591).

A study of these expeditions shows that they initially served several related purposes. One was to gather information about the movements and intentions of the Quraysh. In connection with one such expedition, the Prophet instructed its commander: "Keep watch on the

Quraysh there and obtain information about them for us." (*Tafsir al-Qurtubi*, Vol. 3, p. 41)

Another purpose was to establish peaceful relations with the tribes living along the routes used by the Quraysh. Such agreements would make it more difficult for the Quraysh to draw these tribes into military action against Madinah. During the expedition of al-Ushayrah, for example, the Prophet concluded an agreement with Banu Mudlij and their allies from Banu Damrah. (*Sirah Ibn Kathir*, Vol. 2, p. 363)

A further purpose was to intercept Quraysh trading caravans and thereby discourage the Quraysh from undertaking hostile action against Madinah. Al-Waqidi states: "his purpose was to intercept a caravan of the Quraysh" (*Sirah Ibn Kathir*, Vol. 2, p. 361). In practical terms, such movements demonstrated that the Muslims were capable of monitoring the Quraysh trade routes and that aggression against Madinah would not leave the Quraysh entirely secure from consequences.

About seven months after the Hijrah, the Prophet sent a detachment of thirty Muhajirun under Hamzah ibn Abd al-Muttalib. This became known as the Sariyyah of Hamzah. They proceeded towards Sayf al-Bahr, where they encountered about three hundred men of the Quraysh under Abu Jahl, who were returning towards Makkah from the direction of Syria. Although the two

groups came face to face, no fighting took place, and Hamzah returned to Madinah.

In Shawwal of the first year after the Hijrah, another detachment of sixty *Muhajirun* was sent towards Rabigh under Ubaydah ibn al-Harith. There they encountered a Quraysh force of about two hundred men. Again, the situation did not develop into fighting, and the Muslims returned to Madinah after making their presence known in the area.

In Dhu'l-Qa'da, a group of twenty Muhajirun under Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas was sent towards Kharrar. They travelled by night and remained concealed during the day. When they reached Kharrar, however, they discovered that the Quraysh caravan had already passed, so they returned to Madinah without an encounter.

In Safar, 2 AH, the Prophet himself set out with about sixty Muhajirun, leaving Sa'd ibn Ubadah al-Ansari in charge of Madinah. He travelled as far as al-Abwa, where he learned that the Quraysh caravan had already passed. During this journey, he concluded a peace agreement with Makhshi ibn Amr, the chief of Banu Damrah, under which the tribe would neither fight the Muslims nor assist an enemy against them. After about fifteen days, the Prophet returned to Madinah without any fighting.

In Rabi al-Thani, 2 AH, information reached the Prophet that a Quraysh trading caravan was travelling towards Makkah. He left Sa'ib ibn Uthman ibn Maz'un in charge

of Madinah and set out with about two hundred Muslims towards Buwat. The caravan reportedly consisted of nearly two thousand five hundred camels accompanied by about one hundred men under the leadership of Umayyah ibn Khalaf. By the time the Prophet reached Buwat, however, the caravan had already moved on. There was no encounter, and the Muslims returned safely to Madinah.

In Jumada al-Ula, 2 AH, the Prophet set out with approximately two hundred Muhajirun towards al-Ushayrah, where another Quraysh caravan was expected to pass. Abu Salamah ibn Abd al-Asad was left in charge of Madinah. The Muslims had only thirty camels for the journey and therefore took turns riding them. On reaching the area, they found that the caravan had already passed. During this journey, the Prophet concluded an agreement with Banu Mudlij. In substance, the agreement provided for mutual support in the event of an attack. He then returned to Madinah.

About ten days after the Prophet's return from al-Ushayrah, an incident occurred that brought the threat closer to Madinah. Kurz ibn Jabir al-Fihri raided a grazing area outside the city at night and drove away a number of camels and sheep (*Sirah Ibn Hisham*, Vol. 2, p. 238). On receiving the news, the Prophet immediately set out in pursuit and travelled as far as Safwan, but Kurz had already escaped. He therefore returned to Madinah without an encounter.

This incident showed that hostile forces could directly threaten the security and economic resources of Madinah. Against this background, the expeditions towards the Quraysh routes acquired an additional deterrent purpose. They enabled the Muslims to gather intelligence, establish peaceful relations with neighbouring tribes, monitor Quraysh movements, and demonstrate that hostile action against Madinah could have consequences.

Taken together, these early expeditions were largely precautionary and strategic in character. Their purpose was to strengthen the security of Madinah, obtain information about the Quraysh, establish agreements with surrounding tribes, and discourage further aggression. Significantly, despite several movements and encounters, most of these expeditions ended without fighting.

In one expedition (under Abdullah ibn Jahsh), a Muslim killed a non-believer, Ibn al-Hadrami. Regarding this incident, some narrations record the words: "Ibn al-Hadrami was the first to be killed between the Muslims and the non-believers" (*Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, Vol. 1, p. 432). On this basis, some people fell into misunderstanding. They claimed that, after arriving in Madinah, Islam abandoned the way of patience and adopted the way of war, and that the killing of Ibn al-Hadrami was, in effect, a declaration that armed struggle had now begun in Islam.

However, when the details of the event are examined, it becomes clear that such a view is entirely baseless.

The actual incident was that, in Rajab of the 2nd year after Hijrah, the Messenger of God ﷺ dispatched a detachment under the leadership of Abdullah ibn Jahsh towards Nakhlah. They were twelve men in total. When sending them out, the Prophet ﷺ gave their commander a sealed letter and instructed him not to open it until they had travelled two days' distance. After two days' journey, he was to open it and act according to what was written.

When Abdullah ibn Jahsh opened the letter after two days, it read: "When you read this letter of mine, proceed until you reach Nakhlah, between Makkah and Ta'if. There, lie in wait for Quraysh and bring us information about them" (*Tafsir al-Qurtubi*, Vol. 3, p. 41).

At that very time, a Quraysh trade caravan was travelling from Syria towards Makkah. One of the men from the detachment, Waqid ibn Abdullah, shot an arrow at the caravan leader, Amr ibn al-Hadrami. The arrow struck a vital spot, and he was killed. The detachment returned to Madinah and reported the incident to the Messenger of God. The Prophet immediately said: "I did not command you to fight in the Sacred Month" (*Sirah Ibn Hisham*, Vol. 1, p. 603). In other words, had combat been intended, would I have sent you forth during a sacred month?

The First Battle of Badr (Ghazwa Badr al-Ula)

Jumada al-Awwal, 2 AH

Towards the end of the Prophet's time in Makkah, the

Quraysh became determined to kill the Messenger of God ﷺ. Their leaders gathered in the council of Dar al-Nadwah to consult and reach a final decision. In the meeting, one said: "Seize Muhammad and confine him until he dies there." Another said: "Expel him from Makkah." Yet another suggested: "Let men from every tribe unite to kill him, so that his blood will be spread across all the tribes, and the clan of Banu Hashim will be unable to seek revenge." (*Sirah Ibn Hisham*, Vol. 2, pp. 93–95)

The Quran refers to this incident:

> "And [remember] when those who disbelieved plotted against you to restrain you, or kill you, or expel you. They planned, and God planned; and God is the best of planners." (8:30)

By God's special help, the Prophet ﷺ left Makkah safely and migrated to Madinah. It was now clear, however, that the Quraysh would not stop at mere opposition; rather, they intended to wage war to destroy Islam and its followers. For this reason, after the Hijrah the Prophet ﷺ consistently sent small detachments of Muhajirun around Makkah to monitor Quraysh, so that their military moves could be anticipated in advance. These early expeditions, composed mainly of emigrant companions, were primarily for gathering intelligence on Quraysh's hostile activities.

One such expedition was that of Ushayrah, which took place in Jumada al-Awwal, 2 AH. Upon receiving news of a Quraysh caravan, the Prophet ﷺ set out with 200

Muhajirun towards Ushayrah, near Yanbu'. However, no clash occurred, and after a few days the Prophet returned to Madinah. During this journey, he concluded a treaty of alliance with the tribe of Banu Mudlij, as is recorded in the histories. (*Sirah Ibn Hisham*, Vol. 2, p. 177)

About ten days after returning from Ushayrah, the very threat anticipated from the Quraysh materialized. A Quraysh chief, Kurz ibn Jabir al-Fihri, led a raiding party against Madinah. They entered the area by night and attacked a Muslim pasture, seizing camels and goats before fleeing.

When the Prophet ﷺ learned of this raid, he immediately set out with a group of companions in pursuit. He advanced as far as Safwan, near Badr, but by the time he arrived the Quraysh raiders had already escaped. The Prophet ﷺ then returned to Madinah without proceeding further.

This was the first direct attack from Quraysh, occurring near Badr, which is why it became known as the First Battle of Badr (Badr al-Ula). It is also called the Battle of Safwan for the same reason. For this expedition, the Prophet ﷺ appointed Zayd ibn Harithah رضي الله عنه as his deputy in Madinah.

Kurz ibn Jabir, who had been one of the leaders of Quraysh, later regretted his actions. When the truth of Islam became clear to him, he came to Madinah and embraced Islam.

After accepting Islam, he rendered significant services. On one occasion, the Prophet dispatched a detachment of twenty horsemen in pursuit of the '*Urayniyyin*, appointing Kurz ibn Jabir as their commander. He also participated in the campaign of the Conquest of Makkah, during which he was martyred.

The Second Battle of Badr (Ghazwah Badr al-Thaniyah)

Ramadan, 2 AH

In Ramadan of the 2nd year after Hijrah, the first full-scale battle took place. This is known as the Battle of Badr. Badr was the name of a village about 80 miles from Madinah, and since the battle occurred there, it came to be called Ghazwah Badr. Because this was the second incident of Quraysh's aggression at that location, it is also called Ghazwah Badr al-Thaniyah (The Second Battle of Badr). At that time, the believers were very few in number and had limited resources, yet with God's help they achieved a decisive victory over the enemy. For this reason, the Quran refers to it as *Yawm al-Furqan*—"the Day of Distinction" between truth and falsehood.

In Makkah, the Messenger of God had been calling people to the oneness of God and to belief in the Hereafter. The Quraysh, who held leadership among the Arabs, inflicted all forms of persecution upon him and his companions, even to the extent of beating some Muslims to death. Yet

the Prophet ﷺ remained patient in every circumstance, responding to their excesses by unilaterally avoiding conflict and continuing to deliver his message peacefully.

When Quraysh's persecution became unbearable, he granted his companions permission to leave Makkah for Madinah. One by one, they migrated, leaving behind their homes and possessions. Finally, Quraysh took the extreme step of expelling the Prophet ﷺ himself from his clan of Banu Hashim, though he still remained in Makkah. Thereafter, the leaders gathered in the council of Dar al-Nadwah and resolved to eliminate him once and for all.

Accordingly, on a night in September 622 CE, Quraysh leaders surrounded his house armed with swords. Their plan was to attack him together at dawn, when he would normally step outside, and kill him instantly. But God's help was with him: under the cover of night, the Prophet ﷺ left his house and departed Makkah. On September 24, 622 CE, he arrived safely in Madinah.

These events clearly established Quraysh's aggression. Thus the Quran addressed the companions of the Prophet ﷺ:

> "Will you not fight those who broke their oaths, who resolved to expel the Messenger, and who were the first to attack you? Do you fear them? It is God who is more deserving that you should fear Him, if you are believers. God will punish them through your hands, disgrace them, grant

you victory over them, and heal the hearts of the believers." (9:13-14)

Because of Quraysh's aggression, the Prophet ﷺ and his companions left their homeland and wealth behind in Makkah and migrated to Madinah. Yet the Quraysh did not cease their hostility. They continued to express their warlike intentions in various ways. One such incident is known in Islamic history as *Ghazwah Badr al-Ula* (The First Battle of Badr).

Now Quraysh devised a new plan of aggression: they resolved to prepare fully for war and launch a decisive attack on Madinah, aiming to crush the Muslims completely. For this purpose, the clans of Makkah jointly raised funds. They then organized a trade caravan under the leadership of Abu Sufyan ibn Harb, an experienced merchant. The plan was to bring goods from Syria, sell them, and use the profits to finance their war preparations.

In Ramadan, 2 AH, the Prophet ﷺ was informed that this trade caravan, carrying goods on one thousand camels, was returning from Syria to Makkah. To thwart Quraysh's hostile plan, he resolved to intercept the caravan and prevent its merchandise from reaching Makkah. With a group of Muslims, he set out towards the caravan.

The leader of the caravan, Abu Sufyan, feared that the Muslims might intercept it. For this reason, his men kept questioning every passerby and traveller about the

situation in Madinah. Through some travellers, news reached him that the Messenger of God was advancing with his companions towards the caravan. Abu Sufyan then hired Dhamdham al-Ghifari and sent him to Makkah with the urgent message: "Come quickly for help, or else the Muslims will seize our caravan."

When Dhamdham reached Makkah, he tore his clothes and cried out loudly to alert the people: "Your caravan is in danger! Rush at once to its defence!" At this, all of Makkah was seized with agitation, for nearly every man and woman of the city had invested wealth in that caravan. Immediately, a thousand men were mobilized with full equipment of war, under the leadership of Abu Jahl. All the chiefs and fighting men of Makkah joined the force, except Abu Lahab.

On the 12th of Ramadan, the Prophet ﷺ departed from Madinah with 313 companions. Their supplies were meagre: only two horses and seventy camels, with two or three men riding in turns on each camel. The Prophet ﷺ shared his mount with 'Ali ibn Abi Talib and Abu Lubabah. When the Prophet's turn came to walk, both of them urged him to remain mounted while they went on foot. The Prophet ﷺ replied: "You are not stronger than I am, nor am I in less need of reward than you." (*Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Kathir, Vol. 2, p. 389)

To keep informed of developments, the Prophet had already dispatched scouts ahead. At the place of Safra,

Basbas and ʿAdiyy returned with news that Quraysh's army was advancing. They also reported that the caravan had changed its route, hurried along, and safely entered the boundaries of Makkah. Meanwhile, Abu Jahl's army, relieved of concern for the caravan, was now marching towards Madinah with the aim of destroying it.

At this point, by divine guidance, the Prophet resolved to march forward and face Abu Jahl's army, placing full trust in God's support.

Among the 313 (or 315) Muslims with the Prophet, some were Muhajirun and some were Ansar. The Muhajirun, by their pledge, were bound to support him in every circumstance. But the pledge of the Ansar—known as *Bayʿat al-Nisa'*—meant that they were obligated to defend him if Madinah were attacked, but not necessarily to fight outside Madinah.

Because of this sensitive issue, the Prophet ﷺ gathered his companions and said: "Now we are facing the military might of Quraysh, so give me your counsel, O people." (*Sirah Ibn Hisham*, Vol. 2, p. 188)

Abu Bakr and ʿUmar stood up and declared their readiness to sacrifice everything. Then al-Miqdad ibn al-Aswad rose and said: "O Messenger of God, do what God has commanded you, for we are with you. By God, we will not say to you as the Children of Israel said to Moses: 'Go, you and your Lord, and fight; we are sitting here.' Rather, we say: 'Go, you and your Lord, and fight; we are with you, fighting alongside you.'"

One after another, the Muhajirun expressed their enthusiastic support, yet the Prophet ﷺ kept repeating: "Give me your counsel, O people." At this, Sa'd ibn Mu'adh, the leader of the Ansar, stood up and said: "O Messenger of God, perhaps your words are directed towards us?" The Prophet ﷺ replied: "Yes."

Representing the Ansar, Sa'd ibn Mu'adh said: "O Messenger of God, we have believed in you, affirmed you, and testified that the religion you have brought is the truth. Upon this, we pledged our hearing and obedience to you. O Messenger of God, you set out from Madinah for one purpose, but God has decreed another before you. Proceed then, and do whatever you wish. Form ties with whomever you wish and cut ties with whomever you wish. Make peace with whom you wish and declare war on whom you wish. Take from our wealth whatever you wish and leave for us whatever you wish. Whatever you take will be more beloved to us than what you leave behind. Command us, for we are at your service. If you march until you reach Bark al-Ghimad, we will march with you. By the One who sent you with the truth, if you were to command us to plunge into the sea, we would plunge in with you, and not one of us would remain behind. Facing the enemy is not burdensome for us. We are steadfast in battle and true when meeting the enemy. Perhaps God will show you from us that which will bring joy to your eyes. So lead us forward, with trust in God."

Hearing these words, the Messenger of God was overjoyed and said: "March forth with trust in God, and receive the glad tidings. God has promised me that He will surely grant us victory."

The Prophet ﷺ then advanced towards the route by which the Quraysh army was approaching Madinah. Near Badr, he encamped, intending that if the enemy advanced to that point, the Muslims would meet them in battle; but if the Quraysh turned back before reaching there, the Muslims too would return to Madinah.

At this moment, one companion, Hubab ibn al-Mundhir, who was experienced in such matters, came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked: "O Messenger of God, is this place where you have encamped based on revelation, or is it personal opinion and strategy?" The Prophet ﷺ replied: "It is personal opinion." Hubab then said: "O Messenger of God, then this is not the most suitable place." He explained the strategic disadvantages of the site. The Prophet accepted his advice and moved forward to encamp at a better location.

The Prophet ﷺ would always try to obtain intelligence about the enemy. On this occasion as well, he sent some companions to gather information. They captured two servants attached to the Quraysh who had come to draw water from a spring and brought them to the Prophet. When asked how many the Quraysh were, the men refused to say.

The Prophet ﷺ then asked: "Tell me, how many camels do they slaughter daily for food?" They replied: "Sometimes nine, and sometimes ten." The Prophet ﷺ said: "That means they are between nine hundred and one thousand."

Soon, the Quraysh army—about one thousand strong—arrived at Badr. There the two forces confronted one another in what became known as the Battle of Badr.

At that time, the Messenger of God was in an 'arish (a small shelter of branches). Before the battle, he prayed to God with deep humility and tears, supplicating:

> "O God, here are Quraysh, advancing with their pride and arrogance. Grant us Your help against them." (*Sirah Ibn Hisham*, Vol. 1, p. 621)

At that moment, an angel came to him and said: "O Muhammad, God sends you His greetings." The Prophet ﷺ replied: "Indeed, He is al-Salam (Peace), from Him is peace, and to Him belongs all peace." (*al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, Ibn Kathir, Vol. 2, p. 403)

The Quraysh army, consisting of one thousand men under Abu Jahl's command, advanced from Makkah. Some among them did not want to fight the Messenger of God. They advised Abu Jahl against war and urged him to turn back. But Abu Jahl was firm, and so the two sides met at the field of Badr, about 80 miles (≈ 130 km) southwest of Madinah and roughly 190 miles (≈ 310 km) northwest of Makkah.

Although the Muslims numbered only 313, God's special help granted them a decisive victory. Fourteen Muslims were martyred, while seventy of the Quraysh were killed and another seventy captured. Many of the slain and captured were prominent leaders of Makkah.

After the battle, the Prophet ﷺ stayed at Badr for three days. Then he returned to Madinah, accompanied by the seventy captives taken in battle. Most of these prisoners, by the standards of the time, were literate. The Prophet ﷺ announced that any prisoner who taught ten children of Madinah to read and write would be freed. Several obtained release in this way. Among those who benefitted was Zayd ibn Thabit al-Ansari. Initially illiterate, he learned reading and writing from the Badr captives. He later became the Prophet's chief scribe, and during the caliphate of Abu Bakr he compiled the complete written copy of the Quran. In the time of Uthman, he supervised the preparation of additional official copies.

At that time, Madinah had no formal prison. The Prophet ﷺ therefore instructed that the captives be placed in the care of different Muslim households. He ordered: "Treat the prisoners well" (*Al-Mu'jam al-Kabir* by Al-Tabarani, Hadith No. 977). The companions followed this so faithfully that those who hosted captives would feed them before themselves; and if nothing remained, they would content themselves with dates. This noble treatment led many of the captives to eventually embrace Islam.

The prisoners were released in different ways. Some gained freedom by teaching the children of Madinah. Some poor captives were released on the condition that they would not take up arms against the Muslims again. Others were ransomed by their relatives from Makkah.

Among the captives was Suhayl ibn 'Amr, a noted poet and orator who had often denounced the Prophet ﷺ in public gatherings and recited verses against him. 'Umar ibn al-Khattab suggested: "O Messenger of God, allow me to break two of his front teeth so that his speech will be impaired and he will no longer be able to speak against you." The Prophet ﷺ replied: "Leave him, O 'Umar. It may be that God will bring you joy through him." Indeed, it was Suhayl who later played a pivotal role in the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah, which proved to be a great victory for Islam. Eventually, he himself embraced Islam at the Conquest of Makkah.

Another narration reports that when 'Umar made this suggestion, the Prophet ﷺ said: "I do not mutilate anyone, lest God mutilate me—even though I am His Prophet." (*Sirah Ibn Hisham*, Vol. 1, p. 649)

After the Prophet's passing, when rebellion and apostasy spread among the Arab tribes, it was the eloquence of Suhayl ibn 'Amr that proved invaluable. Through his powerful speeches, he calmed the tribes and restrained them from breaking away, thereby safeguarding the unity of the Muslims.

The Expedition of Qarqarat al-Kudr

Shawwal, 2 AH

After returning from the Battle of Badr, the Prophet ﷺ received news that the tribes of Sulaym and Ghatafan were gathering against him. He set out with two hundred men in their direction. When he reached the place known as the spring of *Kudr* (‘Ayn al-Kudr), it became clear that their purpose had not been open battle but rather a raid. Once they learned that the Prophet ﷺ was aware of their plan and was advancing with his men, they retreated. The Prophet ﷺ stayed at Kudr for three days, then returned to Madinah without any fighting.

The Expedition Against Banu Qaynuqa’

Shawwal, 2 AH

The tribe of Banu Qaynuqa’ belonged to the same community as the Jewish scholar ‘Abdullah ibn Salam. They were renowned for their courage and bravery, and many of them worked as goldsmiths. The Prophet ﷺ once visited their marketplace, gathered them together, and invited them to Islam, saying:

> “O assembly of Jews, fear God. Do not let what befell Quraysh at Badr also befall you. Accept Islam, for indeed you know that I am the Messenger of God. You find me mentioned in your scripture, and God has taken a covenant with you regarding me.”

The Jews, angered by this address, replied: "You fought a people who had no knowledge and no experience (meaning Quraysh), and so you prevailed over them. But by God, if we fight you, you will know that we are true men."

When the Prophet ﷺ migrated to Madinah, a pact had been made with the Jewish tribes—Banu Qaynuqa', Banu Qurayzah, and Banu Nadir—that they would neither fight him nor support his enemies in any way. But Banu Qaynuqa' broke this treaty and prepared for war.

The Prophet ﷺ appointed Abu Lubabah ibn 'Abd al-Mundhir al-Ansari in charge of Madinah and advanced towards the settlement of Banu Qaynuqa'. The Jews shut themselves inside their fortress and barred the gates. From the 15th of Shawwal until the 1st of Dhu'l-Qa'da, the Prophet laid siege to them. After about two weeks, they came down from their fortress. The Prophet ﷺ did not have them executed but ordered that they take their essential belongings and leave.

The Expedition of Sawiq

Dhu'l-Hijjah, 2 AH

After the defeat at Badr, when the surviving Quraysh returned to Makkah, the city was abuzz with news of their loss. Abu Sufyan, still a leader of Makkah and not yet a Muslim, swore an oath that he would not bathe until he had attacked the Muslims.

With two hundred horsemen, he set out towards Madinah with hostile intent. They reached the area of ʻArid, only three miles from Madinah. There they entered a date orchard, where they encountered two men busy with farming—one from the Ansar and one a hired worker. Abu Sufyan's men killed them both, burned some date palms, and considered their oath fulfilled before retreating towards Makkah.

When the Prophet ﷺ received news of this raid, he set out with two hundred Muslims in pursuit. However, by the time they arrived, Abu Sufyan and his men had already escaped. In their haste, the Quraysh had left behind sacks of parched barley flour (*sawiq*), which the Muslims collected. For this reason, the incident became known as the Expedition of Sawiq.

The Prophet ﷺ returned to Madinah from Sawiq on the 9th of Dhu'l-Hijjah. On the following day, the 10th of Dhu'l-Hijjah, he led the Muslims in the Eid al-Adha prayer of two rakʻahs, offered the sacrifice of two rams, and instructed the Muslims to perform sacrifice. This was the first Eid al-Adha in Islam.

The Marriage of Lady Fatimah (Sayyidah Fatimah)

2 AH

In the same year, the Prophet ﷺ gave his daughter, Lady Fatimah, in marriage to ʻAli ibn Abi Talib. ʻAli later recalled:

"When I wished to propose, I thought to myself that I owned nothing, yet for marriage a man must have something."

When he presented his proposal, the Prophet ﷺ asked: "Do you have anything to give as a dowry?" He replied: "No." The Prophet then asked: "Where is the coat of armour that was given to you at Badr?" 'Ali answered: "It is with me." The Prophet ﷺ said: "Give that as her dowry."

'Ali sold the armour to 'Uthman ibn 'Affan for 480 dirhams and brought the amount to the Prophet. The Prophet ﷺ advised him: "Use some of it for perfume and clothing."

As a dowry gift, the Prophet ﷺ provided his daughter with simple household items: a plain blanket, a leather mattress stuffed with palm fibres, a hand mill, a water skin, and two clay jars.

The Expedition of Ghatafan

Muharram, 3 AH

In Muharram of the 3rd year after Hijrah, the Prophet ﷺ received news in Madinah that the tribes of Banu Tha'labah and Banu Muharib were gathering in Najd with the intent of raiding the outskirts of Madinah and seizing supplies. Their leader was Du'shur al-Ghatafani.

The Prophet ﷺ set out against them with a force of 450 companions, appointing 'Uthman ibn 'Affan as his deputy in Madinah. When the Ghatafan learned of his approach, they dispersed into the mountains. Only one man was captured

and brought before the Prophet ﷺ, who advised him and invited him to Islam. He accepted Islam on the spot.

The Prophet ﷺ remained in that region for the entire month of Safar, but no battle took place. He then returned peacefully to Madinah.

The Expedition of Najran

Rabi' al-Thani, 3 AH

In Rabi' al-Thani of the same year, the Prophet ﷺ was informed that the tribe of Banu Sulaym had gathered at a place called Najran to launch hostilities against the Muslims.

The Prophet ﷺ set out with three hundred companions, leaving 'Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum in charge of Madinah. On hearing of his advance, the enemy abandoned their plans and dispersed. The Prophet and his companions stayed in the area of Najran for about ten days before returning to Madinah without conflict.

The Battle of Uhud

Shawwal, 3 AH

After the Prophet ﷺ migrated from Makkah, continued hostilities from the Quraysh led to repeated skirmishes. The first major encounter was the Battle of Badr, in which the Quraysh suffered a crushing defeat. That loss did not silence them; rather, their thirst for revenge continued to

burn until it culminated in the battle known as the Battle of Uhud.

At Badr, the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims had confronted the Quraysh army under the command of Abu Jahl. A second Quraysh group at that time, led by Abu Sufyan, was returning with a large trade caravan from Syria. This caravan escaped safely back to Makkah.

For that commercial venture, the people of Makkah had invested together a sum of 50,000 dirhams, which yielded nearly double in profit. Now, Abu Sufyan ibn Harb, ʻAbdullah ibn Abi Rabiʻah, ʻIkrimah ibn Abi Jahl, and other Quraysh leaders gathered in the council of Dar al-Nadwah. After consultation, they decided to return the original capital to its owners but to devote the profit entirely to preparing for war against Madinah.

Accordingly, they launched extensive preparations until, on the 5th of Shawwal, 3 AH, a fully equipped army of three thousand men set out from Makkah under the command of Abu Sufyan.

Through various sources, the Prophet ﷺ learned of their mobilization. To gather further details, he dispatched two men from Madinah, named Anas and Muʻnis. They returned and reported that the Quraysh army had nearly reached Madinah. The Prophet ﷺ then sent Hubab ibn al-Mundhir to assess their numbers. He came back with accurate information on their strength and equipment.

The Prophet ﷺ immediately began defensive preparations and gathered his companions for consultation. The elder companions advised remaining within the city and defending from there. Many of the younger Muslims, however, favoured going out to meet the enemy in open battle. The Prophet ﷺ himself inclined towards the view of defending from within Madinah, and 'Abdullah ibn Ubayy supported this, remarking: "Madinah is like a fortified stronghold. History shows that whenever its people remained inside to resist, they prevailed. But whenever they went out, they suffered defeat."

Others argued, however, that if they stayed behind their walls, their enemies would brand them as cowards. Eventually, the Prophet ﷺ resolved to go out. When he left Madinah, he was accompanied by one thousand men. But on the way, owing to the disagreement, 'Abdullah ibn Ubayy withdrew with three hundred of his followers, saying, 'Our advice was ignored, and so we will not take part.' Thus, only about seven hundred men remained with the Prophet.

The Battle of Uhud began after midday and ended by sunset. On the Muslim side, about 700 men remained, while the Quraysh army numbered nearly 3,000. With them also came women of Makkah, who sang verses of incitement (*rajaz poetry*) to spur their men into battle. Among these women were Hind bint 'Utbah, Umm Hakim bint al-Harith, Fatimah bint al-Walid, Barzah bint Mas'ud, Raytah bint Shaybah, Sulafah bint Sa'd, and Khunas bint Malik.

Of these, only two—Khunas and ʻAmrah—remained upon their old religion. The others later embraced Islam.

The Quraysh appointed five commanders to lead their forces: Khalid ibn al-Walid, ʻIkrimah ibn Abi Jahl, Safwan ibn Umayyah, ʻAmr ibn al-ʻAs, and ʻAbdullah ibn Abi Rabiʻah. At Uhud, they fought fiercely against the Muslims, but eventually all five later accepted Islam and became its defenders.

Despite being outnumbered, the Muslims initially prevailed and killed many from the enemy ranks. Yet they remained true to Islamic principles even in the heat of battle. For example, Abu Dujanah, carrying his sword, charged into the enemy lines. At one point, Hind bint ʻUtbah came before him. She was unarmed, reciting verses to encourage her people. Abu Dujanah lifted his sword but, seeing she was a woman without a weapon, held back his strike, for in Islam it was forbidden to kill women or other non-combatants in war.

At the start, the Muslims were on the verge of victory. But triumph turned into a setback because of a strategic error. On the edge of the battlefield was a mountain pass at Uhud of great military importance. The Prophet ﷺ had placed a detachment of archers there with strict orders: "Remain at your post under all circumstances. Do not leave, whatever happens."

However, when these men saw the Muslims pressing forward and thought victory was certain, they left their

position to join the spoils. Khalid ibn al-Walid, then still among the Quraysh, seized the opportunity. He led a cavalry charge through the unguarded pass, striking the Muslims from behind. This surprise attack caused chaos and reversed the outcome of the battle.

During the fighting, the Prophet's uncle Hamzah ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib was martyred. He was killed by Wahshi ibn Harb, a slave of Makkah, who bore no personal hatred for the Muslims but was promised his freedom if he killed Hamzah. Later, remorse overtook Wahshi, and he came to the Prophet and embraced Islam.

On that occasion, a man pointed out to the Prophet ﷺ: "O Messenger of God, this is the man who killed your uncle Hamzah." The Prophet ﷺ replied: "Leave him. For the Islam of a single man is dearer to me than the killing of a thousand disbelievers." (*Al-Rawd Al-Unuf*, Vol. 5, p. 317)

When the enemy forces attacked from the rear, the Muslims' lines broke, leaving only a handful of companions close by to protect the Prophet ﷺ. Taking advantage of the situation, the enemy surged towards him. At that critical moment, the Prophet ﷺ called out:

> "Who will sell his life for us and be with us in Paradise?"

Hearing this, many companions rushed to his side and surrounded him, shielding him from direct sword strikes. Still, stones were hurled at him, wounding his

face severely and causing blood to flow. At that point, the Prophet ﷺ said:

> "How can a people prosper who wound their Prophet, while he is calling them to their Lord?"

Immediately after these words, an angel came down with God's command:

> "You have no part in this matter. God may accept their repentance, or He may punish them." (Quran, 3:128)

In another report, when the Prophet ﷺ was injured, he invoked destruction upon some Quraysh leaders—such as Safwan ibn Umayyah, Suhayl ibn 'Amr, and Harith ibn Hisham. Yet, despite their arrogance, God did not permit such a supplication. Instead, the Prophet ﷺ was instructed to refrain, a wisdom that became clear later, for all of these men eventually accepted Islam and became pillars of its strength.

Once corrected by divine revelation, the Prophet ﷺ changed his prayer. Rather than cursing his enemies, he began to ask for their guidance, saying:

> "O my Lord, forgive my people, for indeed they do not know." (*Fath al-Bari*, Vol. 8, p. 508)

When the Prophet ﷺ was wounded and had lost much blood, he sought refuge in a cave. For a time, he disappeared from the sight of his companions, and a rumor spread that he had been martyred. At that moment, Ka'b ibn Malik

saw him and wanted to cry out loudly: "O Muslims, rejoice! The Messenger of God is here!" But the Prophet ﷺ motioned for him to remain quiet, fearing that if the enemy heard, they might renew their assault.

Towards the end of the battle, another incident took place. The leader of the Quraysh army stood on a hill and shouted:

> "Exalt Hubal! Exalt Hubal!" (referring to their idol).

The Prophet ﷺ instructed 'Umar ibn al-Khattab to respond:

> "Allah is higher and greater!"

The enemy leader then called out again:

> "We have al-'Uzza, but you have no 'Uzza!"

The Prophet ﷺ said to 'Umar:

> "Reply to him: God is our Protector, and you have no protector." (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith No. 3039)

Towards the end of the battle, the leader of the Quraysh army proclaimed:

> "A day for a day at Badr! Indeed, the days alternate, and battle is like a water-bucket (passed around, sometimes up, sometimes down)."

Hearing this, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab replied:

> "Not the same! Our slain are in Paradise, and your slain are in the Fire." (*Al-Maghazi* by al-Waqidi, Vol. 1, p. 297)

After the Muslims' setback, many of their martyrs were mutilated by the enemy. Their ears and noses were cut off, and their bodies disfigured in celebration. Later, when Abu Sufyan met 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, he said:

> "Indeed, some mutilation was done to your dead. By God, I neither approved of it, nor disliked it, nor forbade it, nor commanded it." (*Sirah Ibn Hisham*, Vol. 2, p. 94)

The Role of Muslim Women

Several Muslim women also participated at Uhud, though not in combat. Anas ibn Malik reported:

> "On the day of Uhud, I saw Aisha and my mother, Umm Sulaym, with their clothes gathered up, carrying water skins on their backs, pouring it into the mouths of the wounded, and then refilling the skins again."

'Umar ibn al-Khattab said that Umm Sulayt, the mother of Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, was also among those who carried water for the soldiers.

Rabi' bint Mu'awwidh narrated: "We used to accompany the Messenger of God on his campaigns. We would bring water for the soldiers, treat the wounded, and carry back the dead, but we did not fight."

Similarly, Umm 'Atiyyah said: "We would accompany the Messenger of God, caring for the sick and treating the wounded."

However, Umm ʻAmmarah (Nusaybah bint Kaʻb) went even further. When she saw Ibn Qamiyyah attacking the Prophet ﷺ, she rushed forward and fought to defend him.

Seventy Muslims were martyred at Uhud, mostly from the Ansar. Due to limited resources, their burial was a poignant affair. For example, when preparing Musʻab ibn ʻUmayr's body, it was discovered that the shroud was too short: if his head was covered, his feet were exposed, and if his feet were covered, his head was exposed. The Prophet ﷺ gave instructions:

"Cover his head and place grass (*idhkhar*) over his feet."

The martyrs were buried without being washed, following the Prophet's order. Some families wanted to bring their dead back to Madinah for burial, but the Prophet ﷺ forbade this, instructing that they be buried where they had fallen.

The Expedition of Hamra' al-Asad

Shawwal, 3 AH

The Battle of Uhud took place about three kilometres outside Madinah, at the foot of Mount Uhud. In that battle, the believers suffered a defeat. Afterwards, the Quraysh army marched away from Uhud towards Makkah, halting at a place called Hamra' al-Asad.

The Messenger of God had a consistent practice of sending out scouts to gather intelligence about the enemy. After the Quraysh army departed Uhud, he likewise dispatched his men to follow them. These scouts trailed the army until they reached Hamra' al-Asad, where they overheard the Quraysh leaders, Abu Sufyan and others, regretting a missed opportunity:

> "We made a serious mistake. After defeating the Muslims at Uhud, we should have pressed forward into Madinah to crush them completely at their centre."

The scouts hurried back on swift mounts and relayed this news to the Messenger of God.

Upon hearing it, the Prophet ﷺ immediately resolved: "We must act before they can march on Madinah." Although the Companions were weary from the recent battle, they readily prepared themselves. Together, the Prophet ﷺ and his followers set out towards Hamra' al-Asad. Unlike usual, this journey was made openly and with full announcement, as the believers marched proclaiming "*Allahu Akbar*."

The purpose of this expedition was not to fight, but to strike fear into the Quraysh so they would abandon any thought of advancing on Madinah and instead return to Makkah.

That is exactly what happened. Through Ma'bad al-Khuza'i, the Quraysh received word that the Muslims were

advancing with loud cries of "Allahu Akbar." Convinced that the Muslims must have received reinforcements and were now coming to avenge their defeat, the Quraysh said among themselves:

> "We should move quickly and reach Makkah, so that if a confrontation does occur, it will be near our home."

Meanwhile, the Prophet's scouts continued bringing him updates. When he learned that the Quraysh army had indeed turned back towards Makkah, he told his followers:

> "Now we may return to Madinah, for the purpose of our mission has been fulfilled."

The Expedition of Abu Salamah 'Abdullah ibn al-Asad

Muharram, 4 AH

The Messenger of God never initiated warfare on his own. But whenever he received reports that an enemy force was preparing to attack, he would take swift action. The campaigns in which he personally took part are called "*Ghazwat*" (battles), while those led by a Companion are technically termed "*Saraya*" (expeditions).

On the 1st of Muharram, 4 AH, news reached the Prophet ﷺ that Tulayhah and Salamah, the sons of Khuwailid, were gathering their people in preparation to fight him. The Prophet ﷺ sent Abu Salamah 'Abdullah ibn al-Asad

(may God be pleased with him) with one hundred and fifty Muhajirun and Ansar to confront them. As soon as the two brothers heard of this force approaching, they fled.

Later, Tulayhah ibn Khuwailid embraced Islam. However, after the Prophet's passing, he apostatized. Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (may God be pleased with him) sent Khalid ibn al-Walid against him. Tulayhah fled to Syria, repented, and re-entered Islam. From then on, he remained active in battle alongside the Muslims. During the caliphate of 'Umar (may God be pleased with him), he fought in the Battle of Qadisiyyah and the Battle of Nahawand. It is said that he was martyred in 21 AH at Nahawand.

His brother Salamah, however, never became a Muslim.

The Incident of Raji'

Safar, 4 AH

Some men from the tribes of 'Udal and Qarah came to the Prophet ﷺ and said:

> "Our tribe has accepted Islam. Please send with us a few men who can teach us the Quran and instruct us in the laws of Islam."

The Prophet ﷺ sent ten Muslims with them, appointing 'Asim ibn Thabit as their leader.

When they reached Raji'—a place between Makkah and 'Usfan—the men betrayed them and signalled the Banu Lahyan. Two hundred men, including one hundred skilled archers, came in pursuit.

As the enemy drew near, ‘Asim and his companions climbed onto a hilltop to defend themselves. Fighting broke out, and eight of the Muslims were martyred. This event took place in Safar, 4 AH.

The Expedition of the Qurra’ (The Tragedy of Bi’r Ma‘unah)

Safar, 4 AH

In the same month, another event took place. ‘Amir ibn Malik, known as Abu Bara’, came to the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet invited him to Islam, but though Abu Bara’ neither accepted nor rejected the call, he said:

> “If you send a group of your Companions to the people of Najd with the message of Islam, I hope they will accept it.”
>
> The Prophet ﷺ replied: “I fear treachery from the people of Najd.”
>
> Abu Bara’ assured him: “I will guarantee their safety.”

The Prophet ﷺ then sent seventy of his Companions—men who were known as the Qurra’, those who recited and taught the Quran. Mundhir ibn ‘Amr al-Sa‘idi was appointed as their leader. These men would collect firewood during the day, sell it in the evening, and use the money to provide food for the people of the Suffah.

The group travelled until they reached Bi’r Ma‘unah and

camped there. The Prophet ﷺ gave a letter addressed to ʻAmir ibn Tufayl, the local chief, and entrusted it to Haram ibn Milhan (the maternal uncle of Anas ibn Malik).

When Haram delivered the letter, ʻAmir ibn Tufayl, without even reading it, signalled to a man who struck Haram from behind with a spear, killing him instantly. He then urged Banu ʻAmir to kill the rest of the Muslims. But because Abu Bara' had guaranteed their safety, Banu ʻAmir refused to assist him.

Frustrated, ʻAmir ibn Tufayl sought help from other tribes—Banu Sulaym, including the clans of ʻUsayyah, Riʻl, and Dhakwan. Together, they attacked and massacred nearly all the Companions at Bi'r Maʻunah without cause.

The Battle of Banu Nadir

Rabiʻ al-Awwal, 4 AH

When ʻUmar ibn Umayyah al-ʻamri returned from Bi'r Maʻunah, two idolaters from Banu ʻAmir joined him on the way. They stopped together in a garden at Qanat. When the two men fell asleep, ʻUmar killed them in retaliation for the massacre at Bi'r Maʻunah.

When he returned to Madinah and told the Prophet ﷺ, the Prophet said:

> "They were under a pact with us. Their blood money must be paid."

Since Banu Nadir were allies of Banu ʻAmir, a portion of the blood money was due from them as well. The Prophet ﷺ went to Banu Nadir with some of his Companions to request their contribution. Outwardly, they received him with smiles and promised cooperation. But privately, they conspired:

> "Let one of us climb onto the roof and drop a heavy stone upon him to kill him."

As the Prophet ﷺ sat with them, revelation informed him of their plot. He immediately rose and returned to Madinah. Soon after, he ordered preparations for war against Banu Nadir. Leaving ʻAbdullah ibn Umm Maktum in charge of Madinah, he set out with his Companions and laid siege to their fortresses.

The Banu Nadir locked themselves inside their strongholds, so the Prophet ﷺ commanded that their palm groves be cut down and set ablaze. The siege lasted fifteen days until the tribe finally sought peace.

The Prophet ﷺ declared:

> "You have ten days to leave Madinah. Take your families, children, and women wherever you wish. You may carry with you whatever your camels can bear—except weapons of war."

This judgement was consistent with the Torah itself, which prescribes exile as the punishment for treachery. Thus, Banu Nadir were expelled from Madinah for their betrayal.

The Expedition of Dhat al-Riqa'

Jumada al-Ula, 4 AH

After the campaign against Banu Nadir, the Prophet ﷺ remained in Madinah from Rabi' al-Awwal until the beginning of Jumada al-Ula. At that time, news reached him that the tribes of Banu Muharib and Banu Tha'labah were gathering forces against him.

The Prophet ﷺ set out with four hundred Companions towards Najd. When they reached the area, they encountered some members of the Ghatafan tribe, but no battle took place. During this expedition, the Prophet ﷺ led the people in *Salat al-Khawf* (the Prayer of Fear). Ibn Sa'd relates that Dhat al-Riqa' was the name of a mountain where the Prophet camped, and so the expedition came to be known by that name.

On the return journey, the Prophet ﷺ rested beneath a shady tree, hanging his sword upon one of its branches. A polytheist came, seized the sword, and stood over him saying:

"O Muhammad, who will save you from me now?"

The Prophet ﷺ replied calmly: "Allah."

At this, the man dropped the sword. The Prophet ﷺ then took it in his own hand and asked:

"And who will save you from me?"

The man was shaken. The Prophet ﷺ invited him to Islam, but he declined, saying only: "I will never fight against you again." Later, he accepted Islam.

The Appointment at Badr (Badr al-Maw'id)

Sha'ban, 4 AH

After returning from Dhat al-Riqa, the Prophet ﷺ remained in Madinah until the end of Rajab. At the close of the Battle of Uhud, Abu Sufyan had called out to the Muslims and set an appointment for battle the following year at Badr.

In fulfillment of this, the Prophet ﷺ set out with fifteen hundred Companions. They reached Badr and waited there for eight days. Abu Sufyan and the Quraysh marched as far as Mar al-'ahran, but they lost courage and turned back, saying: "This year is one of famine and hardship—it is not a time for fighting."

The Prophet ﷺ, after waiting eight days without confrontation, returned peacefully to Madinah.

The Expedition of Dumat al-Jandal

Rabi' al-Awwal, 5 AH

In Rabi' al-Awwal, word reached the Prophet ﷺ that the people of Dumat al-Jandal were preparing to attack Madinah. He marched out with one thousand Companions. But when the tribes heard of the Muslims' approach, they dispersed. The Prophet ﷺ returned without battle.

The purpose of such campaigns was not always to engage in open war, but often to intimidate potential enemies so they would retreat without conflict.

The Battle of al-Muraysi' (Banu al-Mustaliq)

Sha'ban, 5 AH

While in Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ received reports that Harith ibn Abi Dirar, chief of Banu al-Mustaliq, had gathered a large force in preparation to attack the Muslims. The Prophet ﷺ sent Buraydah ibn al-Husayb al-Aslami to verify the information, and he confirmed it to be true.

The Prophet ﷺ then ordered his Companions to prepare for battle. Thirty cavalry joined the expedition—ten from the Muhajirun and twenty from the Ansar. Leaving Zayd ibn Harithah in charge of Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ took with him two of his wives, Aisha and Umm Salamah (may God be pleased with them).

The Muslims engaged Banu al-Mustaliq and achieved victory.

During the journey, however, an incident occurred at a watering place. A dispute broke out between a Muhajir and an Ansari. Each man called out to his group, shouting: "O Muhajirun!" and "O Ansar!"

When the Prophet ﷺ heard these calls, he said:

> "What is this call of ignorance?"

When the situation was explained to him, he declared: "Leave it, for it is foul and rotten." (*Musannaf 'Abd al-Razzaq*, Hadith No. 18041)

The Incident of Ifk

This incident took place during the same expedition. Aisha (may God be pleased with her) accompanied the Prophet ﷺ on that journey. On the return, as the army camped at a place near Madinah, she went some distance away to relieve herself. On her way back, her necklace broke and fell. While she delayed in searching for it, the order to march was given.

The men assumed that Aisha was inside her howdah, as its curtains were drawn, and without checking, they lifted it onto the camel and set off. When she returned, she found the camp empty. Wrapping herself in her cloak, she lay down at the spot.

Safwan ibn al-Mu'attal, who customarily stayed behind the caravan to gather any items left behind, arrived there and recognized her. On seeing her, he recited: "*Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un*" (Indeed, we belong to God and to Him we shall return).

Aisha herself later said:

> "By God, he did not speak a single word to me, nor did I hear anything from him except his recitation of Inna lillah." (*Musnad Ahmad*, Hadith No. 25623)

Safwan brought his camel, made it kneel down, and Aisha mounted it. He then led the camel by its rope until they caught up with the rest of the army.

When the hypocrites heard of this, they began to spread slanderous accusations. The rumours stirred turmoil throughout Madinah. Finally, God revealed verses in Surat al-Nur declaring Aisha's innocence, and the agitation came to an end.

The Battle of the Trench

(also called the Battle of the Confederates)

Shawwal, 5 AH (627 CE)

The battle began after the exile of the Jewish tribe Banu Nadir from Madinah. Their leader, Huyayy ibn Akhtab, went to Makkah and urged the Quraysh to wage war against Muhammad. Another leader, Kinanah ibn Rabi', persuaded the Ghatafan tribe by offering them half the annual harvest of Khaybar's date orchards. The Quraysh were already hostile and readily agreed.

Under the command of Abu Sufyan, an army of over ten thousand men—drawn from Quraysh and several allied tribes—set out for Madinah. When Muhammad heard of their approach, he consulted his followers. One of them, Salman al-Farisi, suggested digging a trench as a defensive barrier around the exposed side of the city. This tactic was unknown among the Arabs but was a common strategy in Persia. Muhammad approved,

assigning sections of the trench to groups of ten men each. He himself joined the digging.

The trench was completed just in time. When the Quraysh and their allies arrived, they were astonished to see a wide ditch blocking their path. They camped outside Madinah but were unable to launch a direct assault. For about three weeks, the siege continued. There were only scattered exchanges of arrows, but no decisive fighting.

This episode was one of the most severe tests for the early Muslim community. Contemporary sources describe the psychological strain: the enemy closing in from all directions, morale sinking, and even some followers expressing doubt and despair. Supplies were short, and conditions inside Madinah were harsh.

At one point, while the trench was being dug, a massive rock blocked progress. Muhammad struck it with a pickaxe three times, declaring with each blow that he foresaw future conquests: first Syria, then Persia, and finally Yemen. His words reflected both faith and an attempt to raise morale among his followers during a moment of crisis.

The siege eventually turned in the Muslims' favour through a mix of strategy and circumstance. Nu'aym ibn Mas'ud, a tribal leader from Ghatafan, secretly converted to Islam during the siege. With Muhammad's permission, he used his position to spread distrust between the Quraysh and their allies, particularly the Jewish tribe of Banu Qurayzah

inside Madinah. Meanwhile, a fierce storm struck the enemy camp. It tore down their tents, sent sand and gravel into their faces, extinguished their fires, and scattered their horses. Disheartened, quarrelling, and demoralized, the confederate army broke apart and withdrew.

For the Muslims, who numbered only around three thousand against a coalition four times their size, survival itself was a victory. The trench strategy—novel in Arabia—had proved decisive, and the confederates' failure marked a turning point in the conflict between Muhammad and his opponents.

The Battle of Banu Qurayza

Dhu'l-Qa'da, 5 AH (627 CE)

Right after the Battle of the Trench ended, Muhammad ordered an attack on the Jewish tribe of Banu Qurayza. The reason was their betrayal: they had a treaty with him, but when the Quraysh came with an army of ten thousand to besiege Madinah, Banu Qurayza broke their pact and sided with the Quraysh.

Once the confederates were defeated and forced to withdraw, Banu Qurayza retreated into their fortresses. Muhammad told his followers to march quickly to their settlements, saying: "No one should pray the afternoon prayer before reaching Banu Qurayza." He sent Ali ahead with the banner, and later joined the army himself.

The Muslims laid siege for twenty-five days. At last, Banu Qurayza agreed to accept judgement. Muhammad proposed that one of their own allies should decide. They chose Saad ibn Muadh, saying: "Whatever Saad decides, we will accept."

Saad ibn Muadh gave his verdict in line with the law of the Torah: the fighting men were to be executed, the women and children taken captive, and the property divided among the Muslims.

The Expedition of Muhammad ibn Maslama al-Ansari

Muharram, 6 AH (October 627 CE)

On the 10th of Muharram, Muhammad sent thirty horsemen under Muhammad ibn Maslama al-Ansari towards Qurta. They engaged the enemy, and the Muslims were victorious.

During this campaign, the chief of Banu Hanifa, Thumama ibn Uthal, was captured and brought to Madinah. Muhammad ordered that he be tied to a pillar in the mosque, so that he could witness the Muslims in prayer and worship.

Whenever Muhammad passed by, he asked: "Thumama, what do you think of me?"

Thumama would reply: "If you show kindness, it will be to one who is grateful."

Meanwhile, the force continued towards Dhi Qarad. Muhammad had already sent a small detachment ahead, which clashed with the enemy. Two of their men were killed, while one Muslim was martyred.

The Expedition of Ukasha ibn Mihsan

Rabi al-Awwal, 6 AH (December 627 CE)

In Rabi al-Awwal, Muhammad heard reports of an enemy force gathering. He sent Ukasha ibn Mihsan with forty men towards Ghamr. But by the time they arrived, the enemy had already fled.

He then dispatched Shuja ibn Wahb to continue searching. By questioning a local, they discovered the enemy's location and gathered intelligence about their movements.

The Expedition of Muhammad ibn Salama

Rabi al-Akhir, 6 AH (627 CE)

In Rabi al-Akhir, news came that the tribes of Banu Tha'laba and Banu Awwal were planning an attack on Madinah. Muhammad sent Muhammad ibn Salama with ten men towards Dhu al-Qassah to confront them.

They reached the area at night and went to sleep, unaware that the enemy was hiding in the surrounding hills. About one hundred men launched a surprise night attack, killing all of them except Muhammad ibn Salama, who survived by chance.

The Expedition of Abu Ubayda ibn al-Jarrah

In response to this incident, Muhammad sent Abu Ubayda with forty men towards Dhu al-Qassah. They attacked the enemy, who fled in retreat. This came to be known as the second expedition of Dhu al-Qassah.

The Expedition of Jamum

Rabi al-Akhir, 6 AH

Around the same time, Muhammad received news of another planned raid. He sent Zayd ibn Harithah towards Jamum to face the tribe of Banu Sulaym. Jamum was about four miles from Madinah.

There, through the help of a woman guide, the Muslims located the enemy. After a brief skirmish, the Muslims returned to Madinah.

The Expedition of Ays

Jumada al-Ula, 6 AH

Muhammad was informed that a Quraysh trade caravan was returning from Syria. He sent Zayd ibn Harithah with 170 horsemen towards Ays, a location near the coast, four days' journey from Madinah.

The Muslims intercepted the caravan, captured its people, and seized their goods. When they returned to Madinah, among the captives was Abu al-As ibn al-Rabi, Muhammad's son-in-law. His wife, Zaynab (the Prophet's daughter),

gave him her protection. Muhammad also granted him protection and returned his goods and belongings.

The Expedition of Tarif

Jumada al-Akhirah, 6 AH (627 CE)

The tribe of Banu Tha'laba was carrying out hostile activities against the Muslims. Muhammad sent Zayd ibn Harithah with fifteen men towards Tarif, about 36 miles from Madinah. When the enemy learned of their approach, they fled. Zayd returned to Madinah without a battle.

The Expedition of Hima

Jumada al-Akhirah, 6 AH

Dihyah al-Kalbi had been sent with a letter from Muhammad to the Byzantine emperor. The emperor received him respectfully and sent him back with many gifts. On his return journey, near Jumaa, a man named Hunayyah from the tribe of Jutham attacked him with his people and looted his goods.

When Rifa'ah ibn Zayd, also from Jutham, heard of this, he recovered all the stolen property from Hunayyah and returned it to Dihyah. When Dihyah reached Madinah and informed Muhammad of what had happened, Muhammad sent Zayd ibn Harithah with five hundred men against the attackers.

The Muslims were victorious, but by mistake, some women and children belonging to Rifa'ah's group—who

were Muslims—were also taken captive. Rifa'ah came to Muhammad and explained the situation. Muhammad immediately ordered that all captives and property be released and returned.

The Expedition of Wadi al-Qura

Rajab, 6 AH (627 CE)

In Rajab, word came that the tribe of Banu Fazara was planning rebellion and hostile action against Madinah. Muhammad sent Zayd ibn Harithah to Wadi al-Qura to subdue them. Fighting broke out, after which the enemy fled. Several Muslims were killed in the skirmish, and Zayd himself was wounded.

The Expedition of Dumat al-Jandal

Sha'ban, 6 AH (627 CE)

In Sha'ban, Muhammad said to Abd al-Rahman ibn Awf: "I am sending you on an expedition—prepare yourself." The next day, after prayer, he called him, tied a turban on his head with his own hands, gave him a banner, and sent him with seven hundred men to Dumat al-Jandal.

As Abd al-Rahman departed, Muhammad instructed him: "Do not act dishonestly, do not betray, do not mutilate bodies, do not kill children, and invite them to Islam. If they accept, then do not hesitate to strengthen ties by marriage with their chief's family."

On reaching Dumat al-Jandal, Abd al-Rahman invited the people to Islam. For three days he called them, and on the third day, the local chief, Asbagh ibn Amr, accepted Islam, followed by many of his people. Abd al-Rahman then married Asbagh's daughter, Tamadir. From this marriage was born Abu Salamah ibn Abd al-Rahman, who later became a well-known scholar. This marriage was intended to establish a bond with the tribe and bring them closer to Islam.

The Expedition of Fadak

Sha'ban, 6 AH

Around the same time, Muhammad received news that the tribe of Banu Sa'd ibn Bakr had joined with the Jews of Khaybar and were gathering forces near Fadak. He sent Ali with one hundred men to confront them.

On the way, they captured a man who turned out to be a spy for Banu Sa'd. He was promised safety and revealed the location of the enemy. Guided by this information, the Muslims launched an attack. Banu Sa'd scattered and fled, and the Muslims returned victorious.

The Expedition of Umm Qirfa

Ramadan, 6 AH (627 CE)

Umm Qirfa was the title of a woman named Fatimah bint Rabi'a, who was a leader of the tribe of Banu Fazara. On one occasion, when Zayd ibn Harithah passed through

her territory on a trade journey to Syria, the people of Banu Fazara attacked him, wounded him, and seized all his goods.

When Zayd returned to Madinah and reported what had happened, Muhammad sent an expedition under his command to punish the attackers. The mission was successful, and Zayd returned safely.

The Expedition of Abdullah ibn Rawaha

Shawwal, 6 AH

After the death of Abu Rafi, the Jews of Khaybar appointed Usayr ibn Rizam as their new leader. He began making preparations to fight Muhammad and sought to rally the Ghatafan and other tribes to his side.

When Muhammad learned of this, he sent Abdullah ibn Rawaha to verify the report. Abdullah confirmed it, and Muhammad then dispatched thirty men with him to bring Usayr for talks.

Usayr came with thirty of his own men, but on the way, he plotted to attack the Muslims. When his plan became clear, fighting broke out. The Muslims fought back, and the Jews suffered a heavy defeat.

The Expedition of Kurz ibn Jabir al-Fihri

Shawwal, 6 AH

In the same month, some men from the tribes of Ukl and

Uraynah came to Madinah and embraced Islam. After a few days, they complained: "We are herders by nature, we live on milk, we are not used to grain, and the climate of Madinah does not suit us. If we could live outside the city among the camels kept for charity and drink their milk, it would be better for us."

Muhammad permitted this, and they went to live among the camels. Once they regained their health, however, they abandoned Islam. They killed the herdsman, drove off the camels, and fled.

Muhammad sent Kurz ibn Jabir al-Fihri with twenty men in pursuit. They captured the offenders, who were executed in retaliation for killing the herdsman, in the same manner they had killed him.

The Mission of Umar ibn Umayyah al-Damri

On one occasion, Abu Sufyan, the leader of Quraysh, said in a gathering: "Is there no one who will go and kill Muhammad?" A Bedouin replied: "I am skilled at such work. If you support me, I can do it." Abu Sufyan provided him with a camel, supplies, and pledged further help.

The man set out for Madinah with the intention of assassination. Muhammad was in the mosque of Banu Abd al-Ashhal when he saw the man approaching and remarked: "He is coming with an evil intent." Usayd ibn Hudayr stood up, seized him, and a hidden dagger fell from his clothes.

Muhammad asked: "Tell the truth—what is your purpose?"

The man said: "If I am given safety, I will tell you."

Muhammad assured him of safety, and he confessed the whole plot. Muhammad then let him go, and afterwards the man accepted Islam.

Following this event, Muhammad sent Umar ibn Umayyah al-Damri and Salamah ibn Aslam al-Ansari to Makkah to confront Abu Sufyan. When they entered the city, they decided to perform a circuit of the Kaaba before acting. Abu Sufyan spotted them and shouted: "Look! These men have come with evil intentions!"

Realizing that their plan could no longer succeed, Umar told his companion: "It is better for us to leave." They then returned safely to Madinah.

The Treaty of Hudaybiyyah

Dhu'l-Qa'da, 6 AH (628 CE)

Hudaybiyyah was the name of a well with a nearby village of the same name, located about nine miles from Makkah.

In Madinah, Muhammad had seen a dream in which he and his followers entered Makkah and performed the minor pilgrimage (*umrah*). Acting on this vision, he set out on the 1st of Dhu'l-Qa'da, 6 AH, with the intention of performing umrah. About fifteen hundred men of the Muhajirun and Ansar accompanied him. He sent Busar ibn Sufyan ahead to gather intelligence about the Quraysh.

Because there was no intention to fight, they carried only provisions for travel and animals for sacrifice.

When the Muslims reached Ghadir Ashat, the scout returned with news that the Quraysh had been alerted and had sworn not to let Muhammad enter Makkah. Khalid ibn al-Walid was already on the road to intercept them with two hundred horsemen. To avoid confrontation, Muhammad changed his route and led his followers until they stopped at Hudaybiyyah.

At Hudaybiyyah, he sent Khirash ibn Umayyah al-Khuza'i to Makkah with a message: that they had come only for pilgrimage, not for war. But the Quraysh seized him, and although some wanted to kill him, others intervened and saved his life. He returned to Muhammad with the report.

Further exchanges followed. Budayl ibn Warqa of the Khuza'ah tribe came with others to inform Muhammad of the Quraysh's position. Muhammad replied: "We have not come to fight. We have come for pilgrimage. If they wish, we can make a peace treaty for a fixed period, during which neither side will harm the other."

Budayl carried this message back. Hearing it, Urwah ibn Mas'ud, a respected leader, said: "People, Muhammad has offered you what is good. Accept it, and allow me to go speak with him." He was permitted, and when he met Muhammad, he heard the same words Budayl had heard. Urwah returned and reported everything to the Quraysh.

Next, Hulays ibn Alqamah of the Kinanah tribe was sent. Muhammad told his Companions to prepare the sacrificial animals where Hulays could see them, since Hulays belonged to a people who deeply revered sacrifice. When he saw the animals, Hulays did not even enter the camp; he returned at once, saying to Quraysh: "Let them perform umrah." But Quraysh refused.

Finally, they sent Suhayl ibn Amr to negotiate. When Muhammad saw him, he said: "Now the matter has been made easy for you." After lengthy talks, terms of peace were agreed upon. Ali wrote the treaty at Muhammad's dictation. The main conditions were:

1. There would be no fighting between the two sides for ten years.
2. If anyone from Quraysh accepted Islam and fled to Madinah, he would be returned.
3. If anyone from the Muslims went to Makkah, he would not be returned.
4. Neither side would betray or attack the other.
5. Muhammad and his followers would return to Madinah without entering Makkah that year, but they could come the following year, stay for three days, perform umrah, and then leave.
6. Any tribe could join either side's alliance if it wished.

Muhammad accepted all the Quraysh's conditions, though many of his Companions were distressed. Umar spoke openly of his frustration, but Muhammad urged patience. After the treaty was signed, he ordered the sacrificial animals slaughtered and the pilgrims to shave their heads.

The Muslims stayed at Hudaybiyyah for about two weeks before returning. On the way back, the opening verses of Surah al-Fath were revealed: "Indeed, We have granted you a clear victory" (Quran, 48:1).

Muhammad recited this verse to his Companions. Surprised, they asked: "Is this a victory?" He replied: "Yes, it is."

In reality, the treaty turned out to be a decisive success. Until then, constant fighting had prevented Muslims and non-Muslims from meeting freely. Now, with peace in place, tensions eased, and people had the chance to learn about Islam directly. In the period after Hudaybiyyah, more people accepted Islam than in all the years since Muhammad's mission had begun.

The treaty also had practical consequences. For example, a man named Abu Basir accepted Islam and fled to Madinah, but under the terms of the agreement Muhammad returned him. Abu Basir then escaped to the coast on the trade route to Syria. Other Muslims followed him until a group of seventy gathered there. They began raiding Quraysh caravans, causing great distress. Eventually, the Quraysh themselves asked Muhammad to release them from the clause requiring fugitives to be returned.

Chiefs Accept the New Faith

The Treaty of Hudaybiyyah proved to be a victory of hearts. After the treaty, several leading figures of Makkah entered Islam. Among them were Khalid ibn Walid, Uthman ibn Talhah, and Amr ibn al-As. These three accepted Islam together.

Khalid later recalled: "The three of us set out from Makkah towards Madinah together. When the Prophet was informed of our arrival, he rejoiced and said: 'Makkah has given us its dearest ones.'" All three went on to play key roles in shaping Islamic history.

Letters to the Kings of the World

The Treaty of Hudaybiyyah took place in 6 AH. In the Quran, God described it as a "clear victory" (*fathan mubinan*, 48:1) and also promised "a near victory" (*fathan qariban*, 48:18).

Hudaybiyyah was not a temporary compromise but a far-sighted strategy. It was a search for calm in the midst of turmoil—a divine tranquility (*sakina*) that enabled Islam to spread where the force of battle could not. What warfare could not achieve, peace and security accomplished: an open door for the message of Islam to reach far and wide.

Once hostilities were set aside, barriers of fear and enmity dissolved. With the atmosphere of peace, people had the

chance to meet Muslims freely, hear their teachings, and reflect on them. As a result, after Hudaybiyyah, more people embraced Islam than in all the years before.

After returning from Hudaybiyyah, in Dhul-Hijjah of 6 AH, Muhammad resolved to send letters to rulers across the world, inviting them to Islam. He gathered his companions and addressed them:

> "O people, I have been sent as a mercy to all mankind. Carry this message to the world, and God will have mercy on you. Do not be like the disciples of Jesus, who agreed when asked to go nearby but clung to their places when asked to go far."

The companions answered his call with readiness. They also advised: "O Messenger of God, rulers and kings do not take a letter seriously unless it bears a seal." Muhammad approved this advice and had a seal made in Abyssinia, engraved with the words Muhammad, Messenger of God. Letters were stamped with this seal before being dispatched.

This set a principle: if other nations have customs or practices that are recognized as formal rules, and these do not contradict reason or faith, then respecting and adopting them is proper and wise. It reflects the teaching: "Wisdom is the lost property of the believer. Wherever he finds it, he is most entitled to it." (*Sunan Ibn Majah*, Hadith No. 4169)

Letter to the Emperor of Rome

The letter that the Messenger of God sent to the Roman Emperor (Heraclius) was worded as follows:

> "This letter is from Muhammad, the servant of God and His Messenger, to Heraclius the Great of Rome. Peace be upon those who follow guidance. After this: I invite you with the call of Islam. Accept Islam, and you will find peace, and God will grant you a double reward. But if you turn away, then upon you will be the burden of your people not embracing Islam.

O People of the Book! Come to a word that is the same between us and you: that we shall worship none but God, and we shall not associate anything with Him, and none of us shall take others as lords besides God. But if they turn away, then say: Bear witness that we are those who submit to God." (Quran, 3:64)

This letter was delivered by Dihyah al-Kalbi. When the Emperor read it, he summoned Abu Sufyan—who had not yet embraced Islam—and questioned him about Muhammad. From his answers, Heraclius became convinced that Muhammad was indeed a true prophet.

It is said that Heraclius then convened a grand assembly of bishops and priests, openly acknowledged the truth of Islam, and invited them to embrace it. But they reacted with outrage. Seeing their reaction, Heraclius retracted

his words and told them: "I only wanted to test your faith. I am pleased to see your steadfastness in your religion." Thus, despite recognizing the truth, he refrained from declaring it openly.

In this letter, Muhammad addressed him as "the Great of Rome," showing that even with non-Muslims, respect and honour appropriate to their position should be observed, without engaging in disputes over belief.

Letter to the King of Persia

Just as he had written to the Emperor of Rome, the Messenger of God also sent a letter to the King of Persia (Khosrow Parviz), addressing him as "*the Great of Persia*." The letter was delivered by Abdullah ibn Hudhafah al-Sahmi.

But unlike Heraclius, Khosrow reacted with fury. He tore the letter to pieces and raged: "This man writes to me, though he is my subject!" Not long afterwards, he was killed by his own son, Sheruweh.

Letters to Other Rulers

In the same period, Muhammad sent letters to many rulers and chiefs. Some received the letters with courtesy, while others responded with hostility. Some, like the ruler of Egypt (*Al-Muqawqis*), acknowledged Muhammad's prophethood but did not accept Islam. Others, such as the Negus, king of Abyssinia, welcomed the letter with joy and embraced the faith.

Rulers Who Received Letters from the Prophet

Among the prominent leaders to whom the Prophet Muhammad sent letters of invitation were:

- Heraclius: Emperor of Rome
- Khosrow Parviz: King of Persia
- The Negus (al-Najashi): King of Abyssinia (Ethiopia)
- Al-Muqawqis: Ruler of Egypt
- Al-Mundhir ibn Sawa: Ruler of Bahrain
- Abd and Jayfar: Kings of Oman
- Hawdha ibn Ali: Chief of Yamamah
- Harith al-Ghassani: Governor of Damascus

The Battle of Khaybar

Muharram, 7 AH (628 CE)

After returning from Hudaybiyyah to Madinah, Muhammad turned his attention to the Jewish strongholds of Khaybar. Before this, the Jews of Madinah had conspired with the Quraysh, encouraging them to attack Madinah in what became the Battle of the Trench (*Ahzab*). But the treaty of Hudaybiyyah bound the Quraysh not to fight Muhammad or aid his enemies. This agreement effectively cut the Jews off from their strongest allies. Muhammad now resolved to break their power so they could no longer obstruct the spread of Islam.

In Muharram of 7 AH, he set out towards Khaybar with 1,400 infantry and 100 cavalry. On the way, when some companions raised loud chants of "*Allahu Akbar*," Muhammad told them: "Be gentle with yourselves. You are not calling upon a deaf or absent one. You are calling upon God, who hears and is near."

News reached him that the Ghatafan tribe had mobilized to aid the Jews of Khaybar. To deter them, Muhammad encamped at Rajee, a place between Khaybar and the territory of Ghatafan. Intimidated, the Ghatafan abandoned their plans and withdrew.

Near Khaybar, Muhammad prayed at length. The closing part of his supplication was: "O God, we ask You for the goodness of this town, the goodness of its people, and the goodness of what is in it. And we seek refuge in You from its evil, the evil of its people, and the evil of what is in it."

Khaybar was fortified with multiple strongholds. On seeing the Muslims approach, the Jews retreated inside their forts. Muhammad ordered attacks on the forts one by one, until each fell in succession.

For the assault on the fortress of Qamus, Muhammad gave the banner to Ali and instructed him: "Invite them to Islam before fighting. By God, if one person is guided through you, it will be better for you than red camels."

At last, after the fall of the remaining fortresses, the

Muslims laid siege to the strongholds of Watih and Sulalim. After fourteen days, the defenders requested safe passage, agreeing to abandon Khaybar. Muhammad granted them security, and the campaign came to an end.

The Battle of Mu'tah

Jumada al-Awwal, 8 AH (629 CE)

Mu'tah was a place on the frontier of Syria. When Muhammad sent letters to rulers and chiefs inviting them to Islam, one was delivered to Shurahbil ibn Amr al-Ghassani, the governor of Syria under the Byzantine Emperor. Harith ibn Umayr carried the letter, but when he reached *Mu'tah*, Shurahbil had him killed.

In response, Muhammad dispatched an army of 3,000 men in Jumada al-Awwal, 8 AH. He appointed Zayd ibn Harithah as commander, and instructed: if Zayd was killed, then Ja'far ibn Abi Talib would lead; if Ja'far was also killed, then Abdullah ibn Rawahah would take command; and if he too was killed, the soldiers should choose a leader among themselves.

He gave Zayd a white banner and instructed the army: first invite the people to Islam; if they refuse, then fight. He also advised them to remain mindful of God, to be sincere towards their companions, and to uphold righteousness in all circumstances.

When Shurahbil learned of the approaching army, he gathered a force of 100,000, and soon after, the Emperor

himself sent another 100,000 in support. When the Muslims heard this, they consulted one another and agreed to advance.

The battle began, and the appointed commanders fell one after another: Zayd, Ja'far, and Abdullah. Finally, the soldiers agreed to appoint Khalid ibn al-Walid as commander. Realizing the enemy force was vastly greater—over 200,000 against only 3,000 Muslims—Khalid devised a tactical manoeuvre. Through strategic repositioning and deceptive manoeuvres, he managed to disengage the army and return safely to Madinah.

Later, under the command of Usama ibn Zayd, the Muslims advanced again towards the region and eventually achieved victory.

The Expedition of Amr Ibn Al-As

Jumada al-Thani, 8 AH (629 CE)

Around this time, Muhammad received news that a group from the tribe of Banu Quda'ah was preparing to attack Madinah. He dispatched Amr Ibn Al-As with 300 men, including 30 cavalrymen, to the area of Dhat al-Salasil.

When Amr realized the enemy was much larger than his force, he sent Rafi' ibn Makhith back to Madinah to request reinforcements. Muhammad then sent Abu Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah with 200 more men, among them Abu Bakr and Umar, instructing: "When you join Amr, work together

and do not quarrel."

When Abu Ubaydah arrived, the time for prayer came, and a dispute arose over who should lead. Amr said: "I am the commander, and you were sent to support me, so leadership in prayer belongs to me." To avoid division, Abu Ubaydah accepted his leadership.

Together, the combined forces advanced against Banu Quda'ah. Their show of unity and strength intimidated the tribe, who abandoned their hostile plans.

The Conquest of Makkah

Ramadan, 8 AH (630 CE)

Under the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah, the Quraysh had pledged neither to attack the Muslims nor to aid their enemies. At that time, Banu Bakr were allies of the Quraysh, while Banu Khuza'ah were allies of the Prophet. Old hostilities ran deep between the two tribes.

One night, Banu Bakr attacked Banu Khuza'ah while they slept near a spring. The Quraysh supported their allies, providing weapons and even men for the raid. Many from Banu Khuza'ah were killed, and their property was plundered. In desperation, Amr ibn Salim al-Khuza'i came to Madinah with forty men and informed the Prophet of the treachery.

In response, the Prophet sent a messenger to Makkah with three demands:

1. The Quraysh should pay compensation for those killed from Khuza'ah.
2. They should sever ties with Banu Bakr.
3. Or they should declare the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah null and void.

When the messenger delivered the message, the Quraysh replied that they were willing to annul the treaty. Later, however, regret set in, and they hastily sent Abu Sufyan to Madinah to renew and extend the agreement. But by then the Prophet no longer accepted it, and Abu Sufyan returned to Makkah unsuccessful.

The Prophet quietly instructed his companions to prepare for a march on Makkah. Supplies and weapons were readied in secrecy, and allied tribes were also told to mobilize.

On the 10th of Ramadan, he set out with an army of about 10,000. At Juhfah, he met his uncle Abbas, who was emigrating from Makkah with his family. Abbas sent his household on to Madinah and joined the Muslim army.

Along the way, several notable figures came forward to embrace Islam. Among them was Abu Sufyan ibn al-Harith, the Prophet's cousin and foster-brother. Once a close friend, he had turned bitterly against the Prophet after the start of his mission, even composing satirical verses against him. But during the march to Makkah, remorse overcame him. He came with a companion and recited the words once spoken by Joseph's brothers:

> "By God, surely God has preferred you over us, and we were indeed in the wrong" (Quran, 12:91).

The Prophet, in turn, responded with the words Joseph had said to his brothers:

> "There is no blame on you today" (Quran, 12:92).

They declared the testimony of faith and entered Islam.

As night fell near Marr al-Zahran, close to Makkah, the Prophet camped with his army and ordered every soldier to light a fire before his tent. Thousands of flames lit up the valley.

The Quraysh, already uneasy over their broken treaty, feared an imminent attack. Alarmed at the sight of the fires, Abu Sufyan ibn Harb, along with Budayl ibn Warqa and others, set out from Makkah to investigate. As they approached Marr al-Zahran, the sight of the vast army left them shaken. Abu Sufyan asked, "Whose fires are these?" Budayl answered, "These must be the fires of Khuza'ah."

When Abu Sufyan saw the thousands of campfires blazing in the valley, he said: "The Khuza'ah could never have gathered such an army; they are far too few." Soon after, the Prophet's guards spotted Abu Sufyan and his companions and captured them.

The guards asked each other, "Who is this man?" Someone replied, "This is the Messenger of God and his companions." While they were speaking, Abbas, the Prophet's uncle,

came by on the Prophet's mule. Hearing Abu Sufyan's voice, he called out:

> "Woe to you, Abu Sufyan! This is the army of the Messenger of God. By God, if he gains the upper hand over you, your fate will be sealed. The only hope for Quraysh is to seek peace and accept his authority."

Abu Sufyan, realizing the danger, turned to Abbas and pleaded, "O Abu al-Fadl, what is the way to safety?" Abbas told him: "Come with me. Ride behind me on this mule. I will take you to the Messenger of God and seek protection for you."

Abbas mounted Abu Sufyan behind him and led him through the army, showing him the scale of its power. When they passed by Umar ibn al-Khattab, Umar immediately recognized Abu Sufyan and shouted: "This is Abu Sufyan, the enemy of God and His Messenger! He has fallen into our hands without a treaty or pledge of safety. Let me strike off his head!"

Umar rushed towards the Prophet's tent with sword in hand, while Abbas pressed forward with Abu Sufyan still mounted behind him. They arrived together, Umar demanding permission to kill Abu Sufyan, while Abbas insisted that he had given him protection. The argument grew heated until Abbas rebuked Umar:

> "Hold back, Umar! If this man had been from your clan, you would not press so hard for his

death. Because he is from Banu Abd Manaf, you are quick to insist."

Umar responded firmly: "By God, your acceptance of Islam was more beloved to me than if my own father al-Khattab had believed. For I knew well that your Islam was more pleasing to the Messenger of God than my father's."

The Prophet then instructed Abbas: "Take Abu Sufyan to your tent. Bring him to me in the morning." Abu Sufyan spent the night under Abbas's protection.

That same night, Hakim ibn Hizam and Budayl ibn Warqa came to the Prophet and accepted Islam. Afterwards, they returned to Makkah to inform its people of the Prophet's arrival.

At dawn, Abbas brought Abu Sufyan again to the Prophet. A conversation took place—recorded in the books of biography—after which Abu Sufyan declared the testimony of faith and embraced Islam. To honour him, the Prophet announced:

- Whoever enters the house of Abu Sufyan will be safe.
- Whoever enters the Sacred Mosque will be safe.
- Whoever closes the door of his house and remains inside will also be safe.

Abu Sufyan agreed, saying, "Yes, now that is sufficient."

The following day, the Prophet set out from Marr al-Zahran towards Makkah with an army of 10,000 companions—an unprecedented number.

As they approached, Sa'd ibn Ubadah al-Ansari, carrying the banner, shouted loudly: "Today is the day of battle! Today the sanctuary of the Kaaba will be broken!"

The Prophet, however, disapproved of these words. He corrected him, saying: "No, today is the day of mercy. Sa'd was mistaken. Today God will honour the Kaaba."

The Prophet then ordered that the banner be taken from Sa'd and handed instead to his son, Qays ibn Sa'd.

At that time, Abu Sufyan was the leader of Makkah. When he saw the vast army that accompanied the Messenger of God, he was overcome with awe. He hurried back to Makkah and publicly declared: "Muhammad is coming with an army we cannot resist. Accept Islam and you will be safe. Whoever enters the Sacred Mosque will be safe. Whoever enters my house will be safe. Whoever closes the door of his house or lays down his arms will also be safe."

The Prophet and his companions entered Makkah and made their way to the Kaaba. He was riding a camel, his head bowed so humbly that his beard touched the saddle.

He had already given strict orders to his companions: they must not start any fighting. They were only to defend themselves if attacked.

Upon entering the city, the Prophet went to the Kaaba. He summoned Uthman ibn Talha, the keeper of its key, and asked him to unlock it. Inside, the walls were decorated with images, and 360 idols were placed around it. The Prophet ordered that the images be erased and the idols removed.

Soon, the people of Makkah gathered in large numbers in the courtyard of the Kaaba. They anxiously waited to hear what judgement would be passed on them, for they had opposed the Prophet, persecuted his followers, and fought against him in battle. Standing at the door of the Kaaba, the Prophet addressed them:

> "There is no god but God alone. He fulfilled His promise, He granted victory to His servant, and He alone defeated the confederates."

He did not take revenge on the people of Makkah. Instead, he announced a general amnesty. The effect was overwhelming: the people accepted Islam in large numbers. Makkah, once the stronghold of idol worship, became the city of monotheism.

After the address, the Prophet sat in the mosque. At that moment, the key of the Kaaba was still in his hand. Ali asked him to give the key to his family. The Prophet did not respond to Ali but instead asked for Uthman ibn Talha. When he came forward, the Prophet handed the key back to him and said: "Today is a day of loyalty and keeping ties of kinship."

When the time for the noon prayer came, the Prophet instructed Bilal to climb to the roof of the Kaaba and call the adhan. The Quraysh were astonished. Bilal was a Black man from Abyssinia, and for them it was hard to grasp that someone of his background would stand atop the Kaaba. By this act, the Prophet made clear that honour

and dignity were not based on race or colour, but on faith and righteousness.

When Bilal gave the adhan, some of the young men mocked him, imitating his voice. Among them was Abu Mahzura. The Prophet had him brought before him. Abu Mahzura was frightened, thinking he would be punished. Instead, the Prophet asked him to recite the adhan himself. After hearing it, the Prophet rewarded him with a bag of silver coins, placed his hand lovingly on his head, forehead, and chest, and prayed for him. Abu Mahzura later said that all his hatred melted into love, and the Prophet appointed him as the *mu'adhdhin* (caller to prayer) of Makkah.

Afterwards, the Prophet performed the circumambulation of the Kaaba and then went to Safa hill. Facing the Kaaba, he praised and glorified God. Some of the Ansar companions worried that after the conquest the Prophet might choose to remain in Makkah. At that very moment, revelation came to him. He called the Ansar and reassured them: "This cannot be. I am God's servant and His messenger. Your life is my life, and your death is my death." Hearing this, the Ansar were moved to tears.

Afterwards, people came forward to pledge allegiance. From the men, he accepted a pledge to Islam and to obey God and His Messenger to the best of their ability. From the women, he accepted the pledge mentioned in the chapter Al-Mumtahina, verse 12: that they would not associate partners with God, nor steal, nor commit adultery, nor kill their children, among other conditions.

Events Following the Conquest of Makkah

On the second day after the conquest, a man from the Khuza'ah tribe killed a pagan from the Hudhayl tribe. When the Prophet learned of this, he gathered the companions and delivered a sermon while standing on Mount Safa:

> "O people, indeed God made Makkah sacred on the day He created the heavens and the earth. It will remain sacred until the Day of Resurrection. For anyone who believes in God and the Last Day, it is not lawful to shed blood in Makkah, nor to cut down its trees."

After this, the Prophet himself gave one hundred camels as compensation for the man who had been killed.

The Quraysh of Makkah had previously seized the houses and properties of the emigrants (the Muhajirun). Some of the emigrants wished to demand their properties back. The Prophet told them: "If you show patience, it will be better for you. In exchange, you will have houses in Paradise." He also said: "Whatever wealth has been spent in the path of God, I do not wish to see it returned." He never once asked for the return of his own house.

On the day of the conquest, the Prophet had already declared a general amnesty. However, there were a small number of individuals guilty of severe crimes for whom the order of execution was given. Their number, according

to varying reports, was about fifteen or sixteen. Yet, in the end, only a few of them were executed. Most were pardoned, and many accepted Islam.

Among those who were forgiven and entered Islam were:

- Ikrimah ibn Abu Jahl
- Ka'b ibn Zuhayr
- Wahshi ibn Harb, the man who had killed Hamza, the Prophet's uncle
- Hind, the wife of Abu Sufyan, who had chewed Hamza's liver after the Battle of Uhud
- Hubar ibn al-Aswad

Despite their grave past actions, the Prophet forgave them all.

The Battle of Hunayn, Awtas, and Ta'if

Saturday, 6 Shawwal, 8 AH

Hunayn is a valley situated between Makkah and Ta'if, home to the tribes of Hawazin and Thaqif. These tribes were known for their skill in battle and their mastery of archery. After the conquest of Makkah, they feared for themselves and decided to strike first before the Muslims could advance against them. Their leader, Malik ibn Awf al-Nadri, set out with an army of twenty thousand to attack the Muslims.

When the Prophet received news of their movement, he sent Abdullah ibn Abi Hadar al-Aslami to investigate. He

returned with confirmation of their preparations. The Prophet then began preparing his own forces.

On the 8th of Shawwal, 8 AH, the Prophet marched from Makkah towards Hunayn with twelve thousand men. As the army advanced, one companion, confident in their large numbers, remarked, "Today we shall never be defeated for lack of numbers." This statement, carrying a sense of pride, displeased God.

On the third day, when the Muslim army entered the valley of Hunayn, the enemy launched a sudden attack with twenty thousand swords. Panic spread among the Muslims, and confusion overtook them. Only twelve devoted companions remained by the Prophet's side.

Those who had recently come from Makkah began murmuring among themselves at the sight of the retreat. Abu Sufyan said, "This flight will not stop until they reach the sea." And Kaldah ibn Hanbal shouted with joy, "Today the spell has been broken!"

At that moment, the Prophet was mounted on his mule, calling out in a loud voice:

> "I am the Prophet, this is no lie! I am the son of Abdul Muttalib!"

At his command, Abbas called out to the Muhajirun and the Ansar:

> "O company of Ansar! O companions of the tree!"—referring to those who had pledged allegiance beneath the acacia tree.

Hearing this call, the companions regrouped and rallied around the Prophet. He then ordered a counterattack. The Muslims, regrouped and resolute, charged once more with full force. The enemy lines broke, and they fled the battlefield. Some retreated to the area of Awtas, while others sought refuge in Nakhlah.

Victory was granted to the Muslims. The Hawazin tribe suffered heavy losses, and around six thousand captives were taken. Later, the Prophet released them, and in time, they too embraced Islam.

The Siege of Ta'if

The Prophet ordered that the spoils and captives of Hunayn be gathered at Ji'ranah, while he himself advanced towards Ta'if. Four days after his arrival, Tufayl ibn Amr al-Dawsi joined him, bringing with him a siege engine and a catapult. Malik ibn Awf al-Nadri, leader of the Hawazin, had already taken refuge in the fortress of Ta'if with his forces before the Prophet's arrival. They had stockpiled years' worth of grain and provisions.

Upon reaching Ta'if, the Prophet laid siege to the fortress. Stones were hurled by catapult, and several strategies were employed, but the defenders could not be forced out. The Prophet then ordered that their orchards be cut down. The people of the fortress appealed in the name of God and family ties, and he left the orchards untouched. He later had a call made at the fortress walls, declaring:

"Whoever among the slaves comes down to us will be set free." Hearing this, twelve or thirteen slaves descended and were granted freedom.

It is related that Umar once said to the Prophet, "Messenger of God, pray against them." He replied, "God has not permitted me to do that." Instead, he gave the order to withdraw, and as he left, he prayed:

"O God, guide Thaqif and bring them to me."

And so it came to pass. The fortress was later surrendered without force, and its people came to Madinah and embraced Islam.

After leaving *Ta'if*, the Prophet returned to Ji'ranah on the 5th of Dhu'l-Qa'da, where the spoils of war had been gathered. He waited there for ten days, hoping the Hawazin would come to ransom their families and children. When no one appeared, he distributed the spoils among the fighters. Soon afterwards, however, a delegation from Hawazin arrived and pleaded for the release of their six thousand captives. The Prophet granted their release, and they too entered Islam.

Among the Quraysh leaders who had joined Islam after the conquest of Makkah, their faith was still fresh and not firmly rooted. During the distribution of the spoils, the Prophet gave them generous portions to soften their hearts. Some of the Ansar felt uneasy about this and even voiced their concerns.

The Prophet then stood and delivered a speech, addressing the Ansar directly:

> “Are you not satisfied that others should return with camels and goats, while you return with the Messenger of God himself?”

Hearing this, the Ansar wept and said, “We are content with the Messenger of God as our share.”

On the night of the 18th of Dhu’l-Qa‘da, the Prophet departed from Ji‘ranah towards Makkah with the intention of performing ‘umrah. Upon arrival, he appointed ‘Attab ibn Asid as governor of Makkah and left Mu‘adh ibn Jabal with him to teach religion. About two and a half months later, on the 27th of Dhu’l-Qa‘da, he returned to Madinah with his companions.

After the conquest of Makkah, nearly the whole of Arabia came under Islam. The Prophet appointed governors and administrators in different regions. Bazan, who had once been governor of Yemen on behalf of the Persian emperor, was confirmed in his position. Abu Sufyan was appointed governor of Najran, ‘Attab ibn Asid governor of Makkah, and Ali judge in Yemen, among others.

The Expedition of ‘Uyaynah

Muharram, 9 AH

The Messenger of God sent Bishr ibn Sufyan al-‘Adawi in Muharram, 9 AH, to collect alms. Most people

accepted this, but the tribe of Banu Tamim did not agree and prepared for battle. Seeing this, Bishr returned and reported everything. The Prophet then sent ʻUyaynah ibn Hisn al-Fazari to Banu Tamim with fifty horsemen. When they arrived, they raided Banu Tamim and captured several men, women, and children, bringing them back to Madinah. The Banu Tamim were compelled to send a delegation of ten men to the Prophet.

When the delegation reached Madinah, they demanded that the Prophet compete with them in boasting and poetry. The Prophet replied, "I am neither a poet, nor have I been commanded to boast." Then speeches and poetry were exchanged from both sides. In the end, Aqraʻ ibn Habis admitted, "By God, your orator is better than our orator, and your poet is better than our poet." After this, they accepted Islam. The Prophet gave them gifts and returned their captives.

The Mission of Walid ibn ʻUqbah

Muharram, 9 AH

The Prophet sent Walid ibn ʻUqbah to collect alms from Banu al-Mustaliq. But Walid mistakenly thought they were preparing to rebel. He returned to the Prophet and reported that they had turned back from Islam and were unwilling to pay. In the meantime, the Banu al-Mustaliq themselves, having learned of this misunderstanding, sent a delegation to the Prophet and clarified the reality.

Concerning this, the following verse was revealed:

> "O you who believe, if a sinner comes to you with news, then verify it…" (Quran, 49:6)

In the month of Safar, 9 AH, the Prophet sent Abdullah ibn Awsajah to the tribe of Banu 'Amr ibn Harithah to invite them to Islam. Also in Safar, he sent Qutbah ibn 'Amir with twenty men against the tribe of Khath'am, in which the Muslims were victorious.

In the following month, Rabi' al-Awwal, the expedition of Dihyah ibn Sufyan took place, and in it too the Muslims were victorious. In those same days, a group of Abyssinians came to Jeddah. The Prophet sent men in pursuit of them, but they fled. On this occasion, it happened that some of the soldiers rushed homeward. Their commander, Alqamah, considered this improper and against discipline. He lit a fire and ordered those men to jump into it. Some of them were even prepared to do so. But immediately Alqamah stopped them, saying, "I only wanted to test you."

When the Prophet was informed of this, he said, "Do not obey anyone who commands you to commit disobedience."

The Expedition of 'Ali to the Tribe of Tayy'

Rabi' al-Akhir, 9 AH

In Rabi' al-Akhir, the Prophet sent 'Ali to the tribe of *Tayy*'. Among those captured in the expedition was Safanah, the daughter of the famous generous man, Hatim al-Ta'i.

She appealed to the Prophet on the basis of her father's generosity, asking him to show kindness to her. The Prophet accepted her request, set her free, and provided her with a mount, provisions for the road, and a gift.

The Expedition of Tabuk

Rajab, 9 AH

In Rajab, 9 AH, false news reached Heraclius, the Emperor of Rome, that the Messenger of God had passed away and that the people were suffering from famine and hunger. It was said that this was the best opportunity to attack Arabia. On hearing this, Heraclius immediately prepared for war, raising an army of forty thousand to march against the Muslims.

When the Prophet learned that the advance force had already reached Balqa, and that Heraclius had paid his soldiers a full year's wages in advance, showing that they were fully prepared for war, he ordered defensive preparations and called on the people for support. Because of the harsh circumstances, this campaign was extremely testing. The hypocrites tried to discourage the believers by saying: "Do not march out in this heat." (Quran, 9:81)

But the sincere Muslims prepared to go. Abu Bakr was the first to bring all his wealth and place it before the Prophet. When asked what he had left for his family, he replied, "Only God and His Messenger." 'Umar brought half of his wealth. 'Uthman presented three hundred camels

fully equipped, along with one thousand dinars, for this campaign. The Prophet was very pleased and said, "After this act, nothing will harm 'Uthman," and prayed for him.

Some companions were eager to join the expedition but had neither provisions nor mounts. They asked the Prophet for animals to ride, but he told them he had nothing to give. They returned weeping, grieving that they had nothing to spend. It was about them that the Quran revealed:

> "There is no blame on those who came to you to provide them mounts, and you said, 'I have nothing to carry you upon,' so they turned away with their eyes overflowing with tears out of grief that they could not find anything to spend." (9:92)

Before leaving Madinah, the Prophet appointed Muhammad ibn Maslamah al-Ansari as his deputy in Madinah, and left 'Ali behind to protect his family. Then he set out with an army of thirty thousand. On the way, they passed the place where the people of Thamud had been punished by God. When the caravan passed through, the Prophet covered his face, urged his camel forward quickly, and ordered the people not to enter their dwellings or use their water.

At one camp, the Prophet's camel was lost. A hypocrite said mockingly, "Muhammad claims to tell news from the heavens, but he does not even know where his own camel is on the earth." When this reached the Prophet, he said, "By God, I only know what God reveals to me. Now

revelation has informed me that the camel is in such-and-such a valley, its halter caught on a tree." The companions went there and found it exactly as he said.

When the Prophet reached Tabuk, he stayed for twenty days, but no enemy appeared. From there, he sent Khalid ibn al-Walid with four hundred and twenty horsemen to Ukaydir, the ruler of Dumat al-Jandal under Heraclius. He told Khalid, "You will find him hunting. Do not kill him, but capture him and bring him to me." This happened as foretold, and Khalid brought him back. Ukaydir made peace with the Prophet.

After twenty days, the Prophet returned to Madinah. On his return, he ordered two men to demolish the Mosque of Harm (*Masjid Dirar*), which the hypocrites had built. Before the march to Tabuk, they had asked him to pray in it for blessing, but he had said, "When I return, then I will see." After his return, he ordered it destroyed.

Almost everyone joined the campaign except a few who had valid excuses. However, three men stayed behind without an excuse, and the Quran described them as "those left behind." They later came to the Prophet, admitting their fault. The Prophet commanded the people not to speak to them for fifty days. After fifty days, revelation came announcing that their repentance had been accepted. The Prophet congratulated Ka'b, one of the three, saying, "Congratulations to you for this day, which is the best day of your life."

Ka'b replied, "O Messenger of God, God has saved me only because of truthfulness. Therefore, I consider it part of my repentance that I will never speak a lie for the rest of my life."

The Pilgrimage Led by Abu Bakr

Dhu'l-Qa'da, 9 AH

In Dhu'l-Qa'da, 9 AH, the Prophet appointed Abu Bakr al-Siddiq as leader of the Hajj and sent him to Makkah. Three hundred men set out with him from Madinah, along with twenty sacrificial camels. He was charged with announcing forty verses of the Quran that had been revealed as part of Surah al-Bara'ah.

However, the Prophet later changed his decision and assigned this task of proclamation to 'Ali instead.

That same year, the Negus (*al-Najashi*), the king of Abyssinia, passed away. The Prophet was informed of his death through revelation. He gathered his companions and performed the funeral prayer for him in absentia. Also in this year, the prohibition of usury (*riba*) was revealed. A year later, during the Farewell Pilgrimage, its prohibition was proclaimed publicly.

The Year of Delegations

10 AH

Delegations from various tribes had already begun arriving in 8 AH, but after the Conquest of Makkah, their numbers

increased greatly in 9 AH and 10 AH. Because of this, those years came to be known as *'Am al-Wufud*—"the Year of Delegations." Below are some of the most notable delegations.

- The Delegation of Hawazin: This was the first delegation to visit the Prophet after the Conquest of Makkah. It consisted of fourteen men, including the Prophet's foster uncle, for the Prophet had been nursed in that tribe. They appealed to him on the basis of this kinship, and even recited poetry. The Prophet treated them with honour and kindness.
- The Delegation of Thaqif: In Ramadan, 9 AH, the tribe of Thaqif came to Madinah to embrace Islam and pledge allegiance. These were the same people who had fortified themselves during the siege of Ta'if. Now they accepted obedience to the Prophet. At the time of their pledge, however, they insisted that they would accept Islam but not be required to pay alms (zakat) or engage in jihad. Even so, the Prophet accepted their pledge. When some companions expressed surprise, the Prophet said: "Once they have entered Islam, they will pay alms and they will fight in jihad" (*Ibn Kathir*, Vol. 4, p. 56). And so it came to pass.
- The Delegation of 'Abd al-Qays: This was a large tribe settled in Bahrain. Their delegation asked the Prophet to teach them a single comprehensive practice that

would make them worthy of Paradise. He replied: "Believe in God, establish prayer, give zakat, and pay one-fifth of the spoils of war to God."

- The Delegation of Najran: In 9 AH, a Christian delegation from Najran arrived in Madinah. It consisted of sixty men, fourteen of whom were their leaders and chiefs. The Prophet accommodated them in the Prophet's Mosque. After the afternoon prayer, when their own time of worship came, they sought to perform it there. Some companions objected and tried to prevent them, but the Prophet said, "Let them pray." They then prayed facing east.

The Prophet engaged them in discussions on various matters, most notably the divinity and sonship of Jesus. The truth was made clear to them, but they knowingly rejected it. It was on this occasion that the opening verses of chapter 3 of the Quran were revealed.

The Farewell Pilgrimage

By the year 9 AH, the Kaaba had been cleansed of all the rituals of ignorance. Now the time had come for the Prophet himself to perform the pilgrimage, so that people could witness firsthand how the rites of Hajj should be carried out.

In Dhu'l-Qa'da 9 AH, he declared his intention to perform Hajj and announced it throughout the region. On the 25th of Dhu'l-Qa'da, he set out from Madinah, accompanied

by a vast number of companions—more than one hundred thousand. On the 4th of Dhul-Hijjah, he entered Makkah and performed the rites of Hajj. Later, at 'Arafat, in the plain of 'Uranah, he delivered a long sermon.

After praising God, he said:

> "O people, listen to what I say. Perhaps I will not meet you again after this year. O people, your lives, your honour, and your property are sacred to one another, just as this day, this month, and this city are sacred. All practices of the Age of Ignorance are beneath my feet. All blood feuds from the Age of Ignorance are abolished. The first blood I set aside is that of Rabi'ah ibn al-Harith, which is owed to the tribe of Hudhayl. All interest (*riba*) from the Age of Ignorance is abolished. You may keep only your capital. The first usury I abolish is that of my uncle, Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib.

He then gave guidance concerning the rights and responsibilities between husband and wife. After this, he said: 'I leave with you two weighty matters: if you hold firmly to them, you will never go astray—the Book of God and the Sunnah of His Messenger.'

Then he addressed the companions: 'On the Day of Judgement, you will be asked about me. What will you say?' They replied: 'We bear witness that you conveyed God's message to us, you fulfilled the trust, and you

sincerely advised the community.' The Prophet then raised his forefinger to the sky three times and said: 'O God, bear witness.' (*Musnad Ahmad*, Hadith No. 1309)

When the sermon ended, Bilal gave the call to prayer for the noon prayer. The Prophet led the noon and afternoon prayers together. Afterwards, he remained in praise, supplication, and seeking forgiveness. At that moment, the Quranic verse was revealed:

> "Today I have perfected for you your religion, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen Islam as your religion." (Quran, 5:3)

The Prophet also delivered a similar sermon at Mina. Since he had said in his sermon that perhaps he would not meet the people again after this year, the pilgrimage came to be known as the Farewell Pilgrimage. At the end of Dhul-Hijjah, he returned to Madinah.

The Visit of Gabriel

Some days after the Farewell Pilgrimage, the Angel Gabriel came to the Prophet. He sat near him, knee to knee, and asked him about faith (*Iman*), excellence (*Ihsan*), and the Day of Judgement. The Prophet answered each question. When Gabriel departed, the Prophet turned to his companions and asked: "Do you know who this was?" Then he told them: "This was Gabriel. He came to teach you your religion."

Expedition of Usama ibn Zayd

26th of Safar, 11 AH

On the 26th of Safar, 11 AH, the Prophet gave orders to prepare an army to confront the Romans. This was the last expedition he organized. He appointed Usama ibn Zayd as commander, and ordered many of the most eminent companions to join. With his own hands, the Prophet gave Usama the banner. Usama gathered the army at Jurf, but before they could set out, news came of the Prophet's passing. The army returned.

When Abu Bakr became Caliph, the very first task he undertook—despite opposition—was to dispatch the army of Usama. He himself accompanied them as far as Jurf before sending them forward.

The Final Days

After the Farewell Pilgrimage, the chapter Surah al-Nasr was revealed, signalling that the Prophet's earthly mission was nearing completion. From then on, he was engaged much in seeking forgiveness and glorifying God. At the Farewell Pilgrimage, when the verse was revealed, "Today I have perfected your religion for you" (Quran, 5:3), he already sensed that his time was drawing near.

At Ghadir Khumm, in a sermon, he had said: "I do not fear that you will fall into idolatry after me. But I do fear that you will compete for worldly gain, harbour mutual rivalry, and fight one another, and in doing so you will be destroyed."

Beginning of Illness

In the last ten days of Safar, one night he awoke and called his servant, saying that he had been commanded to seek forgiveness for the people of al-Baqi‘ cemetery. On his return, he began to feel unwell, with a severe headache and fever.

When his illness worsened, he asked for seven water skins to be poured over his head. This was done, and when he felt some relief, he went out to the mosque with the support of Ali and led the noon prayer. Afterwards, he addressed the companions—this was his final public address.

In that speech, among other things, he said: “May God curse the Jews and Christians who turned the graves of their prophets into places of worship.” His intention was to warn his community against doing the same with his grave.

The Final Prayer in Congregation and the Appointment of Abu Bakr

As long as he had the strength, he continued to go to the mosque to lead the prayers. The last prayer he led himself was the Maghrib prayer, four days before his death. At the time of the night prayer, he asked whether the people had prayed. He was told they were waiting for him. Several times he tried to rise, but the severity of his illness prevented him. At last, he said: “Tell Abu Bakr to lead the people in prayer.” Abu Bakr then led the prayers.

Passing of the Prophet

On Monday, the 12th of Rabi‘ al-Awwal, 11 AH, he passed away. That morning, he lifted the curtain of his chamber and saw the people standing in rows for the dawn prayer. He smiled at the sight and was pleased. Later that same day, the signs of death began.

He rested his head in the lap of Aisha. Even in that state, he used a tooth-stick to clean his mouth. By his side was a bowl of water; in distress, he would dip his hand into the water, pass it over his face, and say: “There is no god but God. Indeed, death has its agonies.” (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith No. 4184)

Then he looked upward, raised his hand, and said: “O God, the Highest Companion.” With that, his soul departed to the eternal realm. Indeed, to God we belong and to Him we return.

At the time of his passing, he was sixty-three years old. It was Monday, the 12th of Rabi‘ al-Awwal.

Distress Among the Companions

When news of the Prophet’s passing spread, distress gripped the companions. A deep silence fell over the people. Umar ibn al-Khattab ﷺ drew his sword and declared, “Whoever says that the Messenger of God has died, I will strike off his head.”

In this state, Abu Bakr al-Siddiq entered the Prophet’s Mosque. He ascended the pulpit and delivered a long address, saying:

> "Whoever worshipped Muhammad, let him know that Muhammad has died. But whoever worships God, God is Ever-Living and never dies."

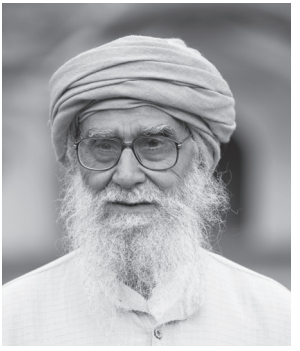
Then he recited the verse:

> Muhammad is but a messenger. Messengers have passed away before him. If he dies or is slain, will you then turn back on your heels? Whoever turns back on his heels does no harm to God in the least, but God will reward those who are grateful. (Quran, 3:144)

> On hearing Abu Bakr's words, the companions' panic and confusion suddenly lifted. Umar later said: "It was as if I had never heard this verse before. When I heard it now, I knew with certainty that the Messenger of God had passed away."

Meanwhile, word spread that the Ansar had gathered at the Saqifah of Banu Sa'idah to discuss succession, and were considering pledging allegiance to Sa'd ibn 'Ubadah. Abu Bakr and Umar went there. After discussion and consultation, it was agreed that Abu Bakr al-Siddiq should be the Caliph, the first successor to the Messenger of God.

Once consensus was reached and Abu Bakr was chosen as Caliph, the funeral rites of the Prophet were carried out on the evening of the second day after his passing. He was buried in the chamber of Aisha, beside the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah, where he had breathed his last.



Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (1925–2021), an Islamic scholar, spiritual leader, and ambassador of peace, was internationally recognized for his seminal contributions to world peace. The Government of India posthumously honoured him with the Padma Vibhushan in 2021 for his contributions to spirituality. Maulana authored over 200 books exploring Islam's spiritual wisdom, the Prophet's nonviolent approach, Islam's relationship with modernity, and other contemporary issues. His English translation of the Quran and his commentary on the Quran are widely appreciated for their simplicity, clarity, and ease of understanding. In 2001, he founded the Centre for Peace and Spirituality International in New Delhi to promote a culture of peace and to share the spiritual message of Islam worldwide. Today, the CPS International network continues to carry this legacy forward.

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