

Chapter 9: Hamza Accepts Islam

Muhammad Mustafa, the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and his Ahlul-Bayt), though safe under the protection of his uncle, Abu Talib, was not immune from harassment by the infidels. Whenever they found an opportunity for baiting him, they didn't miss it. On one occasion, Abu Jahl found him alone, and used much offensive and vulgar language toward him. That same evening when his uncle, Hamza bin Abdul Muttalib, came home from a hunting expedition, his slave-girl recounted to him the tale of Abu Jahl's gratuitous insolence toward him (Muhammad), and the latter's forbearance, of which she had been an eye-witness.

Hamza was a warrior, a hunter and a sportsman, and was little interested in the day-to-day affairs of the city. But Abu Jahl's conduct toward his nephew so roused his anger that he seized his bow, went into the assembly of the Quraysh where he (Abu Jahl) was reviewing the events of the day to his compeers, struck him at his head with his bow, causing it to bleed, and shouted: "I too have become a Muslim."

This was a challenge to Abu Jahl but he figured that silence was the best part of valor, and did not tangle with Hamza, even restraining his friends who wished to rise in his defence.

Hamza became a devout Muslim and a champion of Islam. He was the comrade-in-arms of his other nephew, Ali ibn Abi Talib, and it were both of them who carried slaughter and dismay into the ranks of the Makkan army in the battle of Badr – the first battle of Islam – fought a few years later.

The battle of Uhud was the second battle of Islam. In that battle, Hamza killed one of the standard-bearers of the pagans of Makka. When they charged the Muslim line, Hamza plunged into their midst. He was hacking his way through their ranks when Wahshi, an Abyssinian slave, hurled a javelin at him. Wahshi was engaged for this very purpose by Hinda, the wife of Abu Sufyan and the mother of Muawiya. The javelin caught Hamza in his groin; he fell on the ground and died immediately.

In the battle of Uhud the Muslims were defeated. After their rout, Hinda and the other harpies she had brought with her from Makka, mutilated the bodies of the slain Muslims. Hinda cut open Hamza's abdomen, plucked out his liver and chewed it up. Muhammad ibn Umar Waqidi, the historian, says that she made a fire in the battlefield, roasted Hamza's heart and liver and ate them. Not satisfied with this,

she cut the limbs, the ears and the nose of Hamza, strung them into a "necklace," and entered Makka wearing it as a "trophy" of victory.

Hamza had killed Utba, the father of Hinda, in the battle of Badr. In the battle of Uhud, she slaked her thirst for vengeance which had given her no rest since the battle of Badr.

Muhammad Mustafa, the Apostle of God, was deeply aggrieved at the death and at the mutilation of the body of such a stalwart of Islam as Hamza. He bestowed upon him the titles of the "Lion of God," and the "Chief of the Martyrs."

Hamza accepted Islam in the fifth year of the Proclamation. May God be pleased with him, and bless him.

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