

# The Companions at the Peace Treaty of al Hudaibiyah

Briefly the story is as follows: In the sixth year after the Hijrah (emigration of the Prophet from Mecca to Madinah), the Messenger of Allah with one thousand and four hundred of his Companions marched towards Mecca to do the Umrah. They camped in "Dhi al-Halifah" where the Prophet (saw) ordered his Companions to put down their arms and wear the Ihram (white gowns worn especially for the purpose of the pilgrimage and the Umrah), then they dispatched al-Hady (an offering for sacrifice) to inform Quraysh that he was coming as a visitor to do the Umrah and not as a fighter.

But Quraysh, with all its arrogance, feared that its reputation would be dented if the other Arabs heard that Muhammad had entered Mecca by force. Therefore, they sent a delegation led by Suhayl ibn Amr ibn Abd Wadd al-Amiri to see the Prophet and ask him to turn back that year, but said that they would allow him to visit Mecca for three days the year after. In addition to that, they put down some harsh conditions, which were accepted by the Messenger of Allah as the circumstances warranted such acceptance, and as revealed to him by his God, Glory and Might be to Him.

A few of the Companions did not like the Prophet's action and opposed him very strongly, and Umar ibn al-Khattab came and said to him, "Are you not truly the Prophet of Allah?" He answered, "Yes, I am." Umar asked, "Are we not right and our enemy wrong?" The Prophet answered, "Yes." Umar asked, "Why do we then disgrace our religion?"

The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, "I am the Messenger of Allah and I will never disobey Him and He is my support." Umar asked, "Did you not tell us that we would come to the House of Allah and go around it?" The Prophet answered, "Yes, and did I tell you that we were coming this year?" Umar answered, "No." The Prophet said, "Then you are coming to it and going around it." Umar later went to Abu Bakr and asked him, "O Abu Bakr, is he not truly the Prophet of Allah?" He answered, "Yes." Umar then asked him the same questions he had asked the Messenger of Allah, and Abu Bakr answered him with the same answers and added, "O Umar he is the Messenger of Allah, and he will not disobey his God, Who is his support, so hold on to him."

When the Prophet had finished signing the treaty, he said to his Companions "Go and slaughter (sacrifices) and shave your heads." And by Allah one of them stood up until he had said it three times. When nobody obeyed his orders, he went to his quarters, then came out and spoke to no one, and slaughtered a young camel with his own hands, and then asked his barber to shave his head. When the Companions saw all that, they went and slaughtered (sacrifices), and shaved one another, until they nearly killed one another. [1](#)

This is the summary of the story of peace treaty of al-Hudaibiyah, which is one of the events whose details both the Shi'a and Sunnah agree upon, and it is cited by many historians and biographers of the Prophet such as al-Tabari, Ibn al-Athir, Ibn Saad, al-Bukhari and Muslim.

I stopped here, for I could not read this kind of material without feeling rather surprised about the behavior of those Companions towards their Prophet. Could any sensible man accept some people's claims that the Companions, may Allah bless them, always obeyed and implemented the orders of the Messenger of Allah (saw), for these incidents expose their lies, and fall short of what they want! Could any sensible man imagine that such behavior towards the Prophet is an easy or acceptable matter or even an excusable one! Allah, the Almighty, said:

***"But no! By your God! They do not believe (in reality) until they make you a judge of that which has become a matter of disagreement among them, and then do not and any straightness in their hearts as to what you have decided and submit with entire submission."* (Holy Qur'an 4:65)**

Did Umar ibn al-Khattab succumb to them and find no difficulty in accepting the order of the Messenger (saw)? Or was he reluctant to accept the order of the Prophet? Especially when he said, "Are you not truly the Prophet of Allah? Did you not tell us? Etc." and did he succumb after the Messenger of Allah gave him all these convincing answers?

No, he was not convinced by his answers, and he went and asked Abu Bakr the same questions. But did he succumb after Abu Bakr answered him and advised him to hold on to the Prophet? I do not know if he actually succumbed to all that and was convinced by the answers of the Prophet (saw) and Abu Bakr! For why did he say about himself, "For that I did so many things..." Allah and His Messenger know the things which were done by Umar.

Furthermore, I do not know the reasons behind the reluctance of the rest of the Companions after that, when the Messenger of Allah said to him, "Go and slaughter (sacrifices) and shave your heads." Nobody listened to his orders even when he repeated them three times, and then in vain.

Allah, be praised! I could not believe what I had read. Could the Companions go to that extent in their treatment of the Messenger? If the story had been told by the Shi'a alone, I would have considered it a lie directed towards the honorable Companions. But the story has become so well known that all the Sunni historians refer to it.

As I had committed myself to accept what had been agreed on by all parties, I found myself resigned and perplexed. What could I say? What excuse could I find for those Companions who had spent nearly twenty years with the Messenger of Allah, from the start of the Mission to the day of al-Hudaibiyah, and had seen all the miracles and enlightenment of the Prophethood? Furthermore the Qur'an was teaching them day and night how they should behave in the presence of the Messenger, and how they should talk to him, to the extent that Allah had threatened to ruin their deeds if they raised their voices above his voice.

1. Sahih, Bukhari, Book of al Shurut, Chapter: Al Shurut fi al Jihad vol 2 p 122

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