

The Conquest of Makkah

The Quraysh had been unable to exploit their own victory over the Muslims at the battle of Uhud, but when the latter were defeated at the battle of Mootah by the Christians, they were tempted to exploit the Christian victory, and to restore the pre-Hudaybiyya conditions in Arabia. The Muslim defeat at Mootah played a key role in the events preceding the fall of Makkah in 630.

Muhammad Husayn Haykal

We may recall that as soon as Khalid and the army returned to Medinah without the proofs of victory (at the battle of Mootah), they were called deserters. Many soldiers and commanders felt so humiliated that they stayed at home in order not to be seen and insulted in public. The campaign of Mootah gave the Quraysh the impression that the Muslims and their power had now been destroyed and that both their dignity and the fear which they previously inspired in others had all but disappeared.

This made the Quraysh incline strongly to the conditions prevalent before the Treaty of Hudaybiyya. They thought that they could now launch a war against which the Muslims were incapable of defending themselves, not to speak of counterattacking or making retaliation. (*The Life of Muhammad, Cairo, 1935*)

According to the terms of the Treaty of Hudaybiyya, the Arab tribes were free to enter into treaty relations with either the Muslims or the Quraysh. Taking advantage of this stipulation, the tribe of Banu Khoza'a wrote a treaty of friendship with the Prophet of Islam, and another tribe – Banu Bakr – became an ally of the Quraysh. Hostility had existed between these two tribes since pre-Islamic times but now both had to abide by the terms of the Treaty of Hudaybiyya, and to refrain from attacking each other

But eighteen months after the Treaty of Hudaybiyya had been signed, a band of the warriors of Banu Bakr suddenly attacked Banu Khoza'a in their homes at night. The time of this attack is given as late Rajab of 8 A.H. (November 629).

The Khoza'a had done nothing to provoke this attack. They took refuge in the precincts of the Kaaba but their enemies pursued them even there, and killed a number of them. Others saved their lives by seeking the protection of Budail bin Waraqa and his friend, Rafa'a, in their houses, in Makkah.

Muhammad Husayn Haykal

The Treaty of Hudaibiyya prescribed that any non Makkans wishing to join the camp of Muhammad or that of the Quraysh may do so without obstruction. On the basis of this provision, the tribe of Khuza'ah joined the ranks of Muhammad, and that of Banu Bakr joined the Quraysh. Between Khuza'ah and Banu Bakr a number of old unsettled disputes had to be suspended on account of the new arrangement.

With the Quraysh now believing (after the battle of Mootah) that Muslim power had crumbled, Banu al Dil, a clan of Banu Bakr, thought that the occasion had come to avenge themselves against Khuza'ah. (*The Life of Muhammad, Cairo, 1935*)

Banu Bakr could not have attacked Khozaa without the connivance and encouragement if not the open support of the Quraysh. Tabari, the historian, says that Ikrima bin Abu Jahl, Safwan bin Umayya and Suhayl bin Amr, all leading figures of Quraysh, disguised themselves and fought at the side of Banu Bakr against the Khozaa. Of these three, the last named was the chief signatory of the Quraysh to the Treaty of Hudaibiyya.

Maxime Rodinson

In Rajab of the year 8 (November 629), in consequence of a vendetta which had been going for several decades, some of the more excited of the Qurayshites at their rear, attacked a group of the tribe of Khuza'a, Mohammed's allies, not far from Mecca. One man was killed and the rest badly mauled and forced to flee into the sacred territory of Mecca. Pursued even there they took refuge in two friendly houses. Shamefully the Banu Bakr laid siege to the houses. In all twenty people of the Khuza'a were slain. (*Mohammed, translated by Anne Carter*)

One of the chiefs of Khozaa, Amr bin Salim, went to Medina and appealed to the Prophet for his intervention. The Prophet was shocked to hear the story of the outrage. As an ally of the Khozaa, he had to defend them from their enemies. But before considering military action, he made an attempt to employ peaceful means to obtain redress and justice. He sent a messenger to the Quraysh, and suggested that:

*The clients of Quraysh, i.e., Banu Bakr, or Quraysh themselves pay blood-wit to the Banu Khozaa, or;

*Quraysh should waive their protection of Banu Bakr, or;

*They should declare the Treaty of Hudaibiyya to be void.

Zarqani says that the man who answered for the Quraysh was Qurtaba bin Umar. He said to the envoy of the Prophet that only the last of the three terms was acceptable to them. In other words, the Quraysh told him that the Treaty of Hudaibiyya with its stipulation of a ten-year truce, was already a "dead letter" as far as they were concerned.

The hotheads of the Quraysh had been quick to repudiate the Treaty of Hudaibiyya but very soon their

more realistic and discreet leaders realized that the answer they had sent to Medina was a blunder as it had been dictated, not by prudence and sagacity, but by presumption and arrogance.

And when they thought of what the consequences of their action could be, they decided to act immediately to avert disaster. But how? After an animated discussion, they agreed that Abu Sufyan should go to Medina, and should try to persuade the Prophet to renew the Treaty of Hudaibiyya.

When Abu Sufyan arrived in Medina, he first went to see his daughter, Umm Habiba – one of the wives of the Prophet. As he was going to sit on a rug, she pulled it from under him, and said: “You are an unclean idolater, and I cannot allow you to sit on the rug of the Messenger of God.” She treated him as if he was an untouchable pariah.

Shaken by such a reception, he left her, and went to the mosque hoping to see the Prophet himself. But the latter did not give him audience. He then solicited the aid of Abu Bakr, Umar and Ali but all of them told him that they could not intercede for him with the Prophet, and he returned to Makkah empty-handed.

The Quraysh had broken the pledge, and the envoys of Khozaa were still in Medina, demanding justice. If the Prophet had condoned the crime of the Quraysh, he would have seriously compromised his own position in the sight of all Arabs. He could not allow this to happen. Eventually, the Prophet decided to capture Makkah, and he ordered the Muslims to mobilize.

The army of Islam left Medina on the tenth of Ramadan of 8 A.H. (February 1, 630). The news that an army was marching southwards, spread rapidly in the desert, and even reached Makkah itself. Those members of the clan of Banu Hashim who were still in Makkah, decided, upon hearing this news, to leave the city and to meet the advancing army. Among them were Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib, the uncle of the Prophet; Aqeel bin Abi Talib, and Abu Sufyan bin al-Harith bin Abdul Muttalib, his cousins. They joined the army of Islam, and reentered Makkah with it.

In the afternoon of the 19th of Ramadan, the army arrived in Marr ad-Dharan in the north of Makkah, and halted there to spend the night. At night the Prophet ordered his soldiers to light little fires, and the whole plain lit up with thousands of bonfires.

Abu Sufyan and Hakim bin Hizam had also left Makkah to investigate the reports of the invasion by the Muslims. Riding north on the road to Medina, they also arrived in Marr ad-Dharan, and were dumb-founded to see countless little fires burning in the valley. When they realized they were in the camp of the Muslims, they were greatly troubled not knowing what they could do to save themselves or their city.

Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib also had great anxiety for the safety of the Makkans. He feared that if they offered resistance, they would be massacred. He was riding the white mule of the Prophet through the camp, when at its southern perimeter, he suddenly ran into Abu Sufyan and Hakim bin Hizam.

He told them that they could see the numbers of the Muslims, and that the Quraysh had no power to resist them. Abu Sufyan asked him what he ought to do. Abbas told him to ride behind him on his mule, and that he would take him to the Prophet, and would try to get safe-conduct for him. Hakim bin Hizam returned to Makkah to report on what he had seen and heard. Abbas and Abu Sufyan rode through the Muslim camp. Presently, they rode past the tent of Umar, and he wanted to know who were the two visitors.

When Umar recognized Abu Sufyan, he was thrilled, and said to him: "O enemy of God, at last you are in my power, and now I am going to kill you." But Abbas told him that he (Abu Sufyan) was under his protection. Thereupon Umar rushed to see the Prophet and solicited his permission to kill him. But the Prophet just told Abbas to bring him on the following morning.

Early next morning, Abbas, Abu Sufyan and Umar, all three appeared before the tent of the Prophet. Umar was raring to kill Abu Sufyan but the Prophet restrained him, and invited the latter to accept Islam. Abu Sufyan was not very eager to accept Islam but Abbas told him that if he didn't, then Umar would kill him, and he would never return to Makkah. Faced by the specter of death, Abu Sufyan declared the Shahadah which formally admitted him to the community of the Muslims.

Abbas also requested the Prophet to grant Abu Sufyan some favor which he would equate with a "distinction." The Prophet said that all those Makkans who would enter Abu Sufyan's house, or would stay in their own houses, or would enter the precincts of the Kaaba, would be safe from all harm. Abu Sufyan was very proud that the Prophet had declared his house to be a sanctuary for the idolaters of Makkah. His latter-day friends and admirers are flaunting his "distinction" right to this day.

It was Friday, Ramadan 20, 8 A.H. (February 11, 630) when the army of Islam broke camp at Merr ad-Dharan, and marched toward Makkah. Abbas and Abu Sufyan stood on the brow of an eminence to watch the squadrons march past them. The latter was much impressed by the order, the discipline, the numbers and the esprit de corps of the formations, and said to Abbas:

"Your nephew has truly won a great kingdom and great power." Abbas snapped: "Woe to you! This is prophethood and not a kingdom." Abu Sufyan had never seen such an awesome sight before, and with his pagan reflexes, and extremely limited vision, could interpret it only in terms of material power. But he realized that the game for him and the idolaters was over at last, and the only important thing now was to save his and their lives.

Abu Sufyan rushed back to Makkah, and entering the precincts of the Kaaba, called out aloud: "O Makkans! Muhammad has arrived with his army, and you have no power to oppose him. Those of you who enter my house, would be safe from harm, and now only your unconditional surrender can save you from massacre."

Abu Sufyan's wife, Hinda, heard his call. She flew into a most violent rage, stormed out of her house, seized him by his beard, and screamed: "O Makkans! Kill this unlucky idiot. He is in dotage. Get rid of

him and defend your city from your enemy.”

But who would defend Makkah and how? Presently, Abu Sufyan was surrounded by other citizens of Makkah, and one of them asked him: “Your house can accommodate only a few people. How can so many people find sanctuary in it?” He said: “All those people who stay in their own houses or enter the precincts of the Kaaba, would also be safe.” This ordinance meant that all that the idolaters would have to do to save their lives, would be to stay indoors, and to refrain from challenging the invaders.

Washington Irving

Mohammed prepared a secret expedition to take Mecca by surprise. All roads leading to Mecca were barred to prevent any intelligence of his movements being carried to Mecca. But among the fugitives from Mecca, there was one Hateb, whose family had remained behind, and were without connections or friends to take an interest in their welfare. Hateb now thought to gain favor for them among the Koreish, by betraying the plans of Mohammed.

He accordingly, wrote a letter revealing the intended enterprise, and gave it in charge of a singing woman, who undertook to carry it to Mecca. She was already on the road when Mohammed was appraised of the treachery. Ali and five others, well-mounted, were sent in pursuit of the messenger. They soon overtook her, but searched her person in vain. Most of them would have given up the search and turned back but Ali was confident that the Prophet of God could not be mistaken nor misinformed. Drawing his scimitar, he swore to kill the messenger unless the letter was produced. The threat was effectual. She drew forth the letter from among her hair.

Hateb, on being taxed with his perfidy, acknowledged it; but pleaded anxiety to secure favor for his destitute family, and his certainty that the letter would be harmless, and of no avail against the purposes of the Apostle of God.

Omar spurned at these excuses and would have struck off his head; but Mohammed, calling to mind, that Hateb had fought bravely in support of the faith in the battle of Badr, forgave him.

Mohammed, who knew not what resistance he might meet with, made a careful distribution of his forces as he approached Mecca. While the main body marched directly forward, strong detachments advanced over the hills on each side. To Ali who commanded a large body of cavalry, was confided the sacred banner, which he was to plant on Mount Hadjun, and maintain it there until joined by the Prophet. Express orders were given to all the generals to practice forbearance, and in no instance to make the first attack.

(The Life of Mohammed)

Muhammad, the Messenger of God, entered Makkah from the north. Usama, the son of his friend and the martyr of Mootah, Zayd bin Haritha, was riding pillion with him. Muhammad's head was bowed low,

and he was reciting the chapter from Qur'an called "The Victory."

Ali carried the banner of Islam as he rode at the head of the cavalry. The Prophet ordered Zubayr bin al-Awwam to enter the city from the west, and Khalid bin al-Walid from the south. He gave strict orders to his army not to kill anyone except in self-defense. He had long desired to destroy the idols in Kaaba but he wished to do so without any bloodshed. His orders were clear and explicit; nevertheless, Khalid killed 28 Makkans at the southern gate of the city. He said he had met resistance.

Sir John Glubb

The Muslim occupation of Mecca was virtually bloodless. The fiery Khalid bin Waleed killed a few people at the southern gate and was sharply reprimanded by Mohammed for doing so.

(The Great Arab Conquests)

Eight years earlier Muhammad had left Makkah as a fugitive with a price on his head, and now he was entering the same city as its conqueror. His manner, however, bespoke not of pride or even of exultation but of gratitude and humility – gratitude to God for His mercy in bestowing success upon His humble slave, and humility in the contemplation of the vanity of worldly glory, and the evanescence of all things human.

The Prophet rode into the precincts of the Kaaba, dismounted from his camel, called his cousin, Ali ibn Abi Talib, and both of them entered the Kaaba, cognizant of the Divine Commandment to the Prophets, Abraham (Ibrahim) and Ismael:

...and We covenanted with Abraham and Ismael that they should sanctify My house... (Chapter 2; verse 125)

The Prophet and Ali found the House of God (Kaaba) in a state of defilement; it had become a pantheon of 360 idols, and it had to be sanctified. The Prophet knocked down each idol as he read the following verse from Qur'an:

Truth has come, and Falsehood has vanished. For Falsehood is (by its nature) bound to vanish. (Chapter 17; verse 81)

The largest idol in the pantheon was that of Hubal, the dynastic god of the clan of Banu Umayya. Abu Sufyan had taken it with him on a camel into the battle of Uhud to inspire his warriors with its presence. Hubal was mounted on a high pedestal, and the Prophet could not reach it. He, therefore, ordered Ali to climb on his shoulders, and to knock it down. In obedience to the prophetic command, Ali had to stand on the shoulders of the Prophet; he aimed a blow at the principal deity of the idolaters, and smashed it into pieces. With that tremendous stroke, Ali put an end forever to idolatry in the Kaaba!

Kaaba, the House of God, had been sanctified.

Abul Kalam Azad

Some idols were on a high pedestal and the Apostle could not reach them. He ordered Ali to climb on his shoulders and to knock them down. Ali mounted the shoulders of the Apostle, and knocked down the idols. He thus removed the impurity of idolatry from the Kaaba for all time. (*The Messenger of Mercy, Lahore, Pakistan, 1970*)

When all the idols had been destroyed, all images had been effaced, and all vestiges of polytheism had been obliterated, Muhammad, the Messenger of God, ordered Bilal to call out *Adhan*. Bilal called *Adhan* and the valley of Makkah rang out with his rich and sonorous *takbir*. The Prophet then made the seven circuits of the Kaaba, and offered prayer of thanksgiving to his Creator.

In the meantime, the Quraysh had gathered in the court of the Kaaba awaiting the Prophet. They hoped that he would give them audience before giving a verdict on their fate.

Presently the Prophet appeared at the threshold of the Kaaba. He surveyed the crowd in front of him and addressed it as follows:

“There is no god but Allah. He is One and all Alone, and He has no partners. All praise and thanks to Him. He has fulfilled His promise. He has helped His slave to victory, and He has dispersed the gangs of his enemies.

‘O people! Listen to me. All the arrogance, the distinctions, the pride, and all the claims of blood of the Times of Ignorance are under my feet today.

‘O Quraysh! Allah has destroyed the arrogance of the Times of Ignorance, and He has destroyed the pride of race. All men are the children of Adam, and Adam was a handful of dust.”

The Prophet then read the following verse from Qur’an:

O People! We created you from a male and a female and distributed you among tribes and families for the facility of reference only. But in the sight of God only those people have a place of honor who are God-fearing and God-loving. Verily, God is knowledgeable and understanding. (Chapter 49; verse 13)

This verse is the Magna Carta of the equality and brotherhood of all men in Islam. There cannot be any distinction between men on the grounds of race, color, nationality, family or wealth. But whereas Islam destroys all other distinctions, it upholds a distinction of its own, and that is the distinction of faith and character.

Muhammad then posed a question to the Quraysh: “How do you think, I am going to treat you now?” They said: “You are a generous brother, and the son of a generous brother. We expect only charity and forgiveness from you.” He said: “I will tell you what Joseph said to his brothers,

'There is no blame on you today.' (Qur'an. Chapter 12; verse 92).

Go now; all of you are my freedmen.”

The Prophet declared a general amnesty in Makkah. The amnesty extended even to the apostates. He forbade his army to plunder the city or to seize anything that belonged to the Quraysh. Quraysh had left nothing undone to compass his destruction, and the destruction of Islam; but in his hour of triumph, he condoned all their crimes and transgressions.

The Quraysh, at first, were incredulous. They could not believe their own ears. How could Muhammad resist the temptation to kill them all, after all that they had done to him in more than two decades, and especially now that he had so much power in his hand? The unwillingness of Muhammad to use his power was something that utterly surpassed the comprehension of the polytheists of Makkah. Considerable time passed before the meaning of the intent of Muhammad sank into their minds, and the amnesty began to look possible and real to them.

The aim of Muhammad, the Apostle of Peace, was to capture Makkah without bloodshed, and in this he was successful. It was here that he revealed himself, in the words of Al-Qur'an al-Majid “a mercy for all mankind.”

History cannot furnish an example of such forbearance. Not only the pagans were not exterminated; not only they did not have to pay any penalty for their crimes of the past; they were not even disturbed in the possession of the houses which the Muhajireen had left in Makkah, and which they had occupied.

From the Kaaba, the Prophet went to Mount Safa, and the people of Makkah came to acknowledge him as their sovereign in his dual character – as Messenger of God, and as their temporal ruler. All men gave the pledge of their loyalty to Muhammad by placing their hands on his hand. Next came the turn of women to take the oath of loyalty. But he did not want to touch the hand of any woman who was not his wife. He, therefore, ordered Umar bin al-Khattab to accept the pledge of women on his behalf.

Sir John Glubb

The Apostle then ordered Umar ibn al-Khattab to accept the oaths of women. *The Great Arab Conquests*)

When oath-taking was over, the Messenger of God addressed himself to the new political and administrative problems arising out of the conquest of Makkah.

The fascinating, complex story that had begun on February 12, 610, in the cave of Hira, had climaxed on February 11, 630, in the court of Kaaba. It was a day of emotion, promise and ceremony, and a day rich in history, significance, and symbolism. The aspiration that had seemed hopeless in 620 in Ta'if, had become an accomplished fact in 630 in Makkah.

The Quraysh had carried on a long and bitter struggle against Islam for twenty years but many among them now could see that the idols which they worshipped as their gods and goddesses, were utterly useless things. They, therefore, accepted Islam. Among them, there were both kinds of proselytes: a few who had been convinced that Muhammad was the true messenger of God, and they acknowledged him as such.

But there were many others who accepted Islam because they had very little to choose from. They realized that it was no use bucking the tide, and they also sensed that it was not such a bad bargain after all to declare themselves Muslims, and they did, with what reservations, was a question to be answered by the future alone.

All members of the clan of Banu Umayya, including Hinda, the wife of Abu Sufyan and the cannibal of Uhud, also “accepted” Islam.

Here one may pause to reflect on the “acceptance” of Islam by the Banu Umayya. A man can surrender to the enemy because of fear, and fear can also seal his mouth. Fear can do many things but there is one thing it cannot do – it cannot change hatred into love. For twenty years, Banu Umayya had spearheaded the pagan opposition to Islam. They waged economic, political, military and psychological war against its Prophet, and against his followers.

Now to imagine that one demonstration of military might by Muhammad “convinced” them that he was the true messenger of God, would be too much to expect from human nature. The demonstration of might by the Muslims did not change the hatred, resentment and bitterness of the Banu Umayya into love and sweetness, especially at a time when Islam deprived them not only of the idols they worshipped as their deities but also deprived them of their prestige, privileges, status and power. They had, therefore, the same state of mind that every defeated nation has. Their hearts were full of hatred, rancor and vindictiveness against the guardians of Islam.

The Banu Umayya accepted Islam in the reflexive recoil from the collapse of the whole pagan effort in Makkah. Their efforts to rescue the past, and their struggle to maintain their links to paganism *as pagans* had failed but perhaps they could try to do the same thing *as Muslims*. The champions of the idols, therefore, entered the ranks of the believers disguised as Muslims. This made them much more dangerous than before when their opposition to Islam had been overt.

At the moment, however, they went “underground” and marked time awaiting an opportunity to surface when they would destroy Islam, if possible; but if not, then they would change its distinguishing characteristics, and would restore as many institutions of the Times of Ignorance as possible.

The Banu Umayya could not subvert Islam in the lifetime of Muhammad, the Messenger of God, because he took effective safeguards against the recrudescence of paganism. He was alert at all times, and they could not spring a surprise upon him. He also took care not to give them any positions of authority which they might use as a base for their self-aggrandizement.

Some historians have claimed that the Prophet was eager to enlist the Banu Umayya in the service of Islam since they had many rare skills and talents. Von Grunebaum, for example, writes:

Muhammad for his part needed the experience of the Meccan ruling class; the expansion of the *umma* and above all its fundamental organization could not be administered without the help of the men of the city. (*Classical Islam – A History 600–1258*, 1970)

This is one of those claims which cannot be upheld against scrutiny. There is no evidence that the Prophet ever put the “experience” of the Banu Umayya to any use. Equally fatuous is the claim that the expansion of the *umma* and its fundamental organization could not be administered without them. If the Banu Umayya had the abilities attributed to them, why they didn't put them to use in their cynical war against Muhammad and Islam, and why were they defeated?

Muhammad, the Messenger of God, created and consolidated the Islamic State in the teeth of the Umayyad opposition. The Islamic State could not coexist with the pagan oligarchy of Makkah which was headed by the Banu Umayya, and he had to destroy it. He was not impressed by their “abilities” before or after their acceptance of Islam, and he did not appoint any of them as a general or an administrator or a judge or anything. This component of his policy toward them could not be more explicit.

Some Sunni historians have pointed out that the Prophet appointed Muawiya, the son of Abu Sufyan and Hinda, his “scribe” to record the Qur’anic verses. Muawiya may have written down some verses of Qur’an but it does not mean that they could not be recorded without him.

There were many scribes available to the Prophet. In the first place, when Muawiya became a Muslim, most of the Qur’an had already been revealed, and there was little, if anything, for him to write. In the second place, he was only one out of a multitude of scribes. If writing the verses of Qur’an is a “distinction” for him, then he shares it with many other copyists.

After all, Abdullah bin Saad bin Abi Sarh, the foster-brother of Uthman bin Affan was also a scribe. He distorted the verses of Qur’an as he wrote them down. The Prophet declared him to be an apostate. He was going to be executed but was saved by Uthman. The Prophet banished him from Medina.

Muawiya's skill as a scribe, therefore, was not one that was in short supply at the court of the Medina. The historians have preserved the names of 29 scribes of the Prophet.

Nevertheless, the statement of Von Grunebaum quoted above, would, in effect, be correct, if it is slightly modified to read that it was not the Prophet of Islam but Abu Bakr and Umar who needed the experience and the expertise of the Banu Umayya, and it were both of them who could not administer the new state without their support. The Banu Umayya were indispensable for Abu Bakr and Umar. The story of the revival of the Banu Umayya during the caliphates of Abu Bakr and Umar is told in another chapter.

The Prophet did, however, try to mollify the Umayyads with dowry in the hope that they would shed

their hostility to Islam, and some day, they themselves or their children would become sincere Muslims. But his efforts were fruitless. Nothing that he did for them, ever softened their hearts toward Islam. They never acquired a sense of identity with Islam or an allegiance to it. They were emotionally, constitutionally and ideologically unable to come to terms with it. Only by failing to achieve their aims by the sword, did they recognize the virtues and accept the mandate of peace. But for them, only the means had changed, not the end.

The day Abu Sufyan; his wife Hinda, their son Muawiya, and other members of the clan of Umayya, accepted Islam, *the Trojan Horse of polytheism also entered the fortress of Islam*. Ali ibn Abi Talib, the philosopher of Islam, summed up the nature of the conversion of the Banu Umayya to Islam as follows:

“Banu Umayya have not become true believers. They have only submitted to a superior force.”

In giving this verdict upon the conversion of the Banu Umayya to Islam, Ali was paraphrasing the following verse from the Book of God:

The Arabs say: ‘We have adopted the Faith (amanna)’! Say (to them): “Faith ye have not. Rather say: ‘We have become Muslim (aslamna). For Faith has not yet entered your hearts.” (Chapter 49; verse 15)

The Prophet of Islam spent a fortnight in Makkah educating the newly converted Makkans into Islam, and in organizing the government of that city. He had “de-contaminated” the Kaaba, and the Muslims were now in possession of a city which was the social, political, cultural, commercial and religious hub of Arabia. All the Arab tribes now recognized the authority of his government as paramount.

The Prophet consolidated the new acquisitions of territories between Makkah and Medina and the areas around Makkah. He then set to work to reorganize the Arab society. In the past, the Arabs had familiarity only with basic tribal and kinship structures in their social organization but now they had become a “nation” (*umma*) under his leadership.

Their loyalties as Muslims, did not take into account racial origins, tribal affiliations, national or linguistic attachments or even geographical boundaries. The loyalties of the Muslims transcended all natural barriers and man-made distinctions. They had to give their new loyalty to the Community of the Faithful which acknowledged God as One, and Muhammad as His Messenger.

Many tribes around Makkah were still heathen, and the Prophet wanted to invite them to Islam. Also, there were other tribes which had accepted Islam but had not paid their taxes to the State treasury, and he wished to remind them to pay those dues. He, therefore, sent missionaries and tax-collectors in various directions, with specific instructions on their duties, responsibilities and powers.

One of these tax-collectors was Khalid bin al-Walid. The Prophet sent him to the tribe of Banu Jadhima to collect unpaid taxes but he overstepped his authority, and stained his hands with innocent Muslim

blood!

Muhammad ibn Ishaq

Khalid's expedition after the conquest of Makkah to the B. Jadhima of Kinana and Ali's expedition to repair Khalid's error.

Hakim told me that the Apostle summoned Ali and told him to go to these people and look into the affair, and abolish the practices of the pagan era. So Ali went to them with the money the Apostle had sent and paid the bloodwit and made good their monetary loss. When all blood and property had been paid for he still had some money left over. He asked if any compensation was still due and when they said it was not, he gave them the rest of the money on behalf of the Apostle. Then he returned and reported to the Apostle what he had done and he commended him. Then the Apostle arose and facing the Qibla, raised his arms, and said: O God! I am innocent before Thee of what Khalid has done. This he did thrice.

Khalid and Abdur Rahman b. Auf had sharp words about this matter. The latter said to him: "You have done a pagan act in Islam." Khalid said that he had only avenged Abdur Rahman's father. He answered that he was a liar because he himself had killed his father's slayer; but Khalid had taken vengeance for his uncle so that there was bad feeling between them.

Hearing of this the Apostle said (to Khalid): "Leave my companions alone, for by God if you had a mountain of gold and spent it for God's sake, you would not approach the merit of my companions." (*The Life of the Prophet*)

Washington Irving

On a certain mission (on his way to Tehama) Khalid bin Waleed had to pass through the country of the tribe of Jadsima. He had with him 350 men and was accompanied by Abdur Rahman, one of the earliest proselytes of the faith. His instructions from the Prophet were to preach peace and goodwill, to inculcate the faith, and to abstain from violence, unless assailed.

Most of the tribe of Jadsima had embraced Islam but some were still of the Sabeian religion. On a former occasion this tribe had plundered and slain an uncle of Khalid, also the father of Abdur Rahman, as they were returning from Arabia Felix. Dreading that Khalid and his host might take vengeance for those misdeeds, they armed themselves on their approach.

Khalid secretly rejoiced at seeing them ride forth to meet him in this military array. Hailing them with an imperious tone, he demanded whether they were Moslems or infidels. They replied in faltering accents, "Moslems." "Why then come ye forth to meet us with weapons in your hand?" "Because we have enemies among some of the tribes who may attack us unawares," they said.

Khalid sternly ordered them to dismount and lay by their weapons. Some complied, and were instantly seized and bound; the rest fled. Taking their flight as a confession of guilt, he pursued them with great

slaughter; laid waste the country, and in the effervescence of his zeal even slew some of the prisoners.

Mohammed, when he heard of this unprovoked outrage, raised his hands to heaven, and called God to witness that he was innocent of it. Khalid when upbraided with it on his return, would fain have shifted the blame on Abdur Rahman, but Mohammed rejected indignantly any imputation against one of the earliest and worthiest of his followers. The generous Ali was sent forthwith to restore to the people of Jadsima what Khalid had wrested from them, and to make pecuniary compensation to the relatives of the slain.

It was a mission congenial with Ali's nature, and he executed it faithfully. Inquiring into the losses and sufferings of each individual, he paid him to his full content. When every loss was made good, and all blood atoned for, he distributed the remaining money among the people, gladdening every heart by his bounty.

So Ali received the thanks and praises of the Prophet, but the vindictive Khalid was rebuked even by those whom he had thought to please. "Behold!" said he to Abdur Rahman, "I have avenged the death of your father." "Rather say," replied the other indignantly, "thou hast avenged the death of thine uncle. Thou has disgraced the faith by an act worthy of an idolater." (*The Life of Mohammed*)

Sir John Glubb

After the occupation of Mecca, emissaries were sent to the surrounding tribes to urge them to destroy their local idols and pagan shrines. One such party was commanded by Khalid bin Waleed, the victor of Uhud. Khalid was a highly successful fighter but a headstrong, violent and bloodthirsty man. He was sent to Beni Jadheema clan of Beni Kinana, on the coastal plain south-west of Mecca.

By a tragic coincidence, these Beni Jadheema had killed Khalid's uncle many years before, when he was returning from a business trip to the Yemen. The Apostle, who was probably unaware that Khalid had a private feud with the people he was sent to convert, had told him to avoid bloodshed.

When he reached Beni Jadheema, Khalid told them to lay down their arms as the war was over and everyone had now accepted Islam. When they had done so, however, he suddenly seized a number of the men, tied their hands behind their backs, and gave orders that they be beheaded, as satisfaction for the murder of his uncle.

An Arab horseman who was with Khalid's force, subsequently told how a young man of Beni Jadheema, his hands tied, asked him to allow him to speak to some women who were standing a little way apart. The Muslim agreed and led the prisoner across to the women. "Goodby, Hubaisha," the youth said to a girl among them, "my life is at an end now." But she cried out, "No, no, may your life be prolonged for many years to come." The prisoner was led back and immediately decapitated. As he fell, the girl broke away from the group of women and ran to him. Bending over him, she covered him with kisses, refusing to let go until they killed her also.

The Apostle was genuinely horrified when he heard of Khalid's action. Standing in the courtyard of Kaaba, he raised his hands above his head and cried aloud: "O God! I am innocent before Thee of what Khalid has done." Ali was sent immediately with a large sum of cash to pay blood-money for all who had been killed, and generous compensation for any losses of property. (*The Life and Times of Mohammed*, 1970, p. 320)

Muhammad Husayn Haykal

Muhammad resided in Makkah fifteen days during which he organized its affairs and instructed its people in Islam. During this period, he sent forth delegations to call men peaceably to Islam to destroy the idols without shedding any blood. Khalid ibn al-Walid was sent to Nakhlah to destroy al-Uzza, goddess of Banu Shayban. His task accomplished, ibn al-Walid proceeded to Jadhimah.

There, however, the people took up arms at his approach. Khalid asked them to lay down their arms on the grounds that all people had accepted Islam. One of the Jadhimah tribesmen said to his people: "Woe to you, Banu Jadhimah! Don't you know that this is Khalid? By God, nothing awaits you once you have laid down your arms except captivity, and once you have become captives, you can expect nothing but death." Some of his people answered: "Do you seek to have us all murdered? Don't you know that most men have converted to Islam, that the war is over, and that security is reestablished?" Those who held this opinion continued to talk to their tribesmen until the latter surrendered their arms.

Thereupon, ibn al-Walid ordered them to be bound, and he killed some of them. When he heard the news, the Prophet lifted his arms to heaven and prayed: "O God! I condemn what Khalid ibn al-Walid has done."

The Prophet gave funds to Ali ibn Abi Talib and sent him to look into the affairs of this tribe, cautioning him to disregard all the customs of pre-Islam. Upon arrival, Ali paid the blood-wit of all the victims and compensated the property owners for their damages.

Before leaving, he surrendered the rest of the money which the Prophet had given him to the tribe just in case there were any other losses which may have escaped notice at the time. (*The Life of Muhammad*, Cairo, 1935)

The demarche that Muhammad Mustafa, the Messenger of God, made toward Banu Jadhima, through Ali, was absolutely essential. Khalid had killed people who were not only Muslim but also were innocent of all guilt. Failure to make amends for his crimes would have earned for the Muslims a reputation not only for senseless cruelty and wanton abuse of power but also for treachery.

The pagans and those Arabs who could be called Muslims, at this early date, only by courtesy, would, inevitably, have linked the foul deeds of Khalid with the Prophet himself. There was even the danger that they would have repudiated Islam and relapsed into idolatry, just to spite Khalid. The Prophet, therefore, went into Kaaba, and thrice denounced Khalid's act, and called upon Heaven to be a Witness that he

bore no responsibility for it.

The Banu Jadhima were left stripped and utterly broken by Khalid. The Prophet wanted not only to comfort them and to rehabilitate them but also to win back their confidence and love. It was a most difficult and delicate task, and he chose Ali to carry it out. Khalid had tarnished the image of Islam, and the Prophet knew that no one among his companions except Ali had the ability to restore to it its pristine sheen.

Ali proved once again that his master could not have chosen anyone better than him for this sensitive assignment, and he demonstrated once again that if he was the first in war, he was also the first in peace. He astonished and enchanted the Banu Jadhima with his sincerity, his generosity, his friendliness, and his genuine solicitude for their happiness and welfare.

With his quality of address, Ali recaptured the hearts of Banu Jadhima for his master, Muhammad Mustafa, and for Islam. This was a role that was “custom–designed” for him to play. He loved this role more than any other. He loved to dress the psychological wounds of other people, and he loved to bring cheer and comfort to broken hearts. He was endowed with a very special flair to carry through a role like this.

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