

Chapter 41: A Religious and Political Journey

The sixth year of migration was terminating with all its bitter and sweet events when suddenly the Prophet dreamt a pleasant dream that the Muslims were performing ceremonies of Haj in Masjidul Haram. He related this dream to his companions and took it to be a good omen for the Muslims as they would achieve their heart's desire soon.¹

The Prophet ordered the Muslims to get ready to perform the journey for Haj and also invited the neighbouring tribes, who were still polytheists, to accompany the Muslims in that journey. He also made it known at all places in Arabia that the Muslims would be proceeding to Makkah in the month of Zi Qa'd.

This spiritual journey, besides possessing spiritual benefits, also carried a number of social and political advantages. It bettered the position of Muslims in the Peninsula and became the means of spreading Islam amongst the Arabs on account of the following facts:

1. The polytheist Arab tribes were under the impression that the Prophet was opposed to all their national and religious beliefs and ceremonies including Haj and 'Umrah which were memorials of their ancestors and for this reason they feared the Prophet and his religion. The participation of the Prophet and his companions in the ceremonies of Haj and 'Umrah on this occasion could diminish the fear and disturbance of mind of some polytheist tribes and make it clear in a practical manner that the Prophet was not only not opposed to the pilgrimage of the House of Allah and the Haj ceremonies which is one of their religious rites and national observances but considered them to be an obligatory act.

Furthermore, that he was also endeavouring, like their grand-parent Isma'il for the revival and preservation of these ceremonies. By this means he could attract to himself those tribes who considered Islam to be totally opposed to their national and religious observances and could diminish their fears.

2. If the Muslims succeeded in performing Haj and carried out their religious obligations freely in Masjidul Haram before the very eyes of polytheist Arabs, this act would itself be a great source of the propagation of Islam, because during Haj season the polytheists and the Arabs from all parts of the Peninsula would come together at Makkah and would, on return to their places, carry with them the news about the

Muslims. In this manner the message of Islam would reach all those places where the Prophet could not send missionaries, and would have its effect there.

3. The Prophet reminded the people in Madina of the sacred months and said: "We are going for the pilgrimage of the House of Allah". He also ordered the Muslims not to carry any arms with them, except a sword which a traveller usually carries while performing a journey. These actions of his made many non-Muslims inclined towards Islam, because, as opposed to the propaganda which Quraysh had been carrying on against Islam, they observed that, like others, the Prophet also considered fighting in these months to be unlawful and was in favour of treating them as sacred months of peace.

The Prophet thought that if the Muslims were successful at that time they would be achieving one of their ardent desires (i.e. performing the ceremonies of 'Umrah and Haj) and those who had been away from their homes would be able to meet their relatives and friends.

And in case of obstruction Quraysh would lose their position in the Arab World, because the representatives of neutral tribes would see as to how they behaved towards the Muslims, who wished to perform 'Umrah and Haj and were not carrying any weapons except the weapons of a traveller, although Masjidul Haram and the ceremonies of Haj are common for all Arabs, and Quraysh are only the custodians of the sanctuary.

Hence the righteousness of the Muslims and the oppression by Quraysh would become evident, and it would not be possible for Quraysh to join other tribes against Islam and form an alliance, because they would have prevented the Muslims before thousands of pilgrims from enjoying their lawful right.

The Prophet considered the pros and cons of the matter and ordered the people to move. He put on ehram at a place named Zul-Hulayfah along with 14002 or 16003 or 18004 persons and specified seventy marked camels for slaughtering and thus made the purpose of this journey clear.

The intelligence organization of the Prophet proceeded in advance so that if they encountered the enemy on the way they should immediately inform the Prophet.

At a place near Asfan a Khuzai'i, who was a member of the intelligence organization of the Prophet, came to him and reported thus: "Quraysh have become aware of your journey. They have collected their forces and have sworn by Lat and Uzza that they will obstruct your arrival in Makkah. The elders and influential persons of Quraysh have gathered in Zi Tuwa (a place near Makkah) and in order to thwart the advance of the Muslims they have sent their brave commander Khalid bin Walid to Kira'ul Ghamim (a desert eight miles away from Asfan) along with two hundred horse-soldiers and have encamped there,5 either to stop the Muslims from entering (Makkah) or will lay down their lives for the achievement of this purpose".

After hearing the report the Prophet said: "Woe be to Quraysh! War has wasted them! I wish they had left me to deal with other idolatrous tribes. In case they (i.e. other tribes) had been victorious over me,

Quraysh would have achieved their purpose, and if I had gained victory over those tribes, they (Quraysh) could fight with me with their reserve forces. By Allah! I shall continue my endeavours for the propagation of monotheism either until Allah makes that religion victorious or I lay down my life for the achievement of this purpose".

Then he asked for a guide who might take them (i.e. the Prophet and his companions) by a route on which they did not encounter Khalid. A person belonging to the tribe named Aslam undertook to guide the caravan and made them pass through rough valleys and made them land at a place called Hodaybiyah.

The Prophet's camel knelt down at that spot and he said: "This animal has stopped at this spot under the order of Allah so that our duty may become manifest". Then he ordered all of them to dismount and pitch their tents.

The horsemen of Quraysh became aware of the itinerary of the Prophet and made themselves reach near the Muslims. If the Prophet had wished to continue his journey it would have been necessary for him to split the rows of the horsemen of Quraysh and shed their blood. But all were under the impression that he had no other motive except to perform pilgrimage of the Holy Ka'bah.

At this place conflict and bloodshed would have dealt a blow to the position and claim of peaceful intentions of the Holy Prophet. Moreover, even killing of these horsemen would not have removed the obstacles in the way because reinforcements were being sent by Quraysh continuously and the matter was not coming to an end.

Besides this, the Muslims did not possess any weapon other than the weapons of travellers and it was not advisable to resort to fighting in such conditions. Rather it was expedient to solve the problem by means of discussions.

For these reasons the Prophet turned, after dismounting, to his companions and said: "If Quraysh demand from me today something which strengthens the ties of kinship I shall give it to them and shall adopt a conciliatory attitude".⁶

The words of the Prophet reached the ears of the people and the enemies also became aware of them. Quraysh, therefore, sent some persons to the Prophet to collect the correct information

The Representatives Of Quraysh Come And Meet The Holy Prophet

Quraysh sent many representatives to the Prophet to find out the object of his undertaking this journey. Budayl Khuza'i and some members of the tribe of Khuza'ah contacted the Prophet as representatives of Quraysh. He said to them: "I have not come to fight. I have come to perform pilgrimage of the Ka'bah".

They returned and informed Quraysh about the position. However, the incredulous Quraysh did not accept their version and said: "By God! Even if he has come for the pilgrimage of the Ka'bah, we shall not let him enter Makkah".

Then Mikraz as a representative of Quraysh met the Prophet. He also returned and confirmed what Budayl had said, but Quraysh did not believe in the report submitted by him.

In order to put an end to the conflict they sent to the Prophet, Hulays bin 'Alqamah, who was the chief archer of Arabia.⁷ He was still at a distance when the Prophet got sight of him and said: "This man belongs to a pure and pious tribe. Sacrifice the camels before him, so that he may know that we have not come to fight and have no aim except performing the pilgrimage of the Ka'bah".

Hulays saw seventy camels which were so hungry that they were eating the wool of one another. He returned from the same spot and did not meet the Prophet. He addressed Quraysh with great vehemence and said: "We have not at all concluded a pact with you to prevent the pilgrims of the Ka'bah from performing pilgrimage. Muhammad has no aim except performing pilgrimage. By the Almighty, who controls my life! If you prevent Muhammad from entering (Makkah) I along with all men of my tribe who are mostly archers shall fall upon you and cut you to pieces".

The words of Hulays were not liked by Quraysh. However, fearing his opposition, they deliberated over the matter and said to him: "Rest assured. We ourselves shall find solution which will be acceptable to you".

At the fourth stage, however, they sent to the Prophet 'Urwah bin Mas'ud Saqafi in whose wisdom, intelligence and honesty they had full confidence. In the beginning he declined to represent Quraysh as he could very well see how they had behaved with their former representatives, but they assured him that his position in their eyes was fully established and they would not accuse him of breach of trust.

'Urwah bin Mas'ud came to the Holy Prophet and said: "O Muhammad! You have gathered different groups around you and have now decided to attack your birth-place (Makkah). Nevertheless, Quraysh will prevent your advance with full force and will not allow you to enter Makkah. I am, however, afraid that tomorrow these groups will leave you in the lurch".

When he had said this Abu Bakr, who was standing behind the Prophet, turned to 'Urwah and said: "You are mistaken. In no circumstances will the Prophet's friends desert him".

'Urwah used all the arts of diplomacy in his speech and tried to prove the strength of Quraysh and weaken the morale of the Prophet; and with a view to degrading the position of the Prophet he touched his beard while talking. Mughayrah bin Sh'obah repeatedly struck his hand and said: "Be respectful and don't misbehave towards the Prophet". 'Urwah asked the Prophet: "Who is he?" (It appears that the persons, who were around the Prophet, had concealed their faces).

The Prophet said: "He is your nephew Mughayrah bin Sh'obah". 'Urwah was displeased and said: "O cunning person! I purchased your honour yesterday. You killed thirteen persons of the tribe of Saqif a short time before embracing Islam and I paid the blood-money from my own pocket to prevent the flames of war flaring up amongst the families of Saqif".

The Prophet interrupted 'Urwah and explained to him the purpose of his journey as he had already explained to the former representatives of Quraysh. However, in order to give a knockdown reply to the threats held out by 'Urwah, he got up and performed wuzu (ablution). 'Urwah saw with his own eyes that the companions of the Prophet did not allow even a drop of the water of his wuzu to fall on the ground.

'Urwah got up and arrived in the assembly of Quraysh. He informed the chiefs of Quraysh, who had assembled at Zi Tuwa, about his meeting with the Prophet and the latter's aim. He also added: "I have seen great kings. I have observed great powers like the power of the Emperor of Iran, Kaiser of the Roman Empire and the King of Ethiopia but have not seen the position of anyone of them amongst their nations as high as enjoyed by Muhammad amongst his followers.

I have seen with my own eyes that they didn't let even a drop of the water of his wuzu fall on the ground and divided it amongst themselves as *tabarruk* (i.e. a sacred gift which brings blessings). If one of his hair falls they pick it up immediately. Hence the chiefs of Quraysh should ponder over this dangerous situation".⁸

The Prophet Of Islam Sends His Representative

The contacts which the representatives of Quraysh had with the great leader of Islam did not produce any result. The Prophet could very well imagine that the representatives of Quraysh could not convey the facts to the elders of Quraysh or did not do so clearly fearing reproach. He, therefore, decided to send his own representative who should clarify to them the real object of his undertaking the journey, which was nothing except the pilgrimage of the Ka'bah.

Khirash, a clever man of the tribe of Khuza'ah, was selected for the purpose and the Prophet placed a camel at his disposal. He met the groups of Quraysh and discharged his duty. However, contrary to expectations as well as the custom of the nations of the world that an ambassador is always immune from any harm, they (i.e. Quraysh) cut off the feet of his camel and were about to kill him, but his life was saved through the archers of Arabia. This foul act proved that the Quraysh had no intention to settle the matter peacefully and were bent upon fighting.

Soon after this incident fifty experienced men of Quraysh were deputed to go round the area where Muslims had encamped and, if possible, to pillage their property and take some of them captives. However, this plan of theirs was frustrated and on the other contrary they were arrested and brought before the Prophet. Although they had shot arrows and hurled stones at the Muslims, the Prophet directed all of them to be set free. Hence, he once again proved his bonafides and made it clear that he

had no intention to fight.⁹

The Holy Prophet Sends Another Representative

In spite of all this the Prophet did not lose hope for peace and sincerely wished that he might be able to solve the problem through discussions and by changing the thinking of Quraysh. This time he wanted to send a representative who had not shed the blood of Quraysh.

Hence Ali, Zubayr and other champions of Islam, who had combated with the heroes of Quraysh and Arabs and had killed some of them, were not qualified to act as representatives. Eventually he decided to depute Umar bin Khattab for the purpose, because till that day he had not shed even a drop of blood of the idolaters.

Umar, however, excused himself from assuming that responsibility and said: "I am afraid of Quraysh as I am in fear of my life, and in Makkah there is no one of my family who might lend me support. However, I suggest Uthman bin Affan who is closely related to Abu Sufyan and can convey your message to the chiefs of Quraysh.

Uthman was however entrusted with this task and he proceeded to Makkah. While on his way he met Aban bin Sa'id bin As and entered the city under his protection. Aban promised that none would interfere with him, until he had conveyed the message of the Prophet in clear terms.

However, Quraysh replied to the message of the Prophet that they had decided on oath that they would not permit Muhammad to enter Makkah forcibly and on account of this oath any discussion with regard to the entry of Muslims in Makkah is out of the question. Then they permitted Uthman to perform tawaf of the Ka'bah, but he refrained from doing so, as a mark of respect to the Prophet. What Quraysh did with regard to Uthman was that they prevented him from returning and possibly their idea was that in the meantime they would find out a solution of the problem.¹⁰

The Rizwan Pledge

The Muslims got extremely perturbed on account of Uthman's delay in getting back. It was then rumoured that Uthman had been killed. Hearing this the Muslims were flared up and wanted to take revenge. In order to strengthen their determination the Prophet said: "I shall not leave this place until I have settled the affair".

At this moment, when danger was so near and the Muslims were not equipped with arms, the Prophet decided to take the oath of allegiance from the Muslims de novo and sat under a tree for this purpose. All his companions shook his hand as a mark of fealty and swore that they would defend the sacred religion of Islam till the end of their lives. It is the very pledge of Rizwan, which has been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an in these words:

Allah is pleased with the believers for their pledging obedience to you under the tree. He knew what was in their hearts, thus he granted them confidence, and rewarded them with an immediate victory. (Surah al-Fath, 48:18)

After they had taken the oath of allegiance the duty of the Muslims became clear –either Quraysh should allow them to proceed to Makkah and perform the pilgrimage of the Ka'bah or they should oppose the obstinacy of Quraysh at the cost of their lives. The Prophet was thinking about this when Uthman appeared from a distance and this in itself was the vanguard of the peace which the Prophet desired so much. Uthman came to the Prophet and said: "The difficulty in the way of Quraysh is the vow which they have taken and a representative of Quraysh will have a talk with you regarding the solution of this difficulty".

Suhayl Bin 'Amr Contacts The Prophet

Suhayl bin 'Amr was deputed by Quraysh with special instructions to put an end to the dispute through a pact about which we shall read later. When the eyes of the Prophet fell on Suhayl he said: "Suhayl has come to conclude a peace pact between us and Quraysh". Suhayl came and sat down. He said all sorts of things and, like a skilled diplomat, aroused the sentiments of the Prophet for the accomplishment of certain things.

He said: "O Abul Qasim! Makkah is Haram and the seat of our dignity. The Arab World knows that you have fought against us. If you enter Makkah in the present state, which is coupled with force and strength, you will make our weakness and helplessness known to the entire Arab World. Tomorrow all the Arab tribes will think of occupying our land. I appeal to you in the name of God to regard the kinship which you share with us, and also remind you of the respect which Makkah enjoys and which is also your birth-place".

When Suhayl said this the Prophet interrupted him and said: "What are you aiming at?" He replied: "The chiefs of Quraysh are of the view that you should return to Madina this year and postpone the pilgrimage till the next year. Next year the Muslims may perform Haj like all other tribes of Arabia, subject to the condition that they should not stay in Makkah for more than three days and should not bring with them any weapons except those which are usually carried by a traveller".

As a result of the discussions between the Prophet and Suhayl it was decided that a general and extensive pact should be concluded between the Muslims and Quraysh. Suhayl was displaying extraordinary severity regarding the conditions and particulars of the pact and at times it appeared that the peace negotiations would break down. However, as both the parties desired peace and reconciliation the thread of discussion was picked up once again.

In spite of all the severity on the part of Suhayl the negotiation came to an end and it was decided that its text should be drawn up in duplicate and the same should be signed by both the parties.

As written by most of the historians, the Prophet directed Ali to write the Peace Pact; and said: "Write: In the name of Allah, the Rahman (Beneficent) the Rahim (Merciful)" and Ali wrote it.

Suhayl said: "I am not acquainted with this sentence. Write: "In Your name O' Allah!" The Prophet agreed that the sentence as uttered by Suhayl might be written. Ali wrote it accordingly. Then the Prophet asked Ali to write: 'This is the pact which Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, has concluded with Suhayl, the representative of Quraysh'.

Suhayl said: "We don't formally recognize your Prophethood and if we had recognized you as a Prophet we wouldn't have waged war against you. You should write your own name and that of your father and should omit this title from the pact".

Some of the Muslims were not agreeable that the Prophet should surrender to Suhayl to this extent. However, the Prophet agreed even to this by keeping in view some higher interests, which will be explained later and asked Ali to delete the phrase 'Messenger of Allah'. At this stage Ali submitted with due reverence:

"It is not possible for me to take the liberty of deleting your title of 'Messenger' and 'Prophet' from beside your sacred name". The Prophet asked Ali to put his (the Prophet's) finger on the word so that he might delete it personally. Ali put the Prophet's finger on the word and he deleted the title 'Messenger of Allah'.¹¹

The indulgence and temperament which the Prophet displayed in drawing up this pact is unparalleled in the world. As he was not influenced by material thoughts and egotistic sentiments and knew that realities do not change by writing something or deleting it, he, in order to ensure peace, adopted a conciliatory attitude and accepted the suggestions of the opponent in spite of all his severity.

History Repeats Itself

The first distinguished pupil of the school of the Prophet of Islam was also faced with the same embarrassment and on this account, Ali, the perfect model of the Prophet became, for various reasons, an embodiment of his personality and they conformed with each other at many stages. When the Commander of the Faithful excused himself from deleting the words 'Messenger of Allah' the Prophet turned towards him and informed him about his future, which fully resembled his own, in these words: "The descendants of this band will invite you to a similar act and you will give in under extreme oppression".¹²

Ali remembered this thing till the Battle of Siffin took place and the simple-minded followers of Imam Ali were impressed by the deceptive demonstrations of the soldiers of Syria who were fighting under the patronage of Mu'awiyah and 'Amr As and persuaded him to agree to make peace.

A meeting was held to write the Peace Pact. The secretary of the Commander of the Faithful named

Ubaydullah bin Abi Rafe' was directed by him to write the Peace Pact on these lines: "This is what has been settled upon by Ali, the Commander of the Faithful."

At this moment 'Amr bin As (who was the official representative of Mu'awiyah and the Syrian army) turned to the secretary of Ali and said: "Write the name of Ali and his father, because if we had formally recognized him to be the Commander of the Faithful, we would not have fought with him at all." The discussions on this point were prolonged.

The Commander of the Faithful was not ready to provide any excuse to his simpleminded friends. A part of the day was spent in dispute by the parties till, on the insistence of one of his own officers, he allowed that the phrase 'Commander of the Faithful' might be deleted. Then he said: "Allah is Great! This is the observance of the tradition of the Prophet". Thereafter he repeated before the people the event of Hdaybiyah and what the Prophet had said to him at that time.¹³

Text Of The Hdaybiyah Pact

1. Quraysh and the Muslims agree that they will not fight or commit aggression against each other for a period of ten years so that social security and general peace may be established at various places in Arabia.
2. If a person from amongst Quraysh leaves Makkah without the permission of his elder and embraces Islam and joins the Muslims, Muhammad must return him to Quraysh. However, if one of the Muslims goes away to Quraysh they will be under no obligation to surrender him to the Muslims.
3. The Muslims and Quraysh will be at liberty to conclude pacts with any tribes they like.
4. This year Muhammad and his companions will return to Madina from this very spot. However, in the coming years they will be at liberty to visit Makkah and perform the pilgrimage of the Ka'bah, subject to the condition that they will not stay in Makkah for more than three days and will not carry with them any weapon other than that usually carried by a traveller.¹⁴
5. According to this pact the Muslims residing in Makkah are free to perform their religious rites and Quraysh will not be entitled to torture them or compel them to abjure their religion or to ridicule their religion.¹⁵
6. The signatories to the pact agree to respect the property of each other and to abandon deceit and artifice against each other and to keep their hearts free from mutual grudge.
7. The life and property of the Muslims who arrive in Makkah from Madina will be respected.¹⁶

This is the text of the Peace Pact of Hdaybiyah, which has been collected from different sources. The pact was drawn up in duplicate. Some persons from amongst Quraysh and the Muslims witnessed the

pact whereafter one copy was given to Suhayl and the other to the Prophet. 17

Glad Tidings Of Freedom

Glad tidings of freedom as contained in this pact reached every person. Although every clause of this pact deserves discussion, the delicate point which demands very serious consideration is the second clause which aroused the indignation of some persons on that day.

Notwithstanding the fact that the companions of the Prophet felt very uneasy on account of this discrimination and uttered words which should not have been uttered regarding the decision taken by a leader like the Prophet of Islam, this clause still brilliant, shows the way of thinking of the Prophet in the matter of the propagation of Islam. It fully shows the great respect which that great leader accorded to the principles of freedom.

In reply to the objection raised by some of the companions of the Prophet as to why they should surrender the refugees from Quraysh whereas Quraysh should be under no obligation to surrender their men, he replied:

"If a Muslim who adopts polytheism and runs away from the standard of Islam, and prefers the environments of idolatry and anti-human religion to the environments of Islam and monotheism, it shows that he has not embraced Islam wholeheartedly and his faith has not acquired the proper base which should satisfy his nature and such a Muslim is of no use to us. And if we surrender the refugees from Quraysh it is on this account that we are satisfied that Allah will provide the means of their deliverance". 18

The future proved that the prediction of the Prophet about this matter (that Allah will provide the means of their deliverance) was absolutely correct, because soon afterwards Quraysh themselves requested the cancellation of this clause on account of the various unpleasant events which they had to face owing to this clause.

This clause is a silencing reply to the partiality of most of the orientalist who insist that the cause of the advancement of Islam was the use of sword. They cannot afford to see that the glory of Islam lies in the fact that within a very short time it spread in many regions of the world. On account of personal motives and with a view to poison the minds, therefore, they are obliged to say that the cause of the advancement of Islam was material force.

This Peace Pact was concluded in the early days of Islam in the presence of the great leader of Islam, as it fully reflects the spirit of Islam and the sublime teachings and human principles which are contained in all its laws, it is quite unfair that we should say that Islam has been spread with the force of the sword.

In the light of the third clause, the tribe of Khuza'ah concluded a defence pact with the Muslims and the tribe of Bani Kananah, who were old enemies of Bani Khuza'ah, declared their alliance with Quraysh.

Last Effort For The Preservation Of Peace

The preliminaries of the Peace Pact and its text show clearly that a large part of it had an educational aspect, and the reason for the Prophet accepting this pact, and agreeing to the deletion of the phrase 'Messenger of Allah' and to its commencing with the words "In your name, O' Allah" (as it was in vogue during the Days of Ignorance) was that he was desirous of maintaining peace in Arabia. And when he agreed that the Muslim refugees from amongst Quraysh might be surrendered to the authorities of the idolatrous government, it was due to the acute obstinacy of Suhayl.

In case, therefore, the Prophet had not agreed with Suhayl on this point with a view to protect the rights of this group (i.e. the Muslim refugees from amongst Quraysh) and had respected the general thinking which was opposed to discrimination in the matter of surrender of refugees, the general peace would certainly have fallen in jeopardy and this great blessing would have been lost.

Hence, with a view to achieve a higher and nobler object, the Prophet bore up against all these pressures and requests so that the great opportunity of ensuring peace, in the face of which all these inconveniences were insignificant, might not be lost. And if he had shown regard for the general opinion and the rights of the said group, Suhayl, on account of his being very obstinate, would have sparked off war and the following incident is a clear proof of this fact:

Negotiations with regards to the contents of the Peace Pact ended and Ali was busy writing it when suddenly Abu Jandal bin Suhayl, the representative of Quraysh, for the conclusion of the Peace Pact, appeared on the scene with chains in his feet. Ali wondered on his arrival, for he had been imprisoned and chained by his father since long. He was an innocent prisoner and his only offence was that he had embraced Islam and was considered to be one of the devotees of the Prophet.

Abu Jandal had learned from the conversation which took place around his prison that the Muslims had arrived in Hdaybiyah.¹⁹ He therefore, managed to escape from the prison by some special contrivance and arrived in the midst of the Muslims by adopting a deviated path through the mountains.

When the eyes of Suhayl fell on his son he was so much displeased that, filled with acute anger, he gave him a hard slap in the face. Then he turned to the Prophet and said: "This is the first person who should return to Makkah in accordance with the second clause of the pact". He meant to say that Abu Jandal being a Quraysh who had fled Makkah should be surrendered to them.

There is no denying the fact that the demand of Suhayl was unjustified and baseless, because the pact had not yet been finally recorded and signed by the parties. How could a party rely on a pact which had not yet passed through its final stages? For this reason the Prophet said to Suhayl: "Our pact hasn't been signed yet".

Suhayl replied: "In that case I ignore all these proceedings and render them null and void". He was so

stubborn in the matter that Mikraz and Huwaytab, two big personalities of Quraysh were very much displeased with his severity. They at once extracting Abu Jandal from his father, made him enter a tent and said to the Prophet: "O Muhammad! Abu Jandal is now under your protection".

They wanted to settle the dispute in this manner but Suhayl's insistence frustrated their plan. He stuck to his words and said: "From the point of view of negotiations the pact has been concluded".

The Prophet was obliged to make the last effort for the preservation of the basis of peace which was extremely valuable for the propagation of Islam. He, therefore, agreed to the return of Abu Jandal to Makkah along with his father.

To console the chained Muslim who was to be surrendered to the infidels in the presence of hundreds of brave Muslims he said: "O Abu Jandal! Be patient. We wished that your father should hand you over to us by way of love and affection. Now that he hasn't agreed to do so you should be patient and forbearing and should know that Allah will open a path of relief for you as well as for others who are under arrest".

The meeting came to an end. The copies of the pact were signed. Suhayl and his friends left for Makkah and Abu Jandal, too, proceeded to Makkah under the protection of Mikraz and Huwaytab. With a view to put an end to the state of ehram the Prophet slaughtered his camel and got his head shaved and others also followed suit.²⁰

Evaluation Of The Peace Pact Of Hdaybiyah

The Peace Pact was concluded between the Prophet of Islam and the leaders of polytheism and after staying at Hdaybiyah for nineteen days, the Muslims returned to Madina and the idolaters went back to Makkah.

Differences and disputes cropped up between the companions of the Prophet at the time of writing the pact as well as after that. One group of them considered it to be beneficial for Islam and another group, whose members could be counted on fingers, assessed it to be against its interests. Now that fourteen centuries have passed since the conclusion of this pact we proposed to evaluate it in an unbiased and realistic manner and shall conclude this chapter after alluding to the differences mentioned above.

We are of the view that this Peace Pact proved to be perfectly beneficial to Islam and made its victory final. Here are the arguments which we should like to offer:

1. The continuous battles and attacks of Quraysh and their internal and external instigations which have been mentioned briefly in connection with the accounts of the Battles of Uhud and Ahzab did not leave any time at the disposal of the Prophet to resort to propagation of Islam amongst the various tribes, as well as in areas beyond Arabia, and his valuable time was mostly spent in defence and in neutralizing the dangerous plots of the enemy. After the conclusion of the Peace Pact, however, the Muslims and their great leader were relieved of the danger from the south, and ground was prepared for the

propagation of Islam in other areas.

The effects of the peace came to light after two years, because when the Hudaibiyah pact was concluded the Prophet was accompanied by 1400 persons, but, two years later, when he proceeded formally to conquer Makkah, as many as ten thousand persons marched along with him under the shadow of the standard of Islam and this clear contrast in the number of persons accompanying him was the direct consequence of the Hudaibiyah pact.

It was due to the fact that previously many people did not join the Muslims owing to fear of Quraysh, but when Quraysh themselves formally recognized the presence of Islam and left the tribes free to associate themselves with it, the fear in the minds of most of the tribe disappeared and the Muslims became in a position to propagate Islam freely.

2. The second thing which the Muslims achieved from the pact was that the iron-curtain which the idolaters had placed between the common man and the religion of Islam was removed and consequently the traffic to Madina became free. The people had more contacts with the Muslims during their journeys to Madina and they became acquainted with the sublime teachings of Islam.

They were wonder struck when they saw the discipline and order amongst the Muslims and their sincere devotion and obedience to the Prophet of Islam. The cleanliness of the Muslims and their performing wuzu at the time of prayers, their organized rows, the effective and enthusiastic sermons of the Prophet and the sweet verses of the Holy Qur'an, with their simplicity and eloquence, attracted them automatically towards Islam.

The Muslims, who travelled to Makkah and its suburbs for different purposes, after the conclusion of the pact, came in contact with their relatives and old friends, propagated Islam amongst them and informed them of the merits, laws and regulations, and the permissible and unpermissible things of this religion. And this thing in itself became the cause of a large number of the leaders of polytheism like Khalid bin Walid and 'Amr bin As joining the Muslims before the conquest of Makkah.

In fact this sort of acquaintance of the people with Islam laid the foundation of the conquest of Makkah and became the cause of this great base of the world of idolatry coming under the control of the Muslims. Consequently the people embraced Islam in large numbers. This great victory was the result of close contacts, removal of fear from the hearts and propagation of Islam among the idolaters without any let or hinderance.

3. Close contact with the Prophet at the time of the conclusion of the pact removed many misunderstandings from the minds of the leaders of polytheism, because the sublime morality of the Prophet and his softness and forbearance as against the stubbornness of the other party proved him to be the fountain of greatest human virtues.

Notwithstanding the fact that he had suffered a great deal at the hands of Quraysh, his heart was still full

of sentiments of human love. Quraysh witnessed that in concluding the pact and accepting its forced clauses, he differed with the views of a large number of his own companions and preferred the honour of the Haram and the Ka'bah, and of his own birth-place (Makkah) to the inclinations of a group of his.

This behaviour neutralized the adverse propaganda which had been carried on about the temperament of the Prophet and proved that he was a friend of humanity and a peaceable person, who would not show grudge and enmity to his enemies, even if he happened to gain control over Arabia one day. There is no denying the fact, however, that if the Prophet had engaged himself in battle on that day he would have been victorious and as stated by the Holy Qur'an his enemies would have fled:

Had the disbelievers fought against you they would run away from the battle and would have found no friend or helper. (Surah al-Fath, 48:22)

However, he displayed kind sentiments and love for humanity by his mildness and neutralized the adverse propaganda against him.

The readers should realize, in the light of these arguments, the grandeur of the remark of Imam Ja'far Sadiq about this Peace Pact. He says: "No event during the life of the Prophet of Islam was more useful than the Peace Pact of Hdaybiyah".

The future events proved that the objections raised by a few companions of the Prophet (whose ring leader was Umar bin Khattab) to this pact and its contents were totally baseless. The historians have given complete particulars of the remarks of the objectors.²¹

The value of the pact becomes evident from the fact that the Prophet had not yet reached Madina when Surah al-Fath, which gave good tidings to the Muslims, was revealed and it treated this act (conclusion of the Peace Pact of Hdaybiyah) to be a victory in jihad. It says:

"Surely, we have granted you (O' Muhammad!) a manifest victory".

Quraysh Insist Upon Cancellation Of One Of The Clauses Of The Pact

Soon after that, however, bitter events obliged Quraysh to request the Prophet to cancel the second clause of the Peace Pact. It was the same clause, which had annoyed the companions of the Prophet and which he had accepted on account of unusual stubbornness on the part of Suhayl. It says:

"If a person from amongst Quraysh leaves Makkah without the permission of his elder and embraces Islam and joins the Muslims, Muhammad must return him to Quraysh. However, if one of the Muslims goes away to Quraysh they will be under no obligation to surrender him to the Muslims". This clause roused the indignation of some persons on that day, but the Prophet accepted it from his heart and said: "Allah will open a path for the relief of the weak Muslims who are prisoners in the hands of Quraysh"

The path of such relief and the reasons for the cancellation of this clause were as follows:

A Muslim named Abu Basir who had been imprisoned by the idolaters for a long time somehow managed to escape to Madina. Two big personalities named Azhar and Akhnas wrote to the Prophet and reminded him that according to the second clause of the pact Abu Basir should be returned to them. They gave their letter to a man belonging to the tribe of Bani 'Amir, who was accompanied by a slave of theirs, and asked him to deliver it to the Prophet.

In accordance with the pact concluded by the Prophet he said to Abu Basir: "You should return to your people and it is not at all proper that we should practise cunning against them. I am sure that the Almighty Allah will provide means of relief to you as well as to others". Abu Basir said: "Are you handing me over to the idolaters so that they may make me abjure the religion of Allah?" The Prophet, however, repeated the said sentence and handed him over to the representatives of Quraysh. The three men then left for Makkah. When they reached Zil Hulayfah²²

Abu Basir leant on a wall on account of fatigue. He then asked the man belonging to Bani 'Amir in a friendly way to give him his sword so that he might have a look at it. When the sword came in his hand he immediately killed the 'Amiri. The slave ran away on account of fear. He came to Madina and said to the Prophet: "Abu Basir has killed my companion". Soon thereafter Abu Basir also came up and related his story and said: "O Prophet of Allah! You have acted according to the agreement made by you. However, I am not prepared to join the people who ridicule my religion".

Having said these words he proceeded to the coast of the sea which was the route of the caravans of Quraysh and settled at a place named 'Eis. The Muslims of Makkah came to know about the story of Abu Basir and about seventy of them somehow got rid of Quraysh and joined him. These seventy Muslims, whose lives had been made miserable by Quraysh, decided to loot the trade caravans of Quraysh or to kill anyone on whom they could lay their hands.

They carried out their programme so skilfully that Quraysh were put out of patience by harassment. So much so that they wrote to the Prophet to cancel the clause in question by mutual agreement and to call back Abu Basir and his companions to Madina.

The Prophet cancelled the said clause by mutual agreement and directed the fugitives who had settled in 'Eis to return to Madina.²³ This provided a great relief to the people at large and Quraysh realized that a true believer could not be kept in captivity for ever and it was more dangerous to keep such a person as a captive, because whenever he escaped he would resort to taking revenge.

The Muslim Women Were Not Surrendered To Quraysh

Hudaybiyah pact was signed. Umme Kulsum, daughter of 'Uqbah bin Abi Mu'ayt, came to Madina from Makkah. Her brothers named 'Ammarah and Walid requested the Prophet to return her to them in

accordance with the second clause of the pact. The Prophet replied to them: "Women are not covered by the said clause as that clause applies to men only".²⁴ And Surah al-Mumtahinah made the position clear with regard to women. It says:

Believers, when believing immigrant women come to you as fugitives, test them. Allah knows best about their faith. If you know that they are believers, do not return them to the disbelievers. They are not lawful for the disbelievers, nor are the disbelievers lawful for them. And give the disbelievers whatever they have spent (upon them as dowry). (Surah al-Mumtahinah, 60:10)

This was the story of Hodaybiyah. As a consequence of the peace provided by this pact, the Prophet was in a position to correspond with the kings and rulers of the world and to extend his call and Prophethood to the humanity at large.

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1. Majma'ul Bayan, vol. IX, page 126.
 2. Seerah-i Ibn Hisham, vol. II, page 309.
 3. Rawdah-I-Kafi, page 322
 4. Majma'ul Bayan, vol. II, page 488
 5. Biharul Anwar, vol. XX, page 330
 6. Tarikh-i Tabari, vol. II, pp. 270-272.
 7. As quoted by Tabari, (vol. II, page 276) he came to see the Holy Prophet after Urwah Saqafi had seen him.
 8. Seerahi Ibn Hisham, vol. II, p. 314; Tarikh-i Tabari, vol. II, pp. 274-275.
 9. Tarikh-i Tabari, vol. II, page 278.
 10. Tarikh-i Tabari, vol. II, pp. 278-279
 11. Irshad Mufid, page 6; A'lamul Wara', page 106; Biharul Anwar, vol. XX, page 368; but Tabari erred on this point and has stated that the Prophet himself wrote his name.
 12. Tarikh-i Kamil, vol. II, page 138; Biharul Anwar, vol. XX, page 353.
 13. Tarikh-i Kamil, vol. III, page 162.
 14. Seerah-i Halabi, vol. III, page 24; and other sources.
 15. Biharul Anwar, vol. XX, page 353; and other sources.
 16. Majma'ul Bayan, vol. IX, page 117.
 17. Seerah-i Halabi, vol. III, pp. 25-26.
 18. Seerah-i Halabi, vol. III, p.12 and Biharul Anwar, vol. XX, p. 312.
 19. Hodaybiyah is at a distance of six to nine miles from Makkah and most of its lands are a part of the Haram.
 20. Tarikh-i Tabari, vol. II, page 281; Biharul Anwar, vol. II, page 353 and Seerah-i Ibn Hisham, vol. II, page 318.
 21. Seerah-i Ibn Hisham, vol. II, page 316.
 22. It is a place six or seven miles away from Madina. People put on ehram there while going to Makkah.
 23. Mughazi-i Waqidi, vol. II, p. 624; Tarikh-i Tabari, vol. II, p. 284.
 24. Seerah-i Ibn Hisham, vol. II, page 323.

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