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Expedition of Umratul Qaza – letters inviting Kings to embrace Islam – events upto the Battle of Mutah

Ali bin Ibrahim has narrated that when the Prophet returned from the conquest of Khyber, he sent Usamah bin Zaid against some Jew town in the vicinity of Fadak. In one of these places was a Jew, Marwas bin Namaik Fadaki, who fled from the Muslims with his family to the mountain where being overtaken he repeated the creed of Islam, but Usamah not crediting his conversion put him to death. When the detachment returned and reported their success, the Prophet blamed Usamah for slaying the confessing Jew but he said he was repeating the Kalimah merely through fear.

“Did you remove the veil of heart and learn that?” demanded the Prophet, “What have you to do with his heart?” Immediately the Almighty Allah sent down this verse:

وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ أَلْقَى إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَامَ لَسْتَ مُؤْمِنًا

“...and do not say to any one who offers you peace: You are not a believer.”¹

So Usamah vowed that he would never fight one who recites the Kalimah and he didn't even accompany Imam Ali (a.s.) in his wars. Thus the latter sin of Usamah was worse than his previous mistake.

Shaykh Tabarsi and other scholars have narrated that in the seventh year of the Hijrat, and a year after the treaty concluded at Hudaibiyah, the Prophet and his companions set out on a pilgrimage to Mecca, where according to the stipulation of the treaty, they remained there for three days. The idolaters cleared the city for him, and ascended the surrounding mountains, from whence they watched the ceremonies of the Muslims.

The Prophet ordered his followers to exhibit agility and strength in the courses between Marwah and Safa in order to inspire the infidels with awe of their prowess. Abdullah bin Rawaha was reciting a Rajaz before the Prophet and was carrying a sword.

It is related from Zuhri that previous to this pilgrimage, the Prophet had sent Ja'far bin Abu Talib to Mecca to solicit for him in marriage Maimoona, daughter of Harith and sister of Umm Fazl, the wife of Abbas. Maimoona constituted Abbas her agent and he settled the condition of her marriage with the Prophet.

Kulaini has narrated through reliable chains from Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) that the Holy Prophet (S) laid a condition on Quraish that they should clear all idols from Safa, so that Muslims can perform the Tawaf. There was a Muslim man who was so occupied that he didn't perform the Tawaf. So the Quraish brought their idols back and people told the Prophet that so and so has not performed the Sany and Quraish have brought back their idols. At that juncture, the following verse was revealed:

إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا ۚ وَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا

“Surely the Safa and the Marwah are among the signs appointed by Allah; so whoever makes a pilgrimage to the House or pays a visit (to it), there is no blame on him if he goes round them both; and whoever does good spontaneously...”²

After three days, when the Holy Prophet (S) set out from Mecca, Hamza's daughter asked him not to leave her at Mecca. Amirul Momineen (a.s.) brought her to Fatima and told her to take her cousin along.

It is mentioned in some reliable books that in the sixth year of Hijri, the Holy Prophet (S) wrote to kings inviting them to Islam. In the same year, the Prophet set the example to Muslim of wearing a ring on his finger. About this epoch he sent six men with letters to as many kings, summoning them to embrace Islam; namely Khatib bin Abu Baltah to Maquqas; Dahyah bin Khalifa to emperor of Rum; Abdullah bin Huzaifa to Kisra, emperor of Iran; Amr bin Umayyah to Najjashi; Shujan bin Wahab to Harith bin Abu Shimr; and Saleet bin Amr to Hozet bin Ali. Maquqas honored the letter he received, kissed it, and wrote in reply, that he had known another prophet was to appear, and that he respected the claims of the Prophet, to whom he sent four girls, one of whom was Mariya, afterwards the mother of Ibrahim and another, her sister Sireen.

He likewise sent an ass named Afeer or Yafur, and a mule called Duldul. Maquqas did not become a Muslim. yet the Prophet accepted his present observing He has by this adorned his reign, but his kingdom shall not endure The Prophet kept Mariya for himself, and gave her sister, Sireen to Hassan bin Wahab.

Kaiser, whose proper name was Harqal, appearing dejected one morning his courtiers asked him the reason, that he had dreamed that king of the circumcised had arisen. His scholars answered that they knew of no people but the Jews who practiced that rite as to these they are under your authority and if you please you can order them all to be slain and thus remove all ground of fear on this account.

While this conversation was going on, a messenger from the governor of Busra arrived. bringing with him an Arab whom he presented before the monarch with the explanation that the man brought news of several wonderful things which had occurred. Harqal then commanded his interpreters to question the Arab about the events alluded to. On being interrogated, the man said, "A person has arisen among us claiming to be a Prophet some believing in and obey him while others oppose him and consequently the flame of war and slaughter blazes among us."

Harqal demanded if this Arab was circumcised and finding that he was exclaimed, "Now the interpretation of my dream is apparent." The emperor immediately summoned his general and ordered him to search the whole kingdom of Shaam for some relative of the Prophet and if he found such a man to bring him to royal court.

The commander-in-chief soon found Abu Sufyan, who visited Shaam for trade, and brought him to Harqal, Abu Sufyan's account of this matter as related by Ibn Abbas is that after he had concluded the truce with the Prophet, he went with a company of Quraish on a mercantile expedition to Shaam where he was met by a party of mounted men, who, understanding his relationship to the Prophet, carried him and his companions to Harqal.

Abu Sufyan was presented before the monarch who was surrounded by all the great men of Rum. Harqal then demanded through an interpreter, which of the Arab party was most nearly related to the man of their country claiming to be a Prophet. Abu Sufyan answering that he was the nearest related to the Prophet, the emperor ordered him to be brought near and the rest of the party to listen to what he said and confirm it if true, and confute it if false.

In relating the story Abu Sufyan observed, "Had it not been that I was ashamed to be convicted of lying before the king verily I had told him nothing but lies." Harqal first demanded what was the family rank of the man claiming to be a Prophet. Abu Sufyan replied that his lineage was the most noble among the Arabs. "Has any one of your people ever before claimed to be a Prophet?" "No." "Has any of this man's ancestor been king?" "No." "Do the chief and principle men follow him or the poor and needy?" "The latter class are his followers."

"Do his adherents increase or diminish?" "They increase." "Are any who embrace his religion afterwards ashamed of it?" "No." "Before claiming to be a Prophet was he considered a liar among you?" "No." "Did you ever witness anything like fraud in him?" "No we have formed a truce with him for a period and cannot tell if he will attempt stratagems against us in this matter; which," added Abu Sufyan "was all I could say on that subject."

Harqal continued: "Have you ever fought against him?" "Yes." "What was the result?" "Our wars have been attended with alternate success." "What does he enjoin on his followers?" "He required the worship of God and forbids associating anything with the Deity, and commands us to forsake the precepts of our fathers, to perform prayers, to bestow charity, and to be chaste and benevolent." Harqal then said to Abu Sufyan through the interpreter: "If what you have stated is true, the Prophet will soon be master of this place. If it were possible I would go to him and would wash his feet."

Harqal then called for the letter addressed to him by the Prophet which was as follows: In the name of God the compassionate the merciful: This is a letter from Muhammad bin Abdullah, the apostle and servant of God to Harqal chief of Rum. The peace of God be on him that follows the true direction in religion. Now know you, I call on you to embrace Islam. Become a Muslim that you may be secure, punishment both in this world and the next.

Obey, that God may double your reward. If you do not accept the offer made you on you, will be responsible for the sin of your subjects who in consequence of your example do not believe. The letter concluded with this passage from the Qur'an: "O you who have received the scripture come to a just determination between us and you that we worship not any except God and associate no creature with Him; and that the one of us take not the other for lords beside God But if they turn back say, Bear witness that we are true believers."

Disputation and confusion now arose in the court and the Arabs were sent away. It is related by Qutub Rawandi that Harqal after reading the letter, summoned his chief scholar, whose name was Askaf, who examined the epistle, and declared that its author was Muhammad of whom Isa had announced the glad news.

"I acknowledge his truth," said Askaf, "and yield him obedience." "Should I do so," said Harqal, "My royalty would be forfeited." Kaiser indeed, wished to profess Islam. The Christian assembled to kill Askaf, who called Dahyah, the bearer of the letter and charged him to tell his master that he had acknowledged the unity of Muhammad, but the Christians did not regard his words. He came out and was martyred by the Christians.

It is related by Qutub Rawandi that Harqal sent a Ghassani man to the Prophet and charged him to observe what he sat upon who sat on his right and to get if possible, a view of the seal of prophethood. On his return, he reported to the king that he found the Prophet seated on the ground water boiling up under his feet, and his cousin, Ali sitting on his right.

I had forgotten the seal, said the man but he reminded me of it, and allowed me to see it between his shoulders. Harqal replied: "He is the Prophet predicted by Isa." Then he told them to go and tell the Prophet that he should come and share his rulership as he cannot leave his kingdom.

Kisra, the King of Iran, on reading the Prophet's letter tore it to pieces. The Prophet therefore pronounced the curse on him that his sovereignty should soon pass away, which was verified. The letter

which was sent through Abdullah bin Hazafah, was as follows: In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful:

This is a letter from Muhammad the Messenger of Allah (S) to Kisra chief of Fars: peace be to him that follows religious direction and believes in God and the Prophet and testifies to the unity of God who has no associate, and that Muhammad is His servant and apostle. I summon you in God's stead, for I am Messenger of Allah (S) to all people to inspire fear in all that live and to show divine signs to infidels. Become, then, a Muslim, that you may be secure from the wrath of God. If you refuse, all the sins of the Majoosis will rest upon you.

Kisra was so enraged he tore the letter to pieces, exclaiming, "Does my slave write me thus and put his own name before mine?" The Prophet cursed him that his kingdom will also be torn thus. According to another traditional report he sent a handful of dust. The Holy Prophet (S) said: Very soon my community will take over his lands as he has sent a handful of dust to me.

He then sent an order to Bazan, his governor in Yemen, to dispatch two strong men to seize the fellow in Hijaz that claimed to be a Prophet and had the audacity to write such a letter to the great king, and bring him prisoner to his presence.

Bazan accordingly sent Banuba and another man, Kharkasak or Firoz or according to another report, he told the Prophet to give up his claim or face dire consequences. He wrote saying, "The command of the king of Non-Arab is that you go with these men to his presence." On their arrival at Medina, they waited on the Prophet and said, "Kisra has commanded Bazan to summon you to appear before his Majesty.

If you go with me, I will intercede for you with the king so that no harm shall befall you if you refuse to go why then you know he will destroy you and your people and desolate the country." It is related that they appeared with their beards shorn and their mustaches hanging over their mouths.

The Prophet was disgusted at this fashion and said, "Who ordered you to appear in such a style?" They replied, "Our lord, Kisra." He replied, "But my Lord has commanded me to wear a long beard, and to trim the mustaches even with the upper lip." He then ordered them to withdraw, and visit him the next day.

When they waited on him as directed, he said, "My Lord has informed me that last night Kisra was slain. God has incited his own son Shiruyahs to kill him. Carry this answer to Bazan: that my kingdom will extend throughout the earth and the empires of Kaiser and Kisra will be conquered by my seat and tell him if he became a Muslim, I will leave him in the enjoyment of his present possessions."

The messengers returned to Bazan and reported the Prophet's answer and declared they never witnessed such power of inspiring awe as he possessed in any king notwithstanding he lived like a poor and humble man. Bazan said, "This report does not denote a king a king but a Prophet I will wait till his truth or falsehood is manifest.

After some days a letter from Shiruyah reached Bazan saying, "I have killed Kisra because he killed the chief of Fars. Take oath of allegiance to me and do not molest the man Kisra ordered you to punish, till you receive further commands from me." Bazan and a party of Farsis who were with him now became Muslims. It is said that Firoz was one of the two men sent to the Prophet and that he became a Muslim and when Isa the false Prophet arose, the Prophet ordered Firoz to put him to death.

Ibn Shahr Ashob has narrated that an angel appeared three successive years to Kisra, with a staff, saying, "Become a Muslim or I will break this." Kisra replied: "Wait for sometime." Then he summoned his guard and scolded them for having allowed that man to enter his bedroom. Next year the angel came to him again and he again told him to wait for sometime. They third time the angel broke the staff and that night Kisra was slain by his son.

The Prophet sent Amr bin Umayyah to Najjashi, with a letter respecting Ja'far bin Abu Talib and his companions. the king honored the letter, kissed it, and raised it to his eyes. He humbled himself at the message of the Prophet so as to descend from his throne and sit upon the ground, and he became a Muslim.

It is related that he sent his son and sixty Habashis to meet the Prophet, but the vessel in which they embarked, floundered at sea, and all perished. Some affirm that this Najjashi was not the same individual to whom Ja'far went, but we shall not debate it as much has already been said about Najjashi. Harith bin Shimr Ghasani, to whom the Prophet addressed a letter did not believe, and his power soon passed away and he died in the year of the conquest of Mecca.

Hozet bin Ali honored the letter he received, and proposed to share his kingdom with the Prophet, who foretold that he would soon lose his dominions, and in the year Mecca was taken, he went to Hell. Qutub Rawandi has narrated from Jurair bin Abdullah Bajali that the Prophet gave him a letter and sent him to Zilakalah of Himyar and it had a better effect, for he embraced Islam and marched to Medina with a large army to join the Prophet.

On his way he passed a recluse's cell who, understanding his object, said it is probable that the Prophet has departed to the eternal world, for I was just now reading the book of Danyal and perused the account there given of the Prophet and of period of his life, and when I made a calculation, I found he must have departed this very hour. At this news, Zilkala returned home, and the bearer of the letter to him, Jurair bin Abdullah, proceeding on to Medina, found the recluse's calculation had been perfectly correct.

It is narrated that in the 6th year of Hijri, Khawla binte Thalaba came to the Prophet and complained about her husband, Aws bin Thabit that he had done Zihar with her. In the same year, the Prophet sent Alau bin Khazramy to Manzar bin Shazy, governor to Bahrain, to summon him to embrace Islam or pay tribute.

The country of Bahrain was under the dominion of the emperor of Non-Arab. Manzar with the Arabs

embraced Islam, but the Jews and the Christian of that country agreed to pay tribute. Thus Bahrain was conquered without war. Shaykh Tabarsi has narrated from Zuhri that the Holy Prophet (S) after the conquest of Khyber sent Abdullah bin Rawaha with 30 riders including Abdullah bin Anis to Bashir bin Wazam, the Jew, because it was learnt that he was mobilizing Ghatfan tribe to fight the Prophet.

When they arrived there, they said: "Prophet is calling you to appoint us as his governor in Khyber." He agreed after much discussion and set out with 30 men. Each Muslim accompanied one Jew. After traveling for two farsakhs, Bashir regretted his decision and decided to slay Abdullah. Abdullah was a very sharp character; he at once understood and slashed his leg severing it.

He landed a blow with a stick on Abdullah's head and it started bleeding. Muslims killed all the Jews, except one who escaped with his life. No one was killed from the Muslims. When they returned to the Prophet, he applied his saliva on Abdullah's head and he was immediately cured. Then the Holy Prophet (S) sent Abdullah to Bani Marra and he killed some of them and arrested some and presented to the Prophet. The Holy Prophet (S) sent Uyyana bin Hasan to Bani Ambar. He also killed some of them and took some prisoners.

It is mentioned in some reliable Sunni books in the events of the seventh year that when the Holy Prophet (S) returned from Khyber, he camped near Masjid Shajara and asked Bilal to remain awake but he was overcome by sleep and all awoke after sunrise. That Prophet recited Qaza prayers with the companions.

Discussion about this in connection with mistakes has passed before. It is related that in this same year, the sun after setting, was brought back at the prayer of the Prophet, for Ali to perform worship, he having been prevented from doing so at the appointed hour by the Prophet laying his head in Ali's lap and being detained there by a divine communication. Tahawi, a celebrated Sunni scholar, has narrated in *Mushkilus Hadith* from Asma binte Umais through two chains of narrators that the head of the Holy Prophet (S) was in Ali's lap when descent of revelation began.

Imam Ali (a.s.) had not prayed the Asr prayer but the sun set. After the revelation was complete, the Prophet asked: "O Ali, have you offered the prayers?" "No," said the Imam. The Prophet prayed and the sun returned from the west after it had set. This incident took place at Sahba, near Khyber. Tahawi says that it is an authentic report testified by reliable authorities.

It is narrated that in the same year, Najjashi proposed to Umm Habib, daughter of Abu Sufyan on behalf of the Prophet and sent her to him. It was in this year that Shiruyah killed his father on the tenth of Jamadius Thani on Monday night, seven hours after sunset. In the seventh year, also Maquqas sent Mariya and his other presents to the Prophet. That same year the Prophet married Maimoona, daughter of Harith.

In the eight year of the Hijrat, the Prophet married Fatima, the daughter of Zahak. She manifested dislike for him, being prejudiced by Ayesha and Hafasa. The Prophet therefore divorced her and sent her back

to her family. In the eighth year, a pulpit was built in the Masjid for the Prophet, previous to which he had leaned against a date-tree post in addressing the people. Some say it was in the seventh year.

A woman's son worked as a carpenter, she asked him the Prophet if he would mind if he prepares a pulpit for him. The new pulpit had three legs. When the Prophet mounted the pulpit on Friday, the date-tree post began to wail in separation of the Prophet till it split. The Prophet descended from the pulpit and consoled it. Then he returned to the pulpit and completed the sermon.

1. Surah Nisa 4:94

2. Surah Baqarah 2: 158

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