

The Expansion of the Call - How do you get public opinion?

The Expansion Of The Call

The hostilities of Quraysh towards the Messenger of Allah and his companions reached saturation point after Thaqif of Ta'if unceremoniously chased him away, and when the tribes of Kinda, Kalb, Banu 'Aamir and Banu Hanifah rejected his call to them during the hajj season. Quraysh managed to increase his isolation further, after these set-backs, separating him and his party from any outside support. He and his companions, however, remained steadfast in their belief in Allah (swt) and never doubted His (swt) promise of victory to them and to Islam. The Messenger of Allah continued inviting people to Islam whenever possible and he approached the tribes and offered himself to them, not worrying in the slightest about the consequences. Some of the louts from Quraysh attempted to provoke him and hurt him, but he never let this affect him or his hope of a brighter future. Allah (swt) sent him with the Message of Islam and he never doubted that Allah (swt) would help and protect him and secure the deen. He waited for Allah's relief, while being very pained

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about the state of the da'wah. Fortunately, the Messenger of Allah did not have long to wait, for the signs of victory soon came from Yathrib (Madinah) in the shape of a group from al-Khazraj who had come to Makkah during the hajj season where the Messenger of Allah met them for the first time and invited them to Islam. They looked to each other and said, "By Allah this is the very Prophet of whom the Jews warned us. Do not let them get to him before us." Thereupon they accepted his teaching and embraced Islam. They said to him, "We have left our people (al-Aus and al-Khazraj), for no tribes are so divided by hatred and rancour as they. Perhaps Allah will unite them through you, if so, then no man will be mightier than you." When they returned to Madinah.

In the following year, twelve people from Madinah attended the hajj and met with the Messenger of Allah at al-'Aqabah where they gave him the first pledge of al-'Aqabah. They

pledged to associate none with Allah, that they should not steal, neither commit fornication, nor kill their offspring, and that they should not slander their neighbour, nor disobey the Messenger of Allah in what was right. If they fulfilled this, jannah would be theirs, but if they committed any of those sins, it was for Allah (swt) to punish or forgive as He pleased. Once they had delivered their pledge and the hajj season was over they returned to Madinah.

The first pledge of al-'Aqabah was a good thing and a blessing. This was so because despite the small number of those who had embraced Islam, the efforts of one companion of the Messenger of Allah i.e. Mus'ab ibn 'Umayr were enough to lead them to change Madinah and transform the existing thoughts and emotions within its society, and despite the relatively large number of those who embraced Islam in Makkah, the people at large remained alienated from them, for the groups did not respond to Islam, and society was not affected by the Islamic thoughts and emotions; whereas by contrast, the majority of people in Madinah embraced Islam and Islam made an impact in the heart of the Madinan society, and the thoughts and emotions were affected. This clearly demonstrates that when individuals who embrace Islam remain alienated from society and the people at large, an impact within society is not generated, nor within the majority of people no matter how strong the belief of these individuals is. It also demonstrates that if the existing relationships between people were affected by thoughts and emotions they would lead to the desired transformation and change no matter how small the number of the conveyors of the message are. This also proves that when the society persists in disbelief, as was the case with the Makkan society, it becomes more difficult to transform, than the society where such erroneous notions are not domi-

nant, as was the case with the Madinan society, even if such notions were present. Therefore, the Madinan society was affected by Islam more than the Makkan society, people in Madinah had sensed the falsehood of the thoughts they were carrying and they had been searching for other thoughts and another way of life. By contrast, the Makkan society was satisfied with its state of affairs and anxious to maintain it, especially the heads of disbelief such as Abu Lahab, Abu Jahl and Abu Sufyan. That is why it took Mus'ab ibn 'Umayr only a short spell to witness the response to the da'wah, he went on calling people to Islam and culturing them with its thoughts and rules, he would feel the quick response and witness people's willingness to accept Islam and their enthusiasm to learn and acquire the knowledge of Islam's rules, and this would make him rejoice; he would witness the number of Muslims grow and Islam spread and this would encourage him to multiply his efforts in the da'wah. When the season of hajj came, he returned to Makkah and reported back to the Messenger of Allah, giving him an account about the Muslims in Madinah and their growing might, and about Islam and its rapid spread, describing the state of the Madinan society and how people there talked only about Allah's Messenger, and how Islam occupied centre stage. Mus'ab informed the Messenger of Allah about the strength of the Muslims and their deterrent might, which made Islam the dominant force in Madinah, he also informed him that some Muslims, whose belief had grown stronger and whose determination to carry the Message and defend the deen of Allah had become greater than ever, would be coming to Makkah that year. The Messenger of Allah was very pleased with the news brought by Mus'ab and began thinking long and hard in the matter and comparing the Makkan society with that of Madinah. He spent twelve consecutive years in Makkah calling for the deen of Allah, exhausting all his efforts, devoting all his time and seizing every single opportunity, enduring in the process all types of hardship, suffering and oppression, and despite all that, society in Makkah remained as stubborn as ever and the da'wah never managed to break through, due to the remorseless hearts and the ruthless feelings of the Makkan people whose idle minds would not break away from the past. The Makkan society was harsh and its aptitude for the da'wah was negligible due to the deeply rooted idolatrous polytheism within the hearts of its people, for Makkah was the main centre of shirk. In Madinah things were different, hardly one year had elapsed since a group of the Khazraj embraced Islam, and the first pledge of al-'Aqabah took place, then came the efforts of Mus'ab ibn 'Umayr the year after, and this was enough to generate an Islamic atmosphere in Madinah and to pave the way for people to embrace Islam at an astonishing rate. The Message of Allah in Makkah had stopped with those who had embraced Islam, with the persecution and oppression inflicted upon them by Quraysh, but in Madinah, on the other hand, had spread rapidly, with the Muslims there not having to suffer the persecution by the Jews and the disbelievers, this could only help Islam to become deeply rooted in people's hearts and to pave the

way for the Muslims. Therefore, it became clear to the Messenger of Allah that Madinah had more aptitude than Makkah to become the source of the light of Islam. He therefore thought about emigrating to Madinah and to let his companions join their brothers there, to find sanctuary and safety and rid themselves from the persecution and torture which Quraysh had been inflicting upon them, this would allow them to concentrate on the da'wah and move towards its practical phase, which is the implementation of Islam and the carrying of its Message with the might and authority of an Islamic state; this was the only reason for the emigration.

It is worth mentioning that the Messenger of Allah had never thought about emigrating from Makkah simply because of the obstacles the da'wah was facing, without remaining steadfast and persevering, and without attempting to overcome those obstacles. He persevered for ten years in Makkah, always focusing his thoughts on the da'wah. He and his followers endured all types of horror and persecution in the way of the da'wah. The ill-treatment and the resistance by Quraysh never weakened his resolve and determination, on the contrary, his belief in the Message which he brought from his Lord took him to new heights, and the certainty of Allah's help made him even more steadfast and resolute. Nevertheless, he realised after those attempts how hard and stubborn the Makkan society was, how shallow minded people were and how ruthless and misguided they were. This meant that the chances of success were slim, and that pursuing the da'wah there could be a wasted effort, thus it became necessary to move away from such a society and look for another one. He therefore thought about emigrating from Makkah, and that was the only reason for thinking about moving to Madinah, not the hardship nor the persecution. Indeed the Messenger of Allah had ordered his companions to emigrate to Abyssinia to escape persecution as it is allowed for the believers to move away from places of affliction if they were persecuted because of their deen, although enduring the torture enhances Iman, and the oppression inflames faithfulness and the resistance sharpens the determination. Iman pushes believers to belittle all hardships and sacrifice wealth, honour, peace of mind and even their lives. And although belief in Allah (swt) makes the believer ready to give his life willingly in His way, unabated aggression and the continuity of sacrifice would cause the believer to become exhausted. This is so because his efforts would be diverted towards persevering against and resisting the harm inflicted upon him, rather than towards mobilising his efforts in the da'wah and broadening his horizons by being allowed to think deeply about the truthfulness of his belief. It was for this reason that the Muslims had no other alternative but to emigrate away from the places where affliction reigned. This was the case when they

emigrated to Abyssinia. However, their later emigration to Madinah was prompted by different reasons. They wanted to move with their Message and bring it to life by implementing it in a society, their new society, and then spread it world-wide. It is only in this context that the Messenger of Allah contemplated ordering his companions to emigrate to Madinah. But before deciding to join them there, he had to first meet the pilgrims coming from that location and confer with the Muslims among them, in order to assess their readiness to protect the da'wah and to see how far they were prepared to sacrifice themselves in the way of Islam. He had to make sure that they were prepared to give him the pledge of war, a pledge of fighting that would form the cornerstone of the Islamic State. Thus the Messenger of Allah waited for the pilgrims; this was the twelfth year of the Message, in 622 CE. The pilgrims were many, among whom were 75 Muslims (73 men and 2 women). One of the women was Nusaybah bint Ka'ab Umm 'Amarah from Banu Mazin ibn al-Najjar and the other was Asma' bint 'Amr ibn 'Adi from Banu Salamah, known also as Umm Mani'.

The Messenger of Allah met the Muslim pilgrims secretly and talked to them about a second pledge, which would not be concerned with simply carrying the da'wah and persevering against aggression. It would be a pledge which would go well beyond that, a pledge with far reaching consequences. It was to be a pledge that would entail forming a force capable of defending Muslims and forming the nucleus that would produce the cornerstone on which to build the foundations of a state with the power to protect it, a power that would remove all material obstacles which stood in the way of the Message and its implementation. The Messenger of Allah talked to them about the pledge and felt their readiness, and they in turn agreed to meet him at al-'Aqabah during the middle of the days of Tashriq. He said to them, "Do not wake anyone, nor wait for anyone absent." When a third of the night had passed they went stealing softly to their appointment with the Messenger of Allah at al-'Aqabah, the two women were also with them. They waited for Allah's Messenger until he came with his uncle al-'Abbas, who was at that time an unbeliever, albeit he wanted to give his nephew a firm guarantee. He was the first to speak and said, "O people of Khazraj! You know what position Muhammad holds among us. We have protected him from our own people who think as we do about him. He lives in honour and safety among his people, but he decided to turn to you and join you; so if you think you can be faithful to what you have promised him and protect him from his opponents, then assume the burden you have undertaken. But if you think that you will betray and abandon him after he has gone out with you, then leave him now." They replied, "We have heard what you say. Now you speak, O Messenger of Allah, and choose for yourself and your Lord what you wish." The Messenger of Allah spoke after reciting the Qur'an and commended Islam and said, "I invite your allegiance on the basis that you protect me as you would your women and children." Al-Bara' took his hand to give the pledge and said, "We give our allegiance O Messenger of Allah, by Allah we are men of war possessing arms which have been passed on from fa-

ther to son". While al-Bara' was speaking Abu al-Haytham ibn al-Tayhan interrupted him and said, "O Messenger of Allah, we have ties with other men (meaning the Jews) and if we sever them perhaps when we have done that and Allah will have given you victory, you will return to your people and leave us." The Messenger of Allah smiled and said, "No, your blood is my blood, and what is sacred to you is sacred to me; I am of you and you are of me; I will fight against those who fight against you, and be at peace with those at peace with you." Al-'Abbas ibn 'Ubadah interrupted and said, "O people of Khazraj! Do you realise to what you are committing yourselves in pledging your support to this man? It means fighting all and sundry; if you think that if you lose your property, and your nobles are killed you will give him up, then do so now, for by Allah it would bring you shame in this world and the next if you did so later; but if you think that you will be loyal to your undertaking even if you lose your possessions and your nobles are killed, then take him, for by Allah it will profit you in this world and the Hereafter." They said that they would accept the Messenger of Allah on these conditions and then inquired, "What is in it for us, O Messenger of Allah, in return for our loyalty?" Allah's Messenger replied confidently, "Jannah." They stretched their hands forth, and he stretched his hand and they pledged their word by saying, "We pledge ourselves to fight, in complete obedience to the Messenger of Allah, in well and woe, in ease and hardship and evil circumstances; that we would not wrong anyone, that we would speak the truth at all times, and that in Allah's service we would fear the censure of none." After they gave the pledge Allah's Messenger said, "Bring me twelve leaders who have charge of their people's affairs." They produced nine from al-Khazraj and three from al-Aus. So the Messenger of Allah said to these naqibs (leaders), "You are the guardians of your people just as the disciples of 'Isa, son of Maryam, were responsible to him while I am responsible for my people." They went back to their beds and then back to their caravan and returned to Madinah.

Afterwards, the Messenger of Allah ordered the Muslims in Makkah to emigrate to Madinah in small parties, and so they began to migrate either individually or sometimes in small groups. Quraysh by then had heard of the pledge and they attempted to prevent the Muslims from emigrating. They came between husband and wife in order to stop the migration, but the Muslims continued to leave Makkah for Madinah whilst Allah's Messenger stayed behind without indicating to anyone whether he would leave or not. There were signs, however, that he too would leave. Abu Bakr kept asking Allah's Messenger for permission to emigrate until he answered, "Don't be in a hurry, it may be that Allah will give you a companion." Abu Bakr knew then that Allah's Messenger wanted to emigrate. Quraysh were very concerned about the implications of the emigration of Allah's Messenger, especially now that the Muslims in Madinah were many and enjoyed the upper hand. Evidently, their position there would be strengthened by the emi-

gration of the Muslims from Makkah. Quraysh realised that another even more serious potential threat to them was Allah's Messenger. Should he join them there, and with the power that they possessed, it could mean the end of them. They therefore thought long and hard about the issue of preventing Allah's Messenger from migrating to Madinah. Quraysh began to fear that once the Muslims had become a force to be reckoned with they would come after them and defend Allah's Messenger, should he decide to stay in Makkah. With such a dilemma confronting them, they finally decided to resort to killing him so as to prevent him from joining the Muslims in Madinah and in order to avoid all future clashes with the people of Madinah, Islam and Muhammad.

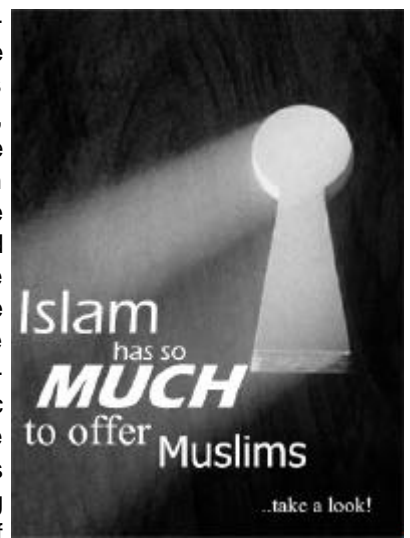
It has been reported in the books of seerah that in the narration of 'A'isha and Abu Umamah ibn Sahm, it was said that when the seventy-three men present at al-'Aqabah left the Messenger of Allah, having given him the protection, pledging their support; the trials and tribulations of the Muslims in Makkah increased for wanting to leave, Quraysh harassed them and harmed them, they complained to Allah's Messenger so he said, "I have been shown the homeland to which you will emigrate, ready."

After a few days he emerged very pleased and said, "I have been told that you can emigrate to Yathrib, whoever wants to go there can do so." So they began their preparations to vacate the city. When these were complete they left secretly in small groups whilst the Messenger of Allah stayed on in Makkah to wait for Allah's permission to emigrate. Abu Bakr kept asking Allah's Messenger for permission to emigrate, he would say to him, "Don't be in a hurry, it may be that Allah will give you a companion." Abu Bakr hoped that his companion would be Allah's Messenger himself.

When Quraysh learnt of the companions' emigration, and since they knew that Allah's Messenger had decided to fight them, they assembled in their council chamber and after a little debate agreed to kill him. Then they dispersed. Jibreel came to the Messenger of Allah and ordered him not to sleep on the bed on which he usually slept. He did not sleep in his bed that night and it was then that Allah (swt) permitted him to emigrate.

The presence of the forces of Islam in Madinah and the readiness of the people to receive the Messenger of Allah and establish the Islamic State were the only reasons which prompted him to emigrate. It would be completely erroneous for anyone to conclude or even to entertain the slightest thought that Muhammad emigrated from Makkah out of fear that Quraysh would kill him. He never gave the slightest consideration to the repression and harm that befell him and was more than happy to sacrifice his life in the way of Islam. This is a fact. His emigration to Madinah was simply the selfless pursuit of the Islamic da'wah and the necessary establishment of the Islamic State to further that objective. It is clear that Quraysh had come to the decision to kill him for fear of his emigration to Madinah where he would enjoy its protection and power, but Quraysh, despite their efforts, failed in

their bid to dispose of him. The emigration, as Quraysh feared, proved to be the turning point in the history of the da'wah. It moved from the phase of inviting people to Islam, to the phase of establishing an Islamic society, a state ruling by Islam's authority, inviting for it by means of



evidence, proof and persuasion and by the force that would protect it from evil and oppressive forces

Ibn Katheer narrated about Ali ibn Abey Talib 'When Allah commanded His Messenger to present himself to the Arab tribes, he went out to mina accompanied by myself and Abu bakr where we came to the gathering of Arab Tribes'.

The fact that he (saw) consistently carried on despite being rebuffed and humiliated indicates that it is a duty. The validity of this qareena is backed by the fact that the prophet (saw) indicated that 'had it not been for the suffering of the people, the miswack before salat would have been made obligatory'. Therefore the fact that the prophet suffered continuously indicates that seeking Nusrah is fard.

In addition there is one verse in the Qur'an that was revealed during this period which explicitly deals with the subject of seeking authority and government. That is according to At-Tabari and Ibn Kathir, and many other traditional Mufasireen:

"And say: My Lord! make me to enter a goodly entering, and cause me to go forth a goodly going forth, and grant me from near Thee power to assist (me). "
(17:80)