

# The Return of the Koraysh

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The first people to reach Mecca with the news of the Koraysh defeat were Al Haysuman and Abdullah, Al Khuzai's son, who bewailed the fact that so many of their chieftains had fallen on the battlefield of Badr. In the large tent of Zamzam, the converts Abu Rafi, former slave of Abbas freed by the Prophet (sa) and Abbas' wife, Umm Fadl sat sharpening their arrows.

They had both been overjoyed to hear the news of the Prophet's victory, however, they felt it was more prudent to restrain their happiness. As they sharpened the arrows, Abu Lahab who had not taken part in the encounter but sent Al As in his place entered. His face looked as black as thunder as he sat himself down at the other end of the tent with his back toward Abu Rafi.

Not long after Abu Lahab heard some others in the tent saying, "Abu Sufyan, Al Harith's son has returned," whereupon he looked up, saw his nephew and called him. A small crowd gathered around the two as Abu Sufyan told his uncle, "The facts are the Koraysh met our enemy and turned their backs. They put us to flight taking prisoners as they pleased, I cannot blame our tribesmen because they faced not only them but men wearing white robes riding piebald horses, who were between heaven and earth. They spared nothing and no one had a chance."

When Umm Fadl and Abu Rafi heard the news of the men in white riding between heaven and earth, they could no longer contain their happiness and Abu Rafi exclaimed for all to hear, "They were angels!"

## The Death of Abu Lahab

Abu Rafi's outburst was more than Abu Lahab could bear, in a raging fury he forced Abu Rafi, who was frail, to the ground and struck him over and over again. Umm Fadl grabbed hold of a tent pole that lay nearby and with all her might hit her brother-in-law's head with it crying out. "Do you think that you can abuse him just because Abbas is away!" She wounded him so severely that his head was split open and laid bare part of his skull.

The wound was never to heal, it turned septic and its poison spread rapidly through his entire body erupting into open pustules that caused his death within the week. When he died, his family, fearing that they might be afflicted with disease -- for they feared the plague, and his condition resembled it -- were hesitant to bury him and so they left his decaying body decomposing in his home for two or three nights.

It was only when someone rebuked them strongly saying, "It is disgraceful, you should be ashamed of yourselves to leave your father to rot in his house and not bury him from the sight of men!" that they did something. With great reluctance and from a safe distance, his sons threw water over his body, then removed his corpse and left it by a wall on a high piece of ground outside Mecca and threw stones over it until it was completely covered.