

as he could. Al-Hubaab ؓ did as he was ordered, and he ؓ went out and found a good position from which he could see Quraish's army and appraise its strength. When he returned to Al-Madeenah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked him, "What did you see?" Al-Hubaab ؓ said, "I saw, O Messenger of Allah, a great many of them. I estimated them to be three-thousand, a little more or a little less. They had two-hundred horses. I also saw a great quantity of armour: By my estimate, around seven-hundred (pieces)."

"Did you see women," asked the Prophet ﷺ. Al-Hubaab ؓ responded, "I saw women who had with them *Difaaf* and *Al-Akbaar* (two different kinds of drums)." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Those women came with the intention of spurring their (fighters) on and of reminding them about the fallen men of Badr (so as to further motivate them to fight). Such is the news that has reached me about them. Do not speak a letter (or a word) about them. Allah is sufficient for us and blessed indeed is He as a Protector and Guardian and Guarantor"^[1]

Having ascertained Quraish's strength from two sources – Al-'Abbaas ؓ and Al-Hubaab ؓ – the Prophet ﷺ strove to keep that information a secret from the general population of the Muslims, fearing that their morale would weaken as a result of them learning about Quraish's massive army. That is why, when Ubai ibn Ka'ab ؓ read Al-'Abbaas's letter, the Prophet ﷺ ordered him to keep its contents a secret. The Prophet ﷺ did, however, share what he had learned about Quraish's army with the leaders of the *Muhaajiroon* and the *Ansaar*, mainly in order to get their opinion about what course of action they should take. In accordance with his policy of mutual consultation, the Prophet ﷺ told the chief of the *Ansaar*, Sa'd ibn Ar-Rabee ؓ about the contents of Al-'Abbaas's letter, adding that he should keep the matter a secret. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ left Sa'd's house, Sa'd's wife came out and asked, "What did the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say to

^[1] Refer to *Maghaazee Al-Waaqidee* (1/207, 208).

you?" Sa'd ؓ answered, "May you have no mother? That is none of your concern." She said, "I indeed heard what he said to you," after which she proceeded to tell him about what she had heard from their conversation, which amounted to everything important and everything private that was spoken between the Prophet ﷺ and Sa'd ؓ. At once irate and worried – irate because of his wife's snooping and worried because he might get blamed for the spreading of the Prophet's secret – Sa'd ؓ grabbed his wife and dragged her outside, in the hope of catching up to the Prophet ﷺ. Since the Prophet ﷺ did not get too far, Sa'd ؓ soon caught up to him – all the while keeping a firm grip on his wife – and told him that his wife had been listening in on their conversation. Sa'd ؓ also said, "O Messenger of Allah, I feared that the news would spread and that you would think that it was I who spread it after you had told me to keep it a secret." The Prophet ﷺ ended the matter right then and there by simply saying to Sa'd ؓ, "Release her."^[1] This incident provided an important lesson for later generations of Muslims: That they must refrain from leaking sensitive military secrets to family members and friends alike, for how often has it been throughout history that an army lost a war because sensitive information found its way into the hands of the enemy. It was for this very reason that the Prophet ﷺ clearly instructed Sa'd ؓ and other leaders of the *Muhaajiroon* and the *Ansaar* to not divulge military secrets to anyone, and this applied equally to Uhud and to all other battles and military encounters in which the Prophet ﷺ participated.

Consulting With His Companions ؓ

When he had gleaned sufficient information about the Quraish, and when the time was ripe for sharing that information with his Companions ؓ, the Prophet ﷺ gathered them together to consult with them about an important decision: Should they fortify themselves in Al-Madeenah and wait for Quraish's army to enter

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah Al-Halabiyyah* (2/489).

Al-Madeenah (or simply to go back without fighting), or should they go out to meet the polytheists outside of Al-Madeenah. As for the Prophet ﷺ, he ﷺ felt that they should stay in Al-Madeenah. He ﷺ said to them, "It is a well-fortified place, so if you think it fitting for you to remain here and leave them to continue (their approach) until they make camp (somewhere outside of Al-Madeenah, that would be a good strategy). For if they stay (and besiege us), they will have a very difficult time (in terms of having to wait it out in the desert). And if they enter upon us, we will fight them from inside of Al-Madeenah (whose streets and alleyways we know better than they do)."^[1] For his own reasons, 'Abdullah ibn Ubai ibn Salool agreed on this particular occasion with the Prophet ﷺ.

Others, however, disagreed and wanted to go out to face the enemy. The majority of those who held this latter view were men who missed out on Badr and who were therefore eager to prove their worth on the battlefield. And so they insisted on going out to immediately face the enemy, saying, "O Messenger of Allah, take us out to our enemy." They realized the honour that had been bestowed on the participants of Badr, and they longed to achieve the same honour and distinction. Under normal circumstances, they would accept the Prophet's decision in a given matter; but on this occasion, they were blinded by their enthusiasm and passion.

Ibn Ishaq said, "Those who really wanted to face the enemy continued to try and convince the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to agree with them, until the Messenger of Allah ﷺ entered his home and attired himself in his battle-gear. Meanwhile, the men outside began to blame one another (for going against the Prophet's view in the matter), saying, "The Prophet of Allah ﷺ suggested one course of action, and you suggested another, so go, O Hamzah, and say to the Prophet of Allah, 'We will follow the course of action you want to take.' Hamzah entered upon the Prophet ﷺ and said, 'O Prophet of Allah, the people blame one another (for going contrary to your view in the matter), and they say to you,

^[1] Refer to *At-Taareekh At-Tabaree* (2/60).

‘We will follow the course of action you want to take,’ to which the Prophet ﷺ replied, ‘Verily, when a Prophet attires himself in his battle-gear, it is not fitting for him to remove it until he fights.’”^[1]

Those Who Wanted to Go Out and Face the Enemy Based Their Opinion on a Number of Factors:

- 1) ‘In the Second Pledge of Al-‘Aqabah, the *Ansaar* pledged to support the Messenger of Allah ﷺ; the majority of them felt that, by staying in Al-Madeenah and not going out to face the enemy, they were reneging on that pledge.
- 2) Some members of the *Muhaajiroon* felt that, more so than the *Ansaar*, it was their responsibility to defend Al-Madeenah and prevent the Quraish from entering it and destroying the gardens and fields of the *Ansaar*.
- 3) Those who had missed out on Badr yearned with a burning intensity to face the enemy and to perchance achieve martyrdom.
- 4) Most members of the *Muhaajiroon* and the *Ansaar* felt that, simply by besieging Al-Madeenah, the Quraish would achieve a victory of sorts, a victory that the Muslims did not want to give them. Furthermore, most Muslims expected the siege to last for a long time, in which case the Muslims would remain cut off from the supplies and provisions they relied on for their livelihood.

As for Those Who Wanted to Stay in Al-Madeenah, they Discerned the Following Strategic Benefits of Doing So:

- 1) The Makkan army, though it comprised mainly of fighters from the Quraish, brought along fighters from neighbouring tribes. Given the nature of Arab tribes, and the potential duration of Quraish’s siege of Al-Madeenah, it would be only a

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hishaam (3/71).

matter of time before internal discord within Quraish's camp would bring an end to their siege. This was actually a brilliant assumption, for a few years later during the Battle of the Confederates, internal discord was one of the main reasons why the Quraish and their allies returned to Makkah after having besieged Al-Madeenah for an entire month and without having achieved any kind of victory in the process.

- 2) If an army besieges a city whose people are determined to defend their property and their families, and if both armies are of approximately equal strength – as were the armies of the Quraish and of the Muslims – it is highly unlikely that the besieging army will achieve victory. When the Muslims besieged the people of Banu Qainuqaa', they were much more powerful than the members of that tribe, and so they came out victorious rather quickly. But as for Quraish's army that was heading towards Uhud, they were not stronger than the Muslims of Al-Madeenah. A siege, therefore, would most likely have ended with a victory for the Muslims.
- 3) When fighters are defending their wives, children, parents, and relatives, they will certainly be highly motivated to fight bravely.
- 4) If Quraish's army was going to enter Al-Madeenah, Muslim women and children could have, from within the safety of their homes, participated in the fighting in various ways. That would certainly have provided an advantage to the Muslims.
- 5) No one knew Al-Madeenah's streets and alleyways better than the *Ansaar* and the *Muhaajiroon*. If they managed to lure Quraish's army into Al-Madeenah, they would be able to hide themselves while Quraish's fighters, not knowing the best places to hide, would be open targets.
- 6) A besieged army always has the advantage of being able to use weapons – such as stones and rocks – that the other army cannot use. In the beginning of a battle, the besieging army's main goal is to break into a fortress – which, given the use of

primitive weapons, delays the actual killing of those inside – while the besieged army's goal is to kill those who are trying to get inside. So unless the besieging army has a lot of men that are expendable, their effort to penetrate the fortress – or in this case, the fortified city of Al-Madeenah – will be in vain.

The Prophet ﷺ always trained his Companions ﷺ to feel free to express their views, even when their views were contrary to his; but, it must be remembered, he ﷺ consulted them only when there was no revealed text – from the Qur'an or one of his sayings – that necessitated a specific course of action. Through the process of mutual consultation, the Companions ﷺ were being trained to think about and come up with solutions for the problems of the Muslim nation. The Prophet ﷺ allowed them to speak freely, since there is no point to seeking consultation when people are not free to speak their minds. It therefore never occurred that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ blamed or castigated someone for offering an incorrect view. When he ﷺ was training his Companions ﷺ to make good decisions, the Prophet ﷺ was obeying a direct command of Allah ﷻ:

﴿فِيمَا رَحِمَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ إِنَّكَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴿١٥٩﴾﴾

"And by the Mercy of Allah, you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you; so pass over (their faults), and ask (Allah's) Forgiveness for them; and consult them in the affairs. Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah, certainly, Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him)."
(Qur'an 3: 159)

Consultation that takes place between a leader and his followers is not a one-way street, a principle that the Companions ﷺ understood very clearly. Although the Companions ﷺ had the right to offer their advice in a given matter, they had to submit to

the final judgment and decision of their leader, the Prophet ﷺ. On this particular occasion, they felt that they had gone too far in voicing their opinion; the Prophet ﷺ decided to go out to face the enemy only because they insisted that he do so. But by the time they realized their mistake, it was too late; and it wasn't just that they were too late; the Prophet ﷺ also wanted to teach them another important lesson (but this time a lesson of how to be a good leader): Once a leader, having weighed all possible options, resolves upon a course of action, he should not hesitate but should instead begin to execute his decision. For if he goes back on his earlier decision, his followers will lose confidence in him, which will result in widespread confusion and distrust within their ranks. The Prophet ﷺ made a firm resolve to go out and meet the enemy. A state of emergency was announced throughout Al-Madeenah: People prepared to go out and fight; each person kept his weapon within reach, even when he went to sleep; guards were dispatched to protect the borders of Al-Madeenah; and a number of Companions ؓ – such as Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh ؓ, Usaid ibn Hudair ؓ, Sa'd ibn 'Ubaadah ؓ – attired themselves in armour, stationed themselves at the door of the *Masjid*, and stood guard over the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. In short, everyone was put on alert as the army prepared to depart from Al-Madeenah and head towards Uhud.

The Muslim Army Heads For Uhud

A Secret Departure and Route

Quraish's army was now nearby, and so, in order to avoid an ambush, the Prophet ﷺ needed to take every necessary precaution as he ﷺ headed out with his army towards Mount Uhud. First, the Prophet ﷺ decided to leave at the quietest possible time, around midnight, a time during which the enemy would surely be in deep sleep. This was more of a well-reasoned conclusion than a mere guess, for, to be sure, the long and arduous journey from Makkah to Al-Madeenah must have

caused a great deal of fatigue to Quraish's soldiers. And when an extremely fatigued person falls asleep, he falls into a deep imperturbable slumber. Neither the sound of voices nor the sound of movement wakes up such a person. So when it was late at night and the Muslim army was ready to march towards Uhud, the Prophet ﷺ indicated that it was time to leave by saying, "Where are the guides?"

Second, the Prophet ﷺ chose the best possible route to reach the battleground, a route from which the Quraish would not likely be able to see the Muslims. The Prophet ﷺ asked for a volunteer to take the Muslims along a path from which they would not pass by or be seen by the enemy. A man named Abu Khaitamah ؓ volunteered for this task, and he ؓ proceeded to lead the Muslims through the property of certain clans and eventually through the garden of a man named Mirba' ibn Qaidhee, who was both blind and a hypocrite. When Mirba' sensed – but could not see – the presence of a large number of strangers passing by, he began to throw dirt into their faces, and he said, "If you are the Messenger of Allah, then I do not give you permission to enter my garden." It is related that he then picked up a handful of dirt and said, "By Allah, had I known that I would hit you and no one else, O Muhammad, I would have struck you in the face with this dirt." No sooner did Mirba' speak these foul words than a number of Muslims raced towards him with the intention of killing him. But the Prophet ﷺ stopped them by saying, "Do not kill him, for this is a person who is blind – blind in vision and blind in the heart." Before the Prophet ﷺ said these words, Sa'd ibn Zaid ؓ managed to deliver a blow to Mirba's head with his bow, causing a tear in his skin, but nothing more serious.

That the Prophet ﷺ chose to travel through gardens and clusters of trees clearly points to how careful the Prophet ﷺ was in terms of maintaining the safety and well-being of his soldiers. Had he ؓ taken the commonly-traveled roads, the enemy would have seen them and taken immediate action against them, or at least would have been able to learn beforehand about the strength, weapons,

and numbers of the Muslims army, all matters that the Prophet ﷺ wanted to keep secret as long as possible.

By travelling through the garden of Mirba', the Prophet ﷺ practically applied an important principle: the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the individual or of the few. When the Prophet ﷺ passed through Mirba's garden with his army, that certainly resulted in some harm to Mirba's garden and crops; nonetheless, the Prophet ﷺ still traveled through the garden. He ﷺ did so because his army benefited greatly in the process, and also because the religious needs of the many outweigh the material needs of the few.

The above-mentioned principle is a category of a broader, more general principle, one that Ash-Shaatibee explained in *Al-Muwafaqaat*: "The test in this matter lies in weighing between benefits and harms: Whatever is greater is given precedence. And if they – the benefit and the harm of doing something – are equal, then that becomes a problematic situation."^[1] And Al-'Izz ibn 'Abdus-Salaam wrote in *Qawaa'id Al-Ahkaam*: "To give precedence to the heavier (and more significant) of two benefits is good and praiseworthy, and to ward off the heavier (and more dangerous) of two harms is also good and praiseworthy. About this the wise ones are in agreement. The same goes for legislations (when one is forced by circumstances to choose only one of two or more legislations): If two legislations are of the same degree (of importance), one should choose between them; if they are not of the same degree, one should choose the more important of the two if one is able to discern it (as actually being the more important of the two)."^[2] He further clarified this issue elsewhere in his book: "The rule is that whenever there is a benefit that is free from negative repercussions, one should strive to achieve (or gain) it; and whenever there is a harm whose removal results in no loss of benefit, then one should strive to ward it off."^[3]

^[1] Refer to *Al-Muwafaqaat* (2/651).

^[2] Refer to *Qawaa'id Al-Ahkaam* (1/6,7).

^[3] Refer to *Qawaa'id Al-Ahkaam* (1/47).

The Hypocrite Ibn Salool Withdraws with One-Third of the Muslim Army

When the Muslims reached Ash-Shaut – a garden that is situated between Al-Madeenah and Uhud – Ibn Salool withdrew from the Muslim army, taking along with him three-hundred fellow hypocrites. He justified his withdrawal with a claim and a complaint: he claimed that no fighting would take place against the polytheists and he complained that the Prophet ﷺ did not listen to him when he suggested that the Muslims should stay in Al-Madeenah instead of going out to fight the polytheists. He is reported to have said, “He obeyed children and people whose opinions are of no value. He obeyed them and disobeyed me. Why should we kill ourselves?”^[1] Notwithstanding his justification for leaving, the true reasons why he left were that he wanted to create chaos in the Muslim camp, to weaken the morale of the Muslim army, and to raise the morale of the enemy. Ibn Salool’s departure plainly shows his treacherous nature and his hatred of Islam. During the Prophet’s lifetime, the Prophet ﷺ informed only Hudhaifah ؓ about the names of the hypocrites, so not even the Companions ؓ could be sure about the identities of all of the hypocrites. When a person died, ‘Umar ؓ would wait and see whether or not Hudhaifah ؓ attended the funeral prayer. If Hudhaifah ؓ did not attend a funeral prayer, ‘Umar ؓ would have a strong indication that the deceased was a hypocrite and so he abstained from praying over him. As for Ibn Salool, however, there is no room for doubt: we know for certain – based on his actions and sayings – that he was not only a hypocrite but the chief of the hypocrites, a status that enabled him to lead three-hundred of his followers away from the Prophet’s army on the Day of Uhud.

Ibn Salool had goals he wanted to achieve through fleeing from the Muslim army, and Allah ﷻ too had a purpose in the withdrawal of the hypocrites: to rid the Muslim army of

^[1] Refer to *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah* (4/14).

treacherous elements in order to distinguish the wicked from the good. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَىٰ مَا أَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ حَتَّىٰ يَمِيزَ الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُطْلِعَكُمْ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ﴾

“Allah will not leave the believers in the state in which you are now, until He distinguishes the wicked from the good. Nor will Allah disclose to you the secrets of the Ghaib (unseen).”
(Qur'an 3: 179)

‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr ibn Haraam’s reaction to the withdrawal of the Hypocrites

‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr ﷺ tried very hard to convince the hypocrites to come back, but they refused. He ﷺ called out to them saying, “I remind you about Allah and warn you not to betray your people and your Prophet at a time when their enemy has arrived.” The hypocrites responded, “Had we known that you are going to fight, we would not have surrendered you (to the will of your enemy). We think that there will not be any fighting.” When it became clear to him that they were not going to come back, ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr ﷺ said, “May Allah distance you (from all goodness), O enemies of Allah. For indeed, Allah will make matters take such a turn that his Prophet ﷺ will not need you in the least.”^[1] In regard to the hypocrites who fled with Ibn Salool, Allah ﷻ revealed the following Verses:

﴿وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعَانِ فِإِذِ اللَّهِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝١٦٦ وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا قَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَوْ ادْفَعُوا قَالُوا لَوْ نَعْلَمُ قِتَالًا لَاتَّبَعْنَكُمْ هُمْ لِلْكَفْرِ يَوْمِيذٍ أَقْرَبُ مِنْهُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ يَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ مَا لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَكْتُمُونَ ۝١٦٧﴾

“And what you suffered (of the disaster) on the day (of the battle

^[1] Refer to Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah (pg. 277).

of Uhud when) the two armies met, was by the leave of Allah, in order that He might test the believers. And that He might test the hypocrites, it was said to them: "Come, fight in the Way of Allah or (at least) defend yourselves." They said: "Had we known that fighting will take place, we would certainly have followed you." They were that day, nearer to disbelief than to faith, saying with their mouths what was not in their hearts. And Allah has full knowledge of what they conceal." (Qur'an 3: 166, 167)

Banu Salamah and Banu Haarithah

After it became clear that Ibn Ubai ibn Salool and his followers were not going to come back, the clans of Banu Salamah and Banu Haarithah were on the verge of withdrawing as well. But Allah ﷻ protected them, made their hearts firm, and even revealed a Verse about them:

﴿إِذْ هَمَّتْ طَّائِفَتَانِ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ تَفْشَلَا وَاللَّهُ وَلِيَهُمَا وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ﴾ (١٢٢)

"When two parties from among you were about to lose heart, but Allah was their Wali (Supporter and Protector). And in Allah should the believers put their trust." (Qur'an 3: 122)

Jaabir ibn 'Abdullah ؓ, a member of one of the two above-mentioned clans, said, "This Verse was revealed about us – about Banu Salamah and Banu Haarithah – and I would not love for it to not have been revealed, for in it Allah ﷻ says: 'But Allah was their Wali (Supporter and Protector).'"^[1]

The men of Banu Salamah and Banu Haarithah thought seriously about going back, but they strove to overcome their weakness, and once Allah ﷻ took it upon Himself to be their Protector and Supporter, they overcame their own selves. And as a result, doubt was supplanted by faith, indecision by resolve, and weakness by strength.

^[1] Saheeh Bukhaaree (4051).

Among the Companions ﷺ, there were two prevailing views about how to deal with Ibn Salool and his followers: The first was to kill them, and the second was to not kill them. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿فَمَا لَكُمْ فِي الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِتْنَةٍ وَاللَّهُ أَرْكَسَهُمْ بِمَا كَسَبُوا أَتُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَهْدُوا
مَنْ أَضَلَّ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ يُضِلِلِ اللَّهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيلًا ۝٨٨﴾

“Then what is the matter with you that you are divided into two parties about the hypocrites? Allah has cast them back (to disbelief) because of what they have earned. Do you want to guide him whom Allah has made go astray? And he whom Allah has made to go astray, you will never find for him any way (of guidance).” (Qur’an 4: 88)

Taking help from Non-Muslims

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ reached a place called Ash-Shaikhain, he saw a group of men who were making a lot of noise. He ﷺ inquired about them, and he was told that, “These are Jews who are allied to ‘Abdullah ibn Ubai ibn Salool.” The Jews of Al-Madeenah were contractually obliged to help the Muslims in their hour of need; nonetheless, just as the non-participation of Ibn Salool was in the best interests of the Muslims, so too was the non-participation of the Jews – especially since these particular Jews were allied to Ibn Salool. As if sensing that some Muslims might feel that they could use the help of the people they were passing by, the Prophet ﷺ said, “We will not seek the help of the people of polytheism against the people of polytheism.”^[1]

The Prophet ﷺ sends back Some Companions ﷺ because of their Young Age

Once he ﷺ made camp at Ash-Shaikhain, the Prophet ﷺ ordered some of his Companions ﷺ to return to Al-Madeenah because they were too young to fight – fourteen years old or younger.

^[1] Refer to *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* (pg. 278).

Examples of those sent back are the following Companions ﷺ: 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar ﷺ, Zaid ibn Thaabit ﷺ, Usaamah ibn Zaid ﷺ, Zaid ibn Arqam ﷺ, Al-Baraa ibn 'Aazib ﷺ, and Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudree ﷺ. In total, they were seventeen youths. At first, Raafai' ibn Khadeej ﷺ was among this group, but then the Prophet ﷺ gave him permission to fight when he ﷺ was told that Raafai' ﷺ was a skilled spear-thrower. When Samurah ibn Jundub ﷺ – one of those who was ordered sent back – heard about Raafai' ﷺ being given permission to fight, he ﷺ went to his mother's husband, crying and complaining about what had just happened. He ﷺ said, "O my father, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ accepted Raafai' and rejected me, even though I take Raafai' down (in wrestling)." His mother's husband, Murree ibn Sinaan ibn Tha'labah ﷺ – in whose home Raafai' was raised and who was the uncle of Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudree ﷺ – went to the Prophet ﷺ and informed him about what Raafai' ﷺ had told him. The Prophet ﷺ turned to Raafai' ﷺ and Samurah ﷺ and said, "Wrestle (against one another)." The two of them then wrestled, and Samurah ﷺ defeated Raafai' ﷺ, after which the Prophet ﷺ declared that both of them were allowed to fight in the upcoming battle.

Based on the fact that Samurah ﷺ and Raafai' ﷺ were accepted because of their fighting skills, we can safely conclude that one of the reasons why youths were not given permission to fight was the likelihood of them not being able to withstand intense fighting, which would result in their fleeing from the battlefield and, consequently, in the lowering of morale among the ranks of Muslim soldiers. Samurah ﷺ and Raafai' ﷺ, however, showed themselves to be more worthy than their fellow youths and more likely to endure the hardships of battle because of the skills they possessed.

It is also important to appreciate the degree to which the Companions ﷺ, both young and old, desired to struggle for the cause of Islam. It is truly amazing that so many youths who were supposed to remain safely in their homes tried instead to

participate in a very real battle, one that would likely end in their deaths. Their enthusiasm points to the sound educational methodology of the Prophet ﷺ, who taught his Companions ﷺ to long for the Hereafter and to turn away from worldly desires and ambitions.

The Prophet's Strategy For The Impending Battle

The Prophet's strategy against the polytheists was at worst brilliant and at best foolproof. After having sent back those who weren't fit to fight, the Prophet ﷺ chose fifty men among his Companions ﷺ to be archers. He ﷺ then divided his army into three battalions:

- 1) The battalion of the *Muhaajiroon*, whose banner the Prophet ﷺ gave to Mus'ab ibn 'Umayr ﷺ.
- 2) The battalion of the *Aus*, whose banner the Prophet ﷺ gave to Usaid ibn Hudair ﷺ.
- 3) The battalion of the *Khazraj*, whose banner the Prophet ﷺ gave to Al-Hubaab ibn Al-Mundhir ﷺ.

The speech given by the leader of an army prior to battle is always crucial: He must know his soldiers and use that knowledge to inspire them to the best of his ability. Islamic history books abound with examples of speeches that Muslim leaders gave to their soldiers prior to a battle, speeches that inspired many to fight bravely and to seek martyrdom. Here, according to a narration that is related by Al-Waaqidee, is the speech that the Prophet ﷺ gave just before the Battle of Uhud:

"O people, what Allah commanded me to do in His Book, I command you to do (now): Work in His obedience and desist from the matters that He forbade. Indeed, today you are in a place of reward and savings (i.e., reward that you are saving for the Hereafter), at least for those among you who know their responsibilities and then prepare themselves to fulfill them, upon patience, certainty (of faith), seriousness, and activeness. For indeed, fighting against the enemy is hard and unpleasant; few

are those who patiently do it. For indeed, Allah is with those who obey Him, and the *Shaitaan* (the Devil) is with those who disobey Allah. So begin your deeds with patience upon *Jihaad*, and in doing so, search out for what Allah promised you. And you must follow what I command you to do, for indeed, I ardently want you to do what is right. And indeed, discord, disagreement, and losing heart are part of what it means to be incapable and weak, which Allah ﷻ does not love, and for which Allah grants neither help nor victory.”^[1]

The Prophet ﷺ stressed three important themes in this speech: The need to work hard in the sphere of *Jihaad*, the importance of being patient upon meeting the enemy in battle, and the evil consequences of discord and disunity among the ranks of Muslims.

The strategic Importance of both Mount Uhud and Mount ‘Ainain

Facing Mount Uhud was Mount ‘Ainain, which was more like a large hill than a mountain. Arriving first at the battlefield, and discerning the strategic importance of both mountains, the Prophet ﷺ ordered his army to stand with their backs facing Mount Uhud; this way, the polytheists would be able to mount an attack from one front only, and the Muslims would have nothing to worry about in terms of being attacked from the rear of their army. And to make this strategy foolproof, the Prophet ﷺ placed fifty archers on the top of Mount ‘Ainain, for since ‘Ainain faced Uhud, it was highly likely that Quraish’s leaders would attempt, during the course of the battle, to send horsemen around ‘Ainain in order to attack the Muslims from behind, thus effectively trapping the Muslims from two sides. Fearing that eventuality, the Prophet ﷺ ordered the archers, under the leadership of ‘Abdullah ibn Jubair ؓ, to remain on top of Mount ‘Ainain and deter horsemen from attempting to go around it. The Prophet ﷺ ordered them to ignore what was happening on the battlefield and to remain where they were regardless of whether the

^[1] Refer to *Al-Maghaazee* by Al-Waaqidee (1/221, 222).

Muslims were winning or losing. He ﷺ said to them, "Even if you see that we are being snatched away by birds, do not leave this position of yours until I send for you. And even if you see that we have defeated the enemy and have crushed them, do not leave (this position) until I send for you."^[1] In more general terms, the Prophet ﷺ stressed the importance of obeying his command on the battlefield, saying to his army, "Do not move from here until I tell you to do so," and also saying to them, "Let no one (among you) fight until I order him to fight."

And he ﷺ said to the leader of the archers, "Shower their horsemen with arrows, so that they do not come upon us from behind. And remain firm in your position, regardless of whether we are winning or losing." He ﷺ also said to all of the archers, "Stay in your position; do not leave it. If you see us defeating them, even to the point that we enter their encampment, do not depart from your post. And if you see us being killed, do not help us or defend us. Instead, keep firing arrows at them, for horses will not approach when arrows are being fired. Indeed, we will remain victorious (today) so long as you stay in your place. O Allah, I indeed make You bear witness upon them (that I have conveyed to them their duty and mission for this battle)."^[2]

The Muslims took control of the high ground, leaving the valley for Quraish's army, so that Quraish's soldiers would have to face Uhud, and have their backs turned to Al-Madeenah. The archers on top of Mount 'Ainain had three important tasks: First, to take control of the mountaintop; second, to protect the Muslims from the rear of their army; and third, to prevent enemy horsemen from riding around the mountain and from approaching the Muslims.

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of *Jihaad* and *As-Siyar*, chapter "What is Disliked in Terms of Disagreement and Discord During War, and the Punishment of One Who Disobeys His Leader"; *Hadeeth* number: 3039.

^[2] Refer to *As-Seerah Al-Halabiyyah* (2/496); also, refer to *Seerah Ibn Hishaam*, to the chapter titled "The Messenger's Preparations for Fighting"; and refer as well to the following sources: *Fathul-Baaree*, in the explanation of *Hadeeth* number: 4043; *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtoom*; and *Taareekh At-Tabaree* (2/507).

Straightening the Rows

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ approached his Companions and straightened their rows in the same manner that he straightened the rows for prayer. He walked through the rows, saying, "Come forward, O so-and-so," and, "Move back, O so-and-so," continuing to do so until the rows were straightened.^[1] In the earlier rows he placed the strongest fighters, so that they could open the way for the fighters behind them.

^[1] Refer to *Al-Maghaazee* by Al-Waaqidee (1/219).

2

In The Heat Of The Battle

The Early Stages Of The Battles – Things Go Well For The Muslims

Before the battle began, Abu Sufyaan tried to divide the ranks of the Muslims. He sent a messenger to the *Ansaar*, saying to them, "Do not stand between us and our cousin (i.e., Prophet Muhammad ﷺ), and we will soon leave you, for we have no need to fight you." They of course gave a response that was most displeasing to him.^[1] When that did not work, the Quraish made another attempt, sending to the Muslims a treacherous native of Al-Madeenah – Abu 'Aamir Ar-Raahib (the monk). Abu 'Aamir went to certain members of the Aus tribe and said, "I am Abu 'Aamir," expecting that his return to Al-Madeenah would be welcome news to the Aus, but instead this is the response he received: "Then may Allah not make you pleased, O wicked-doer!" Upon hearing their response, Abu 'Aamir said, "Since I have parted from here, my people have become afflicted with evil." Later on that day, he fought fiercely alongside the polytheists and against the Muslims.

As was customary among Arabs, the battle was preceded by a duel. According to the author of *As-Seerah Al-Halabiyyah*, Talhah ibn 'Uthmaan, the bearer Quraish's banner on the Day of Uhud,

^[1] Refer to *Imtaa' Al-Asmaa'* by Al-Miqreezee (1/120).

came forward and demanded that an opponent come out and engage in a duel with him. No one from the Muslim army came forward. Talhah then said, "O Companions of Muhammad ﷺ, you indeed claim that Allah will hasten us to the Hellfire with your swords, and that He will hasten you to Paradise with our swords. So is there anyone among you who will hasten me to the Hellfire with his sword, or at least allow me to hasten him to Paradise with my sword?" 'Alee ؓ came forward and said to him, "By the One Who has my soul in His Hand, I will not part from you until Allah hastens you to the Hellfire with my sword or hastens me to Paradise with your sword." The two of them fought, and 'Alee ؓ delivered the first and only blow: a hit with his sword that cleanly severed Talhah's leg from his body. Talhah fell to the ground with blood gushing from his wound; the humiliation suffered by Talhah did not end there: as he fell to the ground, his garment was raised and his private areas became exposed. He pleaded with 'Alee ؓ, saying to him, "O my cousin, I ask you (to spare me) by Allah and by my familial relation to you." 'Alee ؓ then left him lying there, without finishing him off. And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ made *Takbeer* (i.e., he ﷺ said, '*Allahuakbar*,' Allah is the Greatest). Some of the Companions ؓ said to 'Alee ؓ, "Why did you not finish him off?" 'Alee ؓ responded, "Verily, when his private area became exposed, my cousin appealed to me based on my familial relation to him. I was too shy of him (to kill him while he was in that predicament and while his private area was exposed)."^[1]

The two armies then collided and the fighting was fierce. Wanting to motivate his Companions ؓ to fight bravely, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ took hold of a sword and said, "Who will take this from me?" A number of Companions ؓ extended their arms, with each one of them saying, "Me, me!" Without giving it to anyone, the Prophet ﷺ asked, "But who will take it and fulfill its right?" Everyone stepped back, and Simaak ibn Kharashah Abu

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah Al-Halabiyyah* (2/ 497-498) and to *Tafseer At-Tabaree* (7/218). The story is related in similar form in *Seerah Ibn Hishaam*.

Dujaanah ؓ asked, "And what is its right, O Messenger of Allah?" He ﷺ said, "For you to strike the enemy with it until it bends (out of shape)." Abu Dujaanah ؓ said, "I will take it and fulfill its right," upon which the Prophet ﷺ handed the sword over to him. A brave man, Abu Dujaanah ؓ was known to prance and strut during battle. When the Prophet ﷺ saw him prancing and strutting between the two rows (of the armies), he ﷺ said, "It is a way of walking that Allah hates (because it indicates arrogance and pride), except in a situation similar to this (because it raises the morale of Muslim army)." Imam Muslim related that Abu Dujaanah ؓ took the sword and began to split the heads of polytheists with it.^[1]

Az-Zubair ibn Al-'Awwaam ؓ later recounted Abu Dujaanah's feats on the Day of Uhud: "I was somewhat hurt when I asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ for the sword and he ﷺ refused to give it me, instead handing it over to Abu Dujaanah. I said, 'I am the son of Safiyyah, who is his (i.e., the Prophet's) aunt, and I am from the Quraish. I stood up to ask for it before Abu Dujaanah ؓ did the same, but the Prophet ﷺ gave it to Abu Dujaanah ؓ and left me (standing there). By Allah, I will see what he does.' And so I followed him; he took out a red head-cloth, which he tied around his head. And the people of the *Ansaar* said, 'Abu Dujaanah has taken out the head-cloth of death,' which is what they would say when he would tie it around his head. Whoever he met (from the enemy) he killed. As for the enemy, they had with them a man who would finish off every single one of our wounded men. That man and Abu Dujaanah ؓ were on a course to meet one another; they slowly came closer to one another, and I invoked Allah ﷻ to make them come together (and fight). They met and traded blows. The polytheist hit Abu Dujaanah ؓ, who warded off the blow with his shield. Abu Dujaanah ؓ returned the blow with a strike that killed the man. Then I saw him raise his sword over the

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, the Book of the Companions' Merits; *Hadeeth* number (2470); also, refer to *Seerah Ibn Hishaam*, to the chapter heading, "The Affair of Abu Dujaanah ؓ."

front part of Hind bint 'Utbah's head, but (instead of striking her with it) he turned the sword away from her. I said (to myself), 'Allah and His Messenger know best (as to whether he should have abstained from killing her).'^[1] Ibn Ishaq related that Abu Dujaanah ؓ said, "I saw a person who was fighting fiercely against us, and I went towards him (in order to fight him). When I raised my sword over him, he made a howling noise, and I realized that it was a woman (i.e., it was Hind bint 'Utbah), and I honoured the sword of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ by not striking a woman with it (which is why I abstained from killing her)."^[2]

The Archers Disobey The Prophet's Command

All of the Muslims fought valiantly, not caring for their own lives but for the victory of their army. There are various accounts that detail the feats that day of Hamzah ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib ؓ, Mus'ab ibn 'Umair ؓ, Abu Dujaanah ؓ, Abu Talhah Al-Ansaaree ؓ, Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ, and many others like them.

There was no doubt about the first half of the battle: The Muslims overwhelmed their enemy and were poised to win the battle. Allah ﷻ described that situation and the critical mistake that led to their defeat in the following Verse:

﴿وَلَقَدْ مَدَنَّا لَكُمُ اللَّهَ وَعْدَهُ إِذْ تَحُسُونَهُمْ بِإِذْنِهِ حَتَّى إِذَا فَشِلْتُمْ وَتَنَزَّعْتُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَعَصَيْتُمْ مِمَّا أَرْسَلْنَا مَا تَحِبُّونَ مِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ ثُمَّ صَرَفْنَا عَنْهُمْ لِبَتْلِيَكُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا عَنْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٥٢﴾﴾

"And Allah did indeed fulfill His Promise to you when you were killing them (your enemy) with His Permission; until (the

^[1] Refer to *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah* (4/17).

^[2] Refer to *Seerah Ibn Hishaam*, to the chapter "The Completion of Abu Dujaanah's Story."

Throughout the earlier stages of the battle, Quraish's horsemen, who were led by Khalid ibn Al-Waleed, did not participate in the battle, but instead stood to one side waiting for the opportune moment to join the fray. That moment was handed to them on a silver platter when the Muslim archers left their positions on top of Mount 'Ainain; furthermore, Khalid ibn Al-Waleed was too good of a military strategist to waste away the opportunity that was just given to him. And so he led his horsemen around Mount 'Ainain and mounted an assault on the Muslims from behind – so that his horsemen were situated between the Muslims and Mount Uhud. Until Quraish's horsemen mounted this assault, Quraish's other fighters were in the process of fleeing, showing all the signs that Uhud was simply going to be a repetition of Badr. But when they saw the Muslims in a state of confusion, and when they saw their horsemen mounting an effective attack on the rear of the Muslim army, they felt a renewed sense of hope. They stopped fleeing and began fighting. What the Prophet ﷺ tried to prevent – through placing archers on top of Mount 'Ainain – was actually happening: The Muslims were surrounded and were being attacked on two fronts.

As a result of what happened, the Muslims fought in a highly unorganized manner, to the degree that they couldn't distinguish between friend and foe. They unwittingly began to fight against one another, which resulted in at least one death, the death of Al-Yamaan ؓ, father of Hudhaifah ibn Al-Yamaan ؓ.

Muslims began to fall down as martyrs on the battlefield; and to exacerbate the situation, Muslim soldiers had no idea where the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was. Every Muslim the polytheists came across they killed. They penetrated the ranks of Muslim fighters, reaching very close to the Prophet ﷺ and even inflicting him with wounds. Pelted him with stones, they broke his noble nose and one of his teeth, and they broke open the skin on his noble face, which resulted in blood gushing forth from it. Anas ؓ related that, when blood began to pour down from his face, the Prophet ﷺ said, "How can a people succeed when they have

ruptured his skin (on his face) and have broken his tooth, and all that he did was invite them unto Allah?"^[1] Allah ﷻ then revealed the Verse:

﴿لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَوْ يُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ﴾ (١٢٨)

"Not for you (O Muhammad ﷺ, but for Allah) is the decision; whether He turns in mercy to (pardons) them or punishes them; verily, they are the Zaalimoon (polytheists, disobedients, and wrongdoers, etc.)." (Qur'an 3: 128)

On the battlefield, meanwhile, a man named Ibn Qamiah killed Mus'ab ibn 'Umair ﷺ, who bore a strong resemblance to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Perhaps because of that resemblance, the Quraish began to say, "Muhammad has indeed been killed," a lie that quickly spread among the ranks of both the Muslim army and Quraish's army.

Since they were being slaughtered, since they were scattered about and not united in one place, and since they heard reports about the Prophet's death, the Muslims began to flee from the battlefield, with some of them entering Al-Madeenah, while others sought refuge on top of Mount Uhud. That it was not easy for the polytheists to pursue Muslims who were climbing Mount Uhud is perhaps what saved many Muslims from being killed on that day.

While many Muslims fled and others, having heard false reports about the Prophet's death, sat down near the battlefield in a state of shock, some Muslims chose to seek out martyrdom. One such Muslim was Anas ibn An-Nadr ﷺ, who, for many months, was mourning the fact that he had not participated in the Battle of Badr. After the Battle of Badr was concluded, Anas ibn An-Nadr ﷺ said, "By Allah, if Allah allows me to participate in another battle alongside the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, Allah will indeed see what I will do!" He ﷺ showed on the Day of Uhud

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, the Book of *Jihad* and *Siyar*, chapter, "The Battle of Uhud"; *Hadeeth* number: 1791.

that he was truthful to his word. When the situation took a turn for the worse for the Muslims, Anas ؓ passed by a group of Muslims who were so shocked by the rumour of the Prophet's death, they tossed their weapons to the ground and stopped fighting. Anas ؓ asked them, "Why are you sitting down?" They answered, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has been killed!" He said, "O people, even if Muhammad ﷺ has been killed, the Lord of Muhammad has not been killed, so die for that which Muhammad ﷺ has died," after which he ؓ said, "O Allah, I excuse myself to you for what these people – i.e., the Muslims – have said, and I absolve myself from what these people – i.e., the polytheists of the Quraish – have come with." Anas ؓ then met Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh ؓ and said, "O Sa'd, I indeed smell the fragrance of Paradise beneath Uhud," upon which he launched himself into the midst of the battlefield, fighting with a ferocity that, if translated into words, would say, "Here I am fulfilling my pledge, O Allah!" The sword of Anas ؓ was lowered only when its owner finished breathing his last breath. Later on, when they came across his body, the Muslims counted more than eighty wounds on his body, wounds that rendered him unrecognizable and wounds that were caused by swords, spears, and arrows. Only his sister ؓ was able to recognize him, and even she ؓ was able to identify him only because she recognized the shape and size and texture of his fingers. The following saying of Allah ﷻ was revealed about Anas ؓ and others like him:

﴿مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُ
وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَنْتَظِرُ وَمَا بَدَّلُوا تَبْدِيلًا﴾ (٣٣)

"Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah [i.e., they have gone out for Jihaad (holy fighting), and showed not their backs to the disbelievers], of them some have fulfilled their obligations (i.e., have been martyred), and some of them are still waiting, but they have never changed [i.e., they never proved treacherous to their covenant which they concluded with Allah] in the least." (Qur'an 33: 23)

As for those Muslims ﷺ who fled in spite of the Prophet's entreaties for them to stand firm and fight, Allah ﷻ revealed this Verse about them:

﴿إِذْ تَضَعُونَ وَلَا تَكُونُ عَلَى أَحَدٍ وَالرَّسُولُ يَدْعُوكُمْ فِي أُخْرَاكُمْ فَأَثْبَكُمْ غَمًّا بِغَمٍّ لِّكَيْلَا تَحْزَنُوا عَلَى مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا مَا أَصَابَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥٣﴾﴾

“(And remember) when you ran away (dreadfully) without even casting a side glance at anyone, and the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) was in your rear calling you back. There did Allah give you one distress after another by way of requital to teach you not to grieve for that which had escaped you, nor for that which has befallen you. And Allah is Well-Aware of all that you do.”
(Qur'an 3: 153)

But in the end, as is confirmed in the following Verse, Allah ﷻ forgave them for fleeing from battle:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا مِنْكُمْ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعَانِ إِنَّمَا اسْتَزَلَّهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوا وَلَقَدْ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥٥﴾﴾

“Those of you who turned back on the day the two hosts met (i.e., the battle of Uhud), it was Shaitaan (Satan) who caused them to backslide (run away from the battlefield) because of some (sins) they had earned. But Allah, indeed, has forgiven them. Surely, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Forbearing.” (Qur'an 3: 155)

After the rumour of the Prophet's death spread throughout the ranks of both armies, the first person to find out that the Prophet ﷺ was actually alive and not dead was the Companion Ka'ab ibn Maalik ؓ, who raised his voice to announce the good news but was quickly silenced by the Prophet ﷺ, since, given the weakness of the Muslims and the consequent susceptibility of the Prophet ﷺ to an attack, it was not a good idea to let the polytheists know that he ﷺ was alive.

The Prophet's Strategy To Reunite And Reassemble His Army, And The Brave Men Who Defended Him

One of the main goals of Quraish's continued assault on the Muslims was to kill the Prophet ﷺ, who, despite seeing his Companions ﷺ fall down one after the other, remained steadfast on the battlefield. His situation looked precarious at best, for he ﷺ was surrounded on all sides by enemy soldiers. And the only men he had with him were nine Companions ﷺ, seven of whom were from the *Ansaar*. Trapped, and with no hope of overcoming the enemy, the Prophet ﷺ and his nine defenders ﷺ had no choice but to attempt to break through enemy lines and make their way to the mountain, so that they could join the rest of their army. While those nine men defended the Prophet ﷺ, and while they made their way to the mountain, they were killed one after another. Then Talhah ibn 'Ubaidullah ﷺ fought fiercely to defend the Prophet ﷺ, until finally he ﷺ was hit by an arrow that caused his right arm to become paralyzed. Having finally reached the mountain, the Prophet ﷺ tried but was unable to climb a large stone. Talhah ﷺ then sat down underneath, taking his weight and allowing him to reach and climb the top of the stone. Az-Zubair ﷺ said, "I then heard the Prophet ﷺ say, 'Talhah has made himself deserving (of Paradise).'^[1]

Another Companion who bravely defended the Prophet ﷺ on that day was Sa'd ibn Abee Waqaas ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ would hand him arrows and say, "Shoot, O Sa'd, may my mother and father be held ransom for you."^[2] Abu Talhah Al-Ansaaree ﷺ, one of the most skilled of archers, also strove valiantly to protect the Prophet ﷺ. According to a narration that is related by trustworthy narrators, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Indeed,

^[1] Refer to *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* (pg. 296) and to Ibn Hishaam, to the chapter, "The Messenger ﷺ Being Unable to Climb the Rock and Talhah ﷺ then Helps Him." This narration is also related by At-Tirmidhee, Ahmad, and Al-Haakim. Al-Haakim declared that the *Hadeeth* is authentic, and Adh-Dhahabee concurred with his assessment.

^[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of Battles (4055).

just the voice of Abu Talhah within the army is harder upon the polytheists than an entire platoon.”^[1] Not only was he firing arrows at the enemy; Abu Talhah ؓ also shielded the Prophet ﷺ with his own armour. To get more power into his shots, Abu Talhah ؓ would pull back very hard with the string of his bow, doing so to the extent that he broke two or three bows on that day. If a Muslim would pass by with a quiver of arrows, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would say to him, “(Hand them over) to Abu Talhah.”^[2] The Prophet ﷺ would then raise his head to look at the enemy, which would prompt Abu Talhah ؓ to say, “O Prophet of Allah ﷺ, may my father and mother be sacrificed for you, do not raise your head and expose yourself thus, for one of the enemy’s arrows might strike you. Let me be closer, so that it is my chest and not yours that they hit.”^[3]

The situation looked so bleak for the Prophet ﷺ that a woman approached in order to defend him. Using her sword when necessary and her bow and arrow when possible, Nusaibah bint Ka’ab ؓ stood as a shield in front of the Prophet ﷺ. And she ؓ too was afflicted with great wounds. Abu Dujaanah ؓ, whose feats have hitherto been discussed, stood right over the Prophet ﷺ, shielding him with his own body. Arrow after arrow struck him in his back while he literally acted like a shield and stood firmly above the Prophet ﷺ.

Abu Bakr ؓ and Abu ‘Ubaidah ؓ also fought valiantly to defend the Prophet ﷺ; furthermore, Abu ‘Ubaidah ؓ used his own teeth to extract the two arrows that were lodged in the face and mouth of the Prophet ﷺ. When the situation looked very bleak, a number of Muslims – around thirty in total – came to the rescue, warding off all of the enemy’s attempts to reach the Prophet ﷺ. Among those men were the following intrepid soldiers: Qataadah ؓ, Thaabit ibn Ad-Dahdaa ؓ, Sahl ibn Haneef ؓ, ‘Umar ibn Al-

^[1] *Al-Musnad*; also, refer to *Al-Fath Ar-Rabbaanee* (22/589); all of the narrators of this *Hadeeth* are trustworthy.

^[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree* (4064).

^[3] *Saheeh Bukhaaree* (4064).

Khattaab ؓ, 'Abdur-Rahmaan ibn 'Auf ؓ, and Az-Zubair ibn Al-'Awwaam ؓ.

With the aid of other Companions ؓ, 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ؓ thwarted Khalid ibn Al-Waleed's attempt to mount an offensive against the Muslims from the higher parts of the mountain. The mountain top was the only place the Muslims had controlled, and they knew that they had to fight hard to regain control of it from Khalid and his men, which is what they managed to accomplish. Soon thereafter the polytheists lost all hope of ending the battle with a decisive victory. True, they had the upper hand, but the fighting had been fierce, and they just didn't have the stamina to go on, while the Muslims, who were facing defeat, were fighting as if they could go on forever.

As the Quraish started to give up hope of achieving a decisive victory, the Prophet ﷺ saw the opportunity to withdraw and, more importantly, to regroup. He ﷺ, the Companions ؓ that were with him, and other Companions ؓ then met together in one of mountain passes of Mount Uhud. And even though the Muslims succeeded in driving back the polytheists, they were overcome with pain and sadness and fear. Allah ﷻ then sent down a slumber upon them, and they slept for a short while. As soon as they woke up, they all felt safe, reassured, and at peace. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿ثُمَّ أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْغَمِّ أَمْنَةً نُّعَاسًا يَغْشَى طَائِفَةً مِنْكُمْ وَطَائِفَةٌ قَدْ أَهَمَّتْهُمْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ يَظُنُّونَ بِاللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ ظَنَّ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَقُولُونَ هَلْ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ قُلْ إِنْ الْأَمْرُ كُلُّهُ لِلَّهِ يَخْشَوْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ مَا لَا يُبْدُونَ لَكَ يَقُولُونَ لَوْ كَانَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ مَا قُتِلْنَا هَاهُنَا قُلْ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ لَبَرَزَ الَّذِينَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَتْلُ إِلَى مَضَاجِعِهِمْ وَلِيَبْتَلِيَ اللَّهُ مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ وَلِيُمَحَّصَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿١٥٤﴾﴾

"Then after the distress, He sent down security for you. Slumber overtook a party of you, while another party was thinking about themselves (as how to save their own selves, ignoring the others

and the Prophet ﷺ) and thought wrongly of Allah – the thought of ignorance. They said, "Have we any part in the affair?" Say you (O Muhammad ﷺ): "Indeed the affair belongs wholly to Allah." They hide within themselves what they dare not to reveal to you, saying, "If we had anything to do with the affair, none of us would have been killed here." Say: "Even if you had remained in your homes, those for whom death was decreed would certainly have gone forth to the place of their death," but that Allah might test what is in your breasts; and to Mahis (this word has three meanings, 1) to test, 2) to purify, and 3) to get rid of) that which was in your hearts (sins), and Allah is All-Knower of what is in (your) breasts." (Qur'an 3: 154)

Scholars of *Tafseer* agree that the "Party (that) was thinking about themselves" refers to the hypocrites. As for the Quraish, its soldiers were exhausted. They ostensibly won the battle, but they were worn out; and the Muslims, who ostensibly lost the battle, were fresh and at peace from the moment that Allah ﷻ 'sent down security' upon them. It is because the Quraish lost hope of finishing off the Muslims that they left Uhud, having to feel content with what they had accomplished – a partial and tainted victory, partial and tainted because they did not achieve their primary goal of killing the Prophet ﷺ and because most of the Muslims survived the battle and would live on to fight future battles against the Quraish.

Some Of The Martyrs Of Uhud

1) Hamzah ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib ؓ: The Appointed Chief of All Martys on the Day of Resurrection

On the Day of Uhud, Hamzah ؓ fought no less bravely, valiantly, and skillfully than he ؓ did on the Day of Badr. He began the fighting by severing the heads of a number of men from the Banu 'Abd-Daar clan, all of whom were carrying banners of their army. While Hamzah ؓ was living up to his reputation as a dangerous and skilled soldier, a man named Wahshee was lying in wait for

him, looking for the opportune moment to kill him. Wahshee wanted nothing to do with the battle; he probably didn't really care who won; what was important to him was that he won something that day – his freedom. Perhaps it would be best to let Wahshee himself relate his story, which is at once tragic and moving:

During the Battle of Badr, Hamzah ؓ killed Tu'aimah ibn 'Adee ibn Al-Khiyaar. My master, Jubair ibn Mut'im (who was Tu'aimah's nephew), said to me, 'If you kill Hamzah in retaliation for his having killed my uncle, you will become a free man. When the people (of the Quraish) set out in the year of 'Ainain – 'Ainain being a mountain that faced Mount Uhud, and between the two there is a valley – I went with them to the battle. When they lined up in rows to fight, Sibaa' came out (from the rows) and said, 'Will anyone engage in a duel (with me)?' Hamzah ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib ؓ came out and said, 'O Sibaa', O son of Umm Anmaar do you dare to challenge Allah and His Messenger?' He then attack Sibaa', who became like the forgotten past (i.e., Hamzah killed him). I waited in ambush for Hamzah, placing myself underneath a stone. When he approached me, I threw my spear at him, aiming at and hitting his private area, so that it came out on the other side (of his body) from his hips; he died as a result. When the people returned (to Makkah), I returned with them and stayed in Makkah until Islam spread there (perhaps he is referring here to the year in which the Muslims conquered Makkah). Then I (probably fearing for his life) went to At-Taaif. Soon thereafter, the people of At-Taaif sent messengers to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. It was said to me, 'Messengers are not harmed,' and so I went out with them (to Al-Madeenah) until I reached there and entered into the presence of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. When he ﷺ saw me, he inquired, 'Are you Wahshee?' I said, 'Yes.' He ﷺ said, 'You killed Hamzah?' I said, 'What has reached you about me is true.' He ﷺ said, 'Are you then able to hide your face from me?' And so I left. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ died (by which time Wahshee had embraced Islam) and when Moosailamah the Liar came out, I said, 'I will go out to (meet) Moosailamah (in battle); perhaps I will (be able to) kill him and thus make up for what I did to Hamzah ؓ. I went out

with the people and (during the battle) there standing in an opening in the wall was a man. I threw my spear at him; it hit him in the middle of his chest and came out from between his shoulders. A man from the *Ansaar* then jumped on him and struck him with his sword on his head. 'Abdullah ibn Al-Fadl said that Sulaimaan ibn Yasaar informed him that he heard 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar ؓ say, "A young girl (one of Moosailamah's followers) who was on the roof of the house said, 'Oh! Alas for the leader of the believers; he was killed by a black slave (i.e., Wahshee ؓ).'"[1]

The Prophet ﷺ asks about the Death of Hamzah ؓ

Shortly after the conclusion of the battle, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked his Companions ؓ, "Who saw the death of Hamzah?" A man ؓ in the crowd answered, "I saw his death." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Go and show him to us." The man led the Prophet ﷺ until he reached the body of Hamzah ؓ. The Prophet ﷺ stood over him and saw how his stomach had been ripped open and how his body had been mutilated by the enemy. The man ؓ said, "By Allah, O Messenger of Allah, he was mutilated. According to one report, the Prophet ﷺ cried when he was informed about Hamzah's death, and sobbed when he later saw his corpse and how badly it had been mutilated.

The Prophet ﷺ stood over the martyrs, among whom was Hamzah ؓ, and announced, "I am a witness over these (martyrs); enshroud them in their blood, for indeed, any wound that is inflicted in the way of Allah will come bleeding on the Day of Resurrection. Its colour will be the colour of blood, but its smell will be the smell of *Al-Misk* (the best kind of perfume). So put forward (in the grave) those of them who know the most Qur'an, and place him (i.e., the one who knows the most Qur'an out of the two people who share a grave) in *Al-Lahd* (the side compartment of a grave)."[2]

[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of Battles, chapter, "The Death of Hamzah ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib ؓ"; *Hadeeth* number: 4072.

[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree* (4079).

The patience of Hamzah's Sister, Safiyyah bint 'Abdul-Muttalib ﷺ

Az-Zubair ibn Al-'Awwaam ﷺ said, "At one point during the Day of Uhud, a woman came racing [towards the battlefield (the battle had already been concluded)]. She was on the verge of getting to where she would be overlooking the corpses of dead (Muslims), and the Prophet ﷺ, who hated for her to see them, said, 'A woman! A woman!' From where I was, I was able to see that it was Safiyyah, and I raced towards her and managed to reach her before she reached the dead bodies [of fallen Muslim soldiers (her brother Hamzah ﷺ was among them)]. She then pushed me in my chest, (which was not surprising) for she certainly was a tough and hardy woman. She said, 'May you have no earth underneath you (to keep you standing)! Get away from me!' I said, 'Verily, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has commanded you (to stop).' She stopped and took out two garments that she had with her and said, 'Here are two garments that I have brought for my brother, Hamzah ﷺ, for news of his death has indeed reached me. So enshroud him in them.' We took the two garments with the intention of enshrouding Hamzah ﷺ in them, but when we reached him, we saw beside him a slain man from the *Ansaar* ﷺ, a man who was treated (by the enemy) in a similar manner to how Hamzah ﷺ was treated (in terms of being mutilated and disfigured). We were uncomfortable and shy with the idea enshrouding Hamzah ﷺ in two garments, while there was nothing in which the *Ansaaree* man could be enshrouded. We said (among ourselves), 'One garment for Hamzah, and one garment for the *Ansaaree* (man).' We measured the garments and found one of them to be longer than the other, and so we drew lots (to decide who was going to be enshrouded in the longer garment). We then enshrouded each one of them in the garment that was assigned to him through the drawing of lots."^[1]

^[1] Refer to *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* (pg. 285); also, refer to *Seerah Ibn Hishaam*, to the chapter titled: "Safiyyah ﷺ and Her Sadness for Hamzah ﷺ."

“There are no Women crying for Hamzah ؓ”

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned from Uhud, he heard *Ansaaree* women crying, which prompted him ﷺ to say, “But as for Hamzah ؓ, there are no women crying for him.” These words having been conveyed to them, the women of the *Ansaar* ؓ began to cry for Hamzah ؓ. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then fell asleep, and when he woke up, they were still crying. He ﷺ said, “O woe upon them! They are still crying since (earlier) today! Then let them cry, but after today, let them never again cry for a dead person.”^[1] It was then that *An-Niyaahah* became forbidden in Islam; *An-Niyaahah* is to cry out loud, while repeating phrases with which one, most often a woman, expresses one’s anger and bitterness over someone’s death. As time passed, more revelation was sent down to stress the wickedness of *An-Niyaahah*, to the degree that it became one of the “Major Sins.” Repeated warnings about *An-Niyaahah* were necessary since the practice had been deeply-rooted in Arab culture. The Prophet ﷺ said, “To practice *An-Niyaahah* over the dead is from the matters of *Al-Jaahiliyyah* (Pre-Islamic ignorance). If a woman who practices *An-Niyaahah* does not repent before she dies, then when she will be resurrected on the Day of Resurrection she will have upon her garments made of tar; then placed and ignited over them will be coats made of the blaze of Hellfire.”^[2] People stopped practicing *An-Niyaahah*, meaning that they stopped wailing complainingly about the deaths of their loved ones; nonetheless, it still being permissible to do so, they continued to cry when one of their loved ones died.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ Names a newborn after his Martyred Uncle ؓ

Jaabir ibn ‘Abdullah ؓ said, “A baby boy was born to one of our men and the people asked, ‘What should we name him?’ The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Name him with the most beloved of names to me:

^[1] Refer to *Saheeh Ibn Maajah* by Al-Albaanee, may Allah have mercy on him (1/265).

^[2] Refer to *Saheeh Al-Jaamai’ As-Sagheer* by Al-Albaanee (2/1151).

(the name of) Hamzah ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib.'"^[1] As is clear from this narration and from the fact that the Prophet ﷺ did not want to see the face of Wahshee ؓ, the Prophet ﷺ loved his uncle, Hamzah ؓ, a great deal. It is important to note, however, that even though Hamzah ؓ is a beautiful name, one that continues to be given to newborn Muslims today, Allah ﷻ later revealed to the Prophet ﷺ the names He ﷻ loves most. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Verily, the most beloved of your names to Allah are: 'Abdullah and 'Abdur-Rahmaan.'"^[2]

"So then are You able to hide Your face from Me?"

It appears that, after Wahshee ؓ embraced Islam, the Prophet ﷺ said to him, "So then are you able to hide your face from me?" which was more of a request than a question. This does not mean that Wahshee ؓ was doing something wrong or that the Prophet ﷺ was holding him responsible for his prior crime – that of killing Hamzah ؓ – for Islam erases what comes before it in terms of sins. No, the Prophet ﷺ said these words simply because he ﷺ wanted to let Wahshee ؓ know that seeing him brought back bad and painful memories, memories of his uncle being disfigured and mutilated. Continuing to see Wahshee would perhaps resulted in anger and pain that would not easily go away; the Prophet ﷺ asked Wahshee ؓ to leave his presence because he was the source of those bad memories.

According to an authentic narration, Wahshee ؓ said, "I went to the Prophet ﷺ and he ﷺ said to me, '(Are you) Wahshee?' I said, 'Yes.' He ﷺ said, 'You killed Hamzah?' I said, 'Yes, all praise is for Allah, Who honoured him (with martyrdom) at my hands, and Who did not humiliate me at the hands of Hamzah ؓ (i.e., I was not killed by him and was thus given the opportunity to repent).'

^[1] Related by Al-Haakim (3/196), and the chain of the narration is *Hasan* (i.e., acceptable).

^[2] *Saheeh Muslim*, the Book of *Al-Adab*, chapter, "It is Forbidden to Take on the *Kunyah* (Title) of Abul-Qaasim, and a Clarification of Those Names that are Recommended"; *Hadeeth* number: 2132.

The people of the Quraish said to the Prophet ﷺ, 'Do you love him even though he killed Hamzah?' I said, 'O Messenger of Allah, ask Allah to forgive me.' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ spit into the ground three times, after which he pushed me in my chest three times. He ﷺ then said, 'Wahshee, go out and fight in the way of Allah, just as you used to fight to hinder (men from following) the path of Allah.'"[1]

Here, the Prophet ﷺ gives advice to Wahshee ؓ that is applicable and relevant to new-Muslims and sinning Muslims alike: If you want to atone for your sins, do the exact opposite of the sins you used to perpetrate. If one used to steal, let him dedicate his life to giving charity; if one used to turn people away from Islam, let him dedicate his life to inviting people to Islam, and so on.

There probably were many ways for Wahshee ؓ to atone for his sins; embracing Islam, which is what he did, was first and foremost among those ways. Nonetheless, fighting in the way of Allah ﷻ was most appropriate considering how he had previously weakened the Muslim army by killing its most skilled and fiercest soldier.

To be sure, the Prophet's advice to Wahshee ؓ played some part in him going to Al-Yamaamah to fight in the apostate wars and to make Moosailamah the Liar his target, just as he had once made Hamzah ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib ؓ his target. After all, assassinations were what Wahshee ؓ specialized in, for the precise spear-thrower of yesterday was the precursor of the skilled marksman of today who can fire at a target from hundreds of meters away. Wahshee ؓ achieved his goal by killing Moosailamah, and he ؓ is reported to have later said, "I killed the best of people (i.e., Hamzah ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib ؓ), and I killed the worst of people, Moosailamah the Liar.""[2]

[1] Related by At-Tabaraanee in *Al-Kabeer*, and its chain is *Hasan* (acceptable) (22/139); *Hadeeth* number: 370; also, refer to *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* (pg. 286).

[2] Refer to *Muhammad Rasoolullah* by Saadiq 'Urjoon (3/602) and *Saheeh Bukhaaree* (4072).

Mus'ab ibn 'Umair ﷺ

Khabbaab ﷺ said, "Seeking the Countenance of Allah, we migrated with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and we hoped for our reward from Allah. There were those among us who did not take any early payment of that reward (instead preferring to save all of their rewards for the Hereafter). One of them was Mus'ab ibn 'Umair ﷺ, who was killed on the Day of Uhud. The only thing he left behind (in this world) was a single garment, so that, when we would cover his head, his legs would be left exposed. And when we would cover his legs, his head would be left exposed. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Cover his head (with the garment) and place *Al-Idhkir* (a kind of grass or herb or plant) over his legs.' And among us were those whose fruits became ripe (in this world) and they reaped them (i.e., they received an early reward in this world, in terms of the spoils of war they gained in the years during which Muslims conquered many lands)."

Once, when 'Abdur-Rahmaan ibn 'Auf ﷺ was fasting, food was brought to him and he ﷺ said, "Mus'ab ibn 'Umair ﷺ was killed, and he was better than me; yet nothing was found to enshroud him with except for a single garment. Hamzah ﷺ (or he mentioned another name) was killed, and he was better than me; yet nothing was found with which he could be enshrouded except for a single robe. I am indeed afraid that our good things and pleasures have been advanced to us in this world (i.e., I fear that we will not be rewarded in the Hereafter; he ﷺ said this not out of hopelessness, but out of a sense of feeling unworthy compared to other Companions ﷺ). He then began to cry and ended up not eating the food (that had been placed before him)."^[1]

Abu Hurairah ﷺ related that when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ left Uhud, he passed by the dead body of Mus'ab ibn 'Umair ﷺ. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood over him, supplicated for him, and recited this Verse:

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree* (1274, 1275)

﴿مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُ
وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَنْتَظِرُ وَمَا بَدَّلُوا تَبْدِيلًا ۝٢٣﴾

"Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah [i.e., they have gone out for Jihaad (holy fighting), and showed not their backs to the disbelievers], of them some have fulfilled their obligations (i.e., have been martyred), and some of them are still waiting, but they have never changed (i.e., they never proved treacherous to their covenant which they concluded with Allah) in the least." (Qur'an 33: 23)

He ﷺ then said, "I bear witness that these [Muslims who have died (and among them was Mus'ab ؓ)] will be martyrs with Allah on the Day of Resurrection, so go to them (to their graves) and visit them. For by the One Who has my soul in His Hand, whenever anyone greets them (from now) until the Day of Resurrection, they will return his greetings."^[1]

Sa'd ibn Ar-Rabee' ؓ

Sa'd ibn Ar-Rabee' ؓ was the one whom the Prophet ﷺ entrusted with secret information about the movements of Quraish's army. The Prophet ﷺ loved Sa'd ibn Rabee' a great deal. In fact, when the Battle of Uhud was concluded, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Who is the man who will go and see what happened to Sa'd ibn Ar-Rabee', to see whether he is among the living or the dead?" The Prophet ﷺ said this because he ؓ had seen, during the course of the battle, spears being aimed at Sa'd ؓ. Ubai ibn Ka'ab ؓ answered, "I will go and try to find him for you, O Messenger of Allah." The Prophet ﷺ said to him, "If you see Sa'd ibn Ar-Rabee', convey *As-Salaam* (greetings of peace) to him from me, and say to him: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ says to you, 'How do you find yourself to be?'"

^[1] Refer to *Al-Mustadrak* (3/200). Al-Haakim declared the chain of this narration to be authentic, and Adh-Dhahabee concurred with his grading of this *Hadeeth*.

When Ubai ؓ found Sa'd ؓ, the latter was lethally wounded but still had some – albeit very little – life left in him. Ubai ؓ said, "Verily, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ordered me to come and see whether you are among the living or the dead," to which Sa'd ؓ replied, "I have been stabbed twelve times"^[1] According to an authentic narration, Sa'd ؓ said to Ubai, "And peace be upon the Messenger of Allah as well as upon you. Say to him, 'O Messenger of Allah, I smell the fragrance of Paradise.' And say to my people from the *Ansaar*, 'You have no excuse with Allah if the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is reached (by the enemy) while you have eyes that blink (i.e., while you are still alive).'" Ubai ؓ later said, "That is when he died, and may Allah have mercy on him." Even with his dying breath, during a time when most people think only of themselves, Sa'd ؓ showed his sincerity to Allah ﷻ and to His Messenger ﷺ, advising his people to fulfill their pledge to defend and protect the Prophet ﷺ with their very lives.

'Abdullah ibn Jahsh ؓ

Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ reported that 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh ؓ said to him on the Day of Uhud, "Will you not supplicate to Allah?" The two of them then went to one side, and Sa'd ؓ began by saying, "O my Lord! When I meet the enemy, make me meet a man who is fierce and severe in his anger, make me fight him and him fight me, then bless me with victory over him until I kill him and take his things (any valuable thing he has on him)." 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh ؓ said, "*Aameen* (Amen)," after which he ؓ said, "O Allah, make me meet a man who is fierce and severe in his anger, make me fight him for You, and make him fight me; then allow him to take me and cut off my nose and ear, so that when I meet You tomorrow, You will say, 'Who cut off your nose and ear?' And I will say, 'It is for You and for Your Messenger (that it happened)?' And you will say, 'You have spoken the truth.'" When Sa'd ؓ was relating this *Hadeeth*, he said to his son or to someone else younger than him, "O my son, the supplication of 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh ؓ

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah Al-Halabiyyah* (2/532).

was better than my supplication. I indeed saw him later on that day, and his nose and ear were hanging on a thread.” It is clear that, in Islam, it is forbidden for a person to ask Allah ﷻ to make him die; nonetheless, based on this narration, it is also clear that asking to die in the way of Allah ﷻ as a martyr is an exception and does not fall under that general ruling.

Hanzalah ibn Abee ‘Aamir ﷺ

At some point during the Battle of Uhud, Hanzalah ﷺ, who was fighting on foot, went after Abu Sufyaan ibn Harb, who was riding a horse. Hanzalah ﷺ struck Abu Sufyaan’s horse with his sword; as a result of his blow, both rider and horse fell down, and Abu Sufyaan let out a scream. Given that Abu Sufyaan was Quraish’s chieftain, he most probably had many men around him to protect him; therefore, Hanzalah ﷺ knew that, if he was going to finish Abu Sufyaan off, he would have to do so quickly. But he couldn’t do it quickly enough, for before he ever reached Abu Sufyaan, Shaddaad ibn Al-Aswad reached him and wounded him with a spear. Holding on to the spear, Hanzalah ﷺ continued to make his way towards Abu Sufyaan to finish him off, but Shaddaad then killed him with a second lethal blow.

What happened to Hanzalah ﷺ was mentioned to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who said, “Verily, between the heavens and the earth I saw the angels washing him with the water of Al-Muzn in sheets of silver.” He ﷺ then said to his Companions ﷺ, “Ask his family about his situation.” They ﷺ asked Hanzalah’s wife about his situation, and she ﷺ answered them by saying, “When he heard the caller (cry out that it was time to go out for battle), he left immediately, even though he was in a state of major impurity (i.e., the impurity that results from having sexual intercourse and that is removed by taking a shower).” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Then that is why the angels washed him.”^[1]

^[1] Refer to *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* (Pg. 289); to *Seerah Ibn Hishaam*, to the chapter titled, “Handhalah ﷺ, the Man Who was Washed by the Angels”; and to *Fathul-Baaree*, to the explanation of *Hadeeth number* : 1346.

According to Al-Waaqidee's account of what happened, Hanzalah ibn Abee 'Aamir ؓ consummated his marriage to Jameelah bint 'Abdullah ibn Ubai ibn Salool ؓ on the night before the Battle of Uhud took place. He ؓ had asked the Prophet ﷺ for permission to spend the night with her, and the Prophet ﷺ gave him permission to do so. Early in the morning, after he performed *Fajr* prayer, Hanzalah ؓ wanted to go out and join the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the rest of the Muslim army. Jameelah ؓ, however, held on to him, and he went back inside and had sexual intercourse with her. Time was running so short that, according to Al-Waaqidee's account, Hanzalah ؓ had to quickly leave without taking a bath to purify himself. Before he left, she sent for four of her fellow clansmen to bear witness that Hanzalah ؓ had consummated his marriage with her. At a later time she was asked, "Why did you make people bear witness upon him (that he had had sexual relations with you)?" She ؓ responded, "It was as if I saw (in a dream) that a gap opened up in the sky, that Hanzalah ؓ entered it, and that it then closed up. I said (to myself), 'This means martyrdom (i.e., this means that Hanzalah ؓ will be martyred).' And so I made people bear witness that he entered upon me (and I made him enter upon me because I wanted to have the son of a martyr)." Around nine months later, Jameelah ؓ gave birth to 'Abdullah ibn Hanzalah ؓ; afterwards, Thaabit ibn Qais ؓ married her, and she ؓ bore him a son as well, Muhammad ibn Thaabit ibn Qais ؓ.^[1]

The Lessons and Morals of This Story

There are a number of lessons we can learn about the Companions ؓ and about true faith from the above-mentioned story:

- 1) After she saw a dream which she interpreted to mean the martyrdom of Hanzalah ؓ, Jameelah bint 'Abdullah ibn Ubai ؓ still clung to him and still desired to have his child. Given the circumstances, one would think that she ؓ would have

^[1] Refer to *Al-Maghaazee* by Al-Waaqidee (1/273).

tried to stay away from him, so as to avoid becoming pregnant; after all, a pregnant widow is not the most sought after woman for marriage. Nonetheless, she engaged in sexual intercourse with him in the hopes of having a son who would be ascribed to a martyr. Jameelah ؓ got what she wanted; she bore Hanzalah's son, whom she named 'Abdullah ؓ. 'Abdullah ؓ achieved many good things later on in his life, but he ؓ was most proud not of his own achievements but of being able to say, "I am the son of the one who was washed by the angels."

- 2) So eager was Hanzalah ؓ to face the enemy that he left his home without first purifying himself; he ؓ thus exemplified the sincerity of the Prophet's Companions ؓ and their desire to sacrifice their lives for the cause of Islam.
- 3) Once on the battlefield, Hanzalah ؓ showed just how brave he ؓ was: Instead of going after foot soldiers, he ؓ went after a horseman, who, moreover, was the leader of Quraish's army. Hanzalah ؓ was at a disadvantage not only because he was on foot while Abu Sufyaan was on horseback, but also because the latter, being the leader of the Quraish, was surrounded by men who were protecting him, which accounts for the speed with which Shaddaad pounced upon Hanzalah ؓ after the latter's initial attack.
- 4) Allah ﷻ bestowed a great honour upon Hanzalah ؓ by sending down angels to wash him with the water of *Al-Muzn* in sheets of silver.
- 5) We learn from Hanzalah's story that if a martyr dies in a state of major impurity, he should be washed before he is buried.^[1]

'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn Haraam ؓ

In spite of the pressing needs of his family, 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn Haraam ؓ was adamant about participating in the Battle of Uhud. Before leaving, he said to his son Jaabir ؓ, "O Jaabir, you

^[1] Refer to *Zaad Al-Ma'aad* (3/214).

will do no wrong by staying within Al-Madeenah until you find out what happens to us. For by Allah, had it not been for the daughters I am leaving behind (and who need someone to take care of them), I would have loved for you to be killed (as a martyr) in my presence.”^[1] ‘Abdullah ؓ also said to his son, “I think that I will certainly be among the first of the Prophet’s Companions ؓ to be killed, and, with the exception of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, I am not leaving anyone behind who is dearer to me than you. And I have a debt to pay, so pay it off (on my behalf). And treat your sisters well.”^[2]

Just as he had foreseen, ‘Abdullah ؓ was martyred during the Battle of Uhud. His son Jaabir ؓ later discussed his father’s death, saying, “When my father was killed on the Day of Uhud, I uncovered his face and began to cry. The Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ began to order me to stop (doing what I was doing), but the Prophet ﷺ did not order me to stop. When my aunt then began to cry for him, the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whether you cry or don’t cry, (you should know that) the angels continued to shade him with their wings until you raised him (perhaps this means: until you raised him to his grave; and Allah ﷻ knows best).”^[3]

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to Jaabir ؓ, “O Jaabir, why is it that I see you broken (and down)?” He ؓ said, “O Messenger of Allah, my father was martyred, and he left behind dependants and a debt.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Shall I not give you glad tidings of how Allah met (or welcomed) your father?” Jaabir ؓ said, “Yes, O Messenger of Allah.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah has never spoken to anyone except from behind a barrier, but He spoke to your father directly (without that barrier). O Jaabir, do you not know that Allah gave life (again) to your father and said,

^[1] Refer to *Musnad Al-Imam Ahmad*, to the *Musnad* of Jaabir ibn ‘Abdullah ؓ; also, refer to *Mujma’ Az-Zawaaid*, the Book of Trade, chapter, “Paying Off the Debts of the Deceased.”

^[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of Funerals, chapter, “If There is Just Reason to Do So, May a Dead Person be Exhumed From His Grave or from Al-Lahd (The Side Compartment of a Grave)” ; *Hadeeth* number: 1351.

^[3] *Saheeh Bukhaaree* (1244).

'O my slave, wish for something from Me, and I will give it to you.' He answered, 'My Lord, bring me back to life, so that I can be killed for You a second time.' The Lord said, 'It has been previously decided by Me that they (human beings) will not return to it (to the world after dying).' Jaabir said, 'O my Lord, then convey (what has happened to me) to those that I have left behind.'"^[1] Allah ﷻ then revealed the Verse:

﴿وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أَحْيَاءُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ﴾
 ﴿١٦٩﴾

"Think not of those who are killed in the Way of Allah as dead. Nay, they are alive, with their Lord, and they have provision."
 (Qur'an 3: 169)

Similarly confirming the continued living of martyrs is another narration, in which, prior to the Battle of Uhud, 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ؓ saw a dream. He ؓ said, "Before Uhud, I saw in my sleep Mubasshir ibn 'Abdul-Mundhir, who said to me, 'You are coming to us after a number of days.' I asked, 'And where are you?' He ؓ said, 'In Paradise, throughout which we can travel howsoever we desire.' I asked him, 'Weren't you killed on the Day of Badr?' He ؓ said, 'Yes, then I was brought back to life.'" 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ؓ mentioned what he saw to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who said, "This is (the reality of) martyrdom, O father of Jaabir."^[2] By the Grace, Mercy, and Kindness of Allah ﷻ, 'Abdullah's dream came true.

Khaithumah Abu Sa'd ؓ

We have hitherto discussed half of Khaithumah's story: He ؓ was the Companion who drew lots with his son to see who could

^[1] *Saheeh Ibn Maajah* by Al-Albaanee (may Allah have mercy on him) (158-189). Refer as well to *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of *Jihaad* and *As-Siyar*, chapter, "That the Mujaahid Wishes to Return to this World (in Order to be Martyred All Over Again)"; *Hadeeth* number: 2817. Also, refer to the explanation of this *Hadeeth* in *Al-Fath*.

^[2] Refer to *Zaad Al-Ma'ad* (3/208).

participate in Badr and who had to stay behind to take care of their family. His son's lot was drawn and was subsequently martyred during the course of the battle. This time around, Khaithumah ؓ knew that there was going to be a battle, and he ؓ also knew that he was, Allah willing, going to be one of its participants. Just before Uhud took place, he ؓ said to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, "I missed the Battle of Badr, but by Allah, I really wanted to participate in it, to the degree that I drew lots with my son to see who could go. His lot was drawn, and he was then granted martyrdom. Last night, while I was sleeping, I saw my son in the best of appearances; he was travelling by the fruits and rivers of Paradise, all the while saying (to me), 'Join us and be our companion in Paradise, for indeed, I have found to be true that which my Lord has promised me.' O Messenger, I have come to long to become his companion in Paradise. I am advanced in years, and my bones have become brittle. And I would love to meet my Lord, so invoke Allah, O Messenger of Allah, to grant me martyrdom and the companionship of Sa'd (his son) in Paradise." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ made the requested supplication for him, and his supplication was answered, for Khaithumah ؓ was martyred during the Battle of Uhud.^[1]

Wahb Al-Muzanee ؓ and his Nephew ؓ

Coming from a mountain called Muzainah, Wahb ibn Qaaboos Al-Muzanee ؓ and his nephew Al-Haarith ibn 'Uqbah ibn Qaaboos ؓ travelled to Al-Madeenah with some sheep that they owned. Upon arriving in Al-Madeenah, they were surprised to find it virtually empty. They asked, "Where are the people?" Those that they asked responded, "At Uhud. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has gone out to fight the polytheists of the Quraish."

The two of them then quickly departed for Uhud, and by the time they reached there, they found that the battle had already begun. Their arrival coincided with the early stages of the battle, during which the Muslims had the upper hand. They did as their Muslim

^[1] Refer to *Zaad Al-Ma'ad* (3/208).

brothers did and began to pick up the spoils of war; a number of horsemen, among whom were Khalid ibn Al-Waleed and 'Ikrimah ibn Abee Jahl, attacked them from behind. The fighting then renewed with great intensity. As a unit of polytheist fighters separated from their army, probably to launch a concentrated attack on the Prophet ﷺ, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Who will take care of this unit?" Wahb ibn Qaaboos ؓ said, "I will, O Messenger of Allah." He ؓ then stood up and began to fire arrows at them and continued to do so until they retreated.

Another unit of men then emerged from Quraish's army, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ again asked, "Who will take care of this unit?" And again, Wahb ibn Qaaboos ؓ said, "I will, O Messenger of Allah." He then went out and single-handedly repelled their attack with his sword. Shortly after Wahb ؓ returned to the Prophet ﷺ, a third unit of polytheist fighters separated from their army and headed towards the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Who will stand up to these (fighters)?" Wahb ؓ said, "I will, O Messenger of Allah."

Whether he ؓ found out through revelation or simply by the fact that Wahb ؓ was greatly outnumbered, the Prophet ﷺ sensed that this was going to be Wahb's final foray on the battlefield. He ؓ said, "Stand up, and (go with) glad tidings of (having achieved) Paradise!" Wahb ؓ stood up in a very happy frame of mind; he ؓ raced towards the oncoming attackers, and once in their midst, he fought bravely until his last breath; meanwhile, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was saying, "O Allah, have mercy on him." When Wahb's body was located, it was found to have on it twenty wounds that were inflicted by spears; individually, each would be lethal; and furthermore, his body was severely mutilated. Once Wahb ؓ was killed, his nephew, Al-Haarith ibn 'Uqbah ؓ, took his place on the battlefield, and he too achieved martyrdom on that day. From that day onward, 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ؓ would say, "Verily, the most beloved of deaths for me to die upon, is the way upon which (Wahb) Al-Muzanee died."^[1]

^[1] Refer to *Al-Maghaazee* by Al-Waaqidee (1/275).

Wahb ؓ was from the area of Muzainah, which is why he is referred to as being Muzanee. One of his fellow clansmen, Bilaal ibn Al-Haarith Al-Muzanee, participated years later in the Al-Qaadisiyyah War, alongside the famous Companion Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ. Bilaal ibn Al-Haarith had with him a young man from the family of Qaaboos (Wahb's family). Taking the young man with him, Bilaal went to Sa'd ؓ when the latter was just waking up from his sleep. Upon seeing Bilaal, Sa'd ؓ exclaimed, "Welcome! Who is this person that is with you?" Bilaal said, "A man from my people; he is from the family of Qaaboos (from Wahb's family)." Sa'd ؓ asked the young man, "O young man, what is your relation to the *Al-Muzanee* man (i.e., Wahb ؓ) who was killed on the Day of Uhud?" The young man answered, "I am his brother's son." Sa'd ؓ said, "Welcome, and welcome again! And may Allah bestow upon you (many) blessings. As for your uncle, I witnessed from him on the Day of Uhud that which I have never witnessed from anyone else. I remember clearly that we were surrounded by the polytheists from all directions and that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was standing in the middle of our ranks. Units were appearing (to attack us) from all directions. Looking around at our fighters and scrutinizing them, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would say, 'Who will take care of this unit?' Each time the Prophet ﷺ said that (about a different unit), (Wahb) Al-Muzanee would answer, 'I will, O Messenger of Allah!' He gave the same answer every time. And I cannot forget the last time he stood up. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said (to him), 'Stand up and rejoice for (having achieved) Paradise!' I stoop up to follow him; Allah knows that I was seeking what he was seeking on that day in terms of martyrdom. We entered into the heat of the battle and they killed him (may Allah have mercy on him). By Allah, I ardently desired to be killed on that day with him, but my appointed time for death was delayed." Sa'd ؓ then asked for a particular arrow; he gave it to Wahb's nephew, and treated him with a great deal of kindness. And he ؓ asked him, "Choose between staying here with us and returning to your family." Bilaal ؓ answered on behalf of his nephew, saying, "He

prefers to return," and so the both of them returned to Muzainah. Sa'd ؓ also said to them about Wahb ؓ, "I bear witness that I indeed saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ standing over his dead body, and (I heard him) saying, 'May Allah be pleased with you, for I am indeed pleased with you.' I then saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stand up on his feet, even though he had just been wounded. I knew that standing up over his grave until he was placed in its side compartment was difficult for the Prophet ﷺ (but he ﷺ did so nonetheless). There is no way of dying that I would more love to (die upon and to) meet Allah ﷻ upon than the way upon which (Wahb) Al-Muzanee died."^[1]

From Wahb's story we can see the impact that true faith has on a person's character. Leaving behind their sheep in Al-Madeenah, both uncle and nephew hurried eagerly not only to reach the battlefield in time, but also to achieve martyrdom. For each time the Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked for a volunteer to undertake a dangerous mission, Wahb ؓ volunteered without hesitating for even a moment. The deaths Wahb ؓ caused and the way in which he ؓ died himself remained firmly ingrained in the collective memory of the Prophet's Companions. Around thirteen years after the Battle of Uhud took place, Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ was reminded about Wahb ؓ simply by hearing the name of a man who was from Muzainah. Throughout those thirteen years, Sa'd ؓ longed to die in the same honourable way in which Wahb ؓ had died. May Allah be pleased with them both and with all of the Prophet's Companions.

'Amr ibn Al-Jamooth ؓ

'Amr ibn Al-Jamooth ؓ was handicapped; one of his legs was defective, causing him to walk with an extreme limp. He ؓ was blessed with four brave sons, Khallaad ؓ, Mu'awwadh ؓ, Mu'aadh ؓ, and Abu Ayman ؓ, all of whom participated in battles alongside the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. On the Day of Uhud,

^[1] *Al-Maghaazee* by Al-Waaqidee (1/277).

the four sons wanted to bar their father from going with them to do battle. They ﷺ said to him, "Verily, Allah has excused you (from fighting)." Apparently he ﷺ was not willing to listen their pleas, and they in turn were not willing to let him go out with them, which is why he ﷺ went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said, "Verily, my children want to bar me (from fighting) and from going out with you for that purpose. By Allah, I want to tread in Paradise with this lameness of mine." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to him, "As for you, Allah Ta'aalah (the Exalted) has excused you, so there is no *Jihaad* upon you." And he ﷺ said to 'Amr's children, "You will do no wrong by not stopping him, for perhaps Allah will grant him martyrdom." Based on these words of the Prophet ﷺ, 'Amr's children did not make any more attempts to stop their father from fighting at Uhud. Facing the Qiblah as he left for Uhud, 'Amr ﷺ repeated the words: "O Allah, do not return me to my family a failure." Allah ﷻ answered his supplications: he ﷺ died that day during battle.

According to one narration, 'Amr ibn Al-Jamooah ﷺ went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said, "O Messenger of Allah, suppose that I fight in the way of Allah until I am killed. Will I walk with this (defective) leg of mine in Paradise while it is normal and healthy?" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ answered, "Yes." Then on the Day of Uhud, the polytheists killed 'Amr ﷺ, his nephew ﷺ, and one of their freed slaves ﷺ. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed by their dead bodies and ordered for them to be placed in the same grave.^[1] 'Amr's story proves that, if a person is excused from having to participate in *Jihaad* because of some illness or handicap, and if he still wants to go out and fight, he may do so.

Abu Hudhaifah ibn Al-Yamaan ﷺ and Thaabit ibn Qais ﷺ

As the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ were getting ready to leave for Uhud, women, children, and old men were being

^[1] Refer to *Al-Musnad* (5/299); *Hadeeth* number: 22553; also refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Hishaam, to the chapter, "The Killing of 'Amr ibn Al-Jamooah ﷺ."

taken to fortresses, where they would, in safety, await the outcome of the battle. Two old men in particular took offense at being herded off with the women and children; those two men were Husail ibn Jaabir ؓ, who was also known as Al-Yamaan Abu Hudhaifah ibn Al-Yamaan, and Thaabit ibn Waqsh ؓ. One of them said to the other, "May you have no father! What is it that you are waiting for? For by Allah, all that remains in your life and mine is the period during which a donkey pauses between one sip (of drink) and another. Indeed, we will die either today or tomorrow. Shall we not then take our swords and catch up with the Messenger of Allah? Perhaps Allah will grant us martyrdom while we are with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ."

The two old men took their swords and made their way towards Uhud. Once there, they joined in the fighting, though the Muslims did not realize that they were there on the battlefield. As for Thaabit ibn Waqsh ؓ, the polytheists killed him. But as for Husail ibn Jaabir ؓ, Muslims, who were not aware of his presence, assumed that he was an enemy fighter and killed him. Husail's son, Hudhaifah ؓ, screamed out, "My father!" The Muslims ؓ who killed him answered, "By Allah, we did not recognize him," and they were telling the truth. Hudhaifah ؓ said, "May Allah forgive you all (for what you have done), for indeed, He ﷻ is the Most Merciful of the merciful ones." Later on the Messenger of Allah ﷺ wanted to pay blood money for Husail's death, but instead of taking the money for himself, Hudhaifah ؓ gave it as charity to the Muslims, an act of selflessness and forgiveness that certainly increased his standing with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

From this story we see how even old men – who were excused from *Jihaad* – longed to die for the cause of Islam. They understood the reality that death is inevitable, whether it overcomes a man during his sleep, through an illness, or on the battlefield; what matters, therefore, is not when one dies but how one dies. Furthermore, we should appreciate the noble character of Hudhaifah ؓ, who forgave his Muslim brothers, having come to the correct conclusion that they had killed his father by mistake and not on purpose.

It is the Final Deed that Counts

What matters most in a person's life is his final deed, the one he performs just before dying. A man might worship Allah ﷻ his entire life but still die upon disbelief (may Allah protect each of us from being such a man), and a man might disbelieve his entire life but still die upon Islamic Monotheism and faith, so that he becomes one of the dwellers of Paradise. This reality is exemplified by two men ؓ who fought in the Battle of Uhud:

1) Al-Usairim ؓ

Al-Usairim's actual name was 'Amr ibn Thaabit ibn Waqsh. Though he was invited to do so, he refused to embrace Islam, and he also refused to allow his people to embrace Islam. It was Abu Hurairah ؓ who related his story, saying, "Verily, Al-Usairim used to refuse, on behalf of himself and his people, to embrace Islam. Then one day he came (to Al-Madeenah), but the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his Companions ؓ were at Uhud. Al-Usairim asked about them, and he was told that, 'They are at Uhud.' It was at that point that Al-Usairim ؓ became convinced about (the truthfulness of) Islam, and so he forthwith embraced it. Taking his sword, spear, and the rest of his fighting gear, he mounted his horse and raced off until he reached the people (at Uhud)."

When the Muslims saw Al-Usairim ؓ, they said to him, "Get away from us, O 'Amr," to which he ؓ responded, "Verily, I have come to believe (in Islam)." He then fought against the polytheists and suffered at their hands a number of lethal wounds. Later on, while the men of the Banu 'Abdul-Ashhal clan were looking for their fallen friends and relatives on the battlefield, they came across the fatally wounded but still alive Al-Usairim ؓ. "By Allah, this is Usairim," they said to one another. "What has brought him here? When we last left him, he disbelieved (in Islam)" These particular men ؓ had not been informed that Al-Usairim ؓ had just embraced Islam. They then asked him, "What has brought you here? Was it sympathy for your people? Or was it a desire to embrace Islam?" He ؓ answered, "Rather, it was a

desire to embrace Islam. I have come to believe in Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ, and I have embraced Islam. Having done so, I took my sword and set out (on the battlefield) with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. I then fought until I was inflicted with what I have obviously been inflicted with. If I die (from these wounds), then all of my wealth goes to Muhammad ﷺ, and he may do with it as he pleases." The men who found him later mentioned his story to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who said, "Verily, he is from the people of Paradise."

Al-Usairim ؓ soon became famously known as the man who entered Paradise without having performed a single prayer. The Prophet ﷺ said about him, "He worked only a little, but he has been rewarded a great deal."^[1] Abu Hurairah ؓ, who narrated Al-Usairim's story, used to say to people, "Tell me about the man who entered Paradise without having ever performed a single Prayer?" If the people he asked did not know the answer, they would ask him who that man was, and Abu Hurairah ؓ would then respond, "That man is Usairim ibn 'Abdul-Ashhal ؓ."^[2]

2) Mukhaireeq ؓ

Based on a treaty they had signed with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the Jews of Al-Madeenah were required to help and defend their Muslim neighbours if they came under attack. When the Battle of Uhud was about to begin, the Jews of Al-Madeenah offered no such help, nor did the Prophet ﷺ ask for or want their help. Nonetheless, a Jewish man named Mukhaireeq gathered his people and said to them, "O Jewish people, by Allah, you know that helping Muhammad ﷺ is your duty," to which they replied, "Verily, today is Saturday (a day of rest and not of fighting)." He said, "May you have no Saturday."

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of *Jihaad* and *As-Siyar*, chapter, "Doing Good Deeds Before Battle"; *Hadeeth* number: 2808.

^[2] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Hishaam (3/100, 101) and to *Fathul-Baaree*, to the explanation of *Hadeeth* number: 2808.

Incensed by the treachery of his people, Mukhaireeq ؓ took his sword and his fighting gear and said, "If I am killed (during the course of this battle), then all of my wealth goes to Muhammad ؐ, who may do with it as he pleases." He ؓ then went to the Messenger of Allah ؐ and fought alongside him until he achieved martyrdom. The Messenger of Allah ؐ said about him, "Mukhaireeq is the best among Jews."

Scholars disagree about whether Mukhaireeq ؓ actually embraced Islam or whether he fought as a Jew who wanted to fulfill the terms of the treaty his people had signed with the Prophet ؐ. Both Adh-Dhahabee, in *At-Tajreed*, and Ibn Hajr, in *Al-Isaabah*, reported from the famous historian Al-Waaqidee that Mukhaireeq died a Muslim. And in *Ar-Raud Al-Anf*, As-Suhailee also maintained that Mukhaireeq ؓ died a Muslim. The disagreement in this issue revolves around the Prophet's saying, "Mukhaireeq is the best among Jews," since it is not said about a Muslim that he is "The Best among Christians," or the "Best among Jews," since saying so clearly ascribes a person to those religions. On the other hand, the Prophet ؐ said Yahood (Jews) and not Al-Yahood, which means 'the Jews.' As he ؐ said Yahood, he ؐ might have meant that Mukhaireeq ؓ was the best among the descendants of Yahood, since Jews are descended from a man named Yahoodhah ibn Ya'aqoob – and the word Yahoodhah became Yahood. A more recent scholar, Dr. 'Abdullah Ash-Shiqaaaree, presented a scholarly study about Mukhaireeq ؓ in his book, *Al-Yahood Fis-Sunnah Al-Mutaahara*. After presenting the various proofs regarding Mukhaireeq's story, Dr. Ash-Shiqaaaree championed the view that he embraced Islam before he died. It is because he embraced Islam, Dr. Ash-Shiqaaaree argues, that he fought alongside Muslims and gave all of his wealth – and he was a very rich man – in charity to Muslims and none of it to his relatives and fellow tribesmen, which clearly indicates that he ؓ was cutting off all ties with Jews and showing complete loyalty to Allah ؐ, His Messenger ؐ, and the Muslims.

Verily, deeds are based upon Intentions

"Verily, deeds are based upon intentions," is, because of its importance, the first *Hadeeth* related in *Saheeh Bukhaaree* and many other *Hadeeth* compilations. The significance of this *Hadeeth* is underscored by an incident that occurred during the Battle of Uhud involving a man named Quzman. Quzman was known for his bravery, but whenever he was mentioned in the presence of the Prophet ﷺ, the Prophet ﷺ would say about him, "Verily, he is indeed from the people of the Hellfire," which probably astonished the Prophet's Companions, who thought Quzman to be a valuable addition to the Muslim army. Well, when the time came for the Muslims to go to Uhud, Quzman remained behind. The women of Banu Dhafar, however, were not going to let him stay behind in peace; they spoke openly about his cowardice in order to shame him into going to Uhud. Their plan worked; Quzman reached Uhud just as the Prophet ﷺ was busy straightening the rows of his army. Going through the ranks of Muslim fighters, Quzman made his way to the first row.

First firing arrows with a great deal of skill and precision, Quzman later took to his sword and plunged into the heart of the enemy fighters, accomplishing truly impressive feats on the battlefield. In fact, before long he managed to kill seven or nine polytheists; by then, however, the wounds that were afflicted on him were too much to bear, and so he fell to the ground. Having witnessed some of Quzman's feats, Qataadah ibn An-No'maan called out to him, saying, "O Abul-Ghaidaaq (i.e., Quzman), congratulations, for you have achieved martyrdom!" Other Muslims began to say to him, "By Allah, you have shown extreme courage today, O Quzman, so rejoice!" "Rejoice for what?" Quzman responded. "By Allah, the only reason why I fought was to preserve the honour of my people. Had it not been for that, I would not have fought." These words of his were conveyed to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who said, "Verily, he is from the people of the Hellfire. Verily, Allah *Ta'aalāh* (the Exalted) helps this religion [even (and among other ways)] with the

wicked man.”^[1]

As is patently clear from Quzman's story, intentions are what count always – when one is praying, doing goods, performing *Jihaad*, and so on. Therefore, if a person fights alongside Muslims, if he inflicts great harm upon the enemy, but if he does so for some worldly motive – to have it said that he is brave or to raise the status of his tribe – and not for the sake of Allah ﷻ, his deeds are not for Allah ﷻ and are therefore not accepted by Allah ﷻ.

Some Miracles And roofs f Prophethood

Qataadah ibn An-No'maan's Eye

Whether it was with an arrow, a spear, or a sword, Qataadah ؓ was struck by the enemy in the eye. His eye actually fell out of its socket and onto his cheeks. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ took the eye in his hand and returned it into Qataadah's eye socket. And by the Grace and Mercy of Allah ﷻ, a miracle occurred at the hands of the Prophet ﷺ: Qataadah's eye returned to normal, as if it had never been dislodged from its socket; in fact, it became the stronger of his two eyes. Throughout the rest of Qataadah's life, whenever his other eye would become sore for whatever reason, the eye that had fallen out on the Day of Uhud would remain healthy and strong.

The death of Ubai ibn Khalaf

When he used to meet the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in Makkah, Ubai ibn Khalaf would say to him, "O Muhammad I have a horse that I feed twelve handfuls of corn every day; I will kill you while I am riding upon it." And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would respond, "Rather, it is I who will kill you, *In Sha Allah* (Allah Willing)." A few years later, on the Day of Uhud, it was when the Prophet ﷺ went to the mountain pass of Uhud that Ubai ibn Khalaf

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* (3/99) and to *Ghazwah Uhud: Diraasah Da'awiyah* (pg. 113).

approached for their decreed meeting. Ubai, who was on horseback, said, "O Muhammad, I will not be saved if you are saved (i.e., this will be a fight to the death)." The Muslims that were with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "O Messenger of Allah, should a man among us go to him (and fight him)?" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Leave him (and let him approach)." When Ubai came closer, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ took a spear out of the hands of Al-Haarith ibn As-Simah ؓ. Once he had the spear in his hand, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ began to shake violently. He ﷺ then approached Ubai and stabbed him in his neck, through a tiny hole in his armour. Ubai, still alive, began to roll off his horse.

Ubai returned to his people most probably to assess the severity of the wound; he found that the Prophet's blow had left only a small cut on his neck. From all apparent signs on his neck, Ubai was okay; but he knew better: he knew that the Prophet ﷺ was truthful and that the ostensibly small wound on his neck was somehow in fact fatal. He began to yell out, "By Allah, Muhammad has killed me." Thinking that cowardice was Ubai's only affliction, his fellow polytheists tried to soothe him by saying, "By Allah, your heart (and courage) are all that are gone. By Allah, there is nothing (else) wrong with you." Ubai said, "Verily, he said to me in Makkah, 'I will kill you.' By Allah, had he merely spit on me, he would have killed me." And of course, Ubai was right; he died in a place called Saraf – which is situated about six miles outside of Makkah – as the Makkan army was returning from Uhud.

The Prophet ﷺ was not only a brilliant military strategist; he ﷺ was also brave and courageous on the battlefield. Ubai ibn Khalaf was almost completely covered in armour, and he was riding on horseback; meanwhile, the Prophet ﷺ was not wearing nearly as strong armour, he was on foot, and he had in his hands nothing but a spear. Notwithstanding the apparent mismatch, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was able to stab Ubai with his spear through a small opening between his armour and his helmet. That

the Prophet ﷺ delivered such a precise blow attests both to his bravery and to his superior fighting abilities.

To be sure, the death of Ubai was yet another miracle that occurred by the blessing of Allah ﷻ and at the hands of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. When he ﷺ was still in Makkah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ informed Ubai that his death would occur not if the Prophet ﷺ willed it to occur, but if Allah ﷻ willed it to occur, showing his complete trust in Allah ﷻ. By the permission of Allah ﷻ, the miracle then occurred on the Day of Uhud. Interestingly, the story of Ubai's death contains yet another example of how the polytheists believed deep down in their hearts that the Prophet ﷺ was truthful and of how they disbelieved out of pride and arrogance. Ubai knew that if the Prophet ﷺ said that some event was going to take place, it was definitely going to take place, which is why he was certain that the tiny wound on his neck was not as harmless as it seemed to be; in fact, he knew that he was going to die because of it. Nonetheless, he still refused to enter into the fold of Islam, choosing to continue to worship his desires and to adhere to his arrogant ways.

The Aftermath Of The Battle

An Exchange Of Words Between Abu Sufyaan And The Muslims

After the battle was over and the polytheists controlled the battlefield, the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ were safely situated in a mountain pass. The polytheists could not see them, and in the quietness that followed the battle, Abu Sufyaan came forward and called out, "Is Muhammad among the people?" What he was really asking was, "Is Muhammad alive or dead?" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to his Companions ﷺ, "Do not answer him." Abu Sufyaan then said, "Is Ibn Abee Quhaafah (i.e., Abu Bakr) among the people?" And again, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Do not answer him." Abu Sufyaan then said, "Is ('Umar) Ibn Al-Khattaab among the people?" When he received no reply, Abu Sufyaan assumed that they were not answering because they were dead, and so he said, "Verily, these people have been killed, for had they been alive, they would have answered (me)."

This time around, 'Umar ؓ was no longer able to control himself; he said, "You have spoken a lie, O enemy of Allah. Allah has kept alive that which will bring about your humiliation (i.e., all of the people you mentioned are still alive and well)." In response, Abu Sufyaan said, "Hubal (one of their idols), you have come out on top." The Prophet ﷺ said to his Companions ﷺ, "Answer him." "What should we say?" they asked. He ﷺ said, "Say: Allah is

higher, loftier, and greater." Abu Sufyaan responded, "We have Al-'Uzzah (one of their idols), and you have no 'Uzzah."

The Prophet ﷺ said to his Companions ﷺ, "Answer him." "What should we say?" they asked. He ﷺ said, "Say: Allah is our Helper and Protector, and you have no Helper and Protector." Abu Sufyaan responded, "Today for Badr: War is about winning one time and losing the next. And you will find mutilations (among your dead brothers), mutilations that I did not command but that I do not dislike or condemn." According to one narration, 'Umar ؓ responded to Abu Sufyaan's claim that they were on even terms since the Muslims won the Battle of Badr and the polytheists won the Battle of Uhud. 'Umar ؓ said, "It is not equal (i.e., things are not equal between us): Our dead ones are in Paradise, and your dead ones are in the Hellfire."^[1]

It is interesting to note that Abu Sufyaan asked about only three people: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, Abu Bakr ؓ, and 'Umar ؓ. This proves that they were the main targets of the polytheists, who knew that they represented the higher leadership positions among Muslims. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was obviously the leader of all Muslims, so Abu Sufyaan was not showing extra special intelligence when he mentioned his name. But he did show an appreciation of Abu Bakr ؓ and 'Umar's leadership qualities – after all, he had known them for a long time – when he asked about them and about no one else. It seems as if Abu Sufyaan felt that, if the Prophet ﷺ, Abu Bakr ؓ, and 'Umar ؓ were dead, the religion of Islam would slowly die down.

When Abu Sufyaan asked about them, it was best to remain silent, as if to show that his questions did not dignify a response, which is why the Prophet ﷺ ordered his Companions ﷺ to not answer him. But as Ibn Al-Qayyim pointed out, when Abu Sufyaan began to glorify his gods and his disbelief, the Prophet ﷺ ordered his Companions ﷺ to answer him, in order to refute him, and in order

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah As-Saheehah* (2/392) and to *Serah Ibn Hishaam*, to the chapter titled, "Abu Sufyaan Takes Pleasure in the Losses Suffered by the Muslims on the Day of Uhud."

to announce that Allah was the Greatest and that, given that the Muslims were his soldiers and slaves, they would come out victorious in the end. In short, it was best not to answer him at first – since there was no real benefit in doing so – but it was best to answer him afterwards, for the reasons outlined above.

The Messenger Of Allah ﷺ Concerns Himself With The Martyrs Of That Day

After Abu Sufyaan and his fellow polytheists left the battlefield and began their return journey towards Makkah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went down to see for himself the martyrs of Uhud. As he walked through the battlefield, the Prophet ﷺ came across the dead bodies of Hamzah ibn ‘Abdul-Muttalib ؓ, Mus‘ab ibn ‘Umair ؓ, Hanzalah ibn Abee ‘Aamir ؓ, Sa’d ibn Ar-Rabee’ ؓ, Al-Usairim ؓ, and others. Looking down at the martyrs of Uhud, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “I am a witness over these (men). Verily, as for any person who is wounded for the sake of Allah, his wound will be bleeding when Allah will resurrect him on the Day of Resurrection; its colour will be the colour of blood, but its odour will be the fragrance of *Al-Misk* (the best kind of perfume). Look among these at him who gathered the most Qur’an, and then place him in front of his Companions in the grave.”^[1]

In *Bukhaaree’s* narration of this *Hadeeth*, Jaabir ibn ‘Abdullah ؓ said, “Verily, the Prophet ﷺ would put two men from the fallen fighters of Uhud in a single garment, and he ﷺ would then say, ‘Which of them took (or memorized) more of the Qur’an?’ If one of them was pointed to (as having known more of the Qur’an than the other), he would be placed ahead (of the other) in the side compartment of the grave. And he ﷺ said, ‘I am a witness over these (martyrs) on the Day of Resurrection.’ He ﷺ ordered for them to be buried with their blood (unwashed). He ﷺ did not pray over them, and they were not washed.”^[2] Furthermore, the

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Hishaam (3/109).

^[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of Al-Maghaazee, chapter, “Those Muslims Who Were Killed on the Day of Uhud”; *Hadeeth* number: 4079.

Messenger of Allah ﷺ ordered for them to be buried in the very spots that they were killed; based on this command, those who had already been taken to be buried in Al-Madeenah were returned to the battleground of Uhud.

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw the mutilated corpse of Hamzah ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib ؓ, he became very sad, and his crying soon turned into the kind of sobbing which gives the appearance that the person sobbing is about to pass out. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Were it not for the fact that Safiyyah would cry and that it would become an established practice after me (after my time), I would have left him (above the ground) so that he would end up in the stomachs of predatory animals and the insides of birds. And if Allah makes me come out victorious over the Quraish on any future occasion, I will mutilate thirty of their men." Seeing the sadness and anger of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the Companions ؓ said, "By Allah, if Allah makes us victorious over them on any day in time, we will mutilate their bodies in a way that no Arab has ever mutilated (dead bodies) before!" The following saying of Allah ﷻ was then revealed:

﴿وَإِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبْتُمْ بِهِ وَلَئِنْ صَبَرْتُمْ لَهُوَ خَيْرٌ
لِّلصَّابِرِينَ ۝١٢٦﴾

"And if you punish (your enemy, O you believers in the Oneness of Allah), then punish them with the like of that with which you were afflicted. But if you endure patiently, verily, it is better for As-Sabireen (the patient ones, etc.)." (Qur'an 16: 126)

The polytheists showed a level of savagery that was completely beyond the norms of just warfare. They cut open the stomachs of many fallen Muslims; they cut off their noses; and they even cut off the ears and private parts of some of them.^[1] In spite of the savagery shown by the Quraish, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his Companions ؓ remained patient. They obeyed Allah's command, and they took back their vow to mutilate fighters

^[1] Refer to *Ghazwa Uhud* by Abu Faaris (pg. 104).

from the Quraish. And the Prophet ﷺ even made atonement for breaking that vow; moreover, he ﷺ made it a point to constantly remind his Companions ﷺ that mutilating enemy fighters was expressly forbidden. Ibn Ishaq, may Allah have mercy on him, related that Samurah ibn Jundub ﷺ said, "Whenever the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood up for an occasion (a gathering, a speech, etc.), he ﷺ would not depart from (that gathering) until he first ordered us to give charity and prohibited us from mutilating (the bodies of fallen enemy soldiers)."^[1]

The Prophet's Supplication On The Day Of Uhud

When things had settled down a little after the departure of the enemy, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ led his Companions ﷺ in the noon (*Adh-Zuhr*) prayer. Because of the great quantity of blood he ﷺ was still losing, he ﷺ had to pray in a seated position; and so the Muslims behind him also prayed sitting down. Upon the conclusion of the prayer, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ wanted to supplicate to Allah, glorify Him, and praise Him. He ﷺ said to his Companions ﷺ, "Straighten up (in rows), so that I can praise my Lord 'Azza Wa Jall (the Possessor of might and majesty)." Once his Companions ﷺ lined themselves up in rows behind him, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ invoked Allah ﷻ with the following supplication: "O Allah, Yours is the praise, all of it! O Allah, no one can withhold what You permit or permit what You withhold. No one can guide whom You decree to go astray or make go astray the one whom You guide. No one can grant provisions You have withheld and no one can withhold what You grant. No one can near what You ordained to be distant nor distance what you decree to be close. O Allah, grant us all of Your blessing, mercy, favours, and provisions. O Allah, I ask You to grant me permanent bliss that neither changes nor vanishes. O Allah, You Alone we seek for help when we are afflicted with hardships. You Alone we resort to for security on a day of terror. O Allah, to You Alone I resort to protect us from the evil of that which You

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah* by Ibn Hishaam (3/107).

have withheld from us. O Allah, make us love faith and make it adorn our hearts! Make disbelief, rebellion and disobedience detestable to us. Let us be among those who are rightly guided. O Allah, make us live as Muslims and cause us to die as Muslims; and make us join with the righteous but not with the disgraced and misled. O Allah, destroy the disbelievers who belie Your Messenger and divert from Your righteous way. O Allah, let Your punishment and Your enmity befall the disbelievers. O Allah, destroy the disbelievers to whom You have given the Book, O God of Truth.”^[1] This supplication marked the end of the Prophet’s stay in Uhud. With the battle concluded and the martyrs buried, the Prophet ﷺ mounted his horse and rode back to Al-Madeenah.^[2]

The Prophet ﷺ set a wonderful example with this supplication, making it clear that supplication is required both in the hour of victory and the hour of defeat. Supplication is the very heart of worship, and the Prophet ﷺ showed by example to his Companions ﷺ that, no matter what the circumstances, one’s heart should have a strong attachment to its Creator. For peace, tranquility, and steadfastness descend upon a heart that is attached to Allah ﷻ.

Finding Out What Direction The Polytheists Were Heading Towards

That the polytheists left the battlefield of Uhud in no way meant that the Muslims were safe from their harm; to the contrary, it was very possible – as corroborated by the savagery they displayed during the Battle of Uhud – that Quraish’s soldiers were headed towards Makkah in order to wreak even more havoc. And so, as a precautionary measure, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent his cousin

^[1] Refer to *Mujmaa’ Az-Zawaa'id* (6/121-122), and Al-Haithamee said, “Ahmad related it, and his narrators (for this *Hadeeth*) are all narrators of *As-Saheeh* (i.e., of the *As-Saheeh* compilation of either Bukhaaree or Muslim).” And Bukhaaree related this supplication in *Al-Adab Al-Mufrad* (pg. 699).

^[2] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah As-Saheehah* (2/394).

'Alee ibn Abee Taalib ؓ to follow the tracks of the enemy and to find out where they were and in what direction they were heading. The Prophet ﷺ gave these instructions to 'Alee ؓ: "Go out and follow the tracks of the people (i.e., of the enemy), and see what they are doing and what they want. If they are steering (i.e., not riding) their horses and riding their camels, they are returning to Makkah. And if they are riding their horses and steering their camels, they want to go to Al-Madeenah. And by the One Who has my soul in His Hand, if Al-Madeenah is what they want, I will go to them and fight them." 'Alee ؓ later recounted, "I then followed their tracks in order to see what they were doing. (And when I caught up to them I saw that) they were steering their horses and were headed towards the direction of Makkah."^[1] 'Alee ؓ then went back and informed the Prophet ﷺ about what he saw.

The wounds suffered and the hardships endured during the Battle of Uhud did not weaken the Prophet's resolve, make him less vigilant, or lower his morale. To the contrary, he ﷺ was eager to show the enemy that the Muslims were not weakened as a result of the battle. By sending 'Alee ؓ, the Prophet ﷺ showed that he ﷺ was a good judge of character. The mission was dangerous and required a brave man to accomplish it, for if the Quraish were to see 'Alee ؓ, they were very likely going to go after him and kill him in their fury. Still young, 'Alee ؓ had already proven himself to be a courageous and skilled fighter, and he ؓ, without hesitation, went after the Quraish and did not stop until he clearly saw what animals they were riding – which meant, of course, that he ؓ was within their reach.

The Battle Of Hamraa Al-Asad

Some narrations point to how the Prophet ﷺ continued to receive intelligence reports about Quraish's movements even after the polytheists were well on their way towards Makkah. As mentioned earlier, Al-Abbaas ؓ – and perhaps other Muslims

^[1] Refer to *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah* (4/41) and *Seerah Ibn Hishaam*, to the chapter titled, "'Alee ؓ Goes After the People (i.e., the Enemy)."

as well – remained among the Quraish, keeping his Islam a secret and sending, whenever possible, news about the Quraish to the Prophet ﷺ. A messenger was secretly sent to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ after the Quraish made camp at Ar-Rauhaa; his message described the situation of the Quraish and Abu Sufyaan's resolve to continue fighting.

Ar-Rauhaa lies on the road to Makkah and is situated approximately seventy-three kilometers from Al-Madeenah. Once there, Abu Sufyaan scolded his fellow polytheists, railing against the fact that they had not achieved one of their prime objectives: killing the Prophet ﷺ. He said to them, "Neither have you killed Muhammad nor are you riding back with heavily-breasted women (i.e., you have not captured Muslim women and taken them back as slaves). Evil is what you have done." Perhaps what Abu Sufyaan meant by his last sentence is that, by mutilating dead Muslims and not finishing off the as of yet living Muslims, the polytheists were committing a grave error; Muslims would become enraged and would become only stronger as time went on. In short, Abu Sufyaan was arguing that, if left unfinished, the war was going to continue; therefore, it was necessary to go back and completely destroy the enemy. The question of whether it was necessary to destroy the enemy was one thing, but whether the polytheists had the same resolve and determination as Abu Sufyaan had, was an altogether different matter. It is related in certain narrations that the above-mentioned words of Abu Sufyaan were conveyed, through a secret messenger, to the Prophet ﷺ.^[1]

When he learned about Abu Sufyaan's intention of returning to Al-Madeenah and of finishing off the job, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ headed with his army towards a place called Hamraa Al-Asad. Not everyone went with the Prophet ﷺ, for he ﷺ said that the

^[1] Refer to *Mujma' Az-Zawaaid* by Al-Haithamee (6/121). Al-Haithamee said, "The men (i.e., narrators) of this *Hadeeth* are the men of *As-Saheeh* (i.e., they related narrations that are found in either *Saheeh Bukhaaree* or *Saheeh Muslims*; therefore, they are trustworthy), except from Muhammad ibn Mansoor Al-Jawwaaz.

only people that were allowed to go with him were those who had participated in the Battle of Uhud.

Ibn Ishaq said: "The Day of Uhud took place on Saturday, towards the middle of Shawwaal. On the day after the Day of Uhud, when ten nights had passed from the month of *Shawwaal*, the *Muaddhin* (caller) of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ announced to the people that they were going to pursue the enemy. The caller announced, 'Let no but he who was present with us yesterday come out with us.' (Since he ﷺ did not meet the said requirement) Jaabir ibn 'Abdullah ﷺ asked permission to accompany the Prophet ﷺ, and the Prophet ﷺ granted him permission. The only reasons why the Prophet ﷺ went out (to pursue the Quraish) were to instill terror into (the hearts of) the enemy, and to let them know that what afflicted the Muslims (on the Day of Uhud) did not make them so weak that they could not pursue their enemy.'" [1]

The Prophet's Companions ﷺ answered the call for *Jihaad*; even those who had been wounded the day before took part in the expedition. A man from the Banu 'Abdul-Ashhal clan later said, "One of my brothers and I took part in the Battle of Uhud; we then went back (to Al-Madeenah), and we were both wounded. When the caller of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ announced that the Muslims were going to go out and pursue the enemy, I said to my brother (or, 'he said to me'; one of the narrators was not sure), 'Shall we miss out on participating in a battle alongside the Messenger of Allah? By Allah, we have no riding animal to ride upon; on the other hand, neither of us is inflicted with an extremely severe wound.' And so we went with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. My wound was less severe than that of my brother; accordingly, if he became overcome (with fatigue), I would carry him for a while, after which he would walk for a while (until he needed me to carry him again). This continued until we reached the place where the Muslims had stopped at [to make camp (i.e., Hamraa Al-Asad)]." [2]

[1] Refer to *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah* (4/50).

[2] Refer to *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah* (4/50).

Hamraa Al-Asad was not very far from where the polytheists had made camp. The Prophet ﷺ stayed there for three days, challenging the Quraish to come and fight the Muslims. The polytheists, however, did not have the courage to answer that challenge; they could not understand how the army they defeated just the day before managed to regroup and launch a counterattack. After all, most defeated armies need time to regroup and to allow wounded soldiers to heal. One question was stuck in the minds of every polytheist: "Did we really defeat them?" And based on the fact that they were being pursued by the Muslims, the answer to that question was a resounding, "No!" To further terrify the enemy, the Prophet ﷺ ordered for torches to be ignited; at any given moment, around five-hundred torches were lit.^[1]

It was while the Muslims were at Hamraa Al-Asad that Ma'bad ibn Abee Ma'bad Al-Khuzaa'ee ؓ approached and embraced Islam at the hands of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ ordered him to go to Abu Sufyaan, giving him general instructions to follow once he arrived at the enemy camp. When Ma'bad ؓ reached Ar-Rauhaa, Abu Sufyaan, who did not know that Ma'bad ؓ was now a Muslim, asked, "What news (do you bring with you), O Ma'bad?" He ؓ said, "Muhammad ﷺ and his Companions are furious at you. They have come out with more fighters than they have ever come out with before, and those of their companions who remained behind (from Uhud) felt a great deal of regret (thus insinuating but not directly saying that they were with the Muslims; Ma'bad ؓ made this insinuation in order to instill fear into Abu Sufyaan's heart)." Abu Sufyaan asked, "What do you say?" Ma'bad ؓ replied, "I do not think you will be able to depart from here before the front part of their army appears from behind this hill."^[2] Abu Sufyaan said, "By Allah, we have prepared to attack them again in order to completely

^[1] Refer to *Ghazwatu-Uhud* by Abu Faaris (pg. 144); refer as well to *At-Tabaqaat Al-Kubra* by Ibn Sa'd (2/43).

^[2] Refer to *Zaad Al-Ma'aad* (3/245).

wipe them out." Ma'bad ؓ said, "Then I strongly forbid you from doing so, for by Allah, what I have seen has inspired me to compose verses of poetry." He then proceeded to recite those verses; in them, Ma'bad ؓ struck a brilliant balance between praising the bravery of Quraish's men on the one hand and warning them not to fight against the Prophet's army on the other. It was as if he were saying: "You have shown valour, O men of Quraish, and you have accomplished a great deal, but now is not the time to fight, for Muhammad ﷺ is furious with you and has come with a huge army."

Appreciating the beauty of Ma'bad's words, Abu Sufyaan and those with him praised him. But if he was going to retreat to Makkah, Abu Sufyaan didn't want to give the appearance of being weak. So even though he resolved now to return to Makkah, Abu Sufyaan wanted to issue a false threat and ultimatum to the Muslims, hoping at least to dampen their spirits and make them retreat before he did.

As it happened, the caravan of 'Abdul-Qais was passing by; its men were headed towards Al-Madeenah in order to purchase provisions for a journey. Abu Sufyaan asked them to convey a message to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ; the contents of that message were simply as follows: Abu Sufyaan and his army have resolved to advance towards you and your companions in order to wipe you out of existence." In payment for the task of conveying his message, Abu Sufyaan promised to give the men of the caravan a quantity of raisins next time they went to the 'Ukaadh Marketplace. The men of the caravan fulfilled their end of the bargain, delivering Abu Sufyaan's message to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ at Hamraa Al-Asad. In response to Abu Sufyaan's threat, the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims ؓ said, "Allah (Alone) is Sufficient for us, and He is the Best Disposer of affairs (for us)." Abu Sufyaan's ploy did not work; the Muslims did not retreat as he wanted them to, and he had to suffer the ignominy of being the one who fled from battle. Regardless of how the Muslims responded to the threat, Abu Sufyaan resolved to return to

Makkah and not to fight; he merely wanted to shift the humiliation of defeat from himself to the Prophet ﷺ. But he failed miserably in the attempt.

The people of the Quraish wanted nothing more than safety and their homeland, and so they resumed their homebound journey to Makkah. After the Quraish left and there no longer remained any point in staying at Hamraa Al-Asad, the Muslims returned to Al-Madeenah with their spirits uplifted. Their victory at Hamraa Al-Asad effectively erased the shame of defeat and failure at Uhud. They importantly regained their sense of being stronger than the Quraish. And truly, it was an important psychological victory for the Muslims: The Quraish could no longer claim a decisive defeat – not when they were retreating from the enemy just a few days after their victory – and the hypocrites and Jews of Al-Madeenah no longer had the opportunity to gloat over the defeat of the Muslims. Describing the aftermath of Uhud and the Battle of Hamraa Al-Asad, Allah ﷻ said in the Noble Qur'an:

﴿الَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَصَابَهُمُ الْقَرْحُ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا مِنْهُمْ وَاتَّقُوا أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ١٧٢﴾ الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ ١٧٣﴾ فَأَنْقَلَبُوا بِنِعْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ لَمْ يَمَسْسَهُمْ سُوءٌ وَاتَّبَعُوا رِضْوَانَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَظِيمٍ ١٧٤﴾ إِنَّمَا ذَلِكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ يُخَوِّفُ أَوْلِيَاءَهُ فَلَا تَخَافُوهُمْ وَخَافُوا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ١٧٥﴾

“Those who answered (the Call of) Allah and the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) after being wounded ; for those of them who did good deeds and feared Allah, there is a great reward. Those (i.e., believers) unto whom the people (hypocrites) said, “Verily, the people (pagans) have gathered against you (a great army), therefore, fear them.” But it (only) increased them in faith, and they said : “Allah (Alone) is Sufficient for us, and He is the Best Disposer of affairs (for us).” So they returned with Grace and Bounty from Allah. No harm touched them ; and they followed

the good Pleasure of Allah. And Allah is the Owner of Great Bounty. It is only Shaitaan (Satan) that suggests to you the fear of his Auliya' [supporters and friends (polytheists, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah and in His Messenger, Muhammad ﷺ)], so fear them not, but fear Me, if you are (true) believers." (Qur'an 3: 172-175)

Before they returned to Al-Madeenah, the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions captured an enemy fighter, who accounted for the only prisoner the Muslims captured during the Battle of Uhud and during the days that followed. That prisoner might not have been a Makkan chieftain, but he was still a good catch, for he was not only a soldier but also a poet who contributed his talents to Quraish's war against Islam. That poet's name was Abu 'Uzzah Al-Jumhee, a name that should not be unfamiliar to us, since he was also captured during the Battle of Badr. That time around, Abu 'Uzzah pleaded with the Prophet ﷺ to spare his life, appealing to the Prophet's compassion by speaking about his poverty and his many dependants in Makkah. The Prophet ﷺ not only spared his life but also freed him without taking any ransom money from him; but before freeing him, the Prophet ﷺ stipulated that he never return again to fight against the Muslims. Abu 'Uzzah vowed never to fight against Muslims again, but he obviously broke that vow on the Day of Uhud. And yet again, Abu 'Uzzah tried to escape from execution; he said, "O Messenger of Allah, pardon me." This time, however, sternness and not mercy was called for, which is why the Messenger of Allah ﷺ replied, "No, by Allah, I will not allow your cheeks to touch Makkah (i.e., I will not let you enter Makkah) and then say, 'I have cheated Muhammad twice.' O Zubair, strike his neck." Zubair struck his neck and killed him, at which point the Prophet ﷺ said, "The believer should not be stung (or bitten) in the same hole (or lair) twice."^[1] This saying became a proverb meaning, a

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of Al-Adab, chapter, "The Believer should not be Stung (or bitten) in the Same Hole (or Lair) Twice"; *Hadeeth* number: 6133. Also, refer to the explanation of this *Hadeeth* in *Fathul-Baaree*.

Muslim should not be fooled twice by the same thing, person, or situation. Had he been freed, Abu 'Uzzah would have thought that he could deceive the Muslims over and over again, which is why it was necessary to kill him.

Abu 'Uzzah was the only prisoner that the Muslims captured. As for the fatalities on both sides, seventy Muslims were martyred and twenty-two polytheists were killed. Allah ﷻ said about the Muslim deaths:

﴿أَوَلَمَّا أَصَابَكُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ قَدْ أَصَبْتُمْ مِثْلَهَا قُلْتُمْ أَنَّى هَذَا قُلْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾ (١٦٥)

“(What is the matter with you?) When a single disaster smites you, although you smote (your enemies) with one twice as great, you say: “From where does this come to us?” Say (to them), “It is from yourselves (because of your evil deeds).” And Allah has power over all things.” (Qur’an 3: 165)

The Prophet ﷺ went out to Hamraa Al-Asad in order to achieve a number of goals, these being some of them:

- ◆ To not have the Muslims return from Uhud feeling a sense of failure and defeat.
- ◆ To let Muslims know that, so long as they obeyed Allah ﷻ and his Messenger ﷺ and so long as they strove for success, they were going to overcome the Quraish in the end.
- ◆ To inspire his Companions ﷺ to be brave.
- ◆ To let the Companions ﷺ know that the calamity they suffered at Uhud was a test and trial from Allah ﷻ; that they were actually strong, in spite of the losses they incurred; and that the Quraish were actually weak, in spite of their ostensible victory at Uhud.

Furthermore, by going out to Hamraa Al-Asad, the Prophet ﷺ showed the importance and value of using psychological tactics as a part of a greater military struggle. Through his actions, it was as if the Prophet ﷺ was saying, “If we instill fear into them, and if they

lose morale, then they are already defeated.” The Prophet ﷺ impugned the honour of the Quraish by staying at Hamraa Al-Asad for three days and challenging them to fight. Also, he ﷺ ordered for torches to be lit; so many torches were lit that people far away were able to see them. Based on the number of lit torches and on the effect Ma’bad’s words had on them, the people of the Quraish imagined that the Muslim army was huge and unbeatable. Notice that no actual fighting took place; everything that happened from the time the Prophet ﷺ went to Hamraa Al-Asad involved psychological warfare only. And that kind of warfare worked well, for the people of the Quraish became terrified, which resulted in them hurrying back to Makkah.

The Participation Of Muslim Women In The Battle Of Uhud

When the Muslims went out to Badr, they had no idea that they were going to fight a battle against Quraish’s army; they thought that they were simply going to overtake one of Makkah’s trading caravans, one that consisted of only thirty men. Therefore, the Muslim contingent that went to Badr in no way represented the full potential of Al-Madeenah’s military strength. Men who could have fought stayed behind; weapons were left behind; riding animals were left behind; and even women, who could have been used to help provide water and medical care to Muslim fighters, were left behind. The Battle of Uhud was another story altogether. The full potential of Al-Madeenah’s military strength was employed, which, among other things, meant that women went along with the army, making the Battle of Uhud the first battle in which Muslim women played an active role.

What exactly was the role that women played in the Battle of Uhud? Well, as for polytheistic women from the Quraish, they came to sing and play musical instruments, to encourage their men, and to stand at the rear of the army in order to humiliate and hurl invective upon any one of their fighters that attempted to flee from battle. Muslim women played an altogether different role.

They were not an actual part of the army; what I mean by this is that they did not stand in the rows of the army; they did not wear armour; and they did not fight in the initial clashes. Their role was to provide support, succour, and assistance to Muslim soldiers, a task that, for the most part, involved providing drink to the thirsty and medical aid to the wounded. Although it is important to note that Muslim women played no military role initially, some of them physically fought against the polytheists after many Muslims fled from the battlefield and the Prophet ﷺ was left vulnerable since he ﷺ was being protected by only a small number of men.

The Mother of the Believers, 'Aishah bint Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ؓ; Umm 'Ammaarah ؓ; Hamnah bint Jahsh Al-Asadiyyah ؓ; Umm Saleet ؓ; Umm Sulaim ؓ: these and certain women from the *Ansaar* were at least some of the women that took part in the Battle of Uhud. Tha'labah ibn Abee Maalik ؓ related an incident that occurred during the caliphate of 'Umar ؓ. He related that 'Umar ؓ once distributed garments made of wool to the female inhabitants of Al-Madeenah. In the end he was left with one garment that was of good quality. Some of the people that were with him suggested, "O Leader of the Believers, give this to the daughter of the Messenger of Allah who is with you." They were referring not to the Prophet's actual daughter, but to his granddaughter: Umm Kulthoom ؓ, the daughter of 'Alee ؓ and the wife of 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ؓ. 'Umar ؓ said, "Umm Saleet is more deserving of it." Tha'labah ؓ commented, "And Umm Saleet was one of the women of the *Ansaar* who pledged allegiance to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. 'Umar ؓ then explained why Umm Saleet ؓ was more deserving of the garment than his wife ؓ: "For indeed, she would run back and forth carrying canteens (of water) for us on the Day of Uhud."^[1] The following are some of the tasks that Muslim women carried out on the Day of Uhud:

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree* (2881, 4071).

1) Providing Drink to Muslim Fighters

Anas ؓ said, "On the Day of Uhud, the people (i.e., Muslims) scattered away from the Prophet ﷺ. I indeed saw (that day) 'Aishah bint Abu Bakr ؓ and Umm Sulaim ؓ, both of whom were applying themselves (to the task of helping Muslim soldiers); I saw their anklets (this was before the legislation of *Hijaab* was revealed; also, it means that he saw the anklets in passing, and not that he was staring at them). They were running while carrying canteens (this explains why part of their legs became inadvertently uncovered). They then returned to refill them, and then they went and emptied the canteens into the mouths of the people (i.e., of the Muslim soldiers)."^[1] Ka'ab ibn Maalik ؓ said, "I saw Umm Sulaim bint Milhaan ؓ and 'Aishah ؓ on the Day of Uhud; they were carrying canteens on their backs (in order to provide drink to Muslim fighters). Also, Hamnah bint Jahsh ؓ provided drink to the thirsty and treated the wounded. And Umm Aiman ؓ provided drink to the wounded."^[2]

2) Providing Medical Assistance to the Wounded and Comfort to the Afflicted

Anas ibn Maalik ؓ related that, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would go out to do battle, he ﷺ would take along with the army Umm Sulaim ؓ and certain women from the *Ansaar*. They would provide drink to the soldiers, and they would treat the wounded.^[3]

'Abdur-Razzaaq (may Allah have mercy on him) related the following from Az-Zuhree (may Allah have mercy on him): "Women would be there with the Prophet ﷺ during battles; they would provide drink to the fighters, and they would treat the

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of *Jihaad* and *As-Siyar*, chapter, "Women's Role in Fighting, and (an Example of or the Ruling on) Women Fighting Alongside Men"; *Hadeeth* number: 2880.

^[2] Refer to *Al-Maghaazee* by Al-Waaqidee (1/249).

^[3] *Saheeh Muslim*, the Book of *Jihaad* and *As-Siyar*, chapter, "Women Fighting Alongside Men"; *Hadeeth* number: 1810.

wounded.”^[1] Ar-Rubayya’ bint Mu’awwidh ؓ said, “We were with the Prophet ﷺ, giving drink to the (fighters) and serving them. Also, we would transport the wounded and the dead to Al-Madeenah.”^[2]

Abu Haazim reported that he asked Sahl ibn Sa’d ؓ about the Prophet’s wounds and that he then heard Sahl ؓ respond, “Lo! By Allah, I indeed know who it is that washed the Messenger of Allah’s wound, who it is that poured water (over it), and what was used to treat him. Faatimah ؓ, the daughter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, would wash him and ‘Alee ؓ would pour water using a shield. And when Faatimah ؓ noticed that the only effect the water was having on the blood was causing more of it to flow forth, she ؓ took a piece of a straw man, burned it, and affixed it to (his skin), and as a result, the blood stopped coming out.”^[3]

3) Using the Sword to Defend Islam and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ

The only Muslim woman that actually fought against the polytheists on the Day of Uhud was Umm ‘Ammarah Nusaibah Al-Maaziniyyah ؓ. Umm ‘Ammarah’s grandson, Damrah ibn Sa’eed ؓ, said, “I heard the Prophet ﷺ say (on the Day of Uhud), ‘Verily, the prestige and standing of Nusaibah bint Ka’ab today is better than the prestige and standing of so-and-so and so-and-so.’ The Prophet ﷺ saw how fiercely she was fighting on that day a day during which she was inflicted with thirteen wounds. When she died, I (being her grandson) was among those who washed her. I counted and checked her (old) wounds (from the Day of Uhud), one wound at a time; and I found that there were a total of thirteen wounds. She used to say that she remembered seeing Ibn Qameeah while he was delivering a sharp

^[1] *Fathul-Baaree*, the explanation of *Hadeeth* number: 2880.

^[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of *Jihaad* and *As-Siyar*, chapter, “Women Treating Wounded Soldiers During Battle”; *Hadeeth* number: 2882, 2883.

^[3] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of Battles, chapter, “The Wounds that Afflicted the Prophet ﷺ on the Day of Uhud”; *Hadeeth* number: 4075.

blow to her shoulder – which resulted in the severest of her wounds, one that had to be treated for an entire year. Then the caller of the Prophet ﷺ called out: ‘To *Hamraa Al-Asad*!’ She tightened her garments around her wounds, in order to prepare for the journey to *Hamraa Al-Asad*, but she wasn’t able to go because she was still losing a great quantity of blood. We spent the night treating the wounds, stopping only in the morning. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned from *Hamraa (Al-Asad)*, he ﷺ no sooner returned to his house than he sent ‘Abdullah ibn Ka’ab Al-Maazinee ؓ (Umm ‘Ammaarah’s brother) to inquire about her health. Ka’ab ؓ soon returned and informed the Prophet ﷺ that she was well, and the Prophet ﷺ was much pleased upon hearing that news.”^[1]

True, Umm ‘Ammaarah ؓ participated in the Battle of Uhud, but because she fought under exceptional circumstances, no general rule should be derived from her example, in that it is not correct to say that Muslim women should fight in the front rows of a battle alongside Muslim men. Husain Al-Baakiree wrote: “In terms of women fighting alongside men, the only established (i.e., authentic) account of that happening is the one that describes Nusaibah’s story; furthermore, she fought as a last resort, when she saw Muslim soldiers fleeing and the Prophet ﷺ almost all alone and very much vulnerable to an attack. Based on those circumstances, Umm ‘Ammaarah ؓ found herself to be in a situation wherein using a weapon was obligatory upon all able men and women.”^[2]

Also commenting on the participation of women in the Battle of Uhud, Dr. Akram Diyaa Al-‘Umaree said, “These narrations prove that women may be employed (during battles) when necessary to treat the wounded and to take care of them. They may perform such tasks if they remain modestly dressed and covered and if their presence does not lead to temptation. Furthermore, they may of course protect themselves if they are attacked by the enemy.

^[1] *Al-Maghaazee* by Al-Waaqidee (1/269-270).

^[2] Refer to *Marwiiyyaat Ghazwatu-Uhud* (Pg. 254).

Nonetheless, *Jihaad* is obligatory upon men only. Only when the enemy attacks a Muslim land does fighting become obligatory upon everyone – upon both men and women.”^[1]

It is plain, therefore, that the participation of women in the Battle of Uhud cannot be used to establish the rule that it is permissible for women to fight in wars. True, if the need for women to fight arises as it did during the Battle of Uhud, then that is an altogether different situation. But in general, the analogy between Nusaibah ؓ fighting during the battle of Uhud and women of later generations joining the Muslim army as fighters does not stand up to sound reasoning. First, the men of that generation were paragons of virtue, modesty, and uprightness; it was not feared that any one of them would act indecently with the women who accompanied the army; likewise, the women were also paragons of virtue, modesty, and uprightness.

Second, the only woman who actually fought was not young and was therefore not a source of temptation; furthermore she went to Uhud not alone but with her husband and two sons, all of whom fought in the battle.

And finally, that particular woman, Umm ‘Ammaarah ؓ, did not go to Uhud in order to fight; she was not wearing armour, and she probably did not carry a sword. She went only to help the Muslim soldiers in any way possible, help that, for the most part, involved her treating the wounded and providing drink to the thirsty.^[2]

Female Companions ؓ Show The True Meaning Of Patience

1) Safiyyah bint ‘Abdul-Muttalib ؓ

Her brother was martyred on the Day of Uhud; she went to see him as he lay dead, and she witnessed firsthand how badly the polytheists had mutilated him; they had cut off his nose, cut open

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah As-Saheehah* (2/391).

^[2] Refer to *Ghazwatu-Uhud* by Muhammad Baashmeel (pgs. 171-173).

his stomach, and chopped off his ears and private parts. But throughout it all, Safiyyah bint 'Abdul-Muttalib ؓ remained patient. When she came running onto the battlefield in order to search for her dead brother's corpse, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was afraid for her, not wanting her to see what the polytheists had done with her brother. He ﷺ therefore instructed Az-Zubair ibn Al-'Awwaam ؓ to go and stop her and to send her back home. Az-Zubair ؓ was able to reach her before she reached the dead body of Hamzah ؓ, and he ؓ said to her, "O my mother, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ indeed orders you to return." She ؓ said, "And why? It has indeed been conveyed to me that my brother has been mutilated and that occurred for the sake of Allah I will indeed seek my reward from Allah, and I will indeed be very patient, Allah willing."

When Az-Zubair ؓ went back to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and informed him about what Safiyyah ؓ had said to him, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Let her go (to her brother)." She ؓ then went to Hamzah ؓ and looked at him; she ؓ did not wail or, as many ignorant women do, complain about the unfairness of her beloved one's death; rather, she simply prayed over him, invoked Allah ﷻ to forgive him, and said, "Indeed, to Allah we belong, and indeed, to Him we are returning."^[1]

2) Hamnah bint Jahsh ؓ

After the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was done burying his martyred Companions ؓ, he mounted his horse and returned to Al-Madeenah, as did the rest of his Companions ؓ. On the way back, the Prophet ﷺ came across Hamnah bint Jahsh ؓ. The Prophet ﷺ said to her, "Be patient and content in anticipation of Allah's reward!" Understanding perfectly that he ﷺ was giving her news of someone's death, she ؓ said, "Who, O Messenger of Allah ﷺ?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Your brother, 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh." She invoked Allah ﷻ to forgive her brother, and she ؓ

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* (3/108).

said, "Verily, we belong to Allah, and to Him we are returning." The Prophet ﷺ said to her, "Be patient and content in anticipation of Allah's reward," instructions that implied the death of another relative. She ﷻ asked, "Who (else), O Messenger of Allah?" He ﷺ said, "Your uncle (her mother's brother), Hamzah ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib." She ﷻ said, "Verily, we belong to Allah, and to Him we are returning. May Allah forgive him and congratulations to him for having achieved martyrdom." The Prophet ﷺ said to her, "Be patient and content in anticipation of Allah's reward," again implying that yet another of her relatives had been killed. She ﷻ asked, "Who, O Messenger of Allah?" He ﷺ said, "Your husband, Mus'ab ibn 'Umayr." This time around, Hamnah ﷻ reacted very differently to how she reacted when she heard about the deaths of her uncle and brother; this time she cried out loud, saying, "Oh! Great indeed is my sadness!"

Witnessing how Hamnah ﷻ remained patient upon hearing about the deaths of her uncle ﷻ and brother ﷻ, and how sad and grief-stricken she became upon learning about the death of her husband, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Verily, her husband is very special for her." The Prophet ﷺ then addressed her, saying, "Why did you say this (i.e., why did you react so differently upon hearing about the death of your husband)?" She ﷻ said, "O Messenger of Allah, I thought about how his children became orphans, and the thought of that terrified me." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then supplicated to Allah ﷻ for her and her children, invoking Allah ﷻ to compensate their loss by bestowing upon them someone else to take care of them. Allah ﷻ answered the Prophet's supplication, for Hamnah ﷻ remarried after her period of waiting came to an end. Her new husband, Talhah ibn 'Ubaidullah ﷻ, took care of her and her children, and together, they had two sons, Muhammad ﷻ and 'Umraan ﷻ. The answer to the Prophet's supplication carried on to even the next generation, for Talhah's son, Muhammad ﷻ, is well-known for having taken wonderful care of Hamnah's children.

3) The Woman ﷺ from the Banu Deenaar Clan

Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ﷺ reported that a woman from the Banu Deenaar clan was bereaved of her husband, brother, and father, all of whom died during the Battle of Uhud. When she was informed about their deaths, she ﷺ asked, "What happened to the Messenger of Allah?" The people who came to her with the news answered, "He is well, O mother of so-and-so. All praise to Allah ﷻ, he is as you want him to be." She ﷺ said, "Point him out to me, so that I can look at him." Someone pointed to the Prophet ﷺ, and as she looked at him, she ﷺ said (addressing him), "Every calamity is small compared to the calamity of your death!" Such was the tremendous impact that faith had on the hearts, souls, and minds of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ.

Umm Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh ﷺ

Umm Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh ﷺ literally means 'Mother of Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh'; her actual name is Kabshah bint 'Ubaid Al-Khazrajiyyah ﷺ. She had at least two sons, one of them being Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh ﷺ, and the other 'Amr ibn Mu'aadh ﷺ. The latter son was martyred during the battle of Uhud. After the battle was over and as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was seated on his horse, Umm Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh ﷺ ran towards him; meanwhile, her son, Sa'd ﷺ, was holding on to the reins of the Prophet's horse. Sa'd ﷺ said, "O Messenger of Allah, my mother (here she is coming)!" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "She is indeed welcome!" She approached until she was close enough to have a clear view of the Prophet ﷺ and of his health. Seeing that he was fine, she ﷺ wanted to tell him about how she was reacting to her son's death. She ﷺ said, "Lo! Now that I see that you are fine, the calamity (of my son's death) has become small and easy to bear." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ consoled her for the death of her son, after which he ﷺ said, "O Mother of Sa'd, rejoice and give glad tidings to their families (i.e., to the families of those who died from the same clan), for indeed, their dead (relatives) have all become companions in Paradise (they were twelve in total).

And they have been granted intercession for their families." Umm Sa'd ؓ said, "We are pleased, O Messenger of Allah. And who will cry for them after this!" She ؓ went on to say, "O Messenger of Allah, supplicate for those who are left behind." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "O Allah, remove sadness from their hearts, compensate them for their calamity, and provide those who are left behind with a good replacement (for what they have lost)."^[1]

^[1] Refer to *Al-Maghaazee* by Al-Waaqidee (1/315, 316).

4

Some Lessons And Morals

The Noble Qur'an contains a very detailed description of the Battle of Uhud, giving us a clearer and more in depth understanding of its details than we get from historical accounts and narrations. What is more, Verses of the Qur'an did more for the Companions ﷺ than simply relate the events that took place prior to, during, and after the actual battle. The Companions ﷺ knew what happened; and as for later generations, they got accurate accounts of the battle through authentic narrations. Comforting the Companions ﷺ, giving them glad tidings, admonishing them, advising them, commanding them - Allah ﷻ did all of the above in the Qur'anic Verses that dealt with the Battle of Uhud. Also, Allah ﷻ clarified what no one else could clarify: the thoughts and deepest feelings of the battle's participants, who were themselves perhaps not tuned into what was going on in their minds at a subconscious level. All of this information we cannot get from history books. A person who has studied and contemplated the Verses of the Qur'an that deal with the Battle of Uhud finds in them precision, depth, and comprehensiveness. Sayyid Qutub said (may Allah have mercy on him) said, "Precision in describing each occurrence, each movement, and each emotion (this is how one can describe the Qur'an's depiction of the Battle of Uhud)." Here are some of the points that the Noble Qur'an dealt with in regard to its discussion of the Battle of Uhud:

Inviting The Believers To Increase Their Faith And Reminding Them About Universal Laws That Apply To All Nations

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ
الْمُكْذِبِينَ ﴿١٣٧﴾ هَذَا بَيَانٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٣٨﴾ وَلَا
تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمُ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾﴾

"Many similar ways (and mishaps of life) were faced by nations (believers and disbelievers) that have passed away before you (as you have faced in the battle of Uhud), so travel through the earth, and see what was the end of those who disbelieved (in the Oneness of Allah, and disobeyed Him and His Messengers). This (the Qur'an) is a plain statement for mankind, a guidance and instruction to those who are Al-Muttaqoon (the pious). So do not become weak (against your enemy), nor be sad, and you will be superior (in victory) if you are indeed (true) believers."
(Qur'an 3: 137-139)

What a truly wonderful consolation these Verses were for the Prophet's Companions ﷺ. Eliminating *Shaitaan's* whispers from the hearts of the Companions ﷺ, Allah ﷻ, in these Verses, at once helped alleviate their pain and inspired them with hope. Allah ﷻ achieved those ends by reminding them of past nations, of the hardships suffered by believers, and of the awful end of disbelieving peoples. The former suffered and were rewarded in the end, and the latter were destroyed. The Prophet ﷺ and His Companions ﷺ were like the believers of past nations, who strove to eradicate polytheism and to invite their people to embrace Islam. And the polytheists of the Quraish were of course like the polytheists of past nations, who disbelieved in Islam and strove to bring about the downfall and destruction of Prophets ﷺ and Messengers ﷺ.

In the last of the above-mentioned Verses, Allah ﷻ said, "So do not become weak (against your enemy), nor be sad, and you will be superior (in victory) if you are indeed (true) believers." Allah ﷻ informed the believers of an important reality: If they would rid themselves of bad traits such as weakness, cowardice, and sadness, they would come out victorious in the end; that would then be an inevitable outcome because of their *Eemaan* (faith) and because of their being upholders of the truth.

Comforting The Believers And Explaining The Wisdom Behind What Happened At Uhud

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنْ يَمَسُّكُمْ قَرْحٌ فَقَدْ مَسَّ الْقَوْمَ قَرْحٌ مِّثْلُهُ وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ ۝٤٠ وَلِيُمَحِّصَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَيَمْحَقَ الْكَافِرِينَ ۝٤١ أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُدْخِلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ الضَّالِّينَ ۝٤٢ وَلَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ تَمَنَّوْنَ الْمَوْتَ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَلْقَوْهُ فَقَدْ رَأَيْتُمُوهُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ ۝٤٣﴾

"If a wound (and killing) has touched you, be sure a similar wound (and killing) has touched the others. And so are the days (good and not so good), that We give to men by turns, that Allah may test those who believe, and that He may take martyrs from among you. And Allah likes not the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers). And that Allah may test (or purify) the believers (from sins) and destroy the disbelievers. Do you think that you will enter Paradise before Allah tests those of you who fought (in His Cause) and (also) tests those who are As-Saabireen (the patient ones, etc.)? You did indeed wish for death (Ash-Shahadah – martyrdom) before you met it. Now you have seen it openly with your own eyes." (Qur'an 3: 140-143)

As a simple translation of these Verses does not to justice to their

profound meanings, a more detailed study is called for. In the first Verse, Allah ﷻ explained that the Companions ﷺ should not lose hope or work less diligently just because they were afflicted with many losses on the Day of Uhud. After all, their enemy had been previously afflicted with similar losses – seventy Muslims were martyred at Uhud, and seventy polytheists were killed at Badr – but that did not stop them from rebuilding their strength and increasing their resolve to fight back. If the enemy had rebounded from their loss, the Muslims were more worthy of doing the same. The author of the famous *Tafseer* book *Al-Kasshaaf* wrote: “This Verse means the following: If they made you suffer losses on the Day of Uhud, you made them suffer losses prior to that on the Day of Badr. Their hearts did not weaken, and the intensity of their enmity and willingness to fight did not diminish in the least. (Being believers) you are therefore more worthy of not becoming weak (and of not losing hope).”^[1]

Allah ﷻ said in the above-mentioned Verses:

﴿وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ﴾

“And so are the days (good and not so good), that We give to men by turns.”

Allah ﷻ explained here one of the universal laws that govern this world: Victory is never constant but rather is given to some people one day and to other people another day, a law that certainly provided some consolation to the believers for what they had suffered on the Day of Uhud.

Then Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا﴾

“That Allah may test those who believe.”

This translation is based on the actual and not literal meaning of the Verse. Literally, it means, “That Allah may know those who

^[1] Refer to *Tafseer Al-Kasshaaf* (1/465).

believe." Allah ﷻ of course – with His comprehensive knowledge of all things – knew beforehand those who believe, but rewards and punishments are not given based on what Allah ﷻ knew beforehand; they are given after what Allah ﷻ has knowledge about comes into being. This is the reason why the word 'test' is more appropriate than 'know.' To put this into perspective, but not to try to make a comparison, consider the example of a student who does not attend class throughout a semester. His teacher knows that he will inevitably fail. Nonetheless, he does not assign him a failing mark until he takes the final exam. The results are inevitable, but the actors must play out their roles so that those results can occur. So Allah ﷻ was testing the believers, but why? Al-Qurtubee said in his *Tafseer* that they were being tested in order to distinguish the true believers from the hypocrites.

Allah ﷻ then mentioned another reason:

﴿وَيَتَّخِذُ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ﴾

"That He may take martyrs from among you."

For the martyrs, passing the 'test' did not require them to win or even to continue living; dying as a martyr for the sake of Allah ﷻ was what made them pass their test. Clashes between believers and non-believers gave the believers the opportunity of dying for the cause of Islam.

In the Verses that followed, Allah ﷻ mentioned two more reasons why the events of Uhud took place:

﴿وَلِيُمَحِّصَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَيَمْحَقَ الْكَافِرِينَ﴾ (٤١)

"That Allah may test (or purify) the believers (from sins) and destroy the disbelievers."

In this Verse, as opposed to the previous Verse the word 'test' is used and not simply implied. Actually, the word used in the Verse comes from the word *Al-Mahs*, which has two denotations: to purify and to test. If the meaning 'to purify' is intended, as Ibn

Katheer implies in his *Tafseer*, the Verses means: to atone for their sins, if they have sins; and if they don't have sins, then to raise them in rankings in proportion to how much they strive and are afflicted.

The second reason:

﴿وَيَمْحَقُ الْكَافِرِينَ﴾

"And (to) destroy the disbelievers."

Might prompt someone to ask: "How are disbelievers destroyed if they win wars?" This is because, in all eras and as a general rule, when a disbelieving people become victorious in battle, they become arrogant and proud, qualities that lead to self-deceit and hubris and, consequently, to the path of self-destruction. Therefore, Allah ﷻ decreed what happened at Uhud in order to purify believers from sins, to purify their ranks of hypocrites, and to destroy the disbelievers through their own arrogance, pride, and wrongdoing.

In the next Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ
الضَّالِّينَ ۝١٤٢﴾

"Do you think that you will enter Paradise before Allah tests those of you who fought (in His Cause) and (also) tests those who are As-Saabireen (the patient ones, etc.)?"

Explaining this Verse, Ibn Katheer (may Allah have mercy on him) said, "This means: 'You will not enter Paradise until you are tested and until Allah sees who among you strives to promote His Cause (Islam) and fights patiently against the enemy.'

Finally, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ تَمَنَّوْنَ الْمَوْتَ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَلْقَوْهُ فَقَدْ رَأَيْتُمُوهُ وَأَنْتُمْ نَظُرُونَ
۝١٤٣﴾

"You did indeed wish for death (Ash-Shahadah – martyrdom)

before you met it. Now you have seen it openly with your own eyes."

Ibn Katheer (may Allah have mercy on him) said, "This Verse means: Prior to this day, you had been, O believers, hoping, nay, longing, for the opportunity to meet the enemy and patiently fight them. Now the opportunity to do so has arrived, so fight and be patient!"^[1]

How To Correct Mistakes

The *Daa'ee* (caller to Islam), the teacher, the *Imam*, the parent – these and other people are faced with choices to make in terms of how to deal with the mistakes of their subordinates. A father may, for example, scold his son for stealing; he may beat him; and he may sit down with him and kindly advise him, trying to understand why he stole and using gentleness to convince him never to do it again. Which is the best option? Well, any reasonable person will say that it depends on the situation, or very often, upon the child himself: What form of punishment will best work on him? What does this discussion have to do with the Battle of Uhud? It has a lot to do with it, when one considers the ways in which Allah ﷻ admonished the believers after the Battle of Badr and after the Battle of Uhud. One finds – very interestingly, I must add – that even though the Muslims won the Battle of Badr, Allah ﷻ admonished them with more severe language than He ﷻ used after the Battle of Uhud, in which the Muslims were defeated. That this is the case has a lot to do with the spiritual upbringing and training of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ. After Badr was over, Muslims were happy, yet they needed to be reminded of their mistakes and of the real reason why they won – because of Allah's help. After Uhud, however, Muslims were sad, and even though they made mistakes, it was important to at once advise them about their mistakes and raise their morale. Too severe of an admonishment

^[1] Refer to *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* (1/409).

was not required especially since the Companions ﷺ were already feeling genuinely bad for their mistakes and since they had already paid dearly for them. The point is that a victorious person has no negative thoughts in his mind, and so he can be reproached without his feelings being hurt in the process. On the other hand, the defeated person – even if he made mistakes – does have negative thoughts in his mind, and so two goals must be achieved when dealing with him: His spirits must be raised, and he must be made aware of his mistakes, so that he repents and avoids committing them again.

Compare the following two Verses, the first one having been revealed after Badr and the second after Uhud, and see for yourself the different approaches taken to admonish the Muslims. Contemplating these and other Verses that deal with the same subject matter must be the basis upon which Muslim teachers and Imams educate and train their students and followers. In regard to the Battle of Badr, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿مَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ أَسْرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ يُثْخِنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ تُرِيدُونَ عَرَضَ الدُّنْيَا وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٦٧﴾ لَوْلَا كِتَابٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ سَبَقَ لَمَسَّكُمْ فِيمَا أَخَذْتُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٦٨﴾﴾

"It is not for a Prophet that he should have prisoners of war (and free them with ransom) until he had made a great slaughter (among his enemies) in the land. You desire the good of this world (i.e., the money of ransom for freeing the captives), but Allah desires (for you) the Hereafter. And Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise. Were it not a previous ordainment from Allah, a severe torment would have touched you for what you took." (Qur'an 8: 67, 68)

And in regard to the Battle of Uhud, Allah ﷻ said (And pay attention to the gentle hope-inspiring words at the end of the Verse):

﴿وَلَقَدْ مَدَنَّا لَكُمُ اللَّهَ وَعَدْنَاهُ إِذْ تَحُسُّونَهُم بِإِذْنِهِ ۚ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَشِلْتُمْ وَتَنَزَّعْتُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَعَصَيْتُم مِّن بَعْدِ مَا أَرْسَلْنَاكُمْ مَا تُحِبُّونَ

مِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ ثُمَّ صَرَفَكُمْ عَنْهُمْ لِيَبْتَلِيَكُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا عَنْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٥٢﴾

“And Allah did indeed fulfill His Promise to you when you were killing them (your enemy) with His Permission; until (the moment) you lost your courage and fell to disputing about the order, and disobeyed after He showed you (of the booty) which you love. Among you are some that desire this world and some that desire the Hereafter. Then He made you flee from them (your enemy), that He might test you. But surely, He forgave you, and Allah is Most Gracious to the believers.” (Qur’an 3: 152)

Giving the Example Of Previous Mujahideen (People Who Fight For The Cause Of Islam)

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَكَايْنٍ مِّن نَّبِيٍّ قَاتَلَ مَعَهُ رِيشُونَ كَثِيرٌ فَمَا وَهَنُوا لِمَا أَصَابَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَمَا ضَعُفُوا وَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿١٤٦﴾ وَمَا كَانَ قَوْلُهُمْ إِلَّا أَن قَالُوا رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَإِسْرَافَنَا فِي أَمْرِنَا وَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٤٧﴾ فَآتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا وَحُسْنَ ثَوَابِ الْآخِرَةِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٤٨﴾﴾

“And many a Prophet (i.e., many from amongst the Prophets) fought (in Allah’s Cause) and along with him (fought) large bands of religious learned men. But they never lost heart for that which did befall them in Allah’s Way, nor did they weaken nor degrade themselves. And Allah loves As-Saabireen (the patient ones, etc.). And they say nothing but: “Our Lord! Forgive us our sins and our transgressions (in keeping our duties to You), establish our feet firmly, and give us victory over the disbelieving folk.” So Allah gave them the reward of this world, and the excellent reward of the Hereafter. And Allah loves Al-Muhsinoon (the good-doers).” (Qur’an 3: 146-148)

In his *Tafseer* of these Verses, Ibn Katheer (may Allah have mercy on him) said, "In these Verses and the Verses that come before them, Allah ﷻ reproached those who were defeated on the Day of Uhud, and especially those who stopped fighting when they heard a caller call out and say that 'Muhammad has indeed died!' Allah ﷻ blamed and censured them for having fled from the battle."^[1]

Allah ﷻ presented to them the example of their Muslim brothers from past eras, Muslims who fought in wars alongside their Prophets ﷺ. Those Muslims did not show weakness when they were afflicted with hardships while they were treading the Path of Allah, nor did they "weaken (and) degrade themselves." To the contrary, they remained patient and steadfast upon their *Jihaad*. It is interesting to note here that Allah ﷻ did not mention by name in these Verses the Prophet's Companions ﷺ. It was sufficient to mention the actions of past nations, which in and of itself contains an indirect admonishment of the believers who were afflicted with weakness and despair when they heard the false rumour of the Prophet's death. The implication is obvious enough: they were patient and remained steadfast no matter what happened, and you (the implication) became weak and fled from battle. To emphasize the point, Allah ﷻ quoted the believers of past eras:

﴿وَمَا كَانَ قَوْلُهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَإِسْرَافَنَا فِي أَمْرِنَا
وَتَبَيَّنْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ﴾ (٤٧)

"And they say nothing but: 'Our Lord! Forgive us our sins and our transgressions (in keeping our duties to You), establish our feet firmly, and give us victory over the disbelieving folk.'"

It is interesting to note that even though they were obedient slaves of Allah ﷻ, they ascribed sins and transgression to themselves. So first they asked forgiveness for their sins, and then they asked Allah ﷻ to help them against the disbelievers, a way of supplicating that all Muslims should adopt. One should begin by purifying oneself of past errors by repenting. And then, and

^[1] Refer to *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* (1/410).

only then, should one ask for what one wants, because one is unlikely to be answered in one's supplications if one has not repented from one's sins; hence the famous story in which rain was withheld from the people of Moosa عليه السلام because of one man among them who had sinned without repenting for many years. Only when that sinner repented did rain then fall from the sky. Because of the patience of Muslims cited in the above-mentioned Verses and because of their supplications and obedience to Allah ﷻ:

﴿فَأَنزَلْنَا لَهُمُ اللَّهُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا وَحُسْنَ ثَوَابِ الْآخِرَةِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾ (٤٨)

"Allah gave them the reward of this world, and the excellent reward of the Hereafter. And Allah loves Al-Muhsinoon (the good-doers)."

Disobeying A Leader's Command Results In Failure

When Muslims disobey their leaders, they inevitably fail to achieve their goals. Consider how, in the Battle of Uhud, victory turned instantly into defeat once the archers disobeyed the Prophet ﷺ and left their posts on top of Mount 'Ainain. External dangers can always be overcome with the help of Allah ﷻ, but internal discord involves Muslims destroying themselves from within, and so the predictable end is defeat and failure.

In this regard, it is important to note that the hypocrites withdrew with one-third of the Muslim army. Their withdrawal should have had a great impact that day, but it didn't; in fact, it had no negative impact whatsoever on the Muslim army. Muslims had been outnumbered before and had still overcome their enemies. Contrary to the inconsequential withdrawal of the hypocrites, the disobedience of Muslim archers, archers who were sincere Muslims and who were well-trained by the Prophet ﷺ, changed the course of the entire battle. What they did in terms of disobeying the Prophet ﷺ affected not just themselves but the entire Muslim army. In fact, their disobedience almost led to the destruction of all Muslims.

At first, when the archers were still following the Prophet's commands, the Muslims were winning the battle. Thing took a turn for the worse only when the archers left their posts and went down to gather the spoils of war. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِذْ تَضِعُّونَ وَلَا تَكُونُ عَلَى أَحَدٍ وَالرَّسُولُ يَدْعُوكُمْ فِي
أُخْرَىٰكُمْ فَأَتْبَعَكُمْ غَمًّا وَعَمَّا يَغْمِرُ لِكَيْلًا تَحْزَنُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ
وَلَا مَا أَصَابَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥٣﴾﴾

“(And remember) when you ran away (dreadfully) without even casting a side glance at anyone, and the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) was in your rear calling you back. There did Allah give you one distress after another by way of requital to teach you not to grieve for that which had escaped you, nor for that which has befallen you. And Allah is Well-Aware of all that you do.”
(Qur'an 3: 153)

That victory turned into defeat once the Muslim archers disobeyed the Prophet ﷺ is indicated in the following Verse:

﴿وَلَقَدْ مَدَدْنَا اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ إِذْ تَحُسُّونَهُمْ بِإِذْنِهِ ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا
فَشِلْتُمْ وَتَنَزَّعْتُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَعَصَيْتُمْ مِمَّا بَعْدَ مَا أَرْسَلَكُمْ مَّا تُحِبُّونَ
مِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ ثُمَّ صَرَفْنَا
عَنْهُمْ لِبَتْلِيَكُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا عَنْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
﴿١٥٢﴾﴾

“And Allah did indeed fulfill His Promise to you when you were killing them (your enemy) with His Permission; until (the moment) you lost your courage and fell to disputing about the order, and disobeyed after He showed you (of the booty) which you love. Among you are some that desire this world and some that desire the Hereafter. Then He made you flee from them (your enemy), that He might test you. But surely, He forgave you, and Allah is Most Gracious to the believers.” (Qur'an 3: 152)

The esteemed Shaikh Muhammad ibn 'Uthaimen (may Allah have mercy on him) said, "The defeat that was handed to them was a result of only one act of disobedience, and that even while the Messenger ﷺ was in their midst. Then what happens when Muslims perpetrate many acts of disobedience (as they do today)?" To obey the Muslim ruler is required of Muslims, and is second in importance after obedience to Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِيَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَزَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ٥٩﴾

"O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority. (And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, if you believe in Allah and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination." (Qur'an 4: 59)

Obedience to Muslim leaders is one of the most fundamental of duties upon all Muslims; it is so important a duty that the scholars have included belief in this duty among the list of major points of creed that all Muslims must have faith in. We can summarize the importance of obeying Muslim rulers in the following points:

- 1) By obeying Muslim rulers, we are showing obedience to Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِيَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَزَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ٥٩﴾

"O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority. (And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves,

refer it to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, if you believe in Allah and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.” (Qur'an 4: 59)

- 2) Obeying a Muslim ruler is a means and not an end; it is a means of establishing Allah's *Shariah* on earth.
- 3) When Muslims are united behind one leader, they achieve the strength that comes with unity. But when they are not united behind one leader, they become afflicted with the weaknesses and problems that are the natural concomitants of discord.

It is therefore one of the principles of *Ahlus-Sunnah Wal-Jamaa'ah* that we do not rebel against our leaders, even when they rule over their citizens in a tyrannical manner. We obey them so long as they do not order us to sin. And rather than invoking Allah ﷻ to bring about their ruin, we invoke Allah ﷻ to guide them.

The Dangers Of Giving Precedence To This World Over The Hereafter

Many Verses from the Qur'an and sayings of the Prophet ﷺ clarify a number of general realities about this world: Its importance (or lack thereof) to Allah ﷻ, its temptations for human beings, and the dangers of greedily going after its pleasures. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿زُيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوَاتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ وَالْبَنِينَ وَالْقَنَاطِيرِ الْمُقَنْطَرَةِ
مِنَ الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ وَالْخَيْلِ الْمُسَوَّمَةِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ وَالْحَرْثِ ذَلِكَ
مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الْمَبَاقِ ١٤﴾

“Beautified for men is the love of things they covet; women, children, much of gold and silver (wealth), branded beautiful horses, cattle and well-tilled land. This the pleasure of the present world's life; but Allah has the excellent return (Paradise with flowing rivers, etc.) with Him.” (Qur'an 3: 14)

And Allah ﷻ also said:

﴿فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُم بِاللَّهِ الْغُرُورُ﴾ (٣٣)

"Let not then this (worldly) present life deceive you, nor let the chief deceiver (Satan) deceive you about Allah." (Qur'an 31: 33)

And in more than one *Hadeeth*, the Prophet ﷺ warned Muslims not to be deceived by the fleeting pleasures of this life. For example, Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudree ؓ related that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Verily, this world is sweet and green and fresh; and indeed, Allah ﷻ has placed you in it in order to make you to succeed one another (generation after generation), to see how you will act. So beware of this world, and beware of women. For indeed, the first trial (test, temptation) of the Children of Israel was in women!"^[1] Of course the link between the dangers of the world's temptations and the events that took place during the Battle of Uhud should by now be very clear to the reader.

Ibn 'Abbaas ؓ said, "When Allah crushed the polytheists on the Day of Uhud, the archers said, 'Catch up to the people and to the Prophet of Allah ﷺ; do not let them beat you to the spoils; otherwise, they, and not you, will have the spoils!' Some of them said, 'We will not leave this place until the Prophet ﷺ gives us permission to do so.'"^[2] This Verse was then revealed:

﴿مِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ﴾

"Among you are some that desire this world and some that desire the Hereafter." (Qur'an 3: 152)

At-Tabaree (may Allah have mercy on him) said that:

﴿مِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا﴾

"Among you are some that desire this world."

Refers to the spoils of war. And Ibn Mas'ood ؓ said, "I didn't see a single person among the Companions of the Messenger of Allah

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim* (2742).

^[2] Refer to *Tafseer At-Tabaree* (3/474).

ﷺ who desired this world until this was revealed about us on the Day of Uhud:

﴿مِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ﴾

"Among you are some that desire this world and some that desire the Hereafter." (Qur'an 3: 152)

What took place on the Day of Uhud provides an important lesson for Muslims of all generations: that love for this world can find its way into the hearts of believers without them even realizing it, so that they end up preferring the pleasures of this world to the eternal bliss of the Hereafter. This is a danger that they must constantly be wary of, which is why the Prophet ﷺ said in the above-mentioned *Hadeeth*, "Beware of this world."

There is always some seemingly logical justification for sinning; for the archers, it was that they had to leave their positions in order to ensure getting their fair share of the spoils. For us, the justifications are endless; but, we must remember, whatever excuse we use to justify our mistakes, the true motive that prompts us to disobey Allah ﷻ is nothing other than love for this world and its pleasures. The constant danger of preferring this life to the Hereafter requires from the believer a constant process of introspection – of searching for the true motives of his actions. Only when a believer is honest with himself can he root out the hidden motive of worldly love, which is a motive that very often stands between him and the obedience of Allah ﷻ. And when a believer is not honest with himself, he will, with the help of the creative genius of the *Shaitaan*, come up with all kinds of specious arguments to justify fulfilling his desires at the expense of his religion and faith.

Adhering To The Teachings Of Islam

Ibn Katheer wrote: "When some Muslims were defeated (i.e., when they fled from the battlefield) and when others among them were killed, the *Shaitaan* (the Devil) called out, 'Lo! Indeed Muhammad has been killed.' Ibn Qameeah returned to the polytheists and said to them, 'I have killed Muhammad,' when, in reality, he had only struck

the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, causing the skin on his head to be cut upon. Nonetheless, what he claimed found its way into the hearts of many people, who truly believed that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had been killed. Having heard Verses in which Allah mentioned the killings of many Prophets, people believed that the same had just happened to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Muslims were then afflicted with weakness, to the point that they held back from fighting. In regard to this turn of events, Allah ﷻ revealed (this Verse):

﴿وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ أَفَإِنْ مَاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ
 انْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ وَمَنْ يَنْقَلِبْ عَلَىٰ عَقْبَيْهِ فَلَنْ يَضُرَّ اللَّهَ شَيْئًا وَسَيَجْزِي
 اللَّهُ الشَّاكِرِينَ ١٤٤﴾

"Muhammad ﷺ is no more than a Messenger, and indeed (many) Messengers have passed away before him. If he dies or is killed, will you then turn back on your heels (as disbelievers)? And he who turns back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to Allah, and Allah will give reward to those who are grateful."
 (Qur'an 3: 144).

This means that, yes, he will die, but he will remain an example for you in terms of the message with which he was sent."^[1]

The message of the above-mentioned Verse is clear: Messengers do not remain forever among their people; rather, as is the case with all people, they must die. What is important for each Messenger ﷺ is for him to convey his message, so that even after he dies, his message and the teachings he came with remain alive, the duty of which lies squarely on the shoulders of his followers. Allah ﷻ reproached the believers for the weakness that overcame them once they thought that the Prophet ﷺ had died:

﴿أَفَإِنْ مَاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ انْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ﴾

"If he dies or is killed, will you then turn back on your heels (as disbelievers)?"

^[1] Refer to Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem (1/441).

It was as if the believers were going through a fire-drill, to see how they would react when the moment of true emergency came. The Prophet ﷺ had not died on the Day of Uhud, but the Muslims thought he had died, and they reacted and acted inappropriately. The message to the Companions ؓ was this: When he ﷺ is going to really die, you must not become weak or lose hope; rather, you must remember your purpose, which is to worship Allah ﷻ and follow the teachings that the Prophet ﷺ has left behind for you.

One critical mistake the Muslims made on the Day of Uhud was that they wrongly equated faith in Allah ﷻ with the Prophet ﷺ remaining alive among them; in short, they did not distinguish between the eternal message the Prophet ﷺ came with, and the corporeal life of the Prophet ﷺ in this world, which unavoidably had to end in death.

What many Companions ؓ did not grasp on the Day of Uhud was that the Prophet ﷺ, the person, was going to die, but his message was not going to die with him. It was up to them ؓ to continue to spread his message, to uphold the truth, and to follow the way of the Prophet ﷺ both in knowledge and in action.

As Ibn Al-Qayyim correctly pointed out, "The Battle of Uhud was like a prelude to the actual death of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Allah ﷻ made their hearts firm and reproached them for having 'turned back on their heels' once they thought that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had died. Rather than do as they did on the Day of Uhud, it was compulsory upon them to remain steadfast upon the teachings of their religion. They were worshipping not Muhammad ﷺ but the Lord of Muhammad ﷺ, Who does not die. Muhammad ﷺ was not sent on earth to remain alive on it forever – no, not him and neither them (were to remain alive forever). Therefore, what was important was for them to all die upon Islam and Islamic Monotheism. It is for this reason that Allah ﷻ reproached those among them who abandoned their duty once they heard the *Shaitaan* (the Devil) call out, 'Verily, Muhammad has died.' Allah ﷻ said: