

﴿وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ أَفَإِنْ مَاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ
 أُنْقَلَبْتُمْ 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)

The ‘grateful (ones)’ were those who knew the value of the blessing (of Islam) and who remained steadfast upon it (upon Islam) until they either died (of natural causes) or were killed. The relevance of this reproach from Allah ﷻ was seen again later on, on the day that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ actually died: Some Muslims apostatized, turning back on their heels, while the thankful ones remained steadfast upon their religion. Allah ﷻ helped the latter group, bestowed honour upon them, made them victorious over their enemies, and, most importantly, bestowed upon them the best end destination (Paradise).^[1]

Summarizing the reprimand given to the believers in the above-mentioned Verse, Al-Qurtubee wrote, “Even if Muhammad ﷺ had been killed, they should not have fled; Prophethood does not ward off death; and religions do not come to an end with the deaths of Prophets.”^[2] Here, Al-Qurtubee makes a very important point: supremely wrong were those who thought that Islam ended with the death of the Prophet ﷺ, as well as those who thought that victory for Islam hinged upon the Prophet ﷺ being alive. They were wrong because, in their assessment of the situation, they did not give just value to the religion of Islam. That Islam must reign supreme over all other religions is the decree of

^[1] Refer to *Zaad Al-Ma’ad* (3/ 224).

^[2] Refer to *Tafseer Al-Qurtubee* (4/222).

Allah ﷻ, and none can change the decree of Allah ﷻ, Who said:

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ
كُلِّهِ، وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾﴾

“It is He Who has sent His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) with guidance and the religion of truth (Islam), to make it superior over all religions even though the Mushrikoon (polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah) hate (it).”
(Qur’an 9: 33)

Islam comes out victorious only because it is the truth and because it is true guidance.

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ actually died, the initial reaction of Muslims was incredulity mixed with grief. But, with the help of Abu Bakr ؓ, they soon learned from their mistake on the Day of Uhud. It is related in *Saheeh Bukhaaree* that, after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ died, Abu Bakr ؓ rode on his horse from his house at As-Sunh (the district that was inhabited by the Children of Haarith and that was situated approximately one mile away from the Prophet’s *Masjid*) until he reached the *Masjid*. Once there, he entered the *Masjid*, without speaking to anyone. Entering upon ‘Aishah ؓ, Abu Bakr ؓ headed straight for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who was covered in a Yemeni robe. Abu Bakr ؓ uncovered his face, kissed him, and cried, after which he ؓ said, “May my mother and father be sacrificed for you. May Allah not gather upon you two deaths! As for the death that has been written (decreed) upon you, you have died it.”^[1] One might ask, why did Abu Bakr ؓ say, “May Allah not gather upon you two deaths! As for the death that has been written (decreed) upon you, you have died it.” Some scholars mention that Abu Bakr ؓ said these words in response to ‘Umar’s claim that the Prophet ﷺ was going to come back to life. ‘Umar ؓ was so grief-stricken that he tried to convince himself that the Prophet ﷺ was going to come

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of *Al-Maghaazee*, chapter, “The Prophet’s Illness and Death”; *Hadeeth* number: 4453.

back to life. Had the Prophet ﷺ come back to life, he ﷺ would have had to die again – a second time – since death is inevitable for all human beings, a reality that Abu Bakr ؓ understood even in the shocking moments after the Prophet's death. And Abu Bakr ؓ knew that the Prophet ﷺ was of too high a ranking with Allah ﷻ to die two deaths, one more than every other human being. Abu Bakr ؓ then explained that the Prophet ﷺ had died the one death that is decreed for all human beings and that there was no other explanation or interpretation for his death.

Ibn 'Abbaas ؓ said, "Verily, Abu Bakr ؓ came out while 'Umar ؓ was speaking to the people, and Abu Bakr ؓ said, 'Sit down, O 'Umar!' But 'Umar ؓ refused to sit down. The people then left 'Umar ؓ and approached Abu Bakr ؓ (wanting to hear what he had to say to them). Abu Bakr ؓ said, "To proceed: If anyone among you worships Muhammad ﷺ, then (know that) Muhammad ﷺ has indeed died. And as for those among you who worship Allah, then (know that) Allah is alive and does not die. Allah ﷻ said:

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"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).

Ibn 'Abbaas ؓ went on to say, "By Allah, it was as if the people did not know that Allah ﷻ had revealed this Verse until Abu Bakr ؓ recited it (to them). The people learned it from him (then and there), and there was no person (there) except that I heard him reciting it. And Sa'eed ibn Al-Musayyib informed me that 'Umar ؓ said, 'No sooner did I hear Abu Bakr ؓ recite that Verse

than I became stunned, to the degree that my legs could not carry me; in fact, I fell to the ground when I heard him recite it: I knew then that the Prophet ﷺ had indeed died.”^[1]

How The Prophet ﷺ Dealt With The Archers Who Disobeyed Him And The Hypocrites Who Betrayed Him

As for the archers who erred on the Day of Uhud, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not push them away or expel them from Muslim society. He ﷺ, for example, did not say, “After having witnessed firsthand your weakness, I have come to the conclusion that you are all good for nothing!” Instead, the Prophet ﷺ, if not embraced, then at least handled their mistake with mercy and forgiveness. Furthermore, all of the Muslim participants in the Battle, archers included, were forgiven for their mistakes. True, the archers had committed a serious mistake that entailed grave consequences and huge losses; but still, they were sincere Muslims. And so Allah ﷻ forgave them, which meant that they were effectively washed of their mistakes. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ إِذْ تَحُسُّونَهُمْ بِإِذْنِهِ ۗ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَشِلْتُمْ وَتَنَزَّعْتُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَعَصَيْتُمْ مِمَّا أُرْسِلْتُمْ مَا تُحِبُّونَ مِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ 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

^[1] Saheeh Bukhaaree, the Book of Al-Maghaazee, chapter, “The Sickness and (Consequent) Death of the Prophet ﷺ”; Hadeeth number : 4454.

enemy), that He might test you. But surely, He forgave you, and Allah is Most Gracious to the believers.” (Qur’an 3: 152)

To make His favour upon them complete, Allah ﷻ commanded the Prophet ﷺ to forgive them, and He ﷻ exhorted the Prophet ﷺ to supplicate for their forgiveness; and since He ﷻ was giving them a fresh start, Allah ﷻ also ordered the Prophet ﷺ to seek out their consultation and to not let their mistakes hinder him from benefiting from their ideas and skills. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿فِيمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانفَضُّوا 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)

As for the hypocrites, their disobedience was not unintentional: Led by ‘Abdullah ibn Ubai ibn Salool, they meant to hurt the Muslims. By withdrawing with one-third of the army, they hoped to lower the morale of the Muslims and raise the morale of the polytheists. In the most critical of moments, Ibn Ubai and his followers abandoned the Prophet ﷺ. Not even ‘Abdullah ibn Haraam’s pleas could convince them to rejoin the Muslim army. Allah ﷻ said about them:

﴿وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعَانِ فِإِذِنَ اللَّهِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٦٦﴾ وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا قَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَوْ ادْفَعُوا قَالُوا لَوْ نَعْلَمُ قِتَالًا لَاتَّبَعْنَاكُمْ هُمْ لِلْكَفَرِ 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 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)

It is interesting to note that, even though the Muslims were already outnumbered, the Prophet ﷺ paid no attention to the hypocrites as they withdrew from the army. It was sufficient for the Prophet ﷺ that the hypocrites had exposed their true inner reality in front of the people. The Prophet’s silence adequately reproached and humiliated Ibn Ubai; it was as if the Prophet ﷺ was saying: “Your withdrawing from us means nothing to us, for we do not need you in the least.”

Ostensibly to give a public show of support for the Prophet ﷺ, but really to show himself to still be an important person in Al-Madeenah, Ibn Ubai would stand up and speak before the Prophet ﷺ would deliver his Friday sermons. Every Friday, when the Prophet ﷺ would sit down before delivering his sermon, Ibn Ubai would stand up and say, “O people, here is the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in your midst. Through him, Allah ﷻ has honoured you and made you strong, so support and help him. Also, listen to him and obey him.” Ibn Ubai would then sit down. Week in and week out, Ibn Ubai would continue to speak on the blessed day of *Jumu’ah* (Friday), at least until he betrayed the Muslims on the Day of Uhud. After the Battle of Uhud was concluded and the Muslims had returned to Al-Madeenah, Ibn Ubai stood up, as he always did, before the Prophet ﷺ delivered his Friday sermon. This time, however, the Muslims ﷻ who were sitting down around him took hold of his garment and said, “Sit down, O enemy of Allah. By Allah, after you did what you did, you are no longer worthy of (speaking in this gathering).” Incensed at the

rough treatment he had just received, Ibn Ubai left the gathering, walking over the necks of people who were seated in the rows of the *Masjid*. As Ibn Ubai was leaving, he said, "By Allah, it is as if, by helping his (the Prophet's) cause, I was speaking evil words (i.e., then why did they stop me?)." Once Ibn Ubai reached the door of the *Masjid*, he was met by men from the *Ansaar* ﷺ, who said to him, "Woe upon you! What is the matter with you?" Ibn Ubai replied, "I stood up to support his cause, and some men from his companions jumped at me, pulling me down and treating me roughly. It is as if, by helping his cause, I was speaking evil words." They said, "Woe upon you! Return (to the inside of the *Masjid*), so that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ can invoke Allah to forgive you," to which Ibn Ubai haughtily replied, "By Allah, I do not want him to ask forgiveness for me."^[1]

Uhud Is A Mountain That Loves Us And That Is Loved By Us

Anas ibn Maalik ﷺ related that, on one occasion, when Mount Uhud came into view, the Prophet ﷺ said, "This is a mountain that loves us and that is loved by us." This saying attests to the finely tuned emotions of the Prophet ﷺ, whereby he appreciated how Allah ﷻ provided the Muslims with an inanimate object, a mountain, to protect the rear of their army from enemy attack. Thankful to Allah ﷻ for having provided them with that mountain, the Prophet ﷺ used the strongest of language to show the attachment that Muslims felt towards it. In doing so, the Prophet ﷺ showed the loftiness of his character, for a man who shows loyalty and recognizes favours from inanimate objects is a man who will do the same when he receives the slightest form of kindness from an actual human being. And that is exactly what the Muslims were blessed with: a Prophet ﷺ who cared a great deal about them, who was finely-tuned to all of their emotions and needs, and who verbally and practically rewarded them with kindness for their sincere efforts.

^[1] Refer to *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah* (4/53) and to *Seerah Ibn Hishaam*, to the chapter titled, "Abdullah ibn Ubai's Status After (Uhud)."

A single saying of the Prophet ﷺ can convey many profound meanings. To be sure, the mutual love described by the Prophet ﷺ in the above-mentioned saying should be understood at a literal level, but it suggests other meanings as well. Professor Saaleh Ash-Shamee said, "It is very often the case that human beings associate a calamity with the place in which and the time during which it occurred. So as to prevent such an attitude from surfacing after the advent of Islam, the Prophet ﷺ said the above-mentioned words (about Mount Uhud); he ﷺ didn't want people to have misgivings (about Uhud) and to fear bad luck (for such feelings are not permissible in Islam), for such were the evil feelings that might have remained in the hearts of people, considering the calamity that took place on the Day of Uhud. Without a doubt, Muslims were going to thereafter stand on Mount Uhud and remember the events of that battle. And so in order to prevent them from having evil thoughts about the place in which the battle occurred, the Prophet ﷺ explained to his Companions ﷺ that places and times are creations of Allah ﷻ and that neither places nor times have an impact on what occurs in them. Instead, everything that happens is in the Hand of Allah ﷻ. The martyrdom that occurred on the Day of Uhud was not a calamity but an honour for those who were martyred. Therefore, we should love Uhud based on the above-mentioned saying of the Prophet ﷺ, and we should understand that it should be honoured because it is the place where Hamzah ﷺ and his companions ﷺ were chosen by Allah ﷻ to sacrifice their lives while seeking out His Pleasure (and reward)."^[1]

The Angels At Uhud

Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ﷺ said, "On the Day of Uhud, I saw to the right and to the left of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ two men, both of whom were attired in white garments. They were fighting fiercely to defend him. I never saw them before that day, and I have never seen them since (he ﷺ was referring to Jibreel

^[1] Refer to *Min Ma'een As-Seerah* (pg. 427).

ﷺ and Meekaaeel (جبرئيل).”^[1]

Because Allah ﷻ guaranteed to protect the Prophet ﷺ from people, the angels fought to defend him on the Day of Uhud; nonetheless, that was the only fighting the angels engaged in on that day. To be sure, Allah ﷻ had promised to help the Muslims in the following verse, but He stipulated that, in order for Him to help them, certain conditions had to be fulfilled: They had to ‘hold on to patience and piety,’ which they didn’t do once they disobeyed the Prophet’s command. Therefore, they did not receive any help from the angels. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِذْ تَقُولُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَلَنْ يَكْفِيَكُمْ أَنْ يُمَدِّدَ رَبُّكُمْ بِثَلَاثَةِ آلَافٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُنَزَّلِينَ ﴿١٢٤﴾ بَلَىٰ إِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَيَأْتُوكُم مِّن فَوْرِهِمْ هَذَا يُمَدِّدْكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِخَمْسَةِ آلَافٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِينَ ﴿١٢٥﴾﴾

“(Remember) when you (Muhammad ﷺ) said to the believers, “Is it not enough for you that your Lord (Allah) should help you with three thousand angels; sent down?” “Yes, if you hold on to patience and piety, and the enemy comes rushing at you; your Lord will help you with five thousand angels having marks (of distinction).” (Qur’an 3: 124, 125)

The Laws Of Victory And Defeat, As Derived From The Chapters: *Al-Anfaal* And *Aal ‘Imraan*

Both the Battles of Badr and Uhud contained important lessons for Muslims, which is why the former is discussed in great detail in chapter *Al-Anfaal*, and the latter in chapter *Aal ‘Imraan*. The correct understanding of Divine Preordainment, the proper way to view life and death, the laws of victory and defeat, the true meaning of winning and losing, the clear difference between faith and hypocrisy – these are just some of the lessons that the Companions ﷺ learned from the events that took place during the Battles of Badr and Uhud.

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, the Book of Virtues, chapter, “Jibreel and Meekaaeel Defend the Prophet ﷺ on the Day of Uhud”; *Hadeeth* number: 2306.

As for the laws of victory and defeat that are discussed in the two above-mentioned chapters, they can be summarized in the following points:

- 1) Victory, in the beginning and in the end, is the Hand of Allah ﷻ; no human being, and no other created being for that matter, has the power to grant victory. As is the case with sustenance and life and faith, Allah ﷻ grants victory to His slaves howsoever He wants and to whomsoever He chooses. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ وَإِن تَطْمَئِنَّ بِهِ قُلُوبُكُمْ وَمَا النَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾﴾

“Allah made it only as glad tidings, and that your heart be at rest therewith. And there is no victory except from Allah. Verily, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.” (Qur’an 8: 10)

- 2) When Allah ﷻ decrees victory for a people, the combined power of all created beings cannot prevent that victory from occurring. And when Allah ﷻ decrees defeat for a people, the combined power of all created beings cannot ward off that defeat. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِن يَنْصُرْكُمُ اللَّهُ فَلَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ وَإِن يَخْذَلْكُمْ فَمَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَنْصُرْكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٦٠﴾﴾

“If Allah helps you, none can overcome you; and if He forsakes you, who is there after Him that can help you? And in Allah (Alone) let believers put their trust.” (Qur’an 3: 160)

- 3) Yes, we must believe that victory comes from Allah alone, but we must also understand that Allah ﷻ hands out victory not arbitrarily but based upon the dictates of His Divine Wisdom. So there is a system and there are rules, one rule being that Muslims must work and strive to help the Cause of Allah ﷻ – which is Islam – if they want to be rewarded with victory. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن نَّصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ ﴿٧﴾﴾

“O you who believe! If you help (in the cause of) Allah, He will help you, and make your foothold firm.” (Qur’an 47: 7)

That victory comes from Allah ﷻ does not mean that we should do nothing to earn victory; to the contrary, Allah ﷻ grants us victory when we obey Him, when we follow His religion in an upright manner, and when we struggle for His Cause.

- 4) Another basic rule is that victory comes to those who are united, and not to those who are divided and are constantly beset by internal strife. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تَنَازَعُوا فَتَفْشَلُوا وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ وَأَصْبِرُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾﴾

“And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength depart, and be patient. Surely, Allah is with those who are As-Saabireen (the patient ones, etc.).” (Qur’an 8: 46)

- 5) Yet another rule is that, for victory to be achieved, Muslims must be obedient to Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ; on the other hand, disobedience of Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ leads to failure and destruction. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تَنَازَعُوا فَتَفْشَلُوا وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ وَأَصْبِرُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾﴾

“And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength depart, and be patient. Surely, Allah is with those who are As-Saabireen (the patient ones, etc.).” (Qur’an 8: 46)

- 6) Muslims deprive themselves of Allah’s help when the love of this world, as opposed to the love of the Hereafter, enters into their hearts and controls their every action. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَقَدْ مَدَدْنَا لَكُمُ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ إِذْ تَحُسُّونَهُمْ بِإِذْنِهِ ۗ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَشِلْتُمْ وَتَنَزَعْتُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَعَصَيْتُمْ مِمَّا أُرْسِلْتُمْ مَّا تَحِبُّونَ ۗ مِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ ۗ ثُمَّ صَرَفْنَا عَنْهُمْ غَيْبَتَهُمْ 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)

- 7) To be outnumbered and to be outgunned in terms of weapons and supplies is not, and I repeat, is not, the cause of failure. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِبَدْرٍ وَأَنْتُمْ أَذِلَّةٌ ۖ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢٣﴾﴾

“And Allah has already made you victorious at Badr, when you were a weak little force. So fear Allah much (abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden and love Allah much, perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained) that you may be grateful.” (Qur’an 3: 123)

- 8) Even though being outgunned is not the cause of failure, Muslims must, with their correct understanding of Divine Preordainment, assemble a well-prepared and well-equipped army, for Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مِمَّا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَمِنْ رِبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ تُرْهِبُونَ بِهِ عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ وَءَاخِرِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ لَا نَعْلَمُونَهُمُ اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُهُمْ ۗ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يُوَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾﴾

“And make ready against them all you can of power, including steeds of war (tanks, planes, missiles, artillery, etc.) to threaten the enemy of Allah and your enemy, and others besides whom, you may not know but whom Allah does know. And whatever you shall spend in the Cause of Allah shall be repaid unto you, and you shall not be treated unjustly.” (Qur’an 8: 60)

- 9) To be steadfast in battle and to patiently endure the hardships of fighting are two of the most important factors that lead to success and victory:

﴿يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا لَقِيْتُمْ فِئَةً فَاثْبُتُوا وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾﴾

“O you who believe! When you meet (an enemy) force, take a firm stand against them and remember the Name of Allah much (both with tongue and mind), so that you may be successful.” (Qur’an 8: 45)

And in another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا لَقِيْتُمْ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا زَحْفًا فَلَا تُوَلُّوهُمُ الْأَدْبَارَ ﴿١٥﴾﴾

“O you who believe! When you meet those who disbelieve, in a battle-field, never turn your backs to them.” (Qur’an 8: 15)

- 10) Nothing helps a person achieve steadfastness and patience on the battlefield more so than the remembrance of Allah ﷻ. As in all of one’s affairs in life, one must, when on the battlefield, remember Allah ﷻ, ask Him for help, and rely on Him completely for success, as opposed to relying on numbers and weapons. One must acknowledge one’s weakness and believe with certainty that there is neither might nor power except with Allah ﷻ. When an entire army of Muslims fights with this frame of mind, help from Allah ﷻ is surely on the way. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا لَقِيْتُمْ فِئْتَهُ فَانْتَبِتُوا وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾﴾

“O you who believe! When you meet (an enemy) force, take a firm stand against them and remember the Name of Allah much (both with tongue and mind), so that you may be successful.”
(Qur’an 8: 45)

The Superiority Of Martyrs, And What Allah ﷻ Has Prepared For Them In Terms Of Bliss And Reward

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “When your brothers were killed at Uhud, Allah ﷻ placed their souls in the insides of green birds; they drink from the rivers of Paradise, and they eat from its fruits. Then they retire to lamps (which for them are like the nests of birds) of gold that are in the shade of the Throne. When they found the wholesomeness of their drink and food and the goodness of their place of sleep, they said, ‘Would that our brothers knew what Allah has done with us, so that they do not forsake *Jihaad*, and so that they do not recoil from war.’ Allah – the Possessor of might and majesty – said, ‘I will convey that to them for you,’” after which Allah – the Possessor of might and majesty – revealed these Verses to His Messenger ﷺ:

﴿وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ءَمُوتًا بَلْ ءَحْيَاءُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ ﴿١٦٩﴾ فَرِحِينَ بِمَا ءَاتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۚ وَيَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ءَلَّا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١٧٠﴾ ۚ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِنِعْمَةِ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ ۚ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٧١﴾﴾

“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. They rejoice in what Allah has bestowed upon them of His Bounty, rejoicing for the sake of those who have not yet joined

them, but are left behind (not yet martyred) that on them no fear shall come, nor shall they grieve. They rejoice in a Grace and a Bounty from Allah, and that Allah will not waste the reward of the believers.” (Qur’an 3: 169-171)

According to the narration of Al-Waahidee, Sa’eed ibn Jubair said about the above-mentioned Verses, “When Hamzah ibn ‘Abdul-Muttalib ؓ and Mus’ab ibn ‘Umair ؓ were killed on the Day of Uhud and saw what they were being provided with in terms of good things, they said, ‘Would that our brothers knew about the good things that have befallen us, so that (as a result of that knowledge) they will increase in their desire to perform *Jihaad*.’ Allah ﷻ said, ‘I will convey that to them on your behalf.’ Allah ﷻ then revealed the Verse:

﴿وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أحيَاءُ﴾

“Think not of those who are killed in the Way of Allah as dead,”

until,

﴿وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

“And that Allah will not waste the reward of the believers.”

Imam Muslim (may Allah have mercy on him) related that Masrooq said, “We asked ‘Abdullah ibn Mas’ood about (the meaning of) this Verse:

﴿وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أحيَاءُ 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)

He said: Lo! We did indeed ask about that, and he (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ) said, ‘Their souls are in the insides of green birds that have lamps (which are like nests for them) hanging from the Throne. They frolic wherever they want in Paradise, and they

then retire to their lamps. Their Lord looked at them and said: Do you desire anything? They said: What could we possibly want when we frolic about wherever we want in Paradise. Allah did the same with them three times, and when they saw that they would continue to be asked, they said: 'O our Lord! We want You to return our souls to our bodies, so that we can fight in Your way a second time.' When it thus became established that they didn't really need anything, they were left alone (i.e., they were no longer asked whether they desired anything more).''^[1]

A Media Campaign Against The Polytheists

As we have hitherto discussed on more than one occasion, the main medium of spreading information during the Prophet's lifetime was word of mouth, and, given the ease with which good poems were memorized, the main information that was being spread by word of mouth was in the form of poetry. Skilled poets, therefore, were a valuable commodity in Arabia. After the Battle of Badr was over, the poets of the Quraish concentrated their talents on composing poems that honoured Quraish's fallen soldiers and that expressed grief and resentment for the many losses their army suffered. After Uhud was concluded, those same poets – such as Hubairah ibn Abee Wahb, 'Abdullah ibn Az-Zab'aree, Diraar ibn Al-Khattaab, and 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas – tried to overstate the significance of their victory; but no matter, for Muslim poets – Hassaan ibn Thaabit ؓ, Ka'ab ibn Maalik ؓ, and 'Abdullah ibn Rawaahah ؓ – were ready to refute them and to counter the effects of their poems.

On a psychological level, Hassaan's poems were like bullets being sprayed at the Quraish. Quraish's victory, Hassaan ؓ explained, was no victory at all. The Muslims, with a wonderful show of bravery, managed to kill the flag-bearer of Quraish's army. Hassaan ؓ mocked Quraish's soldiers in his poems for being

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, the Book of Leadership, chapter, "Clarifying that the Martyrs are in Paradise, that They are Alive With their Lord, and that They are Being Provided with Sustenance"; *Hadeeth* number: 1887.

cowardly, an attribute of theirs that was attested to by the fact that they could not even protect their flag-bearer – one of the most protected men of any army. Furthermore, Hassaan ؓ reminded them of how their flag ended up in the hands of one of their women, since all of the men had left it, being busy with the task of fleeing from the battlefield. With these insults Hassaan ؓ wanted to remind Quraish's nobles that they showed cowardice and that they went through many humiliating situations during the early part of the battle; in effect, Hassaan ؓ was saying to them: "Do not be deceived by your victory; it was tainted, and we are still alive and as strong as ever!" To be sure, Arabs valued honour above all else. What honour, then, did Quraish's nobles have left when, all over Arabia, poems were being circulated in which a description was given of how Quraish's soldiers fled, which left one of their women with no choice but to pick up their flag for them. That a woman did what they were supposed to do underscored their cowardly actions.

One of Quraish's poets, Diraar ibn Al-Khattaab (who later embraced Islam), tried to distort reality and divide the ranks of Muslims by saying in one of his poems that the victory of the Muslims on the Day of Badr was a victory not of all Muslims, but of the Prophet ﷺ and the *Muhaajiroon*. Diraar tried to revive tribal pride within the ranks of Muslims in Al-Madeenah. He of course failed in that attempt, for shortly thereafter Ka'ab ؓ replied to his poem with one of his own, in which he ؓ established the unity of Muslims and the support and help that the *Ansaar* were willing to give to the Prophet ﷺ.



**The Most Important Events
That Took Place Between
Uhud And Al-Khandaq**





The Quraish Tries To Bring About Instability In Al-Madeenah

The outcome of Uhud was pleasing not just to the Quraish; polytheistic Arab tribes that lived near Al-Madeenah were also encouraged by the outcome of the battle, so encouraged, in fact, that they felt a renewed sense of hope of being able to overcome the Muslims in battle. Many Arab tribes fixed their gazes on Al-Madeenah, waiting for the opportune moment to attack it and kill its inhabitants.

So in the months that followed Uhud, Muslims found no peace in their own land, instead finding that they were constantly being threatened by one enemy or another. The tribe of Banu Asad wanted to attack Al-Madeenah; Khaalid ibn Sufyaan Al-Hudhalee began to mobilize his forces for an all-out attack on Al-Madeenah; even 'Adal and Qarah, two subtribes that promised to be loyal to the Prophet ﷺ, had the temerity to betray him ﷺ and the Muslims. Outside of Al-Madeenah, 'Aamir ibn At-Tufail began to kill Muslim messengers who left Al-Madeenah to preach the message of Islam, even though messengers in those times were recognized by all Arabs to have the right of safe passage to and from their destinations. And within Al-Madeenah, the Jews of Banu An-Nadeer tried to assassinate the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Nonetheless, with exceptional bravery, planning, and execution, the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ were able to thwart all of the above-mentioned attempts of the polytheists to do harm to Islam and Muslims.

The Tribe Of Banu Asad

Through spies that were scattered throughout the Arabian Peninsula, an urgent warning was sent to the Prophet ﷺ. Led by Tulaihah Al-Asdee, the tribe of Banu Asad ibn Khuzaimah was mobilizing its forces to mount an all-out offensive on Al-Madeenah. Banu Asad had two main goals in mind: To win the riches of Al-Madeenah and to help the Quraish to make polytheism come out victorious over Islam.

But before the people of Banu Asad could mobilize their forces, the Prophet ﷺ sent out a unit to attack them first. That unit consisted of one-hundred and fifty men from both the *Muhaajiroon* and the *Ansaar*, and the Prophet ﷺ appointed Abu Salamah ibn 'Abdul-Asad ؓ to lead them. Having handed the flag of war over to Abu Salamah ؓ, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Continue travelling until you make camp on the land of Banu Asad, and then attack them before their forces assemble together against you."

It was in the month of *Muharram* that Abu Salamah ؓ and his unit set out to attack Banu Asad. Once they reached their destination, the Muslim unit raided Banu Asad's livestock. The people of Banu Asad became so terrified that they fled without taking with them any of their livestock, which the Muslims took as booty. The plan of scaring and scattering Banu Asad's fighters worked perfectly. It was not likely that Banu Asad would be foolish enough to plan again for an attack on Al-Madeenah. Therefore, having successfully achieved the aim of their mission, Abu Salamah's unit returned safely to Al-Madeenah.

Abu Salamah ؓ is one of the first people ever to embrace Islam; he ؓ was from the small elite group that believed in the Prophet ﷺ during the earliest days of his mission. The raid on Banu Asad was particularly difficult for Abu Salamah ؓ, for the wounds that he was inflicted with on the Day of Uhud had not yet completely healed. In fact, during the course of the expedition to Banu Asad, Abu Salamah's wounds worsened, to the degree that he ؓ returned to Al-Madeenah exhausted and in very bad shape;

shortly after his return, Abu Salamah ؓ died.

There are a number of interesting points related to the raid on Banu Asad. First, the Prophet ﷺ resorted to his often-employed strategy of scattering and demoralizing the enemy before they had a chance to mobilize their forces. Being certain that the Muslims were weakened by the Battle of Uhud, the people of Banu Asad were truly shocked when they saw a small army of Muslims fearlessly attacking them. Second, whereas the polytheists could not maintain secrecy – after all, news of Banu Asad’s planned attack reached the Prophet ﷺ in Al-Madeenah – the Muslims did an impeccable job of preserving their secrets, as is attested to by the fact that the people of Banu Asad learned about the Muslim attack on them only after the attack began in earnest. That the Muslim unit had to travel a long distance to reach their destination should have meant that Banu Asad would learn about their approach at an early stage; but the excellent planning of the Prophet ﷺ and the exemplary discipline of his Companions ؓ prevented the enemy from learning about the attack until it was too late. Secrecy and surprise were the main causes of victory in this battle. Third, Abu Salamah’s unit left an indelible mark on Banu Salamah’s attitude towards the Muslims: Convinced of the military might of the Muslims, the people of Banu Asad gave up all hope of conquering Al-Madeenah. In fact, seeing how capable the Muslims were of mounting a surprise attack, Banu Asad became terrified of them, fearing that they could be attacked at any time. It is not surprising; therefore, that Banu Asad soon made overtures of wanting to sign a peace treaty with the Muslims.

‘Abdullah Ibn Unais ؓ Confronts Khaalid Ibn Sufyaan Al-Hudhalee

Sharing common motives with Banu Asad – wanting to gain the riches of Al-Madeenah and to support their fellow polytheists from the Quraish – the people of Hudhail and their allies planned an attack of their own on Al-Madeenah. The main organizer of the

planned attack was Khaalid ibn Sufyaan Al-Hudhalee, who was recruiting fighters from both Hudhail and elsewhere; he was asking his fighters to make preparations and to gather at 'Arafaat. In fact, it could be said that Khaalid ibn Sufyaan was single-handedly orchestrating the planned attack. That is why, instead of going after the people of Hudhail, the Prophet ﷺ deemed it sufficient to kill Khaalid ibn Sufyaan. The Prophet ﷺ knew that without their leader and organizer, the people of Hudhail and their allies would lose their motivation and will to attack Al-Madeenah, and so the Prophet ﷺ ordered 'Abdullah ibn Unais Al-Juhaneer to carry out the important task of killing Khaalid. 'Abdullah ibn Unais later recounted the details of his mission: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ called me and said, "Verily, it has been conveyed to me that Khaalid ibn Sufyaan ibn Nabeeh is gathering people together in order to attack me; right now, he is at 'Arinah, so go to him (there) and kill him." I said, "O Messenger of Allah, describe him, so that I can recognize him (when I see him)." The Prophet ﷺ said, "When you see him, you will notice that he (i.e., his body) shakes." I then left, taking with me my sword, and I continued my journey until I reached him at 'Arinah; he was with some women that he was visiting. When I reached him, it was time for 'Asr. As soon as I saw him, I saw what the Messenger of Allah ﷺ described to me: his body was shaking. I began to approach him, but fearing that a fight between us would divert me from prayer, I prayed as I walked towards him, nodding with my head to indicate the bowing and prostrating positions. When I finally was face to face with him, he asked, "Who are you?" I said, "I am an Arab man who has heard about you and your efforts to gather an army to fight that man (in Al-Madeenah). And I have come to you for that reason." "Yes," Khaalid said, "I am in the process of doing that." I walked with him for a while, and as soon as I was able to, I attacked him with my sword and killed him. I then left just as his women were racing towards him. When I traveled back to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and when he ﷺ saw me, he ﷺ said, "The face (shows signs of) success." I said, "I killed

him, O Messenger of Allah.” He ﷺ said, “You have spoken the truth.” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then stood up with me, after which he ﷺ entered his house. He ﷺ then gave me a staff. He ﷺ said, “Keep this with you, O ‘Abdullah ibn Unais.” I went out with the staff, and when the people saw me with it, they said, “What is this staff (for)?” I said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave it to me and ordered me to hold on to it.” They said, “Will you not go back to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and ask him why he ﷺ gave it to you?” I returned to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and asked, “O Messenger of Allah, why did you give me this staff?” He ﷺ said, “It will be a sign between me and you on the Day of Resurrection.”

The Prophet ﷺ then explained to him that some people will come on the Day of Resurrection with good deeds that they will lean upon (hence the staff). Until the day he died, ‘Abdullah ؓ kept the staff and his sword together. And when ‘Abdullah ؓ was being prepared for his burial, his staff was placed alongside him in his shroud, so that he ؓ was then buried with it.

The Lessons and Morals of This Story

1) Nipping a Problem in the Bud

Rather than allow the enemy to mobilize its forces and to increase in strength, the Prophet ﷺ always sought to hurt them and weaken their resolve in the early stages of their planning. The Prophet ﷺ understood that, left unchecked, problems can grow in scope and intensity. It is for this reason that the Prophet ﷺ did not give Khaalid ibn Sufyaan the time he needed to gather together an entire army; in fact, so quickly did the Prophet ﷺ deal with the threat that, to end that threat, it was sufficient to kill a single man. In dealing with problems in their early stages of development, the Prophet ﷺ saved many Muslim lives, lives that would have been lost had the Prophet ﷺ delayed in taking serious action against the enemy; instead, the Prophet ﷺ did what all good leaders do: he ﷺ noticed a problem, assessed it, came up with a plan to deal with it, and immediately put his plan into action – without showing the irresoluteness that is the chief characteristic of a weak leader.

2) The Prophet's Ability to Choose the Right Man for the Job

A leader is judged as much by the people around him and the people he appoints for specific tasks as for his own actions. In this regard, the Prophet ﷺ was well-acquainted with the skills and talents of his Companions ﷺ and employed them accordingly. When choosing a leader, the Prophet ﷺ sought out a man who was knowledgeable, brave, and good at making decisions. When choosing someone to teach or preach the message of Islam, he ﷺ looked for someone who was at once knowledgeable, charismatic, and refined in character. When choosing ambassadors to visit kings, the Prophet ﷺ would send someone who was handsome, eloquent, and quick-witted. And when choosing someone to carry out a dangerous mission that could very likely end in death, the Prophet ﷺ would choose a man who was brave, strong-hearted, and patient. Not only was 'Abdullah ibn Unais Al-Juhanee ﷺ brave, strong-hearted, and sincere in his faith; he was also qualified for the mission of killing Khaalid ibn Sufyaan for another reason: he ﷺ was superior to others in his knowledge of Hudhail territory, since it bordered on the territory of his own tribe – the Juhainah. ^[1]

3) 'Abdullah's Reward

'Abdullah ibn Unais ﷺ was asked to carry out a very dangerous mission: to travel deep into enemy territory and to kill a prominent figure. In both the past and present, the successful completion of such a mission is rewarded with a huge sum of money; mercenaries compete with one another to gain such reward money. But 'Abdullah ibn Unais ﷺ was not offered any money, nor did he ask for any; what he ﷺ was being offered and what he ﷺ supremely wanted was a reward that relatively few human beings achieve – the eternal bliss of Paradise. In this regard, 'Abdullah ﷺ was like all of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ, whose main aim in life was to earn rewards for the Hereafter. To be sure, some of them earned worldly profits through trade and hard work, but those profits meant little

^[1] Refer to *Ghazwat-Uhud* by Muhammad Baashmeel (pg. 31).

to them. In the life of this world, 'Abdullah ibn Unais ؓ was given a staff whose significance will become manifest in the Hereafter, when it will serve as a sign between the Prophet ﷺ and 'Abdullah ibn Unais ؓ.

4) Some Rules of Jurisprudence

Even during war, there are rules pertaining to worship that Muslims must adhere to; for example, Al-Khattaabee related that most scholars agree that, if a Muslim is being pursued by the enemy, he may pray by simply nodding his head. However, there is disagreement among scholars regarding what a Muslim should do when he is chasing the enemy. Most scholars say that, in that situation, he must descend from his riding animal, pray on the ground, and perform all of the regular motions of prayer - such as bowing and prostrating. Imam Ash-Shaafi'ee (may Allah have mercy on him) mentioned an exception: if Muslims are chasing the enemy, if they are cut off from the rest of their army, and if they fear that the people they are chasing will attack them, they can perform prayer with gestures (by nodding their heads to signify the bowing and prostrating positions). It is also related from Ash-Shaafi'ee - and this is relevant to the story of 'Abdullah ibn Unais ؓ - that he said, "If the (Muslim) pursuer fears that the person he is chasing will get away, he can perform prayer with gestures; otherwise, he may not do so."^[1]

5) The Permissibility of Resorting to *Ijtihad* (Forming a Legal Opinion Based on Available Evidence)

That *Ijtihad* was permissible during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ was proven by dint of the fact that 'Abdullah ibn Unais ؓ resorted to *Ijtihad* when he decided to perform prayer not with the regular movements and motions but with gestures. Then, when he ؓ returned to Al-Madeenah, the Prophet ﷺ did not reproach him or find fault with him for what he did, which establishes the permissibility of praying with gestures when one

[1] Refer to 'Umdatul-Qaaree Sharh Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree (6/263).

is extremely afraid for one's life. This ruling is correct since 'Abdullah ibn Unais ؓ did what he did during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ, during the period of revelation. Therefore, had there been cause to correct Unais's mistake, revelation would have descended to the Prophet ﷺ to correct Unais's wrong action; since that did not occur, it is sensible to conclude that what Unais ؓ did was correct.

The Deception Of The 'Adul And Al-Qaarrah Tribes, And The Tragedy Of Ar-Rajee'

There are varying accounts about the reason why the Prophet ﷺ sent a unit to Ar-Rajee'. According to a narration related by Bukhaaree, sending spies to gather information about the enemy was the only purpose for which the Prophet ﷺ sent anyone to Ar-Rajee'; however, other authentic narrations provide a more detailed account of what happened. A group of emissaries from the 'Adul and Al-Qaarrah tribes visited the Prophet ﷺ in Al-Madeenah and said to him, "Verily, we want to embrace Islam, so send back with us a number of your Companions ؓ who can help us understand (our duties), who can teach us to recite the Qur'an, and who can teach us the legislations of Islam."^[1] In spite of their sweet words, these emissaries were far from sincere in their intentions.

It is likely that, wanting to exact revenge for the death of Khaalid ibn Sufyaan Al-Hudhalee, the Hudhail tribe resorted to trickery and deception. In fact, Al-Waaqidee said with certainty that the Ar-Rajee' tragedy began when Banu Laihyaan, one of the clans of the Hudhail tribe, went to the people of the 'Adul and Al-Qaarrah tribes, offering them money if they did something for them. They wanted the people of 'Adul and Al-Qaarrah to travel to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and ask him to send back with them men who could invite them to Islam and teach them about Islam's legislations. Once they had the Muslim delegates within their

^[1] Refer to *Al-Maghaazee* by Al-Waaqidee (1/354, 355).

reach, they meant to capture them, imprison them, and then sell them to members of the Quraish. It was because of these reasons that the Messenger ﷺ sent a delegation of Muslims that consisted of ten Companions ﷺ, placing in authority over them 'Aasim ibn Thaabit ibn Al-Aqlah ﷺ.

When the Muslim delegates reached a spot that was situated between 'Usfaan and Makkah, the Banu Laihyaan clan, which consisted of about two-hundred fighters, ambushed them. Having surrounded them from all directions, the fighters of Banu Laihyaan forced the Muslims to retreat to a nearby hill. Banu Laihyaan then promised to spare their lives if they surrendered themselves, but of course they meant to betray that promise.

The leader of the Muslim delegates, 'Aasim ibn Thaabit ﷺ, refused to accept their offer; true, the Muslims were outnumbered about twenty to one and that death was more likely than not, but 'Aasim ﷺ did not want to surrender. He ﷺ said, "Verily, I have indeed vowed never to accept the protection of a polytheist." 'Aasim ﷺ then began to fight them, firing arrows at them until he ran out of them, and then fighting against them with his spear until it broke. All that he had left then was his sword. He ﷺ said, "O Allah, I have defended Your religion on the beginning of this day of mine, so protect my flesh at the end of it!" The wording of this supplication was truly significant, for in a previous battle against the Muslims, a woman named Sulaaqah bint Sa'd ibn Ash-Shuhaid was bereaved of her husband and all of her four sons. 'Aasim ﷺ had killed two of them: Al-Haarith and Mus'aafan. Sulaaqah made a vow that, if Allah every enabled her to drink alcohol from the upper part of 'Aasim's skull, she would do so. And in accordance with that vow, she offered a reward of one-hundred camels to anyone who brought back the head of 'Aasim ﷺ. Therefore, the men of Banu Laihyaan did not care whether they took back 'Aasim ﷺ dead or alive; they merely needed his body – but 'Aasim's supplication stood in their way. Finally, 'Aasim ﷺ broke part of his sword, leaving him with no weapon, but he ﷺ still continued to fight. During the fighting,

'Aasim ؓ injured two men and killed one. But in the end, there were too many spears pointed at 'Aasim ؓ. And the men of Banu Laihyaan finally managed to kill him. All that remained for them to do was to chop off his head and take it to Sulaaqah bint Sa'd, so that they could take from her their reward of one-hundred camels. Before the men of Banu Laihyaan could reach 'Aasim's body, Allah ﷻ sent down to them a swarm of flying insects. The insects had a painful sting, and whenever men tried to approach 'Aasim's body, the insects would bite them on the face. No one among them was able to come even near 'Aasim. Realizing that they could do nothing about the situation, the men of Banu Laihyaan said, "Leave him until nightfall, at which time these insects will leave him. But when nightfall arrived, Allah ﷻ sent a flood – even though there was not a single cloud in any direction of the sky. The flood carried 'Aasim's body away, and the men of Banu Laihyaan never saw it again.

In the skirmishes that took place on that day, 'Aasim ؓ was one of seven Muslims ؓ who died. As for the three remaining Muslims, Banu Laihyaan offered them safety if they put down their weapons. Given the impossibility of both fleeing and overcoming the enemy, the three Muslims agreed to accept the terms offered to them. But as soon as the opportunity arose, the polytheists betrayed them. 'Abdullah ibn Taariq ؓ, one of the three remaining Muslims, fought back and was consequently killed. As for the other two, Khubaib ؓ and Zaid ibn Ad-Dithinnah ؓ, they were taken captive and were being led towards Makkah. Once they arrived there, the men of Banu Laihyaan sold them to the Quraish. All of this occurred in the month of Safar, in the year 2 H.

Khubaib ؓ was sold to the children of Al-Haarith ibn 'Aamir ibn Naufal, who intended to kill him in revenge for what Khubaib ؓ did on the Day of Badr: He ؓ killed their leader, Al-Haarith. After Khubaib ؓ found out that the children of Al-Haarith had decided to kill him, he asked one of the daughters of Al-Haarith to lend him a razor, for he ؓ wanted to shave off his pubic hair, one of

the Islamic duties that are related to personal hygiene. A woman lent the razor to him, and shortly thereafter she panicked when she realized that her son was missing; no one had taken the child; instead, he had simply climbed up the stairs of the house and made his way to the prisoner. When his mother finally found him, she was terrified to see that he was sitting in the lap of Khubaib رضي الله عنه, who had the borrowed razor in his hand. She thought that Khubaib رضي الله عنه was going to try to get revenge on her son for what was happening to him. And seeing her expressing, Khubaib رضي الله عنه quickly allayed her fears, saying, "Are you afraid that I will kill him? I would never do that, *In Sha Allah Ta'aalah* (if Allah, the Exalted, wills)." She would later say, "I have never seen a prisoner who is better than Khubaib رضي الله عنه. (While he was a prisoner with us,) I would see him eating a bunch of grapes, and at that time, there were no fruits in Makkah. And verily, he was tied up in iron (chains). Therefore, it (the bunch of grapes) was nothing other than sustenance that Allah provided him with."

After the people of the Quraish took him out to the *Masjid* in order to kill him, Khubaib رضي الله عنه said, "Let me perform two units of prayer." As soon as he finished performing those two units, he turned to them immediately and said, "Had it not been for the fact that you would say that I am afraid of dying, I would have prayed more." Thus Khubaib رضي الله عنه was the first Muslim to establish the practice of praying two units of prayer before being executed by the enemy. Khubaib رضي الله عنه then said, "O Allah, count their numbers, and kill them one by one, and do not spare a single one of them."

As Khubaib رضي الله عنه was being chopped up alive, Abu Sufyaan asked him, "Would it please you if Muhammad was with us being killed, while you are with your family?" Khubaib رضي الله عنه replied, "No, by Allah. It would not even please me if I were (safe) with my family, while the Prophet ﷺ was where he is (in Al-Madeenah), being pricked and harmed by a single thorn." Khubaib رضي الله عنه was then killed, and his body was hung up on a cross (perhaps it was a practice that the Quraish had learned from the Romans; Abu Sufyaan was, after all, well-traveled). They then appointed

someone to watch over Khubaib's corpse; later on during the night, 'Amr ibn Umayyah Ad-Damree came to take him away and bury him.

As for Zaid ibn Ad-Dithinnah ؓ, Safwaan ibn Umayyah purchased him and killed him in revenge for his father, Umayyah ibn Khalaf, who was killed on the Day of Uhud. Abu Sufyaan asked Zaid ؓ the same question that he asked Khubaib ؓ: "I ask you by Allah, O Zaid! Would you love for Muhammad to be here with us in your place, so that we can kill him, while you are (safe) among your family (in Al-Madeenah)?" Zaid ؓ replied, "By Allah, I would not even love for Muhammad to be pricked and harmed by a thorn where he is right now (in Al-Madeenah), while I am (safe) among my family." Abu Sufyaan said, "Of all people, I have never seen anyone loving someone as much as the Companions of Muhammad ؐ love Muhammad ﷺ."^[1]

What took place between the men of Banu Laihyaan and the ten Muslim delegates is known as the occurrence of Ar-Rajee', since it was beside the water source of Ar-Rajee' that the ambush took place.

The Lessons and Morals of This Story

1) The Permissibility of Surrendering to the Enemy

Discussing the *Hadeeth* that relates the above-mentioned story, Imam Ibn Hajr (may Allah have mercy on him) wrote in *Fathul-Baaree*: "This *Hadeeth* proves that it is permissible for a (Muslim) prisoner to refuse to accept a promise of safety even if doing so leads to being killed. One may choose this course of action if one wants to be strict and to avoid being forced to say words of disbelief. Nonetheless, if one wants to take the other route that is (also) sanctioned by the *Shariah*, one may surrender and accept the enemy's promise of safety."

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah As-Saheehah* (2/400) and to *Seerah Ibn Hishaam*, to the chapter titled, "The Killing of Ibn Ad-Dithinnah, and an Example of His Loyalty to the Messenger ﷺ."

It is clear that, based on the different actions of the ten Muslim delegates, it is permissible both for a Muslim to surrender and accept amnesty offered by the enemy, in the hope of escaping later on, and for a Muslim to fight until the end, so as to avoid being captured, humiliated, and forced to utter words of disbelief. 'Aasim ؓ chose the latter course of action; Khubaib ؓ and Zaid ؓ chose the former. But whenever a Muslim prisoner has the opportunity to escape, he must do so, so as to avoid being in a position of humiliation.

The above-mentioned story teaches us that, when in a situation similar to the one faced by the ten Muslim delegates, Muslims have a wide range of options. In each individual case, a Muslim should consider the circumstances, his enemy, his chances of escape, and any other factor that might play into his situation; and then he should choose the best course of action that is available to him, whether that means fighting, escaping, or surrendering.

2) Allah ﷻ Answers the Supplication of 'Aasim ؓ

It is interesting to note that Allah ﷻ answered 'Aasim's supplication by protecting his flesh from the polytheists, even though He ﷻ did not protect 'Aasim from being killed by the polytheists. This is because Allah ﷻ wanted to at once honour 'Aasim ؓ with martyrdom and protect his body from being defiled and mutilated.

3) Honouring the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ

It is the seemingly small details of the Prophet's *Sunnah* that many of today's Muslims take for granted; this was not, however, how the Companions ؓ followed the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ. Consider the situation of Khubaib ؓ, who was a prisoner of the Quraish and who had just been sentenced to death. In spite of his precarious situation, he remembered an act of *Sunnah* that he needed to perform: removing his pubic hair, an act of personal hygiene that a Muslim must, according to the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ, perform at least once every forty days. This should serve as a reminder for many of us who are negligent when it

comes to performing various acts of *Sunnah*. Khubaib's story should especially serve as reminder to those who say that, since the Muslim nation is going through difficult times, we must not bother ourselves with small details, such as growing the beard, straightening the rows for prayer, and so on. For here was Khubaib ﷺ going through not just a difficult time but imminent death, yet he remembered to perform what many of us might consider to be a small act of *Sunnah*. Here, in terms of attitude, lies one of the main differences between us and the Prophet's Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all).

4) Islam Removes From a Person's Heart Hatred and the Desire to Exact Personal Revenge

When Khubaib ﷺ had the son of a polytheist in his lap and a razor in his hand, he ﷺ could have exacted revenge on the children of Al-Haarith for what they were doing to him. He had been sentenced to die anyway; why not get revenge on them by killing one of their children? Well, there was a very good reason why not: He ﷺ was a Muslim, and faith had penetrated the deepest regions of his heart. Looking at the terrified expression on the mother's face, Khubaib ﷺ said, "Are you afraid that I will kill him? *In Sha Allah* (Allah Willing), I would never do that!" Khubaib ﷺ understood that the child was innocent and was not responsible for the crimes of his adult relatives. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿مَنْ أَهْتَدَىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِي لِنَفْسِهِ ۗ وَمَنْ ضَلَّٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَضِلُّ عَلَيْهَا وَلَا نُزِرُ وَأَنْزِرُ ۗ وَزَرَّ أُخْرَىٰ ۗ وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّىٰ نَبْعَثَ رَسُولًا ﴿١٥﴾﴾

"Whoever goes right, then he goes right only for the benefit of his own self. And whoever goes astray, then he goes astray to his own loss. No one laden with burdens can bear another's burden. And We never punish until We have sent a Messenger (to give warning)." (Qur'an 17: 15)

A Muslim should get angry only when his religion is somehow being attacked, a principle that Muslims must adhere to both in easy and hard times. Since the child was innocent, Khubaib ﷺ

explained that it would never even cross his mind to kill him. Khubaib's attitude and demeanour in this situation attests to his high level of *Eemaan* (faith); may Allah ﷻ be pleased with him and with all of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ.

5) The Companions' Love of the Prophet ﷺ

It is not uncommon for a person to want to sacrifice his life for another person; motives for making such a sacrifice differ, ranging from love for a relative to an impulse to act selflessly for a greater cause. Whatever the motive, no human being has ever loved another human being as much as each Companion ﷺ loved the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Love is based on a person's knowledge of another person's character and traits, and no one knew the Prophet ﷺ as much as his Companions ﷺ knew him. On many instances in this book, we have seen examples of just how much the Companions ﷺ loved the Prophet ﷺ; and the tragedy of Ar-Rajee' is yet another shining illustration of that love. In the last moments of Khubaib ﷺ and Zaid's life, Abu Sufyaan asked them if they would prefer it if the Prophet ﷺ were in their place and they were back home in Al-Madeenah with their families. They could have simply said, "No," and that would have attested to their love for the Prophet ﷺ. But they wanted to express the true extent of their love, and so they explained to Abu Sufyaan that they wouldn't be at peace in their homes even if the Prophet ﷺ was safe in his home but pricked by a harmless thorn. The love that they felt for the Prophet ﷺ attested to their sincere faith in Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ said, "If three qualities are combined in a person, then he has tasted the sweetness of *Al-Eemaan* (faith): He loves Allah and His Messenger more than anything else; he loves a slave (of Allah) for the sake of Allah and for no other reason; and he hates to return to disbelief after having been saved by Allah, just as he hates to be thrown into the fire."^[1]

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of *Eemaan*, chapter, "It is a Part of *Eemaan* (faith) for One to Hate to Return to Disbelief Just as Ones Hates to be Thrown into the Fire"; *Hadeeth* number: 21.

'Aamir Ibn At-Tufail And The Tragedy Of Bair Ma'oonah (4 H.)

'Aamir ibn At-Tufail was a leader, though not the head chieftain, of the Banu 'Aamir tribe. He was a haughty and arrogant man who had ambitions of becoming king not just of his tribe but of all of Arabia. Notwithstanding his blinding arrogance, he was realistic in one regard: he recognized that, sooner or later, the Prophet ﷺ was going to have authority over the entire Arabian Peninsula. And so 'Aamir went to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "I give you one of three choices: you can have authority over the people of the valleys (i.e., people who live in cities and villages), while I have authority over the people of the desert; or, you can appoint me as your successor; or, I will attack you with the people of Ghatfaan, with one-thousand red (i.e., red-skinned) men and one-thousand red women."^[1] The Prophet ﷺ of course rejected all of those choices, which instilled in 'Aamir a desire to somehow destroy the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ, for he knew that his ambitions of controlling Arabia hinged either on the Prophet's help or on his destruction.

Later on, the head chieftain of the Banu 'Aamir tribe, Mulaa'ib Al-Asinnah, visited Al-Madeenah. Mulaa'ib – who was the uncle of 'Aamir ibn At-Tufail – presented a gift to the Prophet ﷺ; for his part, the Prophet ﷺ invited Mulaa'ib to Islam. Although Mulaa'ib did not commit himself to embracing Islam, he was very close to doing so; perhaps what stopped him was that he was not sure whether his people would continue to follow him if he became a Muslim. He said to the Prophet ﷺ, "O Muhammad, if only you would send men from your companions to the people of Najd (i.e., to his people), and I would then have hope of them answering you (i.e., embracing Islam)." The Prophet ﷺ, having been betrayed before by the tribes of 'Adur and Al-Qaarah, said,

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of Battles, chapter, "The Battle of Ar-Rajee'; Ra'il and Dhakwan; a mention of 'Adul and Qaarah, as well of 'Aasim ibn Thaabit, Khubaib, and his companions; *Hadeeth* number: 4091.

“I fear that they (i.e., my companions) will be harmed by the people of Najd.” Mulaaib Al-Assinnah, whose real name was Abu Baraa, said, “I will grant them protection, so send to the people of Najd whomsoever you desire.”

Having obtained a guarantee of protection from the leader of Banu ‘Aamir – who was sincere in his offer and had no intention of betraying the Prophet ﷺ – the Prophet ﷺ sent a group of men, among whom was Al-Mundhir ibn ‘Amr ؓ, to invite the people of Najd to Islam.

‘Aamir ibn At-Tufail’s ambitious nature made him disrespectful of his own uncle and leader; he pleaded with the people of Banu ‘Aamir to unite around him and to attack the Muslim delegates who were headed towards An-Najd, but they refused to help him. They said that they would not betray their leader, Mulaaib Al-Asinnah.

Driven by ambition and hatred, ‘Aamir did not quit there; instead, he went to another tribe, the tribe of Banu Sulaim, and pleaded with its people to follow him in an attack on the Muslims. They agreed to follow him, and almost one-hundred of their archers accompanied ‘Aamir to Ba’ir Ma’oonah, where they overtook the Muslim delegates and killed every single one of them with the exception of ‘Amr ibn Umayyah ؓ.^[1] Ba’ir means ‘a well.’ And since it was at the well of Ma’oonah that this slaughter took place, what transpired there became known as the Tragedy of Ba’ir Ma’oonah, a disgraceful event took place in the year 4 H.

According to one narration, Anas ؓ said, “People went to the Prophet ﷺ and said, ‘Send with us men who can teach us the Qur’an and the *Sunnah*. He sent with them seventy *Ansaaree* men, who were known as *Qurraa* (*Qurraa* is the plural of *Qaaree*, one who is skilled in the recitation and memorization of the Qur’an).

^[1] Refer to *Saheeh As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* (pg. 322); to *Seerah Ibn Hishaam*, to the chapter titled, “A Mention of the Day of Ar-Rajee’”; to *Saheeh Bukhaaree* (4086, 4096); to *Al-Fath*, the explanation of *Saheeh Bukhaaree*; and to *Saheeh Muslim* (677).

Among them was my uncle (his mother's brother), Haraam ؓ. These men would recite the Qur'an; they would study and learn together in the night. And during the day, they would bring water and place it in the *Masjid*. Also, they would gather wood, sell it, and use the proceeds to buy food for the People of *Suffah* (poor people who lived in the *Masjid*) and for the poor. The Prophet ﷺ sent these men back with the visitors who came (to Al-Madeenah). Then they ('Aamir ibn At-Tufail and his followers) appeared and killed them before they were able to reach their destination. They (the Muslims) said, 'O Allah, convey to our Prophet from us that We have indeed met You, that we are pleased with You, and that You are pleased with us.'" During the slaughter, one of the attackers approached Anas's uncle, Haraam ؓ, from behind and ran his spear through him; as this was happening to him, Haraam said, "By the Lord of the Ka'bah, I have indeed achieved success!" Allah ﷻ answered the supplication of those Muslims, for back in Al-Madeenah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to his Companions ؓ, "Verily, your brothers have been killed. They said (as they were dying), 'O Allah, convey to our Prophet from us that We have indeed met You, that we are pleased with You, and that You are pleased with us.'"[1]

The Lessons and Morals of This Story

1) For Islam to Spread and Reign Supreme, Sacrifices Have to be Made

We have hitherto seen how the allies of Hudhail deceived Muslims at Ar-Rajee', Muslims who had left Al-Madeenah in order to teach others about Islam. In this story that tragedy is repeated: someone, namely 'Aamir ibn At-Tufail, ambushed and attacked Muslims who left Al-Madeenah to preach the message of Islam, and then slaughtered them in a vile and barbaric manner.

[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, the Book of Leadership, chapter, "It Being Confirmed that the Martyr Gains Entry into Paradise"; *Hadeeth* number: 677.

These two tragic incidents deeply affected the Prophet ﷺ; in fact, he ﷺ spent a number of months performing *Qunoot* (Supplication during prayer that is made either before or after the bowing position and that is resorted to when tragedies and calamities occur) during *Fajr* prayer. In the *Qunoot*, the Prophet ﷺ would supplicate against the tribes of Sulaim that disobeyed Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ. Ibn 'Abbaas ؓ said, "For consecutive months the Messenger of Allah ﷺ performed *Qunoot* in the *Zuhr*, 'Asr, *Maghrib*, 'Eesha, and morning (*Fajr*) prayers. At the end of each prayer (i.e., the last unit), after he ﷺ would say, 'May Allah answer he who praises Him (i.e., when he would be standing up from the bowing position),' he ﷺ would supplicate against certain clans of the Banu Sulaim tribe - against the Ra'il, Dhakwaan, and 'Usaiyyah clans. And the people (praying) behind him would say, 'Aameen.'" [1] Anas ibn Maalik ؓ said, "And that was the beginning of *Qunoot*; prior to that we wouldn't perform it." And when a man asked Anas ؓ about *Qunoot*, whether it was supposed to be performed after the bowing position or immediately after the completion of recitation (i.e., before the bowing position), he ؓ said, "No, it should be performed after the completion of recitation (i.e., before the bowing position)." [2] Some scholars mention that when there is a need to fulfill - for example, Muslims in a specific area are hit with a calamity and need help - *Qunoot* should be performed after the bowing position; otherwise, it should be performed before the bowing position. But the reality is that the Companions ؓ acted differently in this regard; some of them performed *Qunoot* before the bowing position, and some of them performed it after the bowing position; this indicates the permissibility of performing *Qunoot* both before and after the bowing position.

Even though Muslim preachers were twice ambushed and killed, the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ؓ did not weaken their

[1] Refer to *Sunan Abu Daawood*, the Book of Prayer, chapter, "Qunoot in the Different Prayers"; *Hadeeth* number: 1443.

[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree* (4088, 4096).

resolve in the least to perform *Da'wah* to Islam. No matter how dangerous the situation, they were still determined to serve Islam, understanding that the cause they struggled for was more important than their lives.

The point is this: they knew that they had to sacrifice their lives, since Islam – or any other religion or great movement, for that matter – becomes strong only when lives are sacrificed to make it strong. Without strength, determination, and sacrifices, a religion or movement becomes nothing more than a philosophy – read in books, studied in schools, and then abandoned as time goes on.

Both the tragedies of Ar-Rajee' and Ba'ir Ma'oonah show us what price we too should be willing to pay in order to fulfill our mission of preaching the message of Islam. Everything has a price: happiness has a price; honour and power have a price; even rest and comfort have a price, the price being not achieving anything worthwhile in life. The price of preaching Islam, the reward for which is great in the Hereafter, may involve giving up the dearest thing one has – one's very life.

2) "By the Lord of the Ka'bah, I Have Succeeded"

The person who said these words was Haraam ibn Milhaan ؓ, who uttered them when a spear went through his back and exited from his chest. Taking blood in his hands and wiping it on his face and head, Haraam ؓ said, "By the Lord of the Ka'bah, I have succeeded." Even the hardest of hearts should be moved by these words. After a life of turmoil, trials, and tribulations, Haraam ؓ saw the eternal bliss that lay ahead of him and said in so many words: "Peace at last! Free at last! Now, and never before now, I have achieved complete and unmitigated success!"

A man of no faith, however, cannot appreciate the significance of Haraam's last words, which is why the man who killed Haraam ؓ, Jabbaar ibn Salma, was bewildered when he heard them. Jabbaar ؓ later said, "One of the things that drew me to Islam was a situation I experienced: I stabbed one of their men that day between his shoulders, and then I watched as the

spearhead came out from his chest; meanwhile, he was saying, 'By the Lord of the Ka'bah, I have succeeded!' I said to myself, 'He has not succeeded! Haven't I just killed the man?' I later asked (people) about what he said (and why he said it), and they answered me, saying, 'He was successful because he succeeded in dying a martyr (and achieving Paradise as a result).' And I said, 'Yes, by Allah, he has succeeded.'" That incident was one of the reasons that prompted Jabbaar ؓ to embrace Islam.^[1]

When we read about what Haraam ؓ said just after a spear was run through his body, we would not be wrong to ask the question: Does a martyr experience the pain and the pangs of death? And a more satisfactory answer we could not find than the one provided by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who said, "What the martyr feels from the touch of death is similar to what one of you feels when he is pinched."^[2]

Al-Miqdaam ibn Ma'dee-Karib ؓ related that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "The martyr has six qualities (or rewards) from Allah ﷻ: He is forgiven with the first flow of blood (that exits from his body); he (then) sees his seat in Paradise; he is protected from the punishment of the grave; he is safe from the greater terror; he is adorned in the robe of *Al-Eemaan*; and he is granted intercession for seventy of his relatives."^[3]

Another honour that martyrs will be bestowed with on the Day of Resurrection is that their wounds will be like they were on the day they were killed: except that "the colour will be the colour of blood, and the smell will be the smell of *Misk* (the best kind of perfume)."^[4] We also know that the lives of martyrs do not end

^[1] Refer to *Seerah Ibn Hishaam*, to the chapter titled, "A Mention of the Day of Ar-Rajee"; and to *Fathul-Baaree*, to the explanation of *Hadeeth* numbers, 4091 and 4092, for it is an explanation that contains in it many valuable lessons.

^[2] Refer to *Saheeh Sunan At-Tirmidhee* by Al-Albaanee (may Allah have mercy on him); (2/133), *Hadeeth* number: 1667.

^[3] *Al-Jaamai' Al-Ahkaam Al-Qur'an* (the *Tafseer* of Verse number 171 from *Aal-Imraan*), and *Saheeh Sunan At-Tirmidhee*, by Al-Albaanee (2/133).

^[4] *Saheeh Sunan At-Tirmidhee* (2/128).

with their deaths; rather, they remain alive; they are provided with sustenance, and they enjoy a blissful existence with their Lord. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أحيَاءُ 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)

3) The Prophet ﷺ Did not Know the Future or Other Matters from the Unseen World, Except for What He Learned Through Revelation

The tragedies of Ba’ir Ma’oonah and Ar-Rajee’, as well as similar occurrences during the Prophet’s lifetime, prove that the Prophet ﷺ did not know the future. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ لَا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ لَأَسْتَكْرَمْتُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ وَمَا مَسَّنِيَ السُّوءُ إِنْ أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ وَبَشِيرٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾
 ﴿١٨٨﴾

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “I possess no power of benefit or hurt to myself except as Allah wills. If I had the knowledge of the Ghaib (unseen), I should have secured for myself an abundance of wealth, and no evil should have touched me. I am but a warner, and a bringer of glad tidings unto people who believe.”
 (Qur’an 7: 188)

Allah ﷻ alone is the Knower of the unseen world, and part of the unseen world is the future. As for Messengers and angels ﷺ, they only know those aspects of the unseen world that their Lord teaches them. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿عَلِيمُ الْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَىٰ غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا﴾
 ﴿٢٦﴾

“He (Alone) the All-Knower of the Ghaib (unseen), and He reveals to none His Ghaib (unseen).” (Qur’an 72: 26, 27)

4) Fulfilling One's Promise, Pledge, or Covenant

The only Muslim to survive the Ba'ir Ma'oonah tragedy was 'Amr ibn Umayyah Ad-Damree ؓ, who was, nonetheless, taken captive by the enemy. When 'Aamir ibn At-Tufail found out that 'Amr ؓ was a descendant of Mudar, he felt a certain kinship towards him. Claiming that there was an obligation upon him to free a slave for the sake of his mother, 'Aamir ibn At-Tufail freed 'Amr ؓ.

'Amr ؓ would have loved to exact revenge for his slaughtered brothers right then and there, but he ؓ was one man, and a prisoner at that, against hundreds of enemies. Therefore having no other choice, 'Amr ؓ headed back towards Al-Madeenah. He stopped on the way to rest in a shaded area; while there, he ؓ came across two men from the Banu 'Aamir tribe, the very same tribe whose men had just slaughtered many Muslims.

Unbeknown to 'Amr ؓ, these two particular men had just obtained a guarantee of protection from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. 'Amr ؓ and the two men had stopped in the same shaded area to get some rest during their respective journeys. Upon meeting them, 'Amr ؓ asked, "Who are you?" They said, "We are from the Banu 'Aamir (tribe)." 'Amr ؓ didn't say anything to them about the ordeal he had just been through; instead, he spoke in a friendly manner with them, so as to not give away his real intentions. Thinking that they had nothing to fear, the two men went to sleep, which is when 'Amr ؓ killed them both. From his point of view, 'Amr ؓ was getting revenge on the Banu 'Aamir tribe for the killings its people had perpetrated; nonetheless, the matter was not as simple as that, for these men were not responsible for the crime committed by their fellow tribesman, 'Aamir ibn At-Tufail. In fact, as we have seen earlier, the leader of Banu 'Aamir and the men of Banu 'Aamir refused to aid 'Aamir ibn At-Tufail in his nefarious activities. But much of this knowledge was unknown to 'Amr ibn Umayyah ؓ, who only knew that the perpetrator of the slaughter was one of the leaders of the Banu 'Aamir tribe.

As soon as 'Amr ibn Umayyah ؓ returned to Al-Madeenah, he ؓ informed the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about everything that had

happened, including his decision to kill the two men from the Banu 'Aamir tribe. The Prophet ﷺ then showed a wonderful display of trustworthiness and honesty; he ﷺ said, "You have killed two people whose blood money I will pay," thus acknowledging that the killing of the two men was a mistake and not an act of war, even though the two men were related to the man who had just slaughtered many Muslims. What mattered to the Prophet ﷺ was that the two men were carrying a guarantee of safety from him; consequently, he ﷺ did not want to punish them for what a certain individual of their tribe did. The Prophet ﷺ could not bring those two men back to life, but he ﷺ could at least acknowledge the mistake of their killings and pay the correct amount of blood money to their relatives, which is exactly what he ﷺ did. Because of what 'Aamir ibn At-Tufail did, the Prophet ﷺ could very well have considered the killing of the two men as part of the revenge that was necessary to get back at 'Aamir and his followers. But the Prophet ﷺ didn't see things that way; he ﷺ instead taught through his actions that the innocent should not be held accountable for the crimes of their relatives.

5) The Noble Companion 'Aamir ibn Fuhairah ؓ

After the Muslim delegates had been killed at Ba'ir Ma'oonah, 'Aamir ibn At-Tufail asked his prisoner, "Who is this?" He was pointing at one of the Muslims he killed. 'Amr ibn Umayyah ؓ responded, "This is 'Aamir ibn Fuhairah ؓ." 'Aamir said, "After he was killed, I indeed saw him being raised to the sky, until I saw that the sky was between him and the ground. And then he was returned (to the ground)."^[1] Perhaps 'Aamir was allowed to see that in order to instill terror into his heart and to let him know the honour that was being bestowed upon his enemy.

6) Hassaan ibn Thaabit ؓ Reaches out to 'Aamir's People

We have hitherto discussed the effectiveness of Hassaan's poems in dealing with Ka'ab ibn Al-Ashraf. After the slaughter of the

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of *Al-Maghaazee* (4093); also, refer to *Seerah ibn Hishaam*, to the chapter titled, "A Mention of the Day of Ar-Rajee'."

Muslim delegates, Hassaan ؓ was being given another opportunity to use his talents to defend Islam against its enemies. Mulaa'ib, the head chieftain of Banu 'Aamir, had been snubbed, insulted, and betrayed by his own nephew: Mulaa'ib had guaranteed the safe passage of many Muslims, and his nephew, 'Aamir ibn At-Tufail, went behind his back, first trying to get the support of his own people, and then trying to get help from the Sulaim tribe. 'Aamir's actions amounted to nothing short of treason. Left on their own, the people of 'Aamir would probably have sorted things out in a relatively peaceful manner. 'Aamir would probably have been punished or reproached or banished from Banu 'Aamir territory, but nothing more.

But Hassaan ؓ intervened in order to prevent that from happening. He ؓ composed Verses in which he encouraged Rabee'ah ibn 'Aamir, Mulaa'ib's son, to get revenge on 'Aamir ibn At-Tufail for betraying his father. Now this was no longer an internal matter to be decided upon by Banu 'Aamir's leaders. Hassaan's poem was being recited on the lips of Arabs all over the Arabian Peninsula. Rabee'ah's honour was being impugned. Was he going to stand by and do nothing after his father had been so disgracefully betrayed? Honor, as we have hitherto seen, was an issue of paramount importance to Arabs. In effect, Hassaan's poem left Rabee'ah with only one honourable course of action: He had to kill 'Aamir ibn At-Tufail. Rabee'ah did try to kill 'Aamir; in fact, he struck him with his sword and inflicted him with a serious, albeit non-lethal, wound. But no sooner did he strike 'Aamir than 'Aamir's fellow clansmen jumped on him and said to 'Aamir, "Take your revenge!" 'Aamir said, "I have forgiven him. If I continue to live after this, I will see what I should do about this attack."

7) The End of 'Aamir ibn At-Tufail

Allah ﷻ answered the supplication of His Prophet ﷺ, who said, "O Allah, be sufficient for me by ridding me of 'Aamir."^[1]

^[1] *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah*, the section titled: "The Delegation of Banu 'Aamir, and the Story of 'Aamir ibn At-Tufail". Also, refer to *Majma' Az-Zawaa'id*, the

Shortly after the Prophet ﷺ made this supplication, 'Aamir became afflicted with an incurable disease. Death did not come to him in an instant; no – as is the case with many tyrants in this world – he would first have to undergo a period of disgrace and humiliation in this world. The symptoms of 'Aamir's illness resembled the symptoms suffered by the victims of certain plagues, which is why as soon as he became sick, everyone stayed away from him, fearing that his illness was contagious. Abandoned by everybody, 'Aamir remained a lonely, forlorn patient in the house of a female member of his tribe.

With the onset of his sickness, 'Aamir's dreams of becoming king of Arabia vanished into thin air. The isolation he endured during his illness coupled by the loss of his dream certainly contributed to what happened next: He went mad, screaming at anyone who dared to remain in close proximity to him. "Bring me my horse!" he screamed at someone. His horse was brought to him, he mounted it, and he then died while was seated on it. As if being ostracized by his people was not humiliating enough, 'Aamir also went through the humiliation of dying a madman.

Book of *Al-Maghaazee* and *Siyar*, chapter, "The Battle of Ba'ir Ma'oonah"; and to *Fathul-Baaree*, to the explanation of *Hadeeth* number: 4091.

The Prophet's Marriage To The Mother Of Poor People ؓ And To Umm Salamah ؓ; Also, Other Events Worthy Of Mention

Zainab Bint Khuzaimah ؓ, "Mother Of Poor People"

Her title during the pre-Islamic days of ignorance was, "Mother of Poor People," a title obviously given to her because of her tireless efforts to feed the poor. Her actual name was Zainab bint Khuzaimah ibn Al-Haarith Al-Hilaaliyyah ؓ, and she was from the clan of Banu 'Abd-Manaaf ibn Hilaal ibn 'Aamir ibn Sa'sa'ah. She ؓ had previously been married to 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh ibn Riaab ؓ, who died a martyr on the Day of Uhud. To honour her after she was bereaved of her husband, and to not let her spend the rest of her life a lonely widow, the Prophet ﷺ married her. Their blessed marriage took place in the month of Ramadan, approximately thirty months after the Prophet ﷺ migrated to Al-Madeenah; nine months later, Zainab ؓ died.

She ؓ had previously been married to 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh ibn Riaab ؓ, who died a martyr on the Day of Uhud. To honour her after she was bereaved of her husband, and to not let her spend the rest of her life a lonely widow, the Prophet ﷺ married her.

The Prophet ﷺ Marries Umm Salamah ؓ

The name Umm Salamah literally means, mother of Salamah. It is common among Arabs to take a *Kunyah*, a name with which one is ascribed to a son or daughter - usually, to the eldest son. In the

same manner Umm Salamah's husband became known as Abu Salamah ﷺ, which literally means, father of Salamah. Umm Salamah's actual name was Hind bint Abu Umayyah Hudhaafah ibn Al-Mugheerah Al-Qurashiyyah Al-Makhzoomiyyah ﷺ. Her husband was her cousin, and his actual name was 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-Asad ﷺ; he ﷺ was the cousin of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, for 'Abdullah's mother was Barrah bint (daughter of) 'Abdul-Muttalib; additionally, 'Abdullah ﷺ was the Prophet's brother from breastfeeding, which means that the same woman breastfed both of them.

Fleeing from the oppression of the Quraish, Umm Salamah ﷺ and Abu Salamah ﷺ were among those Muslims who had migrated from Makkah to Abyssinia; after a short stay there, they returned to Makkah, only to migrate again after a while – this time to Al-Madeenah, after the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims ﷺ had already reached there.

1) An Important Discussion Between Umm Salamah ﷺ and Abu Salamah ﷺ

Umm Salamah ﷺ and Abu Salamah ﷺ had been through a lot of hardships together, hardships that only made their love for one another stronger. Appreciating the bond that had evolved between them, Umm Salamah ﷺ one day said to Abu Salamah ﷺ, "It has been conveyed to me (from the Prophet ﷺ) that, if a woman's husband dies, if he is from the people of Paradise, and if she does not marry again after his death, Allah will unite them in Paradise (in marriage). So come and let us pledge to one another that you will not marry again after me, and that I will not marry again after you." Abu Salamah ﷺ replied, "Will you obey me?" She ﷺ said, "Yes." He ﷺ said, "When I die, get married (again)." And then he ﷺ made the supplication: "O Allah, after I die, provide Umm Salamah with a man who is better than me, a man who will neither cause her grief nor harm her." When Abu Salamah ﷺ later died, Umm Salamah ﷺ said to herself, "And who is better than Abu Salamah ﷺ." Only a short while later – after the end of the waiting

period that Umm Salamah ؓ had to go through after her husband died – the Prophet ﷺ was at the door of her home, mentioning to her nephew or son that he ﷺ was about to propose to her.

2) The Supplication Umm Salamah ؓ Made When Her Husband Died

Abu Salamah ؓ died of wounds that were inflicted on him during a battle against the polytheists. Umm Salamah ؓ loved him as a woman does her husband, but she ؓ also respected him for his noble character. Going to inform the Prophet ﷺ about her husband's death, Umm Salamah ؓ said, "O Messenger of Allah, verily, Abu Salamah ؓ has indeed died." The Prophet ﷺ gave her a command, saying, "Say: 'O Allah, forgive both me and him, and compensate me with a good replacement for him.'" Umm Salamah ؓ later said, "I said (what the Prophet ﷺ instructed me to say), and Allah provided me with someone who was better for me than Abu Salamah ؓ: Muhammad ﷺ."

3) The Messenger of Allah's Exchange of Messages With Umm Salamah ؓ When He ﷺ Proposed to Her

'Umar ibn Abu Salamah ؓ said, "Verily, when Umm Salamah's period of waiting (the period of time a woman has to wait out after her husband's death before she can remarry) came to an end, Abu Bakr ؓ proposed to her, but she rejected his proposal. Then 'Umar ؓ proposed to her, and she rejected his proposal as well. Next, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent a message to her (in which he ﷺ proposed to her). She ؓ replied, "Welcome. Inform the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that I am jealous by nature, that I have children, and that none of my guardians are present here (to give me away)."

The Prophet ﷺ replied with the following message: "As for your saying, 'I have children,' Allah will provide for your children for you. And as for your saying, 'I am jealous by nature,' I will invoke Allah to take away (from you) your jealousy. And as for your guardians, every single one of them will be pleased with me (i.e.,

with me being your husband).”^[1]

According to one narration, Umm Salamah ؓ said, “Verily, I am a woman who is advanced in my years.” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ replied, “As for the question of age, I am older than you are.”^[2] Here was a generous and kind reply from one who was always generous and kind in his dealings – may the peace and blessings of Allah ﷻ be upon him.

Excited by the Prophet’s proposal, Umm Salamah ؓ said to her son, “O ‘Umar, stand up and marry the Messenger of Allah ﷺ (to me).”^[3] Commenting on these words of Umm Salamah ؓ, Ibn Katheer (may Allah have mercy on him) said, “Umm Salamah’s saying, ‘O ‘Umar, stand up and marry the Messenger of Allah ﷺ (to me),’ means this: ‘I am pleased (with the offer), and I give permission for me to be married off to him.’ Some scholars misunderstood her saying, thinking that she was asking her son ‘Umar ibn Abee Salamah ؓ to marry her off (to be her guardian in marriage), but that is not correct, for he was young at the time, and was thus not qualified to conclude the agreement (of marriage).” Ibn Katheer then referred to another work of his in which he discussed this issue in detail, and he went on to say, “The one who concluded the (marriage) agreement with him (i.e., with the Prophet ﷺ) was her son, Salamah ibn Abu Salamah ؓ, who was the eldest of her sons.”^[4]

4) The Early Part of their Blessed Marriage

When Umm Salamah ؓ agreed to marry the Prophet ﷺ, he ﷺ said to her, “Verily, I will not give you less than what I gave to

^[1] Refer to *Siyyar ‘A’laam An-Nubalaa* (2/203, 204), and the chain of this *Hadeeth* is authentic.

^[2] Refer to *At-Tabaqaat* by Ibn Sa’d (8/90). And though the narrators of this *Hadeeth* are all trustworthy, it is nonetheless a *Mursal* narration (i.e., a *Taabi’ee* related it from the Prophet ﷺ without mentioning the name of a Companion from whom he learned the *Hadeeth*).

^[3] Refer to *Siyyar ‘A’laam An-Nubalaa* (2/204), and the chain of the *Hadeeth* is authentic.

^[4] Refer to *Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah* (4/92).

such and such woman: two hand mills, two jars, and a cushion made of leather that is stuffed with fibers.”^[1]

Shortly after Abu Salamah ؓ died, Umm Salamah ؓ gave birth to his daughter, who was named Barraah at first. When the Prophet ﷺ married Umm Salamah ؓ, he ﷺ would go to her, in order to spend their early days of marriage together (which perhaps was delayed because of her pregnancy and delivery). But when he ﷺ would visit her, she would take her newborn daughter, place her in her lap, and breastfeed her. The Prophet ﷺ, being gentle and modest by nature, would become shy and would leave her. He ﷺ came to her a number of times, and the same thing would happen. Meanwhile, ‘Ammaar ibn Yaasir ؓ, who was Umm Salamah’s half-brother (since Sumayyah ؓ was mother of them both), realized what was happening; the baby was preventing any intimacy between the newly-married couple. ‘Ammaar ؓ realized that, in order to rectify the situation, he ؓ had to act in a discreet manner. And so he ؓ went to his sister’s house and took from her the newborn girl, promising to have one of the women of his household breastfeed her. Soon thereafter, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ arrived and asked where the baby was. His visit coincided with the visit of one of Ibn Abu Umayyah’s female relatives, who answered, “‘Ammaar ibn Yaasir took him.” The Prophet ﷺ then told Umm Salamah ؓ that he ﷺ would return in the evening. After they spent that night together, the Prophet ﷺ said to her in the morning, “You are indeed deemed honourable by your family (i.e., by your husband; he ﷺ was referring to himself). If you wish, I will spend seven consecutive days with you, but if I do that for you, I will have to do it for my other wives (as well). And if you wish, I will spend three days (with you), and then I will begin the rotation (i.e., after those three days are over, I will go about in order, spending one night with each wife).” She ؓ said, “Spend three nights (with me).”^[2] The Prophet ﷺ spent three days with Umm Salamah ؓ, after which he ﷺ said, “A

^[1] Refer to *Siyar ‘A’laam An-Nubalaa* (2/204).

^[2] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by As-Soobaanee (3/136).

virgin has seven days, and a previously-married woman has three." What this means is that, if a man has more than one wife, he should spend seven days with his newlywed wife if she is a virgin, and three days if she had been previously married. After those days are over, he should begin a rotation, having his wives take turns by spending one night with each wife. Therefore, after the Prophet ﷺ spent three happy days with Umm Salamah ؓ, he appointed for her a day in the rotation, as he ﷺ did with the rest of his wives ؓ.

5) Changing the Name of Barraah ؓ

As I mentioned above, Umm Salamah ؓ gave birth to Abu Salamah's daughter ؓ, whom she named, Barraah. Barraah means someone who is pious, and so it is a name that amounts to a degree of self-praise. And though it is true that Muslims should keep names that have good meanings, those names should not bespeak a person's level of piety, for only Allah ﷻ knows who the pious ones are. When Barraah ؓ – or Zainab ؓ, which became her new name – grew up, she ؓ said, "Verily, after the Prophet ﷺ married my mother, he ﷺ entered upon her. My name was Barraah, and he ﷺ heard her calling me by that name. He ﷺ said, 'Do not announce yourselves to be pure (and pious and good), for indeed, it is Allah Who knows best who among you is pious, and who among you is a wicked-doer. So name her, Zainab.'" Umm Salamah ؓ responded, "Then she is Zainab."^[1]

The Prophet ﷺ loved beautiful names, which prompted him at times to change the names of certain people; and not just of children, but of men and women as well. On one occasion, a man named Shihaab ؓ, who was in the presence of the Prophet ﷺ, was mentioned. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to him, "Rather, you are Hishaam."^[2] And it is related in another narration, one that is graded '*Hasan* (acceptable),' that whenever a man came to

^[1] The chain of this narration is strong. It is related by Ibn Ishaq, by way of Bukhaaree, in *Al-Adab Al-Mufrad* (781).

^[2] The chain of this narration is *Hasan* (acceptable), and it is related by Bukhaaree in *Al-Adab Al-Mufrad* (825).

the Prophet ﷺ with a name that the Prophet ﷺ did not like, he ﷺ would change it.^[1]

On another occasion, a very old woman visited the Prophet ﷺ while he ﷺ was with 'Aishah ؓ. The Prophet ﷺ asked the old woman ؓ, "Who are you?" She ؓ said, "I am Jatthaamah Al-Muzaniyyah." The Prophet ﷺ said, "No, instead you are Hassaanah Al-Muzaniyyah. How are you? How is your situation? How have you been since we last met?" She ؓ said, "(I am) well, may my mother and father be sacrificed for you, O Messenger of Allah ﷺ." Some meat was then placed before the Prophet ﷺ, who began to hand pieces of it to Hassaanah ؓ. When Hassaanah ؓ left, 'Aishah ؓ said, "O Messenger of Allah, why such a wonderful welcome for this old woman?" The Prophet ﷺ responded, "She would visit us during the lifetime of Khadeejah, and honouring old friendships is from *Eemaan* (faith)."

6) The Wisdom Behind the Prophet's Marriage to Umm Salamah ؓ

There were many good reasons why the Prophet ﷺ married Umm Salamah ؓ; the author of *Tafseer Al-Manaar* mentioned some of them.^[2] First, Umm Salamah ؓ was a woman of superior character and intelligence, the latter quality being attested to by her advice on the Day of Al-Hudaiybiyyah (the discussion of which is yet to come, *In Sha Allah*). Second, by marrying Umm Salamah ؓ, the Prophet ﷺ gave her consolation for the loss of her husband. Third, Umm Salamah ؓ was from the Banu Makhzoom clan, a revered clan of the Quraish and, more importantly, the one that carried the banner of war against the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. It was hoped that the Prophet's marriage to Umm Salamah ؓ would be seen as a token of good will – a reason (among other reasons) for the people of Banu Makhzoom to enter the fold of Islam, now that they had become in-laws of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Fourth, by marrying Umm Salamah ؓ,

^[1] *At-Tabaraanee* (17/119).

^[2] Refer to *Tafseer Al-Manaar* (4/372).

whose husband had died a martyr, the Prophet ﷺ taught an important lesson to the Muslims of his generation and to the Muslims of all ensuing generations: When men sacrifice their lives and are martyred, the men left behind should honour them by doing their utmost to take care of their bereaved dependants.

Umm Salamah ؓ, in spite of her age when she married the Prophet ﷺ, was the last of the Prophet's wives to die; to be exact, she ؓ died in the year 61 H. As was the case with other wives who lived on after the Prophet's death, Umm Salamah ؓ fulfilled her role of spreading knowledge and of relating, among other things, details of the private life of the Prophet ﷺ. She ؓ related many *Ahaadeeth* from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ; her Musnad contains in it three-hundred and eighty-eight *Ahaadeeth*. Of those *Ahaadeeth*, Bukhaaree and Muslim agreed upon thirteen of them; three others Bukhaaree alone related; and thirteen others Muslim alone related.^[1] May Allah ﷻ be pleased with her and with all of the Prophet's wives, who all tirelessly strove to spread the light of guidance and knowledge to the rest of mankind.

The Birth Of Al-Hasan Ibn 'Alee ؓ

Imam Al-Qurtubee, may Allah have mercy on him, wrote: "Al-Hasan ؓ was born in Sha'baan, in the year 4 H." An-Nawawee narrowed down the date, saying that Al-Hasan ؓ was born after the completion of five nights from the month of Sha'baan. And then before the passage of one year, Al-Husain ؓ was born. The famous historian Al-Waaqidee wrote that Faatimah ؓ became pregnant with Al-Husain ؓ fifty nights after she gave birth to Al-Hasan ؓ. 'Alee ibn Abee Taalib ؓ said, "When Al-Hasan was born, I named him Harb, but then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ came and said, 'Show me my son. What have you named him?' I said, 'Harb.' He ﷺ said, 'No, instead he is Hasan.'"^[2] The Prophet ﷺ replaced the name that conveyed a harsh meaning - for Harb

^[1] Refer to *Siyyar 'A'laam An-Nubalaa* (2/210).

^[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree* in *Al-Adab* (286).

means war – with one that suggested a good meaning – for the word Hasan literally means, something that is good.

The Prophet ﷺ picked up the newborn and kissed him. Abu Raafai' ؓ informed us of another thing the Prophet ﷺ did when Al-Hasan was born; he ؓ said, "When Faatimah ؓ gave birth to Al-Hasan ؓ, the Prophet ﷺ made the same call in Al-Hasan's ears as is made for the prayer (i.e., the *Aadhaan*)."^[1]

In another narration, Abu Raafai' ؓ informed us about the '*Aqeeqah* of Al-Hasan. The '*Aqeeqah* is performed on the seventh day of a newborn's life, and what it involves is the slaughter of a sheep on behalf of the newborn; also on the seventh day, the newborn's head should be shaved. Abu Raafai' ؓ said, "When Faatimah ؓ gave birth to Hasan ؓ, she said, 'Shall I not perform '*Aqeeqah* on behalf of my son by spilling the blood of two male sheep?' The Prophet (wanting to perform the '*Aqeeqah* of his grandson himself) said, 'No, but shave his head and give charity in silver that is equivalent to the weight of his hair; (and give that charity) to the poor and to *Al-Aufaad* (*Al-Aufaad* were specific poor Companions ؓ of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ who stayed in the *Masjid* or in *As-Suffah*, which is a part of the *Masjid*).' Faatimah ؓ then carried out his instructions."^[2] The Prophet ﷺ wanted to be the one who gave the '*Aqeeqah* meat for his grandson, Hasan ؓ; he ﷺ performed '*Aqeeqah* for him by slaughtering two male sheep.^[3] And about the practice of performing '*Aqeeqah* in general, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Every boy is held back by his '*Aqeeqah* (i.e., until it is performed); a slaughter is made for him on his seventh day, his head is shaved, and he is named."^[4]

^[1] *Musnad Ahmad* (the *Musnad* of *Ansaaree* whose *Ahaadeeth* are related from Abu Raafai') and *Abu Daawood* (5105); some scholars have ruled that this *Hadeeth* is authentic, while others ruled that it is weak.

^[2] *Musnad Ahmad*, section, "The *Ahadeeth* of Faatimah bint *Rasoolullah* ؓ that are Related Through Abu Raafai'"; *At-Tabaraanee* related it as well (3/30) with a *Hasan* (i.e., acceptable) chain.

^[3] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah*; also, the same is related in *Al-Ahaadeeth As-Saheehah* by *Al-Sooyaanee* (3/106).

^[4] Related by *Ahmad* and the compilers of *As-Sunan*. And *At-Tirmidhee* declared it to be authentic. Refer to *Saheeh Al-Jaamai'* (2/835).

In The Year 4 H, Zaid Ibn Thaabit ؓ Learns The Language Of The Jews

Khaarijah ibn Zaid ibn Thaabit related from his father, Zaid ibn Thaabit ؓ, that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ once ordered him to learn the writing (i.e., the language) of the Jews, so that he could read for the Prophet ﷺ the letters they sent to him.^[1] What is truly amazing in this regard is that Zaid ؓ learned and mastered their language in just fifteen days, a feat that attests to two things: First, the intelligence of Zaid ؓ, and second, the effort and hard work the Companions ؓ were willing to put in order to execute a command of the Prophet ﷺ as quickly as possible.

According to one particular narration, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ arrived in Al-Madeenah, some people brought Zaid ؓ to be presented to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. They said, "O Messenger of Allah, this is a youth from the Banu An-Najjaar clan, and with him (i.e., and committed to his memory) are somewhere between thirteen and nineteen Chapters (of the Qur'an) that Allah has revealed to you." Duly impressed by the child, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "O Zaid, learn the writing (i.e., the language, which, among other things, involves learning how to read and write) of the Jews, for by Allah, I do not trust the Jews to (truthfully read to me) a book (or letter)." Zaid ؓ later said, "And so I learned for him their writing (i.e., their language); not even fifteen nights passed before I mastered it. I would read to him their letters when they wrote to him, and I would answer for him when he wanted to write back."^[2]

In the Prophet's time, a translator held a position of great importance; having access to all kinds of foreign correspondences, he would be privy to many important secrets. It is for this reason that the Prophet ﷺ chose a trustworthy Muslim, instead of

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of Rulings, chapter, 'Translating for Rulers, and Whether the Translation of a Single Translator is Permissible'; *Hadeeth* number: 7195.

^[2] Refer to *Siyyar 'A'laam An-Nubalaa* (2/429).

relying on a non-Muslim, to be his translator. In learning the Jewish language in just fifteen days, Zaid ؓ showed signs of achieving wonderful things later on his life, and he ؓ lived up to that promise. He ؓ was among those who memorized the entire Qur'an during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ; he ؓ was among the most famous of the transcribers who wrote down revelation for the Prophet ﷺ. He ؓ, and he alone, undertook the task of writing the entire Qur'an on scrolls during the caliphate of Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq ؓ, and he ؓ was also one of transcribers of copies of the Qur'an during the caliphate of 'Uthmaan ؓ. Each of these achievements in and of itself attests to the great service that Zaid ؓ rendered for the Muslim nation. May Allah ﷻ be pleased with him and with all of the Prophet's Companions.

3

The Expulsion Of The Banu An-Nadeer Tribe

From the day Ka'ab ibn Al-Ashraf died until the Day of Uhud, the Jews of Al-Madeenah were in a constant state of fear. First, one of the three Jewish tribes of Al-Madeenah had been expelled, and then one of the agitators of the two remaining tribes was killed. As far as the Jews of Al-Madeenah were concerned, they did not want to take any rash actions that could result in their deaths or banishment from Al-Madeenah.

Their mood and outlook began to change, however, in the year 3 H, when the Battle of Uhud took place. The results of the Battle of Uhud instilled hope into the hearts of Al-Madeenah's Jews; they began to question whether the Muslims were as strong as they seemed to be, and they began to ponder their options. In the end, it was probably the tragedies of Ar-Rajee' and Ba'ir Ma'oonah that finally pushed the Jews over the edge and made it clear to them that they had to take some risks if they wanted to regain the control they had prior to the advent of Islam. Nonetheless, they did not engage in open confrontations with the Muslims; rather, they resorted to deception and to concentrating their energies on coming up with a secret plan to kill the Prophet ﷺ. At the same time, they began to fill up their fortresses with weapons and other equipment.

The History Behind And The Causes Of The Confrontation Between The Muslims And Banu An-Nadeer

1) The History of the Confrontation

Scholars from the middle centuries of Islam were of the view that the Battle of Banu An-Nadeer took place after Uhud, in the month of Rabee'ul-Awwal, in the year 4 H. Ibn Al-Qayyim wrote, "Muhammad ibn Shihaab Az-Zuhree claimed that the Battle of Banu An-Nadeer took place six months after Badr; this is either a misinterpretation on his part or someone wrongly ascribed this view to him. Without a doubt, the Battle of Banu An-Nadeer took place after Uhud. The battle that took place six months after Badr was the Battle of Banu Qainu'qaa'; the confrontation with Quraizah (the last of the three Jewish tribes) took place after the Battle of Al-Khandaq; and the Battle of Khaibar (yet another confrontation with the Jews) took place after Al-Hudaibiyah.^[1] Ibn Al-'Arabee and Ibn Katheer also championed the view that the Battle of Banu An-Nadeer took place after Uhud.

2) The Reasons for the Battle

There are many reasons that prompted the Prophet ﷺ to attack the Banu An-Nadeer tribe and to expel them from Al-Madeenah; of those reasons two are the most important.

First, Banu An-Nadeer blatantly violated many articles of their treaty with the Muslims. For example, they never offered help when the Muslims were fighting battles at Badr and Uhud; in fact, they did quite the opposite. They provided shelter to the enemy and guided them to the weakly guarded areas of Al-Madeenah. This barefaced violation occurred after Badr – as we have hitherto discussed – when Abu Sufyaan and two-hundred horsemen raided a district of Al-Madeenah. When Abu Sufyaan reached the outskirts of Al-Madeenah, it was the leader of Banu An-Nadeer, Salaam ibn

^[1] Refer to *Zaad Al-Ma'ad* (3/249).

Mishkam, who hosted him, helped him, and provided him with sensitive information about the Muslims. Moosa ibn 'Uqbah ؓ said, "It was the Banu An-Nadeer tribe that conspired with the Quraish, encouraging them to fight the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and guiding them to the weaknesses (of Al-Madeenah)."^[1]

And second, although it is true that the Jews of Banu An-Nadeer had previously done many vile things to warrant an attack, they completely outdid themselves when they planned to assassinate the Prophet ﷺ. After 'Amr ibn Umayyah Ad-Damree ؓ killed two men of Banu 'Aamir, the Prophet ﷺ went with a group of his Companions ؓ to the district inhabited by the Banu An-Nadeer tribe. The purpose of the official visit was to ask Banu An-Nadeer for assistance in the payment of the blood money that had to be paid for 'Amr's mistake. That the Prophet ﷺ went to them was to be expected, for part of the agreement that the Jews made with the Muslims of Al-Madeenah was that they would help them when it came to the payment of blood money, for cases similar to that of 'Amr ؓ.

At first, the leaders of Banu An-Nadeer put on an artificial display of happiness when they saw the Prophet ﷺ. They gave a courteous and kind welcome, but no sooner did they find themselves to be alone than they began plotting the assassination of the Prophet ﷺ, since his presence in their district gave them the perfect, and perhaps only, opportunity they needed to carry out that end. It appears that they agreed to drop a huge stone on him from on top of a wall under which he ﷺ was seated.

But their plan failed. Allah ﷻ had guaranteed to protect the Prophet ﷺ from people, and that is just what He ﷻ did, revealing to the Prophet ﷺ Banu An-Nadeer's plan to kill him. The Prophet ﷺ then quickly got up from his seat and returned with great haste to Al-Madeenah. And his Companions ؓ returned as well.

Regarding their planned assassination of the Prophet ﷺ, the Jews of Banu An-Nadeer were committing an act of war against not just the Prophet ﷺ, but the entire Muslim nation. The people of

^[1] *Fathul-Baaree*, the Book of Al-Maghaazee, chapter, "The Hadeeth of Banu An-Nadeer (7/332).

Banu An-Nadeer had violated their treaty with the Muslims on many occasions, but this time, they went too far: The Prophet ﷺ had to react, and he ﷺ did react, ordering an immediate attack on Banu An-Nadeer. In the Noble Qur'an, Allah ﷻ mentioned how He ﷻ blessed the believers by saving the Prophet ﷺ from the plotting of Banu An-Nadeer:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ أَن
يَبْسُطُوا إِلَيْكُمْ أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَكَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ
فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١﴾﴾

“O you who believe! Remember the Favour of Allah unto you when some people desired (made a plan) to stretch out their hands against you, but (Allah) withheld their hands from you. So fear Allah. And in Allah let believers put their trust.” (Qur'an 5: 11)

Tafseer scholars have related various narrations that explain the reason behind the revelation of this Verse. For example, *At-Tabaree* reported that Ibn Ziyaad said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ went to Banu An-Nadeer in order to ask them to help pay blood money on behalf of his Companions ؓ; for this purpose, he ﷺ took along with him Abu Bakr ؓ, 'Umar ؓ, and 'Alee ؓ. He ﷺ said (to the leaders of Banu An-Nadeer), ‘Help me pay off blood money that has befallen me.’ They said, ‘Yes, O Abul-Qaasim, it is about time you have come to us and asked us for help. Sit down, and meanwhile, we will feed you and give you what you ask for.’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his Companions ؓ sat down, waiting (for the leaders of Banu An-Nadeer to bring the money they promised); meanwhile, the leader of Banu An-Nadeer – the very man who said the aforementioned words to the Prophet ﷺ – said to his Companions, ‘You will never be closer to him than you are now. Throw a stone down on him and kill him, and thereafter you will never see any evil again!’ They betook themselves to a huge hand mill (a tool that consists of two circular stones, one placed on top of the other) that they owned in order to throw it down on the Prophet ﷺ. But Allah ﷻ held back their hands until Jibreel ؑ came and told the Prophet ﷺ

to get up from where he was sitting. Allah ﷻ then revealed the Verse:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ أَن
يَبْسُطُوا إِلَيْكُمْ أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَكَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ
فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١﴾﴾

“O you who believe! Remember the Favour of Allah unto you when some people desired (made a plan) to stretch out their hands against you, but (Allah) withheld their hands from you. So fear Allah. And in Allah let believers put their trust.” (Qur’an 5: 11)

In this manner, Allah ﷻ informed the Prophet ﷺ about what they wanted to do with him.”^[1]

Muhammad ibn Ishaq, Mujaahid, ‘Ikrimah, and others^[2] related a slightly more detailed account of what happened; according to their narrations, the leaders of Banu An-Nadeer appointed a man named ‘Amr ibn Jihaash with the task of killing the Prophet ﷺ. Their plan was this: Once the Prophet ﷺ sat down under a wall and the people gathered around him, ‘Amr’s job was to throw the hand mill on him from on top of the wall. But before ‘Amr could throw down the hand mill, Allah ﷻ informed the Prophet ﷺ of their plot, and the Prophet ﷺ, as well as his Companions ﷺ, immediately returned to Al-Madeenah.

Perhaps because of different accounts and other attempts that were made on the Prophet’s life, scholars disagree about what event prompted the revelation of the above-mentioned Verse. Ibn Jareer, as well as others, believed that it was revealed in response to Banu An-Nadeer’s plot to kill the Prophet ﷺ, a view that is strengthened by the fact that subsequent Verses discuss Jews, some of their infamous deeds, and their betrayal of the Prophets that were sent to them.^[3] Expressing agreement on Ibn Jareer’s assessment of the

^[1] Refer to *Tafseer Ibn Jareer* (6/144, 145).

^[2] Each of their narrations of this story might be weak if taken individually; but taken as a whole, they strengthen one another to the point that they can correctly be used as proof. Refer to *Al-Mujtama’ Al-Madane Fee ‘Ahd An-Nubuwwah* (pg. 145).

^[3] Refer to *Tafseer At-Tabaree* (6/144, 145).

matter, Dr. Muhammad ibn Aal-'Aabid added, "But it is still possible that the noble Verse was revealed after all of those events (i.e., after all of the events during which attempts were made on the Prophet's life), so that the same revealed Verse applies to all of those events equally, as has been stated by the scholars (of the past)."^[1]

We can therefore conclude that the meaning of the aforementioned Verse is this: Remember Allah's favours, one of the greatest of which was saving the Prophet ﷺ from the Jews, who plotted to kill him. Allah ﷻ thwarted their evil plot and saved your Prophet ﷺ from their evil.

Allah ﷻ then ended the Verse by saying, "So fear Allah. And in Allah let believers put their trust." Here, after having shown believers a manifestation of His almightiness, Allah ﷻ reminded them that they should be thankful to him and that they should place their trust in Him alone.

Warning Banu An-Nadeer About Their Imminent Expulsion From Al-Madeenah, And The Siege That Followed

1) Banu An-Nadeer is Warned

Most *Seerah* books contain accounts of the advance warning that the Prophet ﷺ gave to Banu An-Nadeer. The Prophet ﷺ sent Muhammad ibn Maslamah ﷺ to the people of Banu An-Nadeer, first giving him the following instructions: "Go to the Jews of Banu An-Nadeer and say to them, 'Verily, the Messenger of Allah ﷻ has sent me to you with this message: 'Leave my country (i.e., Al-Madeenah), for you have indeed betrayed the covenant I made with you; one of the ways you did this was the treacherous deed you intended to perpetrate. I give you a respite of ten (days) (during which time you have to leave Al-Madeenah). If anyone among you is seen afterwards (i.e., after the expiration of those

^[1] Refer to *Hadeeth Al-Qur'an Al-Kareem 'An Ghazawaat Ar-Rasool ﷺ* (1/251).

ten days), then his neck will be struck (with a sword).”^[1]

They were so stunned that they found no words with which to reply to the Prophet’s message; nonetheless, they did have something to say to Muhammad ibn Maslamah ؓ, a member of the Aus tribe, the very same tribe that had been allied to the Banu An-Nadeer tribe during the pre-Islamic days of ignorance. They said to him, “O Muhammad, we never thought that a man from the Aus would bring us such an ultimatum!” Muhammad ibn Maslamah ؓ responded, “Hearts have changed, and Islam has erased past covenants.” They said, “We will load our things (in preparation for our departure).” They spent the following days loading as many supplies as they could for their departure from Al-Madeenah.

During that period, ‘Abdullah ibn Ubai ibn Salool, chief of the hypocrites, sent a message to the leaders of Banu An-Nadeer, saying, “Stand firm! And fortify yourselves, for indeed, we will not surrender you to them. If you are fought against, we will fight alongside you; and if you are forced to leave, we will leave with you. But do not leave, for indeed, I have on my side Arabs and people who have joined my people, so that we are two thousand strong. So stay where you are, and they (my followers and the Arabs that are allied to me) will enter your fortresses with you; and for the cause of preventing the enemy from reaching you, they (my followers) are all willing to die.”^[2]

The leaders of Banu An-Nadeer regained at least some of their confidence – or perhaps better put, foolhardiness. Their head chieftain, Huyai ibn Akhtab, sent Jiddee ibn Akhtab to the Prophet ﷺ with the message: “We will not leave our land, so do whatever you want!” Upon receiving this message, the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims ؓ proclaimed, “Allahuakbar (Allah is the Greatest),” after which the Prophet ﷺ announced that the Muslims were to make preparations to fight the Jews.^[3]

^[1] Refer to *Tabaqaat Ibn Sa’d Al-Kubraa* (2/57) and to *Al-Maghaazee* by Al-Waaqidee (1/363-370).

^[2] Refer to *Taareekh At-Tabaree* (2/553).

^[3] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Katheer (3/146).

2) The Siege and the Eventual Expulsion of Banu An-Nadeer

The ten day deadline passed, yet the people of Banu An-Nadeer were still in their homes. It was then that the Muslim army marched towards them. No fighting erupted, since the people of Banu An-Nadeer had locked themselves in their fortresses, a course of action that naturally resulted in a siege, one that lasted for fifteen nights.

The Prophet ﷺ ordered for their date-palm trees to be burned down, a strategic move that helped bring about an early end to the siege. The main wealth of Banu An-Nadeer was their land and gardens; with their trees burned down, they began to lose hope. They yelled at the Prophet ﷺ from inside of their fortresses, saying, "O Muhammad, you indeed forbade such destruction, and you would find fault with those who perpetrated it. So why now do you cut down and destroy our date-palm trees?"

Allah ﷻ cast terror into the hearts of Banu An-Nadeer's people; they knew that, if they were going to come out of this situation alive, accepting banishment from Al-Madeenah was their only option. To make matters worse, Ibn Ubai broke his promise of helping them; furthermore, they did not have enough provisions to last them for much longer. Sensing the urgency of their situation, they sent a message to the Prophet ﷺ, asking him to guarantee them safety if they packed up their things and left Al-Madeenah permanently. The Prophet ﷺ accepted their offer, saying to them, "Leave your homes, and your blood will be spared; also, you can take with you anything that your camels will carry, except for *Al-Halqah* (a word that refers to shields and weapons)." The people of Banu An-Nadeer were, of course, happy to leave with their bodies intact.

Before leaving, the people of Banu An-Nadeer tore down the roofs of their houses, and destroyed the pillars and walls; if they had to leave, they did not want to give the Muslims the satisfaction of using their homes - but given the difficulty of the task and the shortness of time, they were not able to demolish all of their homes. They also managed to load a huge quantity of gold and silver onto their camels; Sallaam ibn Abee Al-Huqaiq alone carried an ox's skin that was filled with gold and silver. He was quoted as saying

that what really mattered was the gold and silver they were taking with them; as for date-palm trees, there were plenty in Khaibar, the intended destination of many of Banu An-Nadeer's people.

The Prophet ﷺ appointed Muhammad ibn Maslamah ؓ to oversee Banu An-Nadeer's departure from Al-Madeenah. Under Muhammad ibn Maslamah's supervision, the people of Banu An-Nadeer soon left Al-Madeenah, having loaded their belongings and wealth onto the backs of six-hundred camels. As they were leaving, they placed female singers and musical instruments at the rear of their procession, so as to prevent the Muslims from taking pleasure in their departure. The tribe then split up into two groups, with one group going to Khaibar, and the other to Adhri'at Ash-Sham. The more prominent of their leaders who went to Khaibar were Sallaam ibn Abee Al-Huqaiq, Huyai ibn Akhtab, and Kinaanah ibn Ar-Rabee' ibn Abee Al-Huqaiq. They were not only welcomed by Khaibar's inhabitants, but also recognized as having authority over them.^[1]

The Lessons and Morals of this Story

Allah ﷻ discussed the expulsion of Banu An-Nadeer in the Noble Qur'an, dedicating an entire Chapter, *Al-Hashr*, to the topic; for this reason, 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbaas ؓ called "*Al-Hashr*" the "Chapter of Banu An-Nadeer." It is related in *Saheeh Bukhaaree* that Sa'eed ibn Jubair once said the words Chapter *Al-Hashr* to Ibn 'Abbaas ؓ, who stopped him with the correction: "Say: 'Chapter Banu An-Nadeer.'"^[2]

Chapter *Al-Hashr* deals with the events that pertain to Banu An-Nadeer's expulsion from Al-Madeenah, the legal ruling on the spoils the Muslims gained, and the stance taken by the hypocrites throughout the confrontation. The chapter also exposes the inner realities of the Jews and hypocrites. Interspersed throughout Chapter *Al-Hashr*, Allah ﷻ orders Muslims to fear Him, warns them not to disobey Him, and mentions some of the lofty qualities

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah*, by Ibn Hishaam (3/212).

^[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree* (4029).

that are befitting of His greatness, majesty, and perfection. Even when historical events are discussed in the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ continues to discuss issues such as *Tawheed* (Islamic Monotheism) and the importance of preparing for the Day of Resurrection; in this manner, Muslims are reminded that these are issues of paramount importance.

When one contemplates Chapter *Al-Hashr*, one can derive many important lessons and morals:

1) The Horror that Allah ﷻ Places in the Hearts of His Enemies

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي أَخْرَجَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ لِأَوَّلِ الْحَشْرِ مَا ظَنَنْتُمْ أَنْ يَخْرُجُوا وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ مَانِعَتُهُمْ حُصُونُهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ فَأَلْتَهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَمْ يَحْتَسِبُوا وَقَذَفَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الرُّعْبَ يُخْرِبُونَ بُيُوتَهُمْ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَيْدِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَاعْتَبِرُوا يَا أُولِيَ الْأَبْصَارِ ﴿٢﴾ وَلَوْلَا أَنْ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْجَلَاءَ لَعَذَّبَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابُ النَّارِ ﴿٣﴾ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ شَاقُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَمَنْ يُشَاقِ اللَّهَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٤﴾﴾

“He it is Who drove out the disbelievers among the people of the Scripture (i.e., the Jews of the tribe of Banu An-Nadeer) from their homes at the first gathering. You did not think that they would get out. And they thought that their fortresses would defend them from Allah! But Allah’s (Torment) reached them from a place whereof they expected it not, and He cast terror into their hearts, so that they destroyed their own dwellings with their own hands and the hands of the believers. Then take admonition, O you with eyes (to see). And had it not been that Allah had decreed exile for them, He would certainly have punished them in this world, and in the Hereafter theirs shall be the torment of the Fire. That is because they opposed Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ). And whosoever opposes Allah, then verily, Allah is Severe in punishment.” (Qur’an 59: 2-4)

When one contemplates these Verses, one realizes that it was Allah ﷻ Who made the people of Banu An-Nadeer surrender. They had every possible material advantage on their side, and they truly believed that no one could make them leave their impenetrable fortresses. Perhaps they were partially right in that assumption, in that, throughout the duration of the siege, the Muslims were not able to force them to leave. Nonetheless, Allah ﷻ brought about their defeat, attacking them where they were most vulnerable - in their hearts. Terror enveloped their hearts, to the degree that they began to destroy their homes with their own hands. We could learn about the inner reality of Banu An-Nadeer's tribesmen only from the Qur'an, and not from the historical accounts of men. Allah ﷻ made it clear in the Noble Qur'an that:

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي أَخْرَجَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ﴾

"He it is Who drove out the disbelievers among the people of the Scripture (i.e., the Jews of the tribe of Banu An-Nadeer) from their homes."

The same Verse went on to explain how the Jews of Banu An-Nadeer had made preparations for all possible contingencies, except that defeat came to them from a direction they thought was secure - from inside of their own selves. Terror having engulfed the insides of their breasts, they quickly acknowledged defeat. Their story should be a lesson for every person: Allah ﷻ alone is in control of all things; He is upon all things capable, and nothing can withstand His might. The path to victory for human beings, therefore, is short: They simply have to return to Allah ﷻ, believe in Him, repent to Him, and place their complete trust in Him. When believers do all of that, Allah ﷻ helps them, even if their enemy is strong; and a good example of this occurring is the expulsion of Banu An-Nadeer from Al-Madeenah.

2) Destroying Things Owned by the Enemy

After the Muslims reached the district of Banu An-Nadeer and the people of Banu An-Nadeer shut themselves up in their fortresses,

the Prophet ﷺ ordered his Companions ﷺ to cut down and burn Banu An-Nadeer's date-palm trees. The people of Banu An-Nadeer called out, "O Muhammad, you indeed forbade such destruction, and you would find fault with those who perpetrated it. So why now do you cut down and destroy our date-palm trees?" Allah ﷻ then revealed the Verse:

﴿مَا قَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ لَيْتَةٍ أَوْ نَرَكْتُمْهَا قَائِمَةً عَلَىٰ أَسْوِلِهَا فَإِذِنَ اللَّهُ
وَلِيُخْزِيَ الْفَاسِقِينَ﴾ (5)

"What you (O Muslims) cut down of the palm-trees (of the enemy), or you left them standing on their stems, it was by the Leave of Allah, and in order that He might disgrace the Faasiqoon (rebellious, disobedient to Allah)." (Qur'an 59: 5)

After mentioning the different views of scholars regarding the interpretation of this Verse, Shaikh Muhammad Abu Zuhrah wrote, "As for the destruction and burning that occurs during war, these are some of the conclusions we can derive from the sources of Islamic legislation and from the actions of the Prophet ﷺ during the wars he ﷺ fought: First, the general rule is that it is not permissible to cut down trees or destroy buildings, since the goal of war is not to hurt citizens (of a country) but to ward off the harm and wrongdoing of an oppressive authority. Second, if it is established that cutting down trees and destroying buildings is a military necessity for which there is no alternative – such as when the enemy uses trees to shield themselves or when they use buildings to hurt the Muslim army – then doing so is permissible, as is exemplified here (i.e., regarding the siege of Banu An-Nadeer) and in the case of Thaqeef's fortress. Third, when certain scholars speak about the permissibility of destroying (buildings) and cutting down (trees), we should be clear on the point that they are speaking about cases of necessity. Therefore, Muslims do not destroy infrastructure simply to wreak havoc and harm the enemy, since citizens (of a country) are not the enemy; rather, the enemy is anyone who carries weapons in order to fight against the Muslims."

3) A Shift in Economic Policy in the Newly-Formed Islamic Country

The Muslims gained a good deal of booty after the siege of Banu An-Nadeer, mainly in the form of property and homes. That booty was not distributed in the same manner that the booty of Badr was distributed; the ruling on the distribution of wealth gained from Banu An-Nadeer was clarified in this Verse

﴿وَمَا آفَاءَ اللَّهِ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْهُمْ فَمَا أَوْجَفْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ خَيْلٍ وَلَا رِكَابٍ
وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يُسَلِّطُ رُسُلَهُ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٦﴾﴾

“And to what Allah gave as booty (Fai’) to His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) from them, for which you made no expedition with either cavalry or camelry. But Allah gives power to His Messengers over whomsoever He wills. And Allah is Able to do all things.” (Qur’an 59: 6)

Here, Allah ﷻ made it clear that, without the Muslims having had to endure the hardships of battle, He ﷻ blessed them with booty from the tribe of Banu An-Nadeer. Contrary to what happened before Badr and Uhud, the Muslims did not ride camels and horses but instead walked to the district of Banu An-Nadeer; furthermore, an end to the hostilities was brought about not through fighting, but through a peaceful agreement. The booty was therefore given to the Prophet ﷺ, who had the right to allocate one year’s worth of expenditures on his family; with the wealth that remained from the booty, he ﷺ had the option of buying riding animals and weapons for the Muslim army.^[1]

Even though one year’s worth of expense money was allocated to his family, the Prophet ﷺ spent that money before the year ended, giving to the poor and needy whenever the opportunity to do so presented itself. That the Prophet ﷺ always spent any money he had on charity is attested to by his financial situation upon his death: his armour was pledged as security with a Jewish man

^[1] Saheeh Bukhaaree (4033) and Saheeh Muslim (1757).

because he had to borrow barley from him in order to feed his family; also, throughout his life, the Prophet ﷺ never ate his full for three consecutive days. In fact, numerous *Ahaadeeth* narrations have been related that describe the frequent hunger suffered by the Prophet ﷺ and his family ﷺ.

In Verse number seven of Chapter *Al-Hashr*, Allah ﷻ clarifies the ruling for any booty that Muslims gain from polytheists in general:

﴿مَا آفَاءَ اللَّهِ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقُرَىٰ فَلِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ
وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ﴾

“What Allah gave as booty (Fai’) to His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) from the people of the townships, – it is for Allah, His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), the kindred (of Messenger Muhammad ﷺ), the orphans, Al-Masaakeen (the poor), and the wayfarer.” (Qur’an 59: 7)

When the Muslims won booty from Banu An-Nadeer, the Prophet ﷺ summoned Thaabit ibn Qais ﷺ and said to him, “Summon your people to me.” Not being sure whether the Prophet ﷺ was referring to his tribe – the Khazraj – or to the native Muslims of Al-Madeenah in general – the *Ansaar* – Thaabit ﷺ asked, “The Khazraj?” The Prophet ﷺ responded, “(No), All of the *Ansaar*.”

Thaabit ﷺ proceeded to summon everyone from both the Aus and Khazraj tribes, and when they were all gathered together, the Prophet ﷺ addressed them, beginning his speech by praising Allah ﷻ and glorifying Him. He ﷺ went on to mention some of the good deeds of the *Ansaar*, particularly the generosity they bestowed upon the *Muhaajiroon*, sharing with them their homes and wealth and, in general, preferring them to their own selves. The Prophet ﷺ said to the *Ansaar*, “If you want, I will divide what Allah gave to me as booty from Banu An-Nadeer between you and the *Muhaajiroon*, in which case the *Muhaajiroon* will continue to reside in your homes and share in your wealth. And if you want, I will give it all to them, and they will leave your homes [and take residence elsewhere (in the homes left behind by the Banu An-Nadeer tribe)].”

Sa'd ibn 'Ubaadah ؓ and Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh ؓ, the two leaders of the Aus and Khazraj tribes, said, "O Messenger of Allah, rather we will distribute (the spoils) between the *Muhaajiroon* (only), but they will stay in our homes as they have done hitherto." And the rest of the members of the *Ansaar* said, "We are pleased, and we have submitted, O Messenger of Allah ﷺ."

As per the decision of the *Ansaar*, all of the booty of Banu An-Nadeer was given exclusively to the *Muhaajiroon*, with the exception of two members of the *Ansaar*, Abu Dujaanah ؓ and Sahl ibn Hunaif ؓ, who were given a share of the spoils because they were poor and needed the money.^[1] Even though the Prophet ﷺ knew that the booty was his to decide upon, he ﷺ gathered the *Ansaar* and consulted them, thus making them feel good about themselves and about their status with the Prophet ﷺ.

Additionally, the purpose behind the decided upon distribution was to ease the burden of the *Ansaar*: the *Ansaar* were able to retake full possession of their homes, while the *Muhaajiroon* moved into the homes left behind by the Banu An-Nadeer tribe. Owning property for the first time since they arrived in Al-Madeenah, many members of the *Muhaajiroon* soon became wealthy, or at least self-sufficient. This certainly was a major factor in bringing about an end to the economic crisis that began after the migration of Muslims to Al-Madeenah; also, giving homes to members of the *Muhaajiroon* was certainly a more permanent solution than having them stay in the *Masjid* or in the homes of their brothers from the *Ansaar*.

The distribution of Banu An-Nadeer's wealth marked a significant shift in the economic policy of the newly-formed Islamic country. Prior to the Battle of Banu An-Nadeer, war booty would be distributed as follows: the Muslim government would take one-fifth and distribute it according to principles outlined in the Qur'an, and the rest would be distributed among the Muslim army. After the Battle of Banu An-Nadeer, the rules changed; war booty became classified into two categories:

^[1] Refer to *Sharh Az-Zarqaanee 'Alal-Mawaahib* (2/86).

- 1) War booty that Muslims achieve through the valour of their swords. This category of war booty took on the old ruling: the Muslim leadership distributes one-fifth of it according to principles outlined in the Qur'an, and the rest is distributed among the Muslim army.
- 2) War booty that Muslims gain without fighting. As for this kind of war booty, the leader of the Muslim nation decides how all of it is spent; it is up to him to decide how best it can be used, and to then spend it accordingly. Therefore, he can use the booty to improve the economic conditions of the Muslim nation; to provide for the poor; to purchase weapons for the Muslim army; to build schools or repair roads, and so on. In this manner, the leader of the Muslim nation has a specific contingency fund that he can readily spend whenever necessary.

In the above-mentioned Verse, Allah ﷻ explains why only certain people are given a share from the latter kind of booty; He ﷻ said:

﴿ مَا آفَاءَ اللَّهِ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقُرَى فَلِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ
وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ كَيْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةً بَيْنَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ مِنْكُمْ وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ
فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٧﴾ ۞

“What Allah gave as booty (Fai’) to His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) from the people of the townships – it is for Allah, His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), the kindred (of Messenger Muhammad ﷺ), the orphans, Al-Masaakeen (the needy), and the wayfarer, in order that it may not become a fortune used by the rich among you. And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it). And fear Allah; verily, Allah is Severe in punishment.” (Qur’an 59: 7)

This Verse basically means that only certain people receive a share of the latter kind of booty in order to prevent the distribution of wealth in a Muslim country from remaining restricted among the rich and among the upper classes. This is just one of many examples

of how the *Shariah* aims to establish a just society, in which the financial gap between the rich and poor is narrowed through various legislations. Needless to say, therefore, that were Muslims to apply Islamic legislations that pertain to wealth – such as the system of *Zakaat*, the prohibition of usury, and the prevention of monopolies and unfair trade practices – everyone in society would be provided for. True, they might differ in the quantity of wealth they have, but no one would be a burden on someone else; that being the case, they would all still cooperate with one another.

Having clarified the reasoning behind the distribution of war booty that is gained through peaceful means, Allah ﷻ then ordered Muslims to fear Him and to obey the Prophet ﷺ:

﴿ مَا آفَاءَ اللَّهِ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقُرَىٰ فَلِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ كَيْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةً بَيْنَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ مِنْكُمْ وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٧﴾

“What Allah gave as booty (Fai’) to His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) from the people of the townships – it is for Allah, His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), the kindred (of Messenger Muhammad ﷺ), the orphans, Al-Masaakeen (the needy), and the wayfarer, in order that it may not become a fortune used by the rich among you. And whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) gives you, take it; and whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it). And fear Allah; verily, Allah is Severe in punishment.” (Qur’an 59: 7)

As for Allah’s saying, “Verily, Allah is Severe in punishment, the scholars of *Tafseer* said that, even though this Verse was revealed about war booty, it applies generally to everything regarding which the Prophet ﷺ issued a command or a prohibition. Allah ﷻ ordered Muslims to obey the Prophet ﷺ in other Verses as well, such as in the following Verse:

﴿ فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِي مَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا ﴿٦٥﴾

“But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you (O Muhammad ﷺ) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission.” (Qur’an 4: 65)

And the Prophet ﷺ said, “If I forbade you from something, stay away from it. And if I ordered you to do something, then do as much of it as you can. For indeed those who came before you were destroyed only because of their many questions (of the wrong kind) and because of their disputes with their Prophets ﷺ.”^[1]

4) The Superiority of the *Muhaajiroon*, the *Ansaar*, and Those Who Follow Them in Goodness

The Virtues of the *Muhaajiroon*

Allah ﷻ pointed out the superior qualities of the *Muhaajiroon* in Chapter *Al-Hashr*, particularly referring to their truthfulness:

﴿لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا وَيَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ ﴿٨﴾﴾

“(And there is also a share in this booty) for the poor emigrants, who were expelled from their homes and their property, seeking Bounties from Allah and to please Him. And helping Allah (i.e., help His religion) and His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ). Such are indeed the truthful (to what they say).” (Qur’an 59: 8)

The Virtues of the *Ansaar*

Also in Chapter *Al-Hashr*, Allah ﷻ described many good qualities of the *Ansaar*:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩﴾﴾

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim*, the Book of Virtues, chapter, “Venerating the Prophet ﷺ, and Avoiding Asking Him Unnecessary Questions”; *Hadeeth* number: 1337.

“And those who before them, had homes (in Al-Madeenah) and had adopted the faith, – love those who emigrate to them, and have no jealousy in their breasts for that which they have been given (from the booty of Banu An-Nadeer), and give them (emigrants) preference over themselves, even though they were in need of that. And whosoever is saved from his own covetousness, such are they who will be the successful.” (Qur’an 59: 9)

The Virtues of Those Who Follow Them in Goodness

Allah ﷻ also commended those who emulate the good qualities of the *Muhaajiroon* and the *Ansaar* and supplicate for their brothers who preceded them in faith:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾﴾

“And those who came after them say: “Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful.” (Qur’an 59: 10)

5) The Hypocrites

Also in Chapter *Al-Hashr*, Allah ﷻ exposed the secret alliance between the hypocrites and the Jews of Banu An-Nadeer. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا يَقُولُونَ لِإِخْوَانِهِمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَئِنْ أُخْرِجْتُمْ لَنَخْرُجَنَّ مَعَكُمْ وَلَا نُطِيعُ فِيكُمْ أَحَدًا أَبَدًا وَإِنْ قُوتِلْتُمْ لَنَنصُرَنَّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ شَهِدٌ لِنَافِقِهِمْ لَكَذِبُونَ ﴿١١﴾ لَئِنْ أُخْرِجُوا لَا يَخْرُجُونَ مَعَهُمْ وَلَئِنْ قُوتِلُوا لَا يَنْصُرُونَهُمْ وَلَئِنْ نَصَرُوهُمْ لَيُولَّيْنَنَّ الْأَذْبَانَ ثُمَّ لَا يَنْصُرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ لَأَنْتُمْ أَشَدُّ رَهْبَةً فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ لَا يَقْبَلُونَكُمْ جَمِيعًا إِلَّا فِي قَرْيٍ مُحَصَّنَةٍ أَوْ مِنْ وَرَاءِ جُدُرٍ بَأْسُهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ شَدِيدٌ تَحْسَبُهُمْ

جَمِيعًا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ شَتَّىٰ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ
 قَرِيبًا ذَاقُوا وَبَالَ أَمْرِهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥﴾ كَمَثَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِذْ قَالَ لِلْإِنسَانِ
 اكْفُرْ فَلَمَّا كَفَرَ قَالَ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّنكَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾
 فَكَانَ عَاقِبَتُهُمَا أَنَّهُمَا فِي النَّارِ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَاؤُ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٧﴾ ❖

“Have you (O Muhammad ﷺ) not observed the hypocrites who say to their brothers among the people of the Scripture who disbelieve : “(By Allah) If you are expelled, we (too) indeed will go out with you , and we shall never obey any one against you , and if you are attacked (in fight), we shall indeed help you .” But Allah is Witness, that they verily, are liars. Surely, if they (the Jews) are expelled, never will they (hypocrites) go out with them, and if they are attacked, they will never help them. And if they do help them, they (hypocrites) will turn their backs, so they will not be victorious. Verily, you (believers in the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism) are more awful as a fear in their (Jews of Banu An-Nadeer) breasts than Allah. That is because they are a people who comprehend not (the Majesty and Power of Allah). They fight not against you even together, except in fortified townships, or from behind walls. Their enmity among themselves is very great. You would think they were united, but their hearts are divided, that is because they are a people who understand not. They are like their immediate predecessors (the Jews of Banu Qainuqa’, who suffered), they tasted the evil result of their conduct, and (in the Hereafter, there is) for them a painful torment ; (Their allies deceived them) like Shaitaan (Satan), when he says to man : “Disbelieve in Allah.” But when (man) disbelieves in Allah, Shaitaan (Satan) says : “I am free of you, I fear Allah, the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists)!” So the end of both will be that they will be in the Fire, abiding therein. Such is the recompense of the Zaalimoon (i.e., polytheists, wrongdoers, disbelievers in Allah and in His Oneness, etc.).” (Qur’an 59: 11-17)

These Verses refer to how the hypocrites, led by ‘Abdullah ibn Ubai, promised to help the Jews of Banu An-Nadeer if the

Muslims attacked them. The hypocrites and the Jews of Banu An-Nadeer are described as being “brothers,” if not by blood, and if not by the same form of disbelief, then at least by disbelief in general. The hypocrites promised their brothers from Banu An-Nadeer to defend them, but:

﴿وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ﴾

“Allah is Witness that they verily are liars.”

Allah ﷻ explained in detail how they were liars, saying:

﴿لَئِن أَخْرَجُوا لَا يَخْرُجُونَ مَعَهُمْ﴾

“If they (the Jews) are expelled, never will they (hypocrites) go out with them, and if they are attacked, they will never help them.”

Allah ﷻ even described what would happen if the hypocrites were to help Banu An-Nadeer:

﴿وَلَئِن قَاتَلُوا لَا يَنْصُرُونَهُمْ﴾

“And if they do help them, they (the hypocrites) will turn their backs.”

In the next Verse, Allah ﷻ described a deplorable reality about the Jews and hypocrites:

﴿لَأَنْتُمْ أَشَدُّ رَهَبَةً فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ﴾

“Verily, you (believers in the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism) are more awful as a fear in their (Jews of Banu An-Nadeer) breasts than Allah.” (Qur’an 59: 13)

They feared the Muslims more than they feared Allah ﷻ, because they did not know the greatness and majesty of Allah ﷻ, which meant that they lacked the knowledge they needed to fear Allah ﷻ as He ﷻ truly should be feared. Further describing the inner reality of the Jews, Allah ﷻ described their cowardice, in terms of how:

﴿لَا يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ جَمِيعًا إِلَّا فِي قُرَى مُحَصَّنَةٍ أَوْ مِنْ وَرَاءِ جُدُرٍ﴾

“They fight not against you even together, except in fortified townships, or from behind walls.”

And finally, Allah ﷻ tells us something about the Jews that we would not expect:

﴿بِأْسِهِمْ بَيْنَهُمْ شَدِيدٌ تَحَسَّبَهُمْ جَمِيعًا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ شَتَّىٰ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ﴾

“Their enmity among themselves is very great. You would think they were united, but their hearts are divided, that is because they are a people who understand not.”

Outwardly, they are united against the Muslims, but inwardly, “their enmity among themselves is very great.”

Then Allah ﷻ made it clear that deception and betrayal led to the downfall not just of Banu An-Nadeer, but of Banu Qainuqa’ before them (as we have hitherto discussed):

﴿كَمَثَلِ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ قَرِيبًا ذَاقُوا وَبَالَ أَمْرِهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥﴾﴾

“They are like their immediate predecessors (the Jews of Bani Qainuqa’, who suffered), they tasted the evil result of their conduct, and (in the Hereafter, there is) for them a painful torment.” (Qur’an 59: 15)

Allah ﷻ ended these set of Verses with a comparison: He ﷻ compared the promise that the hypocrites gave to the Jews to the promise that *Shaitaan* (the Devil) gives to a human being:

﴿كَمَثَلِ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ قَرِيبًا ذَاقُوا وَبَالَ أَمْرِهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥﴾ كَمَثَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِذْ قَالَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ اكْفُرْ فَلَمَّا كَفَرَ قَالَ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِنْكَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ فَكَانَ عَقِبَتَهُمَا أَنَّهُمَا فِي النَّارِ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَذَلِكَ جَزَاؤُ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٧﴾﴾

“They are like their immediate predecessors (the Jews of Banu Qainuqa’, who suffered), they tasted the evil result of their conduct, and (in the Hereafter, there is) for them a painful torment. (Their allies deceived them) like Shaitaan (Satan), when he says to man: “Disbelieve in Allah.” But when (man) disbelieves in Allah, Shaitaan (Satan) says: ‘I am free of you, I fear Allah, the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists)!’ So the end of both will be that they will be in the Fire, abiding therein. Such is the recompense of the Zaalimoon (i.e., polytheists, wrongdoers, disbelievers in Allah and in His Oneness, etc.).” (Qur’an 59: 15-17)

Just as the Jews were deceived by the promise of the hypocrites – for in the end the hypocrites did not fight alongside the Jews – some men are deceived by the *Shaitaan*, who promises them pleasure and happiness, but who then washes his hands of them in the Hereafter, saying:

﴿إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

“I am free of you, I fear Allah, the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists)!”

As for the hypocrites, they said to the Jews of Banu An-Nadeer, “And if you are attacked (in fight), we shall indeed help you.” But then when the siege began in earnest, the hypocrites effectively washed their hands of the Jews, providing them with no help whatsoever.

6) Reminding Believers about the Hereafter

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنْسَهُمْ أَنْفُسَهُمْ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ۝١٩ لَا يَسْتَوِي أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ وَأَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ ۝٢٠﴾

“And be not like those who forgot Allah (i.e., became disobedient to Allah) and He caused them to forget their ownelves, (let them to forget to do righteous deeds). Those are the Faasiqoon

(rebellious, disobedient to Allah). Not equal are the dwellers of the Fire and the dwellers of the Paradise. It is the dwellers of Paradise that will be successful.” (Qur’an 59: 19-20)

Chapter *Al-Hashr* is essentially a discussion of the events that took place prior to, during, and after the siege of Banu An-Nadeer, which is why Ibn ‘Abbaas ؓ called it the “Chapter of Banu An-Nadeer.” It is at once interesting and important to appreciate how the chapter describes the siege, sheds light on the attitudes of the various parties involved in the siege – and exhorts Muslims to reflect on greater matters, such as Islamic Monotheism and the Hereafter.

In this manner, the Prophet’s Companions ؓ were being trained to link important events in their lives with their greater purpose in life: to worship Allah ﷻ alone, without associating any partners with Him. With the defeat of Banu An-Nadeer, Muslims achieved a great victory, one that was accompanied immediately by economic growth and a new source of revenue for the Muslim nation – the war booty that was won from Banu An-Nadeer. After their victory, Muslims were called upon to keep score of their deeds and spiritual development, and to ask themselves the question, “Have we performed deeds that will benefit us in the Hereafter? Allah ﷻ was reminding them that they had to focus not on their worldly gains, but on the profits they earned for the Hereafter.

7) The Greatness of the Noble Qur’an

Also in Chapter *Al-Hashr* – or Chapter *Banu An-Nadeer*– Allah ﷻ said:

﴿لَوْ أَنْزَلْنَا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَىٰ جَبَلٍ لَّرَأَيْتَهُ خَاشِعًا مُّتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ
وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَلُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾﴾

“Had We sent down this Qur’an on a mountain, you would surely have seen it humbling itself and rending asunder by the fear of Allah. Such are the parables which We put forward to mankind that they may reflect.” (Qur’an 59: 21)

This Verse means: Had We given the mountain a mind, as We have bestowed minds upon you, O mankind, and had We then revealed the Qur'an to it, it would have, fearing Allah, humbled itself and cut itself asunder. This example illustrates the lofty status of the Qur'an and reminds us of the effect that its admonitions should have upon us. In this Verse, man is reproached for the hardness of his heart and for how little he is affected when the Qur'an is being recited to him. Allah ﷻ ends the Verse by informing mankind that He ﷻ puts forward parables such as the one just mentioned, in order to make clear what is permissible and what is forbidden, and in order to make men reflect and contemplate His Verses.

Up until now, we have seen how Chapter *Al-Hashr* is about the Battle of Banu An-Nadeer, but also how it is in no way limited to a discussion of the battle's proceedings. The ending of the chapter is an example of the same point, for in the final Verses of Chapter *Al-Hashr*, Allah ﷻ mentions some of His Beautiful Names and lofty attributes. He ﷻ said:

﴿هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ ۝٢٢ هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ۝٢٣ هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَلِيقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝٢٤﴾

“He is Allah, than Whom there is La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He) the All-Knower of the unseen and the seen (open). He is the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. He is Allah than Whom there is La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He) the King, the Holy, the One Free from all defects, the Giver of security, the Watcher over His creatures, the All-Mighty, the Compeller, the Supreme. Glory be to Allah! (High is He) above all that they associate as partners with Him. He is Allah, the Creator, the Inventor of all things, the Bestower of forms. To Him belong the Best Names.

All that is in the heavens and the earth glorify Him. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.” (Qur’an 59: 22-24)

These Verses instill Muslims with the understanding that they can learn more about their Lord by studying and understanding His Beautiful Names and lofty attributes. The Companions ﷺ understood this point, realizing that the more they knew and understood Allah’s Names and attributes, the more their faith increased. And then the Companions ﷺ increased not just in knowledge, but also in the behavior and the deeds that are the fruits of knowledge.

8) The Prohibition of Alcohol

In Rabee’ul Awwal of the year 4 H, during the nights of the Banu An-Nadeer siege, alcohol became officially prohibited in Islam. Allah ﷻ revealed the Verse:

﴿ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ ﴾ (91)

“So, will you not then abstain?.” (Qur’an 5: 91)

And the believers responded by saying with a firm resolve, “We have indeed abstained, O our Lord!”^[1]

Alcohol was forbidden not at once but in stages. Prior to the revelation of the above-mentioned Verse, Allah ﷻ informed Muslims that drinking alcohol was at once a great sin and a benefit for men. Instead of explicitly forbidding alcohol, Allah ﷻ simply informed Muslims that the sin of drinking alcohol is greater than the benefit of doing so. He ﷻ said:

﴿ يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنْفَعَةٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَإِثْمُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَفْعِهِمَا وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلِ الْغَفْوُ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴾ (24)

“They ask you (O Muhammad ﷺ) concerning alcoholic drink and gambling. Say: “In them is a great sin, and (some) benefit for men, but the sin of them is greater than their benefit.” And

^[1] Refer to *Al-Khasaa'is Al-'Aamah Lil-Islam* by Al-Qardaawee (pg. 181).

they ask you what they ought to spend. Say: "That which is beyond your needs." Thus Allah makes clear to you His Laws in order that you may give thought." (Qur'an 2: 219)

Commenting on this Verse, Sayyid Qutub (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

This Verse that we have with us was the first step in forbidding (alcohol). We learn from this that certain things and deeds might not be pure evil and that, at times, good mixes with evil and evil mixes with good on this earth. Nonetheless, permissibility or prohibition depends on whether the good of a thing or deed is greater than its evil. So since the sin of alcohol and gambling is greater than their benefit, we know the reason behind their prohibition, even though, in the above-mentioned Verse, their prohibition is not clearly spelled out for us.

From this we learn an important lesson about how Muslims are trained through Verses of the Noble Qur'an; in fact, we can discern a similar methodology of training in many examples of Islamic legislations. When a command or prohibition relates to an article of belief, Islam makes clear its ruling from the very beginning. But when a command or prohibition relates to an act of worship or to a custom or to a complicated societal situation, Islam proceeds slowly, making matters easy for people by legislating laws in stages (instead of at once).^[1]

Sayyid Qutub rightly points out that, if an issue relates to beliefs and to Islamic Monotheism, Allah ﷻ immediately makes it clear what we should believe; no compromise is allowed, which is why, in the early stages of the Prophet's *Dawah*, the Prophet ﷺ never compromised his beliefs, even though doing so would have resulted in an end to his persecution and the persecution of his followers. Alcohol, on the other hand, was dealt with in a different manner. People were accustomed to drinking alcohol; for some of them it was a habit, and for others, an addiction. Habits and addictions require treatment.

^[1] Refer to *Fee Dhilaal Al-Qur'an* (1/229).

That treatment began when Allah ﷻ appealed to the Muslims' sense of sound logic: If the sin of drinking alcohol is greater than its benefit, should they not then abstain from it? Then the next step was taken with the revelation of this Verse from Chapter An-Nisaa:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ حَتَّىٰ تَغْتَسِلُوا وَإِن كُنْتُمْ مَّرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِّنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَمَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا غَفُورًا ﴿٤٣﴾

“O you who believe! Approach not As-Salaat (the prayers) when you are in a drunken state until you know (the meaning) of what you utter, nor when you are in a state of Janaaba (i.e. in a state of sexual impurity and have not yet taken a bath), except when travelling on the road (without enough water, or just passing through a mosque), until you wash your whole body (Ghusl). And if you are ill, or on a journey, or one of you comes after answering the call of nature, or you have been in contact with women (by sexual relations) and you find no water, perform Tayammum with clean earth and rub therewith your faces and hands (Tayammum). Truly, Allah is Ever Oft-Pardoning, Oft-Forgiving.” (Qur’an 4: 43)

Like other their brothers in faith, Muslims who drank alcohol performed the five obligatory prayers in the Masjid; so, without a doubt, prayer was more important to them than drinking alcohol. In the aforementioned Verse, Allah ﷻ informed Muslims that they should not approach prayer when they are in a drunken state. This made drinking alcohol virtually unfeasible, since the five prayers are spread throughout the day, leaving practically no time between them for people to get drunk and then sober up for the next prayer. In essence, the Companions ﷺ were being given a choice between prayer and drinking alcohol, and the

Companions ﷺ were at an advanced enough stage of their spiritual development to prefer prayer over alcohol. If we suppose that some of them continued to drink, they were forced to do so at odd times, which had the effect of breaking down their addiction. When the Companions ﷺ got out of the habit of drinking alcohol at certain customary times of the day, they were ready for an all-out prohibition of alcohol, a stage of legislation that was signaled by the revelation of this Verse:

﴿ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ ﴾ (٩١) ﴿

“Shaitaan (Satan) wants only to excite enmity and hatred between you with intoxicants (alcoholic drinks) and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah and from As-Salaat (the prayer). So, will you not then abstain?.” (Qur’an 5: 91)

9) Deceivers Always lose out in the End

The Jews of Banu An-Nadeer stooped to a new low, even for them, when they attempted to take the life of the Prophet ﷺ. Through their treachery, they had hoped to gain strength and authority in Al-Madeenah, but Allah ﷻ saved the Prophet ﷺ from their evil plotting and made them pay dearly for their actions. In utter humiliation, they were forced to leave their homes and permanently leave Al-Madeenah; and what was more shameful for them, they suffered defeat not through battle, but from the terror that was cast into their hearts. Allah ﷻ said about them:

﴿ هُوَ الَّذِي أَخْرَجَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ لِأَوَّلِ الْحَشْرِ مَا ظَنَنْتُمْ أَنْ يَخْرُجُوا وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ مَانِعَتُهُمْ حُصُونُهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ فَأَلْنَهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَمْ يَحْتَسِبُوا وَقَذَفَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الرُّعْبَ يُخْرِبُونَ بُيُوتَهُمْ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَيْدِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَاعْتَبِرُوا يَا أُولِيَ الْأَبْصَارِ ﴾ (٢) ﴿

“He it is Who drove out the disbelievers among the people of the Scripture (i.e., the Jews of the tribe of Banu An-Nadeer) from

their homes at the first gathering. You did not think that they would get out. And they thought that their fortresses would defend them from Allah! But Allah's (Torment) reached them from a place whereof they expected it not, and He cast terror into their hearts, so that they destroyed their own dwellings with their own hands and the hands of the believers. Then take admonition, O you with eyes (to see)." (Qur'an 59: 2)

They suffered as a result of their treachery and evil plotting. Reminding others not to similarly be the cause of their own destruction – that is, not to be treacherous and then suffer the consequences – Allah ﷻ ordered mankind to “take admonition, O you with eyes (to see).” Here, Allah ﷻ orders us to take admonition, to learn from the downfall of Banu An-Nadeer. Three particular lessons come to mind when I contemplate this Verse as well as the downfall of Banu An-Nadeer:

- 1) Those who stand in the way of the truth and oppose it with all of their might, will, in the end, suffer defeat and humiliation. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَتْغْلِبُونَ وَتُحْشَرُونَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ وَيَسَّ الْمِهَادُ ﴿١٢﴾﴾

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ) to those who disbelieve: “You will be defeated and gathered together to Hell, and worst indeed is that place to rest.” (Qur'an 3: 12)

- 2) The struggle between truth and falsehood will continue until Allah ﷻ inherits the earth and that which is on it. During that period of time, falsehood will have its victories, as will the truth. But in the end, it is the people of the truth who will come out victorious.
- 3) Allah ﷻ orders us in the aforementioned Verse to “take admonition,” which means that we should contemplate what happened to the Jews of Banu An-Nadeer as a result of their betrayal and treachery, so that we avoid committing a similar mistake and suffering a similar punishment.

10) “There is no Compulsion in Religion”

Among the tribe of Banu An-Nadeer were some of the children of the *Ansaar*, who had converted to Judaism as a result of being raised among the tribesmen of Banu An-Nadeer. Later on, when Banu An-Nadeer was expelled from Al-Madeenah, the parents of those children wanted to prevent them from leaving. Consequently, Allah ﷻ revealed the following Verse:

﴿لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ
وَيُؤْمِرْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾
(٢٥٦)

“There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieves in Taghoot and believes in Allah, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.” (Qur’an 2: 256)

According to a narration that is related in *Sunan Abu Daawood*, ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbaas ؓ said, “A woman’s (i.e., some women’s) children would all die in their infancy (or childhood), and she would then make a vow that if one of her children remained alive, she would have him convert to Judaism (this was before the advent of Islam). Later on, when the people of Banu An-Nadeer were forced to leave (Al-Madeenah), they had among them certain children of the *Ansaar*. (The parents said,) ‘We will not allow our children to leave,’ and Allah ﷻ then revealed (this Verse):

﴿لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ﴾

“There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path.” (Qur’an 2: 256)^[1]

^[1] Abu Daawood (3/132); Hadeeth number: 2682.

4

The Battle Of Dhaat Ar-Riqaa'

Its History, Its Causes, And The Reason For Its Name

Because of different interpretations of historical accounts, historians and scholars of *Seerah* disagree about when this battle took place. Bukhaaree was of the opinion that it took place after the Battle of Khaibar,^[1] Ibn Ishaq, on the other hand, believed that it took place after the Battle of Banu An-Nadeer^[2]; according to another opinion, it took place after Khandaq in the year 4 H; and according to yet another opinion, one that was espoused by Al-Waaqidee^[3] and Ibn Sa'd^[4], the Battle of Dhaat Ar-Riqaa' took place in the month of Muharram, in the year 5 H. Ibn Hajar championed Bukhaaree's view, arguing that, since Abu Moosa Al-Ash'aree ؓ participated in the Battle of Dhaat Ar-Riqaa' and since he arrived in Al-Madeenah from Abyssinia immediately after the conquest of Khaibar, the Battle of Dhaat Ar-Riqaa' must of taken place after Khaibar. Furthermore, Ibn Hajar argued, Abu Hurairah ؓ also participated in Dhaat Ar-Riqaa', and he ؓ embraced Islam around the time of the conquest of Khaibar, which also means that Dhaat Ar-Riqaa' took place after Khaibar. And yet another proof that Ibn Hajar mentioned is that, during the Battle of Dhaat Ar-Riqaa', the Messenger of Allah ﷺ

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree* (4125: 4137).

^[2] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hishaam (3/225).

^[3] Refer to *Al-Maghaazee* by Al-Waaqidee (1/395).

^[4] Refer to *At-Tabaqaat* by Ibn Sa'd (2/61).

performed what is known as the prayer of fear (prayer that is performed in a specific manner when one fears an enemy attack); and the prayer of fear was legislated after Khandaq, at 'Asfaan, during the days of Al-Hudaibiyyah – and Al-Hudaibiyyah took place in the year 6 H.

Among latter day scholars, Dr. Al-Bootee stated with certainty that Dhaat Ar-Riqaa' took place before Khandaq. His proofs: a *Hadeeth* that is related in *As-Saheeh* (either *Bukhaaree* or *Muslim*); in it, it is mentioned that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ spoke directly to Jaabir's wife around the time of the Battle of Al-Khandaq; yet according to another *Hadeeth*, which is related in both *Saheeh Bukhaaree* and *Saheeh Muslim*, the Prophet ﷺ asked Jaabir ؓ during the expedition of Dhaat Ar-Riqaa' whether he had gotten married, and Jaabir ؓ answered, "Yes." Since the Prophet ﷺ knew Jaabir's wife around the time of Khandaq but not during the Battle of Dhaat Ar-Riqaa', and since both of these facts are established in authentic narrations, it is only logical to conclude that Dhaat Ar-Riqaa' took place before Khandaq. Having established this sound logical connection, Dr. Al-Bootee went on to refute Ibn Hajr's proofs. For example, he said that Abu Moosa's narration makes mention of another battle that is also called Dhaat Ar-Riqaa', for Abu Moosa ؓ said, "We went out with the Prophet ﷺ on an expedition; we were a total of six people, and we had among us a single camel that we took turns riding upon" As for the Battle of Dhaat Ar-Riqaa' that we are discussing here, it is certain that more than six Companions ؓ took part in it.

In short, as many have argued, Dr. Al-Bootee's case is strongest since one of the narrations he relies upon is related in either *Saheeh Bukhaaree* or *Saheeh Muslim*, while the other is related in both *Saheeh Bukhaaree* and *Saheeh Muslim*. Also, Dr. Al-Bootee soundly refuted Ibn Hajr's main proof – Abu Moosa's narration – by explaining that more than one expedition was called Dhaat Ar-Riqaa'. Al-Bootee mentioned that the Battle of Dhaat Ar-Riqaa' – the one that we are discussing here – took place in the year 4 H, approximately one and a half month after the Banu An-Nadeer

tribe was expelled from Al-Madeenah. Most scholars of *Seerah* are of the same opinion, as am I.

As for the cause of the battle, the tribes of Najd betrayed the Muslims on more than one occasion, once killing seventy of them who went to Najd for the purpose of inviting its people to Islam (a tragedy that we have hitherto discussed). In response to the betrayal of certain tribes in Najd, the Prophet ﷺ went out with his army with the intention of attacking two particular tribes: Banu Muhaarib and Banu Tha'labah.^[1]

Dr. Muhammad Abu Faaris mentioned another reason for the battle. A man went to Al-Madeenah and told the Muslims that the people of Banu Muhaarib and Banu Tha'labah from Ghatfaan were mobilizing their forces in order to attack the Prophet ﷺ.

If the reader of this work has paid even the slightest attention to prior events, he will have no problem in deducing what the Prophet ﷺ did in response to that information: He ﷺ went to attack them in their land, before they could do the same in Al-Madeenah. Taking with him four-hundred fighters – according to some reports, seven-hundred fighters – the Messenger of Allah ﷺ traveled to Banu Muhaarib and Banu Tha'labah territory.

When he ﷺ reached them, the people of Banu Muhaarib and Banu Tha'labah became terrified, so much so that they fled to nearby mountaintops, leaving their women, children, and wealth behind. At the time for prayer, the Muslims feared that enemy fighters might be nearby, ready to mount a surprise attack. Because of that possibility, the Prophet ﷺ led the Muslims in what is known as the prayer of fear, which differs from regular congregational prayer in that some Muslims pray behind the Imam, while others stand guard, facing the enemy; then the two groups of Muslims change roles, so that everyone gets to pray, while there is always a group that stands guard in case the enemy attacks.

The Muslims achieved the aims of their expedition: to instill terror into the men of Ghatfaan, break up their army, and deter them

^[1] Refer to *Fiqhus-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* (pgs. 194, 195).

from attacking Al-Madeenah. Having taught the men of Ghatfaan a stern lesson, the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ embarked on their return journey to Al-Madeenah.

The expedition was named Dhaat Ar-Riqaa', but the reason for this naming is not agreed upon by historians. Ar-Riqaa' literally means a patch or a piece of cloth that is used to tie or patch something up. It is said that the expedition was named Dhaat Ar-Riqaa' because, during it, the Muslims had to patch up their war banners. Some speculate that the battle was given its name based on a tree that was called Dhaat Ar-Riqaa'. Others say that the expedition was called Dhaat Ar-Riqaa' because the Muslim army arrived at a destination whose land was characterized by many white and black spots that had the appearance of patches. But the correct view in this matter is that the expedition was called Dhaat Ar-Riqaa' because, during it, the skin on the legs of Muslim soldiers became dry and ulcerated, and they were consequently forced to tie pieces of cloth around their feet and legs. Bukhaaree and Muslim related that Abu Moosa Al-Ash'aree ؓ said, "We went out with the Prophet ﷺ on an expedition, and we were six men. We had among us a single camel that we took turns riding upon. Our feet became dry and ulcerated, and I was no exception, for even my nails fell off. (To alleviate the pain,) We would tie pieces of cloth around our legs. And it was because we would tie pieces of cloth around our legs that the military expedition was named Dhaat Ar-Riqaa'."^[1]

The Prayer Of Fear, Guarding The Front Lines, And The Bravery Of The Prophet ﷺ

1) The Prayer of Fear

During the military expedition of Dhaat Ar-Riqaa', Allah ﷻ revealed to His Prophet ﷺ the legislation of the fear prayer. Allah ﷻ described in the Noble Qur'an how the fear prayer differs from normal congregational prayer:

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree* (4128) and *Saheeh Muslim* (1816).

﴿وَإِذَا كُنْتَ فِيهِمْ فَأَقَمْتَ لَهُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَلْتُمْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ مَعَكَ
 وَلْيَأْخُذُوا أَسْلِحَتَهُمْ فَإِذَا سَجَدُوا فَلْيَكُونُوا مِنْ وَرَائِكُمْ وَلْتَأْتِ طَائِفَةٌ
 أُخْرَى لَمْ يُصَلُّوا فَلْيُصَلُّوا مَعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا حِذْرَهُمْ وَأَسْلِحَتَهُمْ وَدَّ الَّذِينَ
 كَفَرُوا لَوْ تَغْفُلُونَ عَنْ أَسْلِحَتِكُمْ وَأَمْتِعَتِكُمْ فَيَمِيلُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَيْلَةً وَاحِدَةً
 وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ كَانَ بِكُمْ أَذًى مِنْ مَطَرٍ أَوْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَى أَنْ
 تَضَعُوا أَسْلِحَتَكُمْ وَخُذُوا حِذْرَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا ﴿١٠٢﴾﴾

“When you (O Messenger Muhammad ﷺ) are among them, and lead them in As-Salaat (the prayer), let one party of them stand up [in Salaat (prayer)] with you taking their arms with them; when they finish their prostrations, let them take their positions in the rear and let the other party come up which has not yet prayed, and let them pray with you taking all the precautions and bearing arms. Those who disbelieve wish, if you were negligent of your arms and your baggage, to attack you in a single rush, but there is no sin on you if you put away your arms because of the inconvenience of rain or because you are ill, but take every precaution for yourselves. Verily, Allah has prepared a humiliating torment for the disbelievers.” (Qur’an 4: 102)

When they performed the fear prayer, a group of Muslims would line themselves up in rows with the Prophet ﷺ; meanwhile, another group of Muslims stood guard, facing the enemy. After the first group finished praying one unit of prayer behind the Prophet ﷺ, they would finish the second and final unit by themselves, while the Prophet ﷺ remained in a standing position. Having completed their prayer, the first group would go and stand guard, while the second group lined themselves up and performed one unit of prayer behind the Prophet ﷺ. Since it was his second and last unit, the Prophet ﷺ would remain seated, while the men of second group completed their second unit of prayer on their own. Then, when they were all in the seated position, the Prophet ﷺ would make *Tasleem* (i.e., say ‘Assalaamu

'Alaikum Warahmatullah'), thus signaling the end of the prayer for them all.

One narration gives a different account of how the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ performed the fear prayer. According to that narration, the Prophet ﷺ led one group in two units of prayer, after which they would leave. A second group would then come and perform two units of prayer behind the Prophet ﷺ, so that in the end, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ performed four units, while his Companions ﷺ performed only two.^[1] Dr. Al-Bootee explained that different narrations indicate that the Prophet ﷺ led his Companions in the fear prayer on more than one expedition; and that he ﷺ performed it one way on a certain occasion, and the second way on another occasion.

It is related that the Muslims performed the fear prayer in the area of Nakhl, which was two days worth of travel away from Al-Madeenah. The legislation of the fear prayer points to the importance of prayer, for even in the heat of battle, when one fears for his very life, one is not excused from prayer. No matter what the circumstances, therefore, a Muslim must never miss the compulsory prayers.

2) Guarding the Front Lines, and the Bravery of the Prophet ﷺ

Two incidents of particular interest took place when the Muslims returned from Dhaat Ar-Riqaa'. The first began when, during their return journey, the Muslims captured a female polytheist; her husband then vowed not to return to his homeland until he spilled the blood of at least one of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ. That night, the Prophet ﷺ ordered two men to stand guard while the rest of the army rested; those two men were 'Abbaad ibn Bishr ﷺ and 'Ammmaar ibn Yaasir ﷺ.

'Abbaad ﷺ stood guard for a part of the night, while 'Ammmaar ﷺ slept; they were to take turns after half of the night passed.

^[1] Refer to *Saheeh Muslim* (483).

'Abbaad ؓ decided to use his time wisely by performing prayer; lying in ambush, the irate husband of the captured woman fired an arrow at 'Abbaad ؓ and hit his target. Without breaking from his prayer, 'Abbaad ؓ simply pulled out the arrow from his body and continued praying; not until three arrows struck him did he cut off his prayer. He ؓ woke up 'Ammar ؓ, who, upon seeing the condition of his companion, said, "How perfect Allah is! Why didn't you wake me up?" 'Abbaad ؓ responded, "I was reciting a chapter of the Qur'an (Baihaqee related that it was Chapter *Al-Kahf*) that I did not want to cut off until I completed it. When he continued to fire at me, I went into the bowing position and alerted you. And by Allah, had I not feared compromising this front line that the Prophet ﷺ ordered me to guard, I would have let myself die before I either cut off the Chapter or managed to complete it."^[1] This story illustrated at once to what degree the Prophet's Companions ؓ were attached to the Noble Qur'an – so much so that 'Abbaad ؓ forgot about the pain of being hit with an arrow – and how they fulfilled their duties in a responsible manner, for the only reason why 'Abbaad ؓ cut off his prayer was that he ؓ wanted to alert his Companion ؓ and thus prevent the enemy from reaching the rest of the Muslim army.

As for the other incident, it too occurred while the Muslims were returning from Dhaat Ar-Riqaa'. It was time for the customary noon-nap, and the Muslim had reached a valley that was filled with trees that had thorns growing on them. The members of the army spread out, with each one of them trying to find a well-shaded place to rest. For his part, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ rested under a tree after having first hung up his sword on it. Jaabir ibn 'Abdullah ؓ later recounted what happened next: "A short while passed by while we were sleeping, when suddenly the Messenger of Allah ﷺ called out to us. We all went to him and found that he ﷺ was not alone, for a Bedouin was sitting down beside him. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: Verily, this man took out my sword

^[1] *Sunan Abu Daawood and Musnad Ahmad*. Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah Fee Dao-Al-Masaadir Al-Asliyyah* (pg. 427).

while I was sleeping. When I woke up, it was in his hand, unsheathed. He said to me: 'Who will defend you from me?' I said to him: 'Allah.'" Jaabir رضي الله عنه went on to say, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not punish him. The name of the Bedouin was Ghaurath ibn Al-Haarith."^[1]

Ghaurath vowed that he would never again fight against the Prophet ﷺ or even be with a people who fought against him ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ then freed Ghaurath, who returned to his people and said to them, "I have come to you from the best of people."^[2]

Ghaurath's story attests to the bravery of the Prophet ﷺ, to his gentle approach in dealing with ignorant people, and to his unshakeable and strong faith. The Prophet ﷺ believed with certainty that, even though he ﷺ had to endure hardships and ill-treatment from others, no person could kill him and prevent him from conveying the message of his Lord. This was a guarantee from Allah ﷻ, Who said:

﴿يَأْتِيهَا الرُّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَغَتْ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

"O Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ)! Proclaim (the Message) which has been sent down to you from your Lord. And if you do not, then you have not conveyed His Message. Allah will protect you from mankind. Verily, Allah guides not the people who disbelieve." (Qur'an 5: 67)

Knowing this guarantee to be true, the Prophet ﷺ responded to Ghaurath's question by saying, "Allah (will defend me from you)." And sure enough, terror filled the heart of Ghaurath, who began to shake with fear as he dropped the sword. Greatly humbled by the experience, Ghaurath sat down before the Prophet ﷺ with his head lowered. Just a few minutes earlier, Ghaurath was hoping to achieve fame and honour among Arabia's polytheists as the man who killed the Prophet ﷺ, and

^[1] Saheeh Bukhaaree (4135, 4136) and Saheeh Muslim (843).

^[2] Refer to *Fathul-Baaree*, to the explanation of *Hadeeth* number: 4136.

now he was sitting down in a submissive manner before the Prophet ﷺ awaiting his judgment. To be sure, this was nothing short of a miracle that Allah ﷻ bestowed on His Prophet ﷺ. No man was going to be allowed to prevent the Prophet ﷺ from conveying the message of Islam; after all, he ﷺ was the seal of all Prophets and a Messenger to all of mankind until the Day of Resurrection, and it was crucial for him to live out his days and complete his mission on earth. May the peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him.

The Prophet's Dealings With Jaabir Ibn 'Abdullah ﷺ

The Prophet ﷺ loved his Companions ﷺ a great deal, always providing them with both the material and moral support they needed, especially during times of hardship. Knowing that Jaabir ibn 'Abdullah ﷺ was poor, the Prophet ﷺ wanted to console him and help him out. Jaabir's father was martyred on the Day of Uhud, and he left behind a number of children, whose upkeep became Jaabir's responsibility.

The opportunity to help Jaabir ﷺ presented itself after the Dhaat Ar-Riqaa' expedition, when the Muslim army was returning to Al-Madeenah. All of the riders of the army rode onwards, but Jaabir ﷺ lagged behind because his camel was weak and slow. The Prophet ﷺ rode back to Jaabir ﷺ to ask him what was wrong, and Jaabir ﷺ responded, "My camel is slowing me down." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Make it kneel," and after Jaabir ﷺ did as he was told, the Prophet ﷺ asked Jaabir ﷺ to hand him a stick. The Prophet ﷺ then struck the camel a number of times, after which he ﷺ said to Jaabir ﷺ, "Now ride it." Much to Jaabir's amazement, his camel began to move at a very fast speed, to the degree that it competed to ride past the Prophet's camel.

The Prophet ﷺ and Jaabir ﷺ then spoke to one another, and during the course of their discussion, the Prophet ﷺ asked, "Will you sell me this camel of yours, O Jaabir?" Jaabir ﷺ said, "O Messenger of Allah, no, rather I will give it to you as a gift," to which the Prophet ﷺ responded, "No, instead sell it to me."

Jaabir ؓ said, "Then offer me a price, O Messenger of Allah." The Prophet ﷺ said, "I will take it for one dirham." Jaabir ؓ said, "No, for then you will have the best of me in the sale, O Messenger of Allah ﷺ." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Then for two dirhams." And again Jaabir ؓ said, "No." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ continued to raise his offer, until his offer reached the value of an *Ooqiyyah*, or forty dirhams. Jaabir ؓ asked, "And are you pleased (with that amount for the camel), O Messenger of Allah?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Yes." Jaabir ؓ said, "Then it is yours," and the Prophet ﷺ concluded their verbal agreement by saying, "I have taken it," even though the camel remained in the possession of Jaabir ؓ for a short while longer.

The Prophet ﷺ then asked, "O Jaabir, have you gotten married yet?" Jaabir ؓ said, "Yes, O Messenger of Allah." The Prophet ﷺ asked, "To a woman who was previously married, or to a virgin?" Jaabir ؓ said, "Rather to a previously married woman." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Should you not have married a virgin, whom you could play with, and who could play with you." Jaabir ؓ then explained his situation, saying that his father had been martyred on the Day of Uhud, leaving behind seven daughters, and that he ؓ wanted to marry a mature woman who could raise them properly. Upon hearing Jaabir's explanation, the Prophet ﷺ, "You have done what is right, *In Sha Allah* (Allah Willing)."

The Prophet ﷺ then informed Jaabir ؓ that, once they reached a place called Siraar, which is situated approximately three miles outside of Al-Madeenah, they would hold a marriage banquet for him and slaughter a camel for the occasion. The Prophet ﷺ further told him that his wife ؓ would hear about their arrival and come, and that he ؓ should consummate his marriage with her. When that night arrived, Jaabir ؓ told his wife about what the Prophet ﷺ said, and she ؓ responded, "Then come closer, for I hear and obey." The following morning, Jaabir ؓ took the camel he had sold to the Prophet ﷺ, intending to give him full possession of it. Arriving at the door of the Prophet's house,

Jaabir ؓ made his camel kneel, and he ؓ then entered the *Masjid* and sat down. When the Prophet ﷺ later came out, he ﷺ saw the camel and asked, "What is this?" The people he asked responded, "O Messenger of Allah, this is a camel that Jaabir brought." The Prophet ﷺ asked, "And where is Jaabir?"

Jaabir ؓ was then summoned, and the Prophet ﷺ said to him, "O son of my brother, take your camel by its head, for it is yours." The Prophet ﷺ then called Bilaal ؓ and said to him, "Go with Jaabir, and give him an *Ooqiyyah* (i.e., forty dirhams)." Bilaal ؓ then did as he ؓ was instructed. From the very beginning, the Prophet ﷺ was looking not actually to buy Jaabir's camel, but to help Jaabir ؓ. In a completely spontaneous manner, the Prophet ﷺ cured Jaabir's camel by the permission of Allah ﷻ, organized a marriage feast for him, and gave him forty dirhams, in fact, slightly more than forty dirhams, without taking his camel in return.^[1]

This story sheds a great deal of light on the wonderful character of the Prophet ﷺ and on the concern he ؓ felt for the welfare of his Companions ؓ. From it one can learn the true meaning of Islamic brotherhood and the effects that brotherhood should have on one's actions, character, and dealings.

^[1] Refer to *Saheeh Muslim* (1466, 5080, 5245, 5246) as well as to *Seerah Ibn Hishaam*, to the chapter titled, "The Battle of Dhaat Ar-Riqaa'"; above, the narration is summarized, though the quoted parts are taken from Ibn Hishaam's narration of the story.

The Battles Of Badr Al-Mau'id And Daumatul-Jandal

The Battle Of Badr Al-Mau'id

After the conclusion of the Battle of Uhud, Abu Sufyaan made an appointment with the Muslims, saying that their respective armies should meet in a decisive battle in the month of Dhil-Qai'dah, in the year 4 H. The only problem was that the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ showed up for the appointment, but Abu Sufyaan and the Quraish did not.

In the month of Dhil-Qai'dah, the Prophet ﷺ marched towards Badr with an army that consisted of fifteen-hundred men, among whom there were ten horsemen. 'Alee ibn Abee Taalib ﷺ carried the banner of the Muslim army; and once the Muslims arrived at Badr, they made camp there for eight days, waiting throughout that period for Abu Sufyaan to arrive with his army.

Whether Abu Sufyaan intended all along not to fight the Muslims at Badr for a second time, or whether he truly backed out at the last moment, he did initially go through the movements, making all the necessary preparations for the planned expedition. He gathered men from the Quraish and their allies, managing to mobilize an army that consisted of two-thousand fighters and fifty horses. The army even actually marched out of Makkah, travelling until the water source of Majannah, which was about forty miles outside of Makkah.