

whatsoever Allah has sent down of the Book [all the holy Books, – this Qur’an and the Books of the old from the Taurat (Torah), or the Injeel (Gospel) or the Pages of Ibraaheem (Abraham)] and I am commanded to do justice among you, Allah is our Lord and your Lord. For us our deeds and for you your deeds. There is no dispute between us and you. Allah will assemble us (all), and to Him is the final return.” (Qur’an 42: 15)

Commenting on the second part of this last Verse, Abul-’Alaa Al-Maudoodee (may Allah have mercy on him) said, “It is as if the Prophet ﷺ is being commanded to say: I have been ordered to establish justice without being unjust to enemies. It is not for me to be biased towards one person, and prejudiced against another. My relationship with all people is the same: It is the relationship of establishing justice. I am the helper and supporter of all who are in the right, and I am the opponent of all who are in the wrong. In my religion, no person, no matter who he is, has special, privileged rights. My relatives do not have a certain set of rights, while strangers have another set of rights; nor do the wealthy and the men of status enjoy more rights than the poor and the men of low status; with me, they are all equal. What is right is right for everyone, and what is a sin is a sin for everyone. What is forbidden is forbidden for everyone, and what is permissible is permissible for everyone. What is obligatory is obligatory for everyone. Not even I am exempt from the authority of Divine Law (the *Shariah*).”

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ
الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ
أَن تَعْدِلُوا وَإِن تَلَوُّا أَوْ تُعْرَضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿١٣٥﴾﴾

“O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even though it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, be he rich or poor, Allah is a Better Protector to both (than you). So follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest you may

avoid justice, and if you distort your witness or refuse to give it, verily, Allah is Ever Well-Acquainted with what you do.”
(Qur’an 4: 135)

If the document the Prophet ﷺ recorded in writing was the constitution of the newly-formed Muslim country, with both general rules and rules that applied specifically to that era – such as duties that were binding upon the various parties involved in the making of the constitution – the Noble Qur’an is in effect the constitution of Muslim societies at all times. In the above-mentioned Verse, Allah ﷻ orders Muslim leaders – and all Muslims for that matter – to be paragons of justice; to be just not only when an issue involves other people but also when one’s own self and one’s family is implicated in a matter. Allah ﷻ did not merely command Muslims to be just in their hearts; He ﷻ further commanded them to take an active approach to applying justice, commanding them to “Stand out firmly for justice. A Muslim must not take sides with the rich against the poor, nor must he, feeling mercy, take sides with the poor against the rich; to the contrary, he must be completely unbiased in any given situation, and his sole concern must be to find out what is just and to then apply it.

In the above-mentioned Verse, Allah ﷻ informs us that we must be just even when our own self-interests or the interests of our family members are at stake. We must not allow our love of our own selves and of our families sway our views and actions when it comes to applying justice. In the following Verse, Allah ﷻ completes the meaning of applying justice: in it, He ﷻ commands Muslims not to allow hatred of an enemy to prevent them from acting justly towards that enemy:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَٰی ءَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا ءَعْدِلُوا هُوَ ءَأَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ءِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨﴾﴾

“O you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah and be just

witnesses and let not the enmity and hatred of others make you avoid justice. Be just: that is nearer to piety, and fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do.” (Qur’an 5: 8)

As for the principle of equality, many articles of the constitution directly deal with it. The constitution explicitly stated that the safety granted by the weakest Muslim is binding upon all Muslims, that Muslims are all protectors of one another, that they must help one another in times of both ease and difficulty – and that they are all equal.

Equality is a general principle that Islam established and that helped spread the message of Islam. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَىٰكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾﴾

“O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honourable of you with Allah is that (believer) who has At-Taqwa [i.e., one of the Muttaqoon (the pious)]. Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.” (Qur’an 49: 13)

And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “O people, Lo! Indeed your Lord is One; your father is one, and Lo! The Arab is not superior to the foreigner, nor is the foreigner superior to the Arab; the red (man) is not superior to the black (man), nor is the black (man) superior to the red (man) – except through piety (i.e., piety is the only means by which one becomes superior to another person). Have I conveyed?”^[1]

Many peoples in the past became attracted to and entered into the fold of Islam because they appreciated its teaching of equality, a teaching that they saw not only in theory but in practice as well. Equality in Islam does not mean that all people are equal in all things, a foolish notion that runs contrary to the nature of how Allah ﷻ created us (as is attested to by the failure of Communist

^[1] Musnad Al-Imam Ahmad (5/411).

countries). People differ in their talent, skill, and level of wealth. Allah ﷻ blesses one person with a certain amount of sustenance, and another person with a lesser amount. Equality does not apply to such matters; rather, it applies to when people deal with one another – particularly in an Islamic court. A Muslim judge hands down judgment in his court based on the principles of justice and equality, ignoring the cultural background, sex, colour, level of wealth, and status of both litigants. All citizens of a Muslim country are equal in the eye of Islamic Law.

The best example of a Muslim country, the one established by the Prophet ﷺ during his lifetime, did much to establish equality among all people. First, Muslims were taught that applying the teaching of equality is an act of worship, for which one is rewarded by Allah ﷻ. Second, all considerations of class, of race, and of prejudice were eradicated from the minds of Muslims. If a man looked down upon his brother because of his colour or race or cultural background, he was immediately castigated and reminded of the fact that he was showing one of the characteristics of ignorance. And third, all Muslims were given an opportunity to achieve worldly prosperity and religious honour; positions and honour were bestowed upon people based on their skills, qualifications, work ethic, and talents; hence Bilaal ؓ, a freed slave, was chosen for one of the most honourable of tasks: performing the call to prayer.

The constitution contained all of the articles that should be found in a comprehensively written constitution: each person knew his duties and his relation to his country. It was not, however, comprehensive for all times; for after it was written, the Qur'an continued to be revealed for ten more years. Many Verses were revealed that explained how people should live, what principles Muslims should apply in terms of governing themselves, what the principles of Islamic legislation are, what laws should Muslims apply within their country and what their dealings should be with foreign countries, and so on; and all of that was further elaborated upon and explained in the Prophet's *Sunnah*.

The constitution provides a wonderful and comprehensive framework for how a constitution should be written; it explains important principles in terms of what relations Muslims should keep with foreign countries and with non-Muslims who live alongside them. In this regard, one should appreciate the justness and fairness of the constitution's articles.

The first-ever Islamic document, the constitution is a particularly wonderful document because those that lived by its terms underwent an amazing transformation, having gone from being slaves of tribal customs and traditions to becoming slaves of Allah ﷻ. The constitution is also of particular interest because it attests to the fact that Al-Madeenah was a highly-civilized country; many of the rights that were included within the articles of the constitution have only recently been embraced – in speech if not in deed – by present-day countries. It must be remembered, however, that all participating parties in a constitution or pact must fulfill its terms. In later chapters, we will see – *In Sha Allah* – whether the Jewish inhabitants of Al-Madeenah fulfilled the constitution's terms or not.

The Status And Position Of The Jewish Dwellers Of Al-Madeenah

No one had more reason to believe in the Prophet ﷺ than the Jews: They had a clear description of him in their books, and they even knew approximately when and exactly where the awaited Prophet ﷺ would appear. In fact, one of the main reasons why they settled in Al-Madeenah was that they wanted to be there when the awaited Prophet ﷺ would appear. Meanwhile, the Quraish and the native inhabitants of Al-Madeenah had no scripture, no revealed book in which they were foretold about the advent of a Prophet. Yet they believed, and despite all of the proofs that the Jews had with them, they disbelieved.

Safiyyah bint Huyaih ibn Akhtab ؓ related the following account, which exemplifies the stance that almost all Jews took in relation to the Prophet ﷺ:

“Of all his children, my father loved me most; and likewise did my uncle, Abu Yaasir, love me. Whenever I and another one of their children met them, they would always take me instead of that other child. Then when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ arrived in Al-Madeenah, he ﷺ stopped at Quba, among the (clan of) Banu ‘Amr ibn ‘Auf. My father, Huyaih ibn Akhtab, and my uncle, Abu Yaasir ibn Akhtab, went to him, having first performed ablution. They did not return until sunset; they came back looking tired, lethargic, and downcast; and they were walking very slowly. I went to them cheerfully as I always did, and by Allah, neither one of them even turned to look at me – such was their melancholy. I heard my uncle, Abu Yaasir, say to my father, Huyaih ibn Akhtab, “Is it really him (i.e., is he really the awaited Prophet)?” He said, “Yes, by Allah.” My uncle said, “Do you recognize him? Have you truly established his identity?” He said, “Yes.” My uncle said, “So what are your inner feelings towards him?” He said, “Enmity, by Allah, as long as I live!”^[1]

From the day the Prophet ﷺ arrived in Al-Madeenah, the Jews waged war against him, not necessarily a military war, but a war nonetheless. Like the Quraish before them, they tried to discredit the Prophet ﷺ in order to deter people from following him. In Islam, Jews saw a threat to their false beliefs. Islam came to invite people to believe in the Oneness of Allah ﷻ and to acknowledge that no race is superior to another race, but that rather all people are slaves of Allah ﷻ. Meanwhile, Jews believed that ‘Uzair is the son of Allah ﷻ and that they, being superior to all other races and peoples, are the chosen ones of Allah ﷻ. And as such, they did not adhere to the articles of the constitution in the signing of which they were voluntary participants. Eventually, the Jewish inhabitants of Al-Madeenah carried out heinous acts of deception and betrayal that precipitated their expulsion from Al-Madeenah; we will come to those acts later on in this work. But even prior to serious crimes that led to their expulsion, they acted contrary to the spirit of the constitution. True, they had their

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Ibn Hishaam (1/518, 519).

freedom of religion, but at the same time they were supposed to be loyal to the Prophet ﷺ and to the Muslims of Al-Madeenah. Here are some of things they did to fight against Islam and Muslims:

1) Dividing the Ranks of Muslims

Based on the constitution, the Jewish inhabitants of Al-Madeenah were supposed to be a nation alongside the Muslims; their actions, however, indicated the contrary. Not being able to militarily attack their Muslim neighbours in Al-Madeenah, yet harbouring a great deal of rancor against them, the Jews of Al-Madeenah tried to sow dissension among Al-Madeenah's inhabitants.

Once they embraced Islam, the Prophet's Companions ﷺ became united, though they had previously been divided; and they loved one another, though they had formerly hated one another (this is particularly true of the Aus and Khazraj tribes, both of which tribes, after the advent of Islam, together became known as the *Ansaar*). In their mutual love and compassion, they were like a single body: If a part of it hurts, the rest of it is afflicted with sleeplessness and fever. The Jews of Al-Madeenah realized this and wanted to rekindle in them feelings of the past – feelings of hatred and enmity.

An old Jewish tribesman concocted a plan to divide the members of the *Ansaar*, who were easier targets than the *Muhaajiroon*, since the members of the latter group were from the same tribe – the Quraish – whereas the former group consisted of people from two tribes – the Aus and the Khazraj – who happened to have had a bitter history of conflict and war. An old Jewish tribesman, Shais ibn Qais, wanted to rouse anew in the *Ansaar* the feelings of hatred they once had for one another.

Muhammad ibn Ishaq (may Allah have mercy on him) related that Shais ibn Qais, an old man who was deeply immersed in his disbelief and who felt a great deal of rancor and jealousy towards the Muslims, passed by a number of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ, some of whom were from the *Ansaar* and some of whom were

from the Khazraj. They were seated in a gathering, talking amiably to one another. Shais was furious when he saw how united they were and at how much Islam had brought them together. Racing through Shais's mind were thoughts about the days of ignorance, when the Aus were bitter enemies of the Khazraj. Looking upon them with those thoughts in his mind, Shais said, "A group from Banu Qailah (Qailah, the name of a woman, was an ancestor to both the Aus and the Khazraj) have gathered together in these lands. No, by Allah, we can never enjoy a stable living alongside them if they are united." In Shais's company was a young Jewish man; Shais ordered him to carry out his plan, saying, "Go to them and sit alongside them. Then bring up the Day of Bu'aath (a battle that took place between the Aus and the Khazraj) and the events that preceded it; then recite some of the poetry that they had composed (in which they used to berate and satirize one another)."

On the Day of Bu'aath, the Aus had fought against the Khazraj, and the Aus came out as victors. At the time, the leader of the Aus was a man named Hudair ibn Simaak Al-Ashhalee, father of Usaid ibn Hudair; and the leader of the Khazraj was 'Amr ibn An-Nomaan Al-Bayaadee; the two of them were venerable chieftains who were both killed that day.

The young Jewish man did as he was told; he went to the members of the *Ansaar* who were seated together, and he spoke about the Day of Bi'aath. The plan worked, at least initially: A loud argument broke out; two men, perched on their knees, jumped on each other. The first man was Aus ibn Qaidhee ؓ, from the Haarithah ibn Al-Haarith clan, one of the clans of the Aus tribe. The other man was Jabbaar ibn Sakhar ؓ, from the Banu Salamah clan, one of the clans of the Khazraj. Those that were gathered became furious, to the degree that a few of them threatened to renew the war that had once raged between the Aus and the Khazraj. They agreed to meet one another with their swords at Al-Harrah, a rocky land that bordered Al-Madeenah.

When news of what happened and what was about to happen

reached the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he went to them, accompanied by members of the *Muhaajiroon*. Once he reached them, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "O group of Muslims, Allah! Allah! Is it the call of ignorance (the call of tribal loyalty and not Islamic brotherhood) (by which you summon one another), while I am in your midst, and after Allah has guided you to and honoured you with Islam! And after He ﷻ has severed from you the matter of ignorance, has saved you with it (i.e., with Islam) from disbelief, and has joined with it (i.e., Islam) your hearts!"

The people then knew that they had been led on and deceived by the *Shaitaan* (the Devil) and that it was nothing other than a plot of the enemy to divide them. The men from both tribes – the Aus and the Khazraj – then began to hug one another, after which they returned to Al-Madeenah with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Allah ﷻ extinguished the flames of enmity that Shais ibn Qais had ignited in their hearts. Regarding Shais ibn Qais and his plot to divide the ranks of Muslims, Allah ﷻ revealed the following Verse:

﴿قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ عَلَىٰ مَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٨﴾
 قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ مَن ءَامَنَ تَبْغُوتَهَا عِوَجًا وَأَنتُمْ
 شُهَدَاءُ ۗ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَفِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾﴾

"Say: "O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Why do you reject the Ayaat of Allah (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) while Allah is Witness to what you do?"
 Say: "O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Why do you stop those who have believed, from the Path of Allah, seeking to make it seem crooked, while you (yourselves) are witnesses [to Muhammad ﷺ as a Messenger of Allah and Islam (Allah's religion, i.e., to worship none but Him Alone)]? And Allah is not unaware of what you do." (Qur'an 3: 98, 99)

And regarding Aus ibn Qaidhee ؓ and Jabbaar ibn Sakhar ؓ – the two men who began to fight one another – and their fellow tribesmen who were with them and who had fallen prey to Shais's

plot,^[1] Allah ﷻ revealed the following Verses:

﴿يَتَّيَّبَهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ۗ إِن تَطِيعُوا فَرِيقًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ يَرُدُّوكُم بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ كَافِرِينَ ۝۱۰۰﴾ وَكَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ وَأَنْتُمْ تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ ءَايَاتُ اللَّهِ وَفِيكُمْ رَسُولُهُ ۗ وَمَنْ يَعْتَصِم بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ هُدِيَ إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ۝۱۰۱﴾ يَتَّيَّبَهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ۗ أَتَقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ ۗ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ۝۱۰۲﴾ وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۗ وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُم بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِّنْهَا ۚ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ءَايَاتِهِ ۗ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ۝۱۰۳﴾ وَلَتَكُن مِّنكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۗ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ۝۱۰۴﴾ وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا وَاخْتَلَفُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝۱۰۵﴾

“O you who believe! If you obey a group of those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians), they would (indeed) render you disbelievers after you have believed! And how would you disbelieve, while unto you are recited the Verses of Allah, and among you is His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ)? And whoever holds firmly to Allah, (i.e., follows Islam – Allah’s religion, and obeys all that Allah has ordered, practically), then he is indeed guided to a Right Path. O you who believe! Fear Allah (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. [Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always], and die not except in a state of Islam (as Muslims) with complete submission to Allah. And hold fast, all of you together to the Rope of Allah (i.e., this Qur’an), and be not divided among yourselves, and remember Allah’s Favour on you, for you were enemies one to another but He joined your hearts together, so that, by His Grace, you became brethren (in Islamic Faith), and you were on the brink of a pit of Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus Allah makes His Ayaat (proofs,

[1] Refer to Seerah Ibn Hishaam (2/211-214).

evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.,) clear to you, that you may be guided. Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good (Islam), enjoining Al-Ma'roof (i.e., Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do) and forbidding Al-Munkar (polytheism and disbelief and all that Islam has forbidden). And it is they who are the successful. And be not as those who divided and differed among themselves after the clear proofs had come to them. It is they for whom there is an awful torment." (Qur'an 3: 100-105)

One should especially appreciate from this story the Prophet's leadership skills and the concern and compassion he ﷺ had for his followers. For no sooner did he hear of a trial that afflicted his followers from the *Ansaar*, than he ﷺ hurried to them and reminded them of Allah ﷻ, clarifying to them that what they were about to do was from the actions of ignorance. Rather than remind them of their previous enmity – as Shais had done – the Prophet ﷺ reminded them of how Allah ﷻ had removed that enmity through blessing them with the religion of Islam. The Prophet's words had a strong impact on their souls, and they underwent an immediate transformation, having understood that it was the *Shaitaan's* whispers and the plotting of their enemies that had brought them to the brink of fighting. They began to cry, feeling regret for what had happened. And what was truly amazing is that there was no awkwardness in the situation, no compulsion to show love. Very often when a fight almost breaks out, and a third party intervenes, those that were about to fight withdraw, and they might even shake hands and depart. But that was not enough for the Prophet's Companions ﷺ. Instead, they hugged one another, thus expressing the love they had for one another and the regret they felt for having almost fought against each other. May Allah be pleased with them and with all of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ.

2) Speaking evil about Allah ﷻ

A number of scholars and historians have mentioned the

following narrative. One day, Abu Bakr ﷺ entered a sort of Jewish temple; it was a kind of temple that was known as Bait Al-Midraas, a house in which Jews would recite the Torah. Many people were gathered inside, and they all had their attention focused on one man, Finhaas, who was one of their scholars. Beside Finhaas was another scholar, whose name was Ashya'. Abu Bakr ﷺ said to Finhaas, "Woe upon you! Fear Allah, and embrace Islam. For by Allah, you indeed know that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. He has come to you with the truth which you find written with you in the Torah and the *Injeel*."

"By Allah, O Abu Bakr," Finhaas responded, "we are not needy to Allah, and indeed, He is needy to us! And we do not supplicate to Him as He supplicates to us. We do not need Him, and He cannot do without us. Had He not needed us, He would not have asked to borrow our wealth, as your companion claims. He has forbidden you from usury, and He has given it to us (i.e., has made it lawful for us). Had He not needed us, He would not have given us usury (i.e., He would not have made it lawful)."

Becoming extremely angry, Abu Bakr ﷺ struck Finhaas on the face with a hard blow and then said, "By the One Who has my soul in His Hand, had it not been for the covenant that exists between us and you, I would have struck your head, O enemy of Allah."

Finhaas went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said, "O Muhammad, look at what your companion did!"

"What made you act as you did?" the Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked Abu Bakr ﷺ.

"O Messenger of Allah," Abu Bakr ﷺ responded, "indeed the enemy of Allah has said something awful: He indeed claims that Allah is poor and that they are rich. When he said that, I became angry for Allah because of what he said, and I struck his face." Feigning innocence, Finhaas denied that he had ever spoken those words, saying, "I never said that."

Regarding what Finhaas truly did say, Allah ﷻ revealed the

following Verse, refuting Finhaas, and confirming the truthfulness of Abu Bakr ﷺ:

﴿لَقَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَقِيرٌ وَنَحْنُ أَغْنِيَاءُ سَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَالُوا وَقَتْلَهُمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَنَقُولُ ذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ ﴿١٨١﴾﴾

“Indeed, Allah has heard the statement of those (Jews) who say: “Truly, Allah is poor and we are rich!” We shall record what they have said and their killing of the Prophets unjustly, and We shall say: “Taste you the torment of the burning (Fire).” (Qur’an 3: 181)

And in regard to Abu Bakr ﷺ and his angry reaction to Finhaas’s foul speech, Allah ﷻ revealed this Verse:

﴿لَتُبْلَوُنَّ فِي أَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَلَتَسْمَعُنَّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا أَذًى كَثِيرًا وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ﴿١٨٦﴾﴾

“You shall certainly be tried and tested in your wealth and properties and in your personal selves, and you shall certainly hear much that will grieve you from those who received the Scripture before you (Jews and Christians) and from those who ascribe partners to Allah, but if you persevere patiently, and become Al-Muttaqoon (the pious ones) then verily, that will be a determining factor in all affairs, and that is from the great matters, (which you must hold on with all your efforts).” (Qur’an 3: 186)

In more than one Verse of the Qur’an, Allah ﷻ spoke about the bad manners that the Jews had when they would speak about Him ﷻ, and about how they said things that were not appropriate to His Greatness and Majesty; or in other words, they attributed faults to Him ﷻ. In short, they reached the highest levels of impudence and shamelessness. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ يَدُ اللَّهِ مَغْلُوبَةٌ غُلَّتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَلَعِنُوا بِمَا قَالُوا بَلْ يَدَاهُ مَبْسُوطَتَانِ﴾

يُنْفِقُ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ وَلِيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا
وَأَلْقَيْنَا بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ كُلَّمَا أَوْقَدُوا نَارًا لِلْحَرْبِ أَطْفَأَهَا
اللَّهُ وَسِعُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾

“The Jews say: “Allah’s Hand is tied up (i.e., He does not give and spend of His Bounty).” Be their hands tied up and be they accursed for what they uttered. Nay, both His Hands are widely outstretched. He spends (of His Bounty) as He wills. Verily, the Revelation that has come to you from Allah increases in most of them their obstinate rebellion and disbelief. We have put enmity and hatred amongst them till the Day of Resurrection. Every time they kindled the fire of war, Allah extinguished it; and they (ever) strive to make mischief on earth. And Allah does not like the Mufsidoon (mischief-makers).” (Qur’an 5: 64)

It appears that part of the reason why the Jews said, “Allah’s Hand is tied up,” is that they were jealous of the Prophet ﷺ – particularly, of his successful *Da’wah* efforts and of the stability he ﷺ achieved in Al-Madeenah. This interpretation is corroborated by the fact that the Muslims placed an embargo upon the Jews because of the latter group’s constant plotting against Islam. As a result the economic situation of Al-Madeenah’s Jews worsened, which had the effect of making them even more angry and resentful. And so in the very next Verse, Allah ﷻ informed them why they were suffering economically:

﴿وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ ءَامَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَكَفَّرْنَا عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ
جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٦٥﴾ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ أَقَامُوا التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَأَكْرَمُوا
مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِن تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِمْ مِّنْهُمْ أُمَّةٌ مُّقْتَصِدَةٌ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ سَاءَ مَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾﴾

“And if only the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) had believed (in Muhammad ﷺ) and warded off evil (sin, ascribing partners to Allah) and had become Al-Muttaqoon (the pious ones). We would indeed have blotted out their sins and admitted them to Gardens of pleasure (in Paradise). And if only they had

acted according to the Taurat (Torah), the Injeel (Gospel), and what has (now) been sent down to them from their Lord (the Qur'an), they would surely have gotten provision from above them and from underneath their feet. There are from among them people who are on the right course (i.e., they act on the revelation and believe in Prophet Muhammad ﷺ like 'Abdullah bin Salaam ؓ), but many of them do evil deeds.' (Qur'an 5: 65, 66)

3) Vitriolic Remarks about the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, Messengers in General, and the Noble Qur'an

When a man feels that he has lost his honour, that he is weak, and that he is under the control of his enemy, he cannot openly rebel. Nonetheless, if he knows that his enemy is honourable and will not harm him unjustly, he will plot against him, using underhanded and secretive means to abuse him – and even to bring about his demise. Each Jewish person in Al-Madeenah was such a man: He felt that he was weak, that he had lost his honour since the awaited Prophet ﷺ was not from his people, and that he was under the control of his stronger Muslim neighbours. And so, being unable to openly curse and harm the Prophet ﷺ, the Jews of Al-Madeenah secretly plotted against him and mumbled curses at him in his presence.

'Aishah ؓ related that a group of Jews once went to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "As-Saam (Death) be upon you, O Abul-Qaasim." As-Saam sounds similar to As-Salaam, but the former means death and the latter means peace. They were hoping that the Prophet ﷺ would not discern their secret curse, but he ﷺ did, and so did 'Aishah ؓ who, becoming angry, said, "And As-Saam (Death) be upon you, and may Allah do with you (such and such in order to punish you)." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Be quiet, O 'Aishah, for indeed, Allah does not love *Al-Fahsh* and *At-Tafaahush* (i.e., foul speech and deeds, and the foul speech and deeds that are done in an intentional and affected manner)." 'Aishah ؓ said, "O Messenger of Allah, you do see what they are saying?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Do you not see that I return back

to them that which they say, if I say, 'And (the same) upon you.'" What this means is that, regardless of whether they had said 'As-Saam' or 'As-Salaam,' the Prophet ﷺ would be giving them an appropriate answer by saying, 'And the same upon you,' without having to resort to bad manners and the use of foul language. 'Aishah ؓ said that, regarding this incident, the following Verse was revealed^[1] :

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ هُوَ عَنِ النَّجْوَى ثُمَّ يَعُودُونَ لِمَا هُوَ عَنْهُ وَيَنْتَجُونَ بِالْإِثْمِ
وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَمَعْصِيَةِ الرَّسُولِ وَإِذَا جَاءُوكَ حَيَّوْكَ بِمَا لَمْ يُحَيِّكَ بِهِ اللَّهُ
وَيَقُولُونَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ لَوْلَا يُعَذِّبُنَا اللَّهُ بِمَا نَقُولُ حَسْبُ لَهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ بِمَا بَصُلُوهُمْ
فِيئَسَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٨﴾

"Have you not seen those who were forbidden to hold secret counsels, and afterwards returned to that which they had been forbidden, and conspired together for sin and wrongdoing and disobedience to the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ). And when they come to you, they greet you with a greeting wherewith Allah greets you not, and say within themselves: "Why should Allah punish us not for what we say?" Hell will be sufficient for them, they will burn therein, – and worst indeed is that destination!"
(Qur'an 58: 8)

This Verse exposes the obsessive hatred and malice of the Jews towards the Prophet ﷺ. Had they been given the opportunity, they would have attempted to kill the Prophet ﷺ (which in fact they did plan to do later on). But instead, given their weak situation, they murmured curses at the Prophet ﷺ, pretending to be giving him greetings of peace.

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ heard 'Aishah ؓ respond to them

^[1] *Zaad Al-Maseer Fee 'Ilm At-Tafseer* (8/189); it is related by Ibn Abee Haatim from the *Hadeeth* of Al-'A'mash from Masrooq from 'Aishah ؓ; its chain is authentic. The *Hadeeth* is also related in *Saheeh Muslim*, the Book of *As-Salaam*, chapter "When the People of the Book Initiate Greetings of Peace, and How to Respond to Them"; *Hadeeth* numbers: 2165 and 2166.

in like manner, he commanded her to resort to a gentler approach. And he ﷺ informed her that good manners, and not anger, should guide a Muslim's actions.

Other Messengers were also not spared from the hostility of the Jews. On one particular occasion, a group of Jews, among whom was Abu Yaasir ibn Akhtab, Naafai' ibn Abee Naafai', 'Aazir ibn Abee 'Aazir, and others, asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to name the Messengers ﷺ that he ﷺ believed in. The Prophet ﷺ said, "We believe in Allah; in what was revealed to us; in what was revealed to Ibraaheem, Ismaa'eel, Ishaaq, Ya'qoob, and Al-Asbaat; in what was given to Moosa and 'Eesa (Jesus); and in what was given to the Prophets from their Lord. We do not make a distinction between them, and we are to Him *Muslimoon* (those who submit to Allah)." When the Prophet ﷺ mentioned 'Eesa (Jesus) ibn Maryam (Mary عليها السلام), they announced that they rejected his Prophethood, saying, "We do not believe in 'Eesa ibn Maryam, nor in he who believes in him."^[1] Allah ﷻ then revealed these Verses about them:

﴿قُلْ يَتَاهَلِ الْكِتَابِ هَلْ تَنْقُمُونَ مِنَّا إِلَّا أَنْ ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلُ وَأَنْ أَكْذَرُكُمْ فَسِيقُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾﴾

"Say: "O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Do you criticize us for no other reason than that we believe in Allah, and in (the revelation) which has been sent down to us and in that which has been sent down before (us), and that most of you are *Faasiqoon* [rebellious and disobedient (to Allah)]?" (Qur'an 5: 59)

As for their attempts to attack the Qur'an, they would do so by presenting specious arguments and asking innumerable questions. For example, ibn 'Abbaas رضي الله عنه said, "When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ arrived in Al-Madeenah, Jewish scholars said, 'O Muhammad, remember your saying:

﴿وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٥﴾﴾

^[1] Refer to Ibn Hishaam in *As-Seerah* (1/567), *Tafseer Ibn Jarir* (1/442).

“And they ask you (O Muhammad ﷺ) concerning the Rooh (the spirit). Say: The Rooh (the spirit) is one of the things, the knowledge of which is only with my Lord. And of knowledge, you (mankind) have been given only a little.” (Qur’an 17: 85)

‘Are you referring to us or to your people?’ The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘To both.’ They said, ‘But you recite from what has been given to you that we have been given the Torah, in which there is an explanation of all things.’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘That, relative to the knowledge of Allah, is only a little; nonetheless, in it (i.e., in what has been revealed to you) is that which is sufficient for you, if you were to apply it.’^[1] Regarding what they asked the Prophet ﷺ, Allah ﷻ revealed the following Verse:

﴿وَلَوْ أَنَّمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ أَقْلَمٌ وَالْبَحْرُ يَمُدُّهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ سَبْعَةُ
أَنْجَارٍ مَّا نَفَدَتْ كَلِمَاتُ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾ (٢٧)

“And if all the trees on the earth were pens and the sea (were ink wherewith to write), with seven seas behind it to add to its (supply), yet the Words of Allah would not be exhausted. Verily, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.” (Qur’an 31: 27)

4) Full Cooperation with the Hypocrites

The hypocrites and Jews of Al-Madeenah shared a common enemy: The Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims. Sharing common goals, the former two groups worked side by side to bring about the demise of their enemies; the Jews were the planners and leaders of the alliance, and the hypocrites were their followers. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا قَالُوا ءَامَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا إِلَىٰ شَيْطَانِهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ
إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِءُونَ﴾ (٤)

“And when they meet those who believe, they say: “We believe,” but when they are alone with their Shayaatin (devils -

^[1] Refer to *Al-Yahood Fis-Sunnah Al-Mutahharah* (1/241) and to *Tafseer Ibn Katheer, Soorah Al-Israa, Verse: 85.*

polytheists, hypocrites, etc.), they say: "Truly, we are with you; verily, we were but mocking." (Qur'an 2: 14)

In his *Tafseer*, An-Nasafee asserted that the Jews were the 'Shayaatin' that are referred to in this Verse. Regarding the Jewish-hypocrite conspiracy, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿بَشِّرِ الْمُنَافِقِينَ بِأَنَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٣٨﴾ الَّذِينَ يَتَّخِذُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَيْبَنَعُوكَ عِنْدَهُمْ الْعِزَّةَ فَإِنَّ الْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا ﴿١٣٩﴾﴾

"Give to the hypocrites the tidings that there is for them a painful torment. Those who take disbelievers for Auliya' (protectors or helpers or friends) instead of believers, do they seek honour, power and glory with them? Verily, then to Allah belongs all honour, power, and glory." (Qur'an 4: 138, 139)

Muhammad Darwaza said, "The majority of *Tafseer* scholars agree that the disbelievers referred to in this Verse are the Jews." And in Chapter *Muhammad*, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أَرْتَدُّوا عَلَيَّ أَدْبَارِهِمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا نَبَّيْنَهُمْ أَلْهَدَى الشَّيْطَانُ سَوَاءً لَهُمْ وَأَمَلَى لَهُمْ ﴿٢٥﴾ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لِلَّذِينَ كَرَهُوا مَا نَزَّلَ اللَّهُ سَنُطِيعُكُمْ فِي بَعْضِ الْأَمْرِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِسْرَارَهُمْ ﴿٣١﴾﴾

"Verily, those who have turned back (have apostated) as disbelievers after the guidance has been manifested to them, Shaitaan (Satan) has beautified for them (their false hopes), and (Allah) prolonged their term (age). This is because they said to those who hate what Allah has sent down: "We will obey you in part of the matter," but Allah knows their secrets." (Qur'an 47: 25, 26)

The majority of scholars maintain that the first Verse refers to the hypocrites and that, in the second Verse, 'those who hate what Allah has sent down,' are the Jews. That the Jews were the brains behind the alliance and the hypocrites their followers is indicated by their saying, "We will obey you in part of the matter."

In Soorah Al-Mujaadalah, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا قَوْمًا غَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِمَّا هُمْ مِنْكُمْ وَلَا مِنْهُمْ وَيَحْلِفُونَ عَلَى الْكُذِبِ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا إِنَّهُمْ سَاءَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ اتَّخَذُوا أَيْمَانَهُمْ جُنَّةً فَصَدُّوا عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ﴿١٦﴾﴾

“Have you (O Muhammad ﷺ) not seen those (hypocrites) who take for friends a people upon whom is the Wrath of Allah (i.e., Jews)? They are neither of you (Muslims) nor of them (Jews), and they swear to a lie while they know. Allah has prepared for them a severe torment. Evil indeed is that which they used to do. They have made their oaths a screen (for their evil actions). Thus they hinder (men) from the Path of Allah, so they shall have a humiliating torment.” (Qur’an 58: 14-16)

Commenting on these Verses, Al-Maawardee said in his *Tafseer*, “This refers to how the hypocrites took for friends a people upon whom ‘is the wrath of Allah,’ and those people are none other than the Jews.”^[1]

One example of how the Jews and hypocrites worked together to incite problems in Al-Madeenah is an incident that is related in *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, on the authority of Usaamah ibn Zaid ؓ. Usaamah ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ was once riding on a donkey, upon which there was a saddle, and underneath the saddle there was a coarse *Fadakee* (ascribed to a place called Fadak) garment; and Usaamah ibn Zaid ؓ was seated behind the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ was visiting Sa’d ibn ‘Ubaadah ؓ in the precincts of Banee Al-Haarith ibn Al-Khazrak, and this was before the Battle of Badr. They passed by a gathering that contained a mix of Muslims, polytheists that worshipped idols, and Jews. ‘Abdullah ibn Ubai ibn Sulool – who later outwardly accepted Islam and became well known as the leader of the hypocrites – and ‘Abdullah ibn Rawaahah ؓ were among those seated in the gathering. When the dust raised by the riding animal

^[1] Refer to *An-Nukat Wal-Uyoon* by Al-Maawardee (4/203).

came down upon the gathering, 'Abdullah ibn Ubai covered his nose with his robe and said, "Do not raise dust upon us." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then extended greetings of peace to them, after which he ﷺ stopped, descended, and invited them unto Allah ﷻ. And he ﷺ recited the Qur'an to them. 'Abdullah ibn Ubai ibn Salool said, "O man, there is nothing that is better than what you say, if it is the truth! But do not annoy us with it in our gathering; instead, return to your place, and (wait there); then, whosoever comes to you, relate to him (what you have to say)."

"Abdullah ibn Rawaahah ﷻ spoke up, telling the Prophet ﷺ to come to their gatherings, saying that that is what they loved and truly wanted. The Muslims, Jews, and polytheists began to curse one another; the situation then escalated until they almost fought one another. But the Prophet ﷺ continued to try to make peace between them until they finally calmed down. The Prophet ﷺ then mounted his riding animal and rode until he ﷺ reached Sa'd ibn 'Ubaadah ﷻ. The Prophet ﷺ said to him, "O Sa'd, did you not hear what Abu Hubaab (i.e., 'Abduulah ibn Ubai) said: He said such and such things."

"O Messenger of Allah," responded Sa'd ﷻ, "Forgive and pardon him, for by the One Who has sent to you the Book, Allah ﷻ has brought the truth which He has revealed to you, at a time when the people of this town had already agreed to crown 'Abdullah ibn 'Ubai (king) and make him leader over them. When Allah ﷻ stopped that from happening with the truth that He ﷻ has given you, 'Abdullah ibn Ubai became embittered and angry as a result. His new circumstances have brought about the change you have seen in him." And so the Messenger of Allah ﷺ pardoned him.^[1]

5) Attacking those Jewish Scholars Who Believed in the Prophet ﷺ and Embraced Islam

When a Jewish scholar named 'Abdullah ibn Salaam heard about the arrival of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in Al-Madeenah, he ﷻ

^[1] Saheeh Bukhaaree (4566).

went to him and said, "I will ask you about three matters, concerning which none (i.e., no human) has knowledge save a Prophet: What is the first of the signs of the Hour?^[1] What is the first food that the people of Paradise will eat? What draws a child to his father (so that he resembles him), and what draws a child to his uncles from his mother's side of the family?"

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Jibreel ؑ has just informed me about these matters." 'Abdullah ؑ said, "Among the angels, he is the one who is the enemy of the Jews." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ proceeded to answer his questions, saying, "As for the first sign of the Hour, it is a fire that gathers the people from the east to the west. As for the first food that the people of Paradise will eat, it is *Ziyaadah* (a separate piece that is attached within the liver) of a whale's liver. And as for the resemblance of a child, when a man copulates with his wife and his water precedes hers, the child will resemble him. If it is her water that comes first, then the child will resemble her."

"I bear witness," 'Abdullah ibn Salaam ؑ said, "that you are indeed the Messenger of Allah," after which he ؑ said, "O Messenger of Allah, the Jews are a people of great lies. If they know that I have embraced Islam before you ask them (about my status among them), they will speak vulgar lies about me to you." The Jews (of Al-Madeenah) then came, and 'Abdullah ؑ entered the house so as to avoid being seen by them.

When they drew near to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he ﷺ asked them, "What kind of man do you deem 'Abdullah ibn Salaam to be?" They said, "He is the most knowledgeable person among us, and the son of the most knowledgeable person among us. He is the most learned person among us, and the son of the most learned person among us."

"What would you think if 'Abdullah were to embrace Islam?" the Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked them.

^[1] It appears that he was not referring to the commonly known minor signs or major signs, but to that particular sign that begins the process of this world coming to an end.

“May Allah protect him from that,” they said, at which instant ‘Abdullah ﷺ came out to them and declared, “I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is indeed the Messenger of Allah.” Then, without hesitation, they said about him, “He is the most evil person among us, and the son of the most evil person among us,” after which they continued to attack his honour.^[1]

The Jews of Al-Madeenah would attempt to harm and vilify any Jewish scholar who embraced Islam. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿لَيْسُوا سَوَاءً مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ أُمَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ يَتْلُونَ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ ءَانَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَأُولَئِكَ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾ وَمَا يَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَنْ يُكْفَرُوهُ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١١٥﴾﴾

“Not all of them are alike; a party of the people of the Scripture stand for the right, they recite the Verses of Allah during the hours of the night, prostrating themselves in prayer. They believe in Allah and the Last Day; they enjoin Al-Ma’roof (Islamic Monotheism, and following Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) and forbid Al-Munkar (polytheism, disbelief, and opposing Prophet Muhammad ﷺ); and they hasten in (all) good works; and they are among the righteous. And whatever good they do, nothing will be rejected of them; for Allah knows well those who are Al-Muttaqoon (the pious ones).” (Qur’an 3: 113-115)

In *Al-Asbaab An-Nuzool*, Al-Waahidee related that ibn ‘Abbaas ﷺ and Muqaatil (may Allah have mercy on him) said, “‘Abdullah ibn Salaam ﷺ, Tha’labah ibn Sa’eed ﷺ, Usaid ibn Sa’yah ﷺ, Asad ibn ‘Ubaid ﷺ - when these and other Jews embraced Islam, the scholars among the Jews said, ‘Only the most evil among us have embraced Islam. Had they been the best among us, they would not have forsaken the religion of their fathers.’

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of Prophets, chapter “The Creation of Adam and His Progeny”; *Hadeeth* number: 3329.

Also, they said to them (i.e., to those among them who embraced Islam), 'You have betrayed (us, your religion, your forbears) when you exchanged your religion for another religion. Allah ﷻ then revealed the Verse:

﴿لَيْسُوا سَوَاءً﴾

"Not all of them are alike."^[1]

6) Spreading Rumors and Taking Joy at the Hardships of Muslims

The Jews of Al-Madeenah took advantage of every available opportunity to harm Muslims and divide their ranks. So when Abu Umaamah As'ad ibn Zuraarah Al-Ansaaree Al-Khazrajee ؓ, one of the 12 representatives who made the Pledge of Al-'Aqabah, was on his deathbed, the Jews tried to depict his sickness as a failing of the Prophet ﷺ - that he ﷺ could not help a follower of his who had made so many sacrifices for him and his religion.

When Umaamah ؓ became so sick that his entire body took on a sickly red complexion, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ visited him and said that it was a foul death for the Jews, since it would lead them further astray. The Prophet ﷺ said, "They (i.e., the Jews) will say, 'Was not his companion (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ) able to defend him (from his sickness). And the truth is that I have no control or power or authority to either harm him or benefit him (because all of that is in the Hand of Allah ﷻ). Nonetheless, I will try to do something for him (to bring about his cure)." The Prophet ﷺ gave an order, and Umaamah ؓ was then cauterized - but to no avail, for he ؓ died (shortly thereafter). The Jews began to gloat over the fact that Umaamah ؓ was not cured. The Prophet ﷺ said, "What a bad deceased one is this for the Jews, for they say, 'His companion has indeed treated him, and was he not able to benefit him!'"^[2]

The death of Abu Umaamah ؓ was not the only incident that

^[1] Refer to *Asbaab An-Nuzool* by Al-Waahidee (pg. 114).

^[2] Refer to *Musannaf 'Abdur-Razzaaq* (10/407), *Hadeeth* number: 19515.

exposed the malice that the Jews harboured towards the Muslims. Another similarly telling incident occurred just after the Muslims migrated to Al-Madeenah; the Jews claimed that they had placed a magic spell over the Muslims, so that none of them would give birth to a child. They did this in order to inflict mental wounds on the Muslims, to cause them grief, and to destroy that spirit of peace and harmony that pervaded Al-Madeenah. And in fact, some time went by without a male child being born to any Muslim, so the situation was a test and trial for the Muslims, which is indicated by the great joy they displayed when finally a male child, 'Abdullah ibn Az-Zubair ؓ, was born to Az-Zubair ؓ, one of the members of the *Muhaajiroon*. Giving an account of this incident, Asmaa bint Abu Bakr ؓ said that she became pregnant with 'Abdullah ibn Az-Zubair ؓ while she was still in Makkah. She said, "When I left (Makkah), my period (of pregnancy) came to an end (i.e., the normal time it takes from pregnancy to the giving of birth, nine months, had passed). I went to Al-Madeenah and stayed at Quba, and it was in Quba that I gave birth. Then I brought the child to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and placed the child in his lap. The Prophet ﷺ asked for a date; (when he had it), he ﷺ chewed it and then spat into the baby's mouth; and that - the saliva of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ - was the first thing that entered into the baby's insides. He ﷺ then chewed on the date and moved it around in the baby's mouth. He ﷺ then supplicated for the baby and invoked Allah ﷻ to bless him. And that was the first newborn to be born in Islam (i.e., that was the first *Muhaajir* child to be born in Al-Madeenah). All of the Muslims became extremely happy because it had previously been said to them, 'Verily, the Jews have put a magic spell on you, so that no (male) child will be born to you.'"^[1] According to the narration of Muslim, she ؓ then said, "And he named him 'Abdullah. Years later, when he was seven or eight years old, 'Abdullah went to the Prophet ﷺ in order to pledge allegiance to him, which is what Az-Zubair ؓ - his father - had ordered him to

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree* (5469) and *Saheeh Muslim* (2146).

do. When he ﷺ saw 'Abdullah ﷺ approaching, the Prophet ﷺ smiled and took a pledge from him." After the arrival of the Prophet ﷺ in Al-Madeenah, 'Abdullah ﷺ was the first Muslim to be born. Because the Jews claimed that no male child would be born to the Muslims, the Prophet's Companions ﷺ became extremely happy and exclaimed *At-Takbeer* (*Allahu Akbar*, Allah is the Greatest) to express their joy and thankfulness.

7) Their Reaction to the Changing of the *Qiblah* (Direction to Which Muslims Prayed)

Al-Baraa ibn 'Aazib ﷺ related that, when the Prophet ﷺ first arrived in Al-Madeenah, he ﷺ stayed with his grandfathers (i.e., the descendants of his grandfathers) – or he said: his uncles – from the *Ansaar*. Al-Baraa ﷺ said that the Prophet ﷺ prayed towards Jerusalem for 16 or 17 months (from the time he ﷺ arrived in Al-Madeenah), though what he ﷺ really wanted was to pray towards the Ka'bah. The first prayer that the Prophet ﷺ did in fact pray towards the Ka'bah was 'Asr prayer. A group of people prayed behind him, and one of them, upon the conclusion of the prayer, left and passed by the people of a *Masjid*, who were still praying 'Asr and who were in the bowing position of the prayer. Seeing them in that state, the man announced, "I bear witness by Allah that I have indeed prayed with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, facing the direction of Makkah." While they were still in the bowing position, they turned around and faced the Ka'bah. Prior to the changing of the Ka'bah, the Jews – as well as Christians – were pleased with the fact that the Prophet ﷺ was praying towards Jerusalem. Then, when the Prophet ﷺ began to face the Ka'bah, they openly expressed their disapproval. In regard to this occurrence, Verses were revealed – Verses that contain many important lessons and morals for Muslims. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِنَّهُ لِلْحَقِّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَفِيلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤٩﴾ وَمَنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَيْكُمْ

حُجَّةٌ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِي وَلَا تَمَّ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٠﴾ كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مِنْكُمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِنَا وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٥١﴾ فَأَذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ ﴿١٥٢﴾ ﴿

“And from wheresoever you start forth (for prayers), turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid-al-Haraam (at Makkah), that is indeed the truth from your Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what you do. And from wheresoever you start forth (for prayers), turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid-al-Haraam (at Makkah), and wheresoever you are, turn your faces towards, it (when you pray) so that men may have no argument against you except those of them that are wrongdoers, so fear them no, but fear Me! – And so that I may complete My Blessings on you and that you may be guided. Similarly (to complete My Blessings on you) We have sent among you a Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) of your own, reciting to you Our Verses (the Qur’an) and sanctifying you, and teaching you the Book (the Qur’an) and the Hikmah (i.e., Sunnah, Islamic laws and Fiqh – jurisprudence), and teaching you that which you used not to know. Therefore remember Me (by praying, glorifying, etc.). I will remember you, and be grateful to Me (for My countless Favours on you) and never be ungrateful to Me.” (Qur’an 2: 149-152)

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿سَيَقُولُ السُّفَهَاءُ مِنَ النَّاسِ مَا وَلَّاهُمْ عَن قِبْلَتِهِمُ الَّتِي كَانُوا عَلَيْهَا﴾

“The fools (pagans, hypocrites, and Jews) among the people will say, “What has turned them (Muslims) from their Qiblah [prayer direction (towards Jerusalem)] to which they used to face in prayer.” (Qur’an: 2: 142)

When this Verse was revealed, the Jews had not yet given their reaction to the changing of the Qiblah from Jerusalem to Makkah.

This is, therefore, yet another instance of how the Prophet ﷺ was informed about matters before they actually occurred.

It is interesting to note that Allah ﷻ referred to the Jews as being *Sufahaah*, which is plural of the word *Safeeh*, which means 'a fool.' Abu As-Sa'ood, in his *Tafseer*, explained that, in its original use, the word *Safeeh* refers to an inferior garment whose fabric is thin. A *Safeeh* in its other sense conveys a similar meaning: a person whose thinking is inferior and shallow. Another meaning of *Safeeh* is a liar, a person who intentionally speaks contrary to what he knows to be the truth; and yet another meaning of the word is a person who is ignorant and a wrongdoer. At any rate, Abu As-Sa'ood said that in the above-mentioned Verse, *Sufahaa*, or the fools, refers to the Jews.

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا...﴾

"Thus We have made you [true Muslims – real believers of Islamic Monotheism, true followers of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and His Sunnah (legal ways)], a just (and the best) nation,...."
(Qur'an 2: 143)

The word *Wasat* is used in this Verse; it literally means 'middle,' but it has other connotations as well. It connotes, as it does in the above-mentioned Verse, the meaning of being the best. It is said that, of all Arab tribes, the Quraish are *Wasat* in terms of their lineage and homeland; this means that they have the best lineage and homeland. Similarly, 'Asr prayer is known as the *Al-Wustaa* prayer (*Al-Wustaa* comes from the word *Wasat*). And so 'Asr is the best of prayers. Commenting on the above-mentioned Verse, ibn Katheer said, "It is as if Allah ﷻ is saying: We have turned you towards the *Qiblah* of Ibraaheem, and We have chosen you for it, in order to make you the best of nations, so that you can be witnesses over all nations on the Day of Resurrection. For indeed, everyone will acknowledge your superiority (on that Day)."^[1]

^[1] Refer to *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, to the explanation of this Verse.

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعُ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضَيِّعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرُؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٤٣﴾﴾

“Thus We have made you [true Muslims – real believers of Islamic Monotheism, true followers of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and His Sunnah (legal ways)], a just (and the best) nation, that you be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) be a witness over you. And We made the Qiblah (prayer direction towards Jerusalem) which you used to face, only to test those who followed the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) from those who would turn on their heels (i.e., disobey the Messenger). Indeed it was great (heavy) except for those whom Allah guided. ‘And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost (i.e., your prayers offered towards Jerusalem). Truly, Allah is full of Kindness, the Most Merciful towards mankind.’” (Qur’an 2: 143)

This Verse mentions that the command to face Jerusalem in prayer was a test for people; similarly, the command to face Makkah was a test as well. On the one hand the Quraish were accustomed to facing Makkah, and on the other hand, the Jews were accustomed to facing Jerusalem. Both when the command was given to face Jerusalem and when the command was given to face Makkah, the people were being tested, so that those who blindly followed their fathers as well as those who were proud and arrogant could be distinguished from those who followed the Prophet ﷺ. In the end, therefore, what really mattered was obedience to Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ. Those who wholeheartedly obeyed the Prophet’s command to change directions – whether it was to Jerusalem or to Makkah – showed themselves to be true believers. ibn ‘Umar ؓ said, “While the people were performing the morning prayer in *Masjid*

Qubaa, a man came and said, 'A part of the Qur'an has indeed been revealed to the Prophet ﷺ; he ﷺ has indeed been commanded to face the Ka'bah, so turn towards it yourselves.' They then (in the middle of their prayer) turned around and faced the Ka'bah."^[1]

At the end of the above-mentioned Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضَيِّعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرُؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٤٣﴾﴾

"Thus We have made you [true Muslims – real believers of Islamic Monotheism, true followers of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and His Sunnah (legal ways)], a just (and the best) nation, that you be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) be a witness over you. And We made the Qiblah (prayer direction towards Jerusalem) which you used to face, only to test those who followed the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) from those who would turn on their heels (i.e., disobey the Messenger). Indeed it was great (heavy) except for those whom Allah guided. 'And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost (i.e., your prayers offered towards Jerusalem). Truly, Allah is full of Kindness, the Most Merciful towards mankind.'" (Qur'an 2: 143)

At the beginning of Verse 142, Allah ﷻ exposed the crime of those who refused to obey the Prophet ﷺ. At the end of Verse 143, Allah ﷻ not only praised those who did obey the Prophet ﷺ, but also commended them for the concern and care they showed for their Muslim brothers. For when the command was given for Muslims to face the Ka'bah, some of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ felt sorrow for those of their brothers who had previously died, while the Muslims were still facing Jerusalem. They feared that their worship might not be accepted. And so this Verse was then

^[1] Refer to *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* (1/337).

revealed, explaining that there was no need to feel sad, for their prayers had been accepted. ibn 'Abbas ؓ said, "When the Prophet ﷺ was instructed to face the Ka'bah, they (i.e., His Companions ؓ) said, 'O Messenger of Allah, what about our brothers who died while they were still facing Jerusalem.' Allah ﷻ then revealed the Verse:

﴿وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعُ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضَيِّعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٤٣﴾﴾

"Thus We have made you [true Muslims – real believers of Islamic Monotheism, true followers of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and His Sunnah (legal ways)], a just (and the best) nation, that you be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) be a witness over you. And We made the Qiblah (prayer direction towards Jerusalem) which you used to face, only to test those who followed the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) from those who would turn on their heels (i.e., disobey the Messenger). Indeed it was great (heavy) except for those whom Allah guided. 'And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost (i.e., your prayers offered towards Jerusalem). Truly, Allah is full of Kindness, the Most Merciful towards mankind.'"
(Qur'an 2: 143)^[1]

Sayyid Qutub (may Allah have mercy on him) said about this Verse, "This had the effect of peace and tranquility being poured into the hearts of Muslims, and their hearts then became filled with contentment, confidence, and certainty."^[2]

Then Allah ﷻ said in the next four Verses:

^[1] Refer to *Sunan At-Tirmidhee* (5/208), *Hadeeth* number: 2964. Imam At-Tirmidhee (may Allah have mercy on him) said about the *Hadeeth*, "This *Hadeeth* is *Hasan Saheeh*."

^[2] Refer to *Fee Dhilaal Al-Qur'an* (2/131-133).

﴿قَدْ زَرَى تَقَلَّبَ وَجْهَكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ
 شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا
 الْكِتَابَ لَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَفِيلٍ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤٤﴾ وَلَئِنْ
 آتَيْتَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ بِكُلِّ آيَةٍ مَا تَبِعُوا قِبْلَتَكَ وَمَا أَنْتَ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَتِهِمْ وَمَا
 بَعْضُهُمْ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَةَ بَعْضٍ وَلَئِنْ أَتَبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ
 الْعِلْمِ إِنَّكَ إِذَا لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٤٥﴾ الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ
 أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٤٦﴾ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ
 مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ ﴿١٤٧﴾ وَلِكُلِّ وِجْهَةٍ هُوَ مُوَلِّئُهَا فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ أَيْنَ مَا تَكُونُوا يَأْتِ
 بِكُمْ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٤٨﴾﴾

“Verily, We have seen the turning of your (Muhammad’s) face towards the heaven. Surely, We shall turn you to a Qiblah (prayer direction) that shall please you, so turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid-al-Haraam (at Makkah). And wheresoever you people are, turn your faces (in prayer) in that direction. Certainly, the people who were given the Scriptures (i.e., Jews and the Christians) know well that, that (your turning towards the direction of the Ka’bah at Makkah in prayers) is the truth from their Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what they do. And even if you were to bring to the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) all the Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), they would not follow your Qiblah (prayer direction), nor are you going to follow their Qiblah (prayer direction). And they will not follow each other’s Qiblah (prayer direction). Verily, if you follow their desires after that which you have received of knowledge (from Allah), then indeed you will be one of the Zaalimoon (polytheists, wrong-doers, etc.). Those to whom We gave the Scripture (Jews and Christians) recognize him (Muhammad ﷺ or the Ka’bah at Makkah) as they recognize their sons. But verily, a party of them conceal the truth while they know it – [i.e., the qualities of Muhammad ﷺ, which are written in the

Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel)]. (This is) the truth from your Lord. So be you not one of the those who doubt. For every nation there is a direction to which they face (in their prayers). So hasten towards all that is good. Wheresoever you may be, Allah will bring you together (on the Day of Resurrection). Truly, Allah is Able to do all things.” (Qur’an 2: 144-148)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ ardently desired to turn in prayer towards the *Qiblah* of his father (i.e., great-grandfather) Ibraaheem ؑ. After all, the Prophet’s link to Ibraaheem ﷺ was very strong: Ibraaheem ؑ was his great-grandfather; the Prophet ﷺ was the answer to Ibraaheem’s prayers; and both of them were the flag-bearers of *Tawheed* (i.e., of the message of Islamic Monotheism) in their respective eras.

For other reasons as well the Prophet ﷺ wanted the *Qiblah* to change from Jerusalem to Makkah. Both Jews and Christians faced Jerusalem in their prayers; both groups had distorted, changed, and corrupted the revealed books that were sent down to their Prophets ؑ. And so the Prophet ﷺ wanted to be different and distinct from them, which is why in so many aspects of the religion, Muslims are commanded to be different from Jews, Christians, and other polytheists. In that vein, the Prophet ﷺ wanted a different *Qiblah*, and what better *Qiblah* can there be than the one that was built by Ibraaheem ؑ – the first house of worship constructed for mankind.

The changing of the *Qiblah* had many far-reaching implications – of political, military, religious, and historical significance. As for the political impact the changing of the *Qiblah* had, it made the Arabian Peninsula the center of the soon to be growing Islamic civilization. Militarily speaking, the changing of the *Qiblah* signified that sooner or later – about eight years later, as it so happened – Muslims would conquer Makkah and polytheism would be uprooted from it. As for its religious significance, the changing of the *Qiblah* distinguished purely monotheistic Muslims from adherents of other faiths, who were polytheists in practice, regardless of however much they claimed to be

otherwise. And finally, the historical significance of the changing of the *Qiblah* was that it inextricably linked the Prophet ﷺ to his great-grandfather, Ibraaheem ؑ.

In the following four Verses, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِنَّهُ لَلْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ﴾ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤٩﴾ وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ إِلَّا لِلنَّاسِ عَلَيْكُمْ حُجَّةٌ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِي وَلَا تَمَيَّنِي عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٠﴾ كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مِنْكُمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِنَا وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٥١﴾ فَادْكُرُونِي أذكُرْكُمْ وَأَشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ ﴿١٥٢﴾ ﴿

“And from wheresoever you start forth (for prayers), turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid-al-Haraam (at Makkah), that is indeed the truth from your Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what you do. And from wheresoever you start forth (for prayers), turn your face in the direction of Al-Masjid-al-Haraam (at Makkah), and wheresoever you are, turn your faces towards it (when you pray) so that men may have no argument against you except those of them that are wrongdoers, so fear them no, but fear Me! – And so that I may complete My Blessings on you and that you may be guided. Similarly (to complete My Blessings on you) We have sent among you a Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) of your own, reciting to you Our Verses (the Qur’an) and sanctifying you, and teaching you the Book (the Qur’an) and the Hikmah (i.e., Sunnah, Islamic laws and Fiqh – jurisprudence), and teaching you that which you used not to know. Therefore remember Me (by praying, glorifying, etc.). I will remember you, and be grateful to Me (for My countless Favours on you) and never be ungrateful to Me.” (Qur’an 2: 149-152)

The blessing of the new *Qiblah* was great indeed; in these Verses, Allah ﷻ juxtaposed the mention of that blessing with a reminder

to Muslims about other great blessings, most prominent among which is that Allah ﷻ has "sent among you a Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) of your own." Allah ﷻ blessed Muslims with a merciful guide who knew how to cure diseases that afflicted the hearts of men.

Not only was the Prophet ﷺ a guide and leader, he ﷺ also recited:

﴿يَتْلُوا عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِنَا﴾

"Reciting to you Our Verses (the Qur'an)."

The very basis of the Prophet's guidance is the Book of Allah ﷻ, and the Companions ؓ were especially blessed to be alive when its Chapters and Verses were freshly being revealed to the Prophet ﷺ.

The blessings did not stop there, for Allah ﷻ then reminded Muslims that the Prophet ﷺ:

﴿وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ﴾

"Sanctifies them."

Through his character and example, the Prophet ﷺ taught Muslims how to apply the teachings of the Qur'an and how to purify their souls. Allah ﷻ said about the Prophet ﷺ:

﴿وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾﴾

"And verily, you (O Muhammad ﷺ) are on an exalted standard of character." (Qur'an 68: 4).

And 'Aishah ؓ said about him ﷺ, "The character of the Prophet of Allah ﷻ was (nothing other than) the Qur'an." The Companions ؓ heard the Qur'an being recited on the tongue of the Prophet ﷺ, and then it was as if they saw the Qur'an walking on earth, embodied in the character of the Prophet ﷺ.

The Prophet ﷺ recited Allah's Verses to Muslims, he ﷺ sanctified and purified them, and he ﷺ also taught:

﴿وَعَلَّمَكُمْ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ﴾

“You the Book (the Qur’an) and the Hikmah (i.e., Sunnah, Islamic laws and Fiqh – jurisprudence).”

Beyond guiding his Companions ﷺ and purifying their souls, the Prophet ﷺ explained the Qur’an to them, clarifying its rulings, expanding on its general legislations, and correcting incorrect interpretations – if the need ever arose.

And then finally, Allah ﷻ summarized the great blessing that was the sending of the Prophet ﷺ, saying:

﴿وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“And teaching you that which you used not to know.”

Prior to the advent of Islam, what were the Arabs of the Arabian Peninsula? They were ignorant; they were steeped in senseless wars; and they led meaningless lives. Then, through the mercy and blessings of Allah ﷻ, they became the best of mankind; they were given a purpose in life, which was to worship Allah ﷻ. They abandoned a life of selfishness and of fulfilling base desires, and they embraced a meaningful life, one in which they purified their souls and built a nation that is the best of all nations. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَوْ ءَامَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِّنْهُمْ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾﴾

“You [true believers in Islamic Monotheism), and real followers of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his Sunnah (legal ways, etc.)] are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin Ma’ruf (i.e., Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam has ordained) and forbid Al-Munkar (polytheism, disbelief and all that Islam has forbidden), and you believe in Allah. And had the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) believed, it would have been better for them; among them are some who have faith, but most of them are Al-Faasiqoon (disobedient to Allah and rebellious against Allah’s command).” (Qur’an 3: 110)

And Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضَيِّعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٤٣﴾﴾

“Thus We have made you [true Muslims – real believers of Islamic Monotheism, true followers of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and His Sunnah (legal ways)], a just (and the best) nation, that you be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) be a witness over you. And We made the Qiblah (prayer direction towards Jerusalem) which you used to face, only to test those who followed the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) from those who would turn on their heels (i.e., disobey the Messenger). Indeed it was great (heavy) except for those whom Allah guided. ‘And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost (i.e., your prayers offered towards Jerusalem). Truly, Allah is full of Kindness, the Most Merciful towards mankind.” (Qur’an 2: 143)

At the end of the above-mentioned Verses, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ ﴿١٥٢﴾﴾

“Therefore remember Me (by praying, glorifying, etc.). I will remember you, and be grateful to Me (for My countless Favours on you) and never be ungrateful to Me.” (Qur’an 2: 152)

The changing of the Qiblah, the sending of a Messenger ﷺ, the guidance and teachings that Messenger ﷺ came with – all of these blessings require from the believer that he remember Allah ﷻ day and night and that he be grateful and thankful to Him for all of His countless blessings, the greatest of which was bringing him out of the darkness of disbelief and into the light of Islam.

A word-by-word study of these Verses should have a profoundly positive effect on the development of a Muslim’s character, which it in fact did regarding the Prophet’s Companions ﷺ. Through the

above-mentioned Verses, the Companions ﷺ gained a better perspective of how they should act and be as Muslims. In other Verses, as we will see (*In Sha Allah*) in the following section, they learned more about their neighbours from the People of the Book – their nature, their inner reality, and their actions. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَنْ رَضَىٰ عَنْكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصْرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَىٰ اللَّهِ هُوَ
 الْهُدَىٰ وَلَئِنِ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ بَعْدَ الَّذِي جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِن وَلِيٍّ
 وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿١٢٠﴾﴾

“Never will the Jews nor the Christians be pleased with you (O Muhammad ﷺ) till you follow their religion. Say: “Verily, the Guidance of Allah (i.e., Islamic Monotheism) that is the (only) Guidance. And if you (O Muhammad ﷺ) were to follow their (Jews and Christians) desires after what you have received of Knowledge (i.e., the Qur’an), then you would have against Allah neither any Wali (protector or guardian) nor any helper.”
 (Qur’an 2: 120)

8- A Description of the Jews in the Noble Qur’an

The characteristics of the Jews are not surprising or unexpected, for they are the characteristics of any human being who forsakes the true religion of Islam. Upon arriving in Al-Madeenah, the Prophet ﷺ signed a detailed agreement with the Jews, one that made clear their relationship to one another as well as their mutual obligations. Things should have gone smoothly between them from that moment onward, but the Jews did not live up to their end of the agreement. They became angry, bitter, and jealous, and so they strove day and night to undermine the peace and tranquility that pervaded the city of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

Deception, not benefiting from knowledge, arrogance, associating partners with Allah ﷻ in worship, waging war against Allah’s Prophets, distorting and corrupting divinely revealed books – these are some of the qualities and actions of the Jews which we learn about from the Noble Qur’an and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet

ﷺ. Of the various characteristics of the Jews, we will briefly discuss those that are mentioned in the Noble Qur'an.

1) Associating partners with Allah ﷻ in worship

All of the Prophets ﷺ that were sent to the Children of Israel invited their people to the worship of Allah ﷻ, to pure Islamic Monotheism. But the Jews distorted those teachings, to the point that they became polytheistic in their worship, for they claimed and believed that Allah ﷻ had a son, and they 'took their rabbis and their monks to be their lords besides Allah.' Allah ﷻ pointed to both manifestations of their polytheism in the following two Verses:

﴿وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ عُزَيْرٌ ابْنُ اللَّهِ وَقَالَتِ النَّصَارَى الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ يُضَاهِيُونَ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ قَالَهُمْ اللَّهُ أَنْفٌ يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ اتَّخَذُوا أَحْبَارَهُمْ وَرُهْبَانَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَالْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا لَّا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ سُبْحَانَهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣١﴾﴾

"And the Jews say: 'Uzair (Ezra) is the son of Allah, and the Christians say: Messiah is the son of Allah. That is a saying from their mouths. They imitate the saying of the disbelievers of old. Allah's Curse be on them, how they are deluded away from the truth! They (Jews and Christians) took their rabbis and their monks to be their lords besides Allah (by obeying them in things which they made lawful or unlawful according to their own desires without being ordered by Allah), and (they also took as their Lord) Messiah, son of Maryam (Mary), while they (Jews and Christians) were commanded [in the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel)] to worship none but One Ilah (God - Allah) La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He). Praise and glory be to Him, (far above is He) from having the partners they associate (with Him)." (Qur'an 9: 30, 31)

Furthermore, they worshipped idols; and as if that was not enough, they made the graves of their Prophets ﷺ into *Masjids*

(places of worship). The Prophet ﷺ said, "May Allah fight the Jews: they turned the graves of their Prophets into *Masjids*."^[1]

2) Showing Opposition to Prophets and Righteous People

Jews treated their rabbis and righteous leaders in a very self-contradictory manner: On the one hand, they worshipped them, by obeying them even when what they said was contrary to Allah's command; and on the other hand, they were constantly fighting against their Prophets ﷺ and learned ones, not even stopping short of killing them - for example, they killed Zakariyyah ﷺ and Yahyah ﷺ. Allah ﷻ informed us about that and about other matters concerning them in the following Verse:

﴿وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَا مُوسَىٰ لَنْ نَصْبِرَ عَلَىٰ طَعَامٍ وَاحِدٍ فَادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُخْرِجْ لَنَا مِمَّا تُنْبِتُ
الْأَرْضُ مِنْ بَقْلِهَا وَقِشَاطِهَا وَفُومَهَا وَعَدْسِهَا بِمَا تَبْيَضُّ وَتَسْوَدُّ قَالَ أَنَسِبِدُلُوكَ
أَلَّذِي هُوَ بِالَّذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ أَمْ لَنْ نَجِدَ لَهُ مِثْرًا فَإِنْ لَمْ يَجِبْ لَكُمْ مِمَّا سَأَلْتُمْ
وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذَّلِيلَةُ وَالْمَسْكِينَةُ وَيَأْتُوا بِغَضَبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا
يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ النَّبِيِّينَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا
يَعْتَدُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

"And (remember) when you said, "O Moosa (Moses)! We cannot endure one kind of food. So invoke your Lord for us to bring forth for us of what the earth grows, its herbs, its cucumbers, its Foom (wheat or garlic), its lentils and its onions." He said, "Would you exchange that which is better for that which is worse? Go you down to any town and you shall find what you want! And they were covered with humiliation and misery, and they drew on themselves the Wrath of Allah. That was because they used to disbelieve the Ayaat (proofs, evidences, Verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of Allah and killed the Prophets wrongfully. That was because they disobeyed and used to transgress the bounds (in their disobedience to Allah, i.e., commit crimes and sins)." (Qur'an 2: 61)

^[1] Saheeh Bukhaaree, the Book of Prayer, chapter "Taking the Graves of Prophets as *Masjids*"; Hadeeth number: 437.

3) Hiding Knowledge and Distorting Facts

Hiding knowledge and distorting facts –from the days of old, these are two fixed characteristics of Jews. Abu Hurairah ؓ reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “It was said to the Children of Israel: ‘And enter the gate in prostration (or bowing with humility) and say: Forgive us.’ They then distorted and changed (what was asked of them): They entered, creeping on their buttocks, and saying, ‘Habba Fee Sha’rah [i.e., instead of saying, ‘Hitta (forgive us),’ they said, ‘Habba Fee Sha’rah (literally: a grain in barley). What matters is that they distorted and changed what they were commanded to say].”^[1]

One of the main things that rabbis and learned Jews tried to hide was knowledge about the Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ, for, through revelation, they had a clear description of him ﷺ. Ibn ‘Abbas ؓ related that Raafai’ ibn Haarithah, Sallaam ibn Mishkam, Maalik ibn As-Sayyif, and Raafai’ ibn Huraimalah went to the Prophet ﷺ and said, “O Muhammad, do you not claim that you are upon the faith and religion of Ibraaheem ؑ, that you believe in the Torah that is with us, and that you bear witness that it has truly come from Allah ﷻ?” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Yes, but you have invented (matters and ascribed them to the Torah) and have rejected what is in it, in terms of the covenants in it that Allah ﷻ has taken of you. And you have kept secret from it that which you have been commanded to make clear to people. And so I absolve myself from that which you have invented (and distorted).” They said, “But as for us, we shall act in accordance to what we have in our hands (i.e., the Torah), for we are indeed upon guidance and the truth. We will neither believe in you nor follow you.” Allah ﷻ then revealed the following Verse about them.^[2]

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of Prophets, chapter “And Enter the Gate in Prostration (Or Bowing with Humility) and say: Forgive Us”; *Hadeeth* number: 437.

^[2] Refer to *Seerah Ibn Hishaam* (1/562) and *Tafseer At-Tabaree* (6/200). The narrators of this *Hadeeth* are all trustworthy.

﴿قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَسْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ تُقِيمُوا التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ
إِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَلِيُزِيدَكُمْ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُم مَّا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا
فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾﴾

“Say (O Muhammad ﷺ): “O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! You have nothing (as regards guidance) till you act according to the Taurat (Torah), the Injeel (Gospel), and what has (now) been sent down to you from your Lord (the Qur’an).” Verily, that which has been sent down to you (Muhammad ﷺ) from your Lord increases in may of them their obstinate rebellion and disbelief. So be not sorrowful over the people who disbelieve.” (Qur’an 5: 68)

4) Internal Division

At first blush, given the rancor that all Jews showed the Prophet ﷺ, it may have seemed that they were united. But nothing was further from the truth; in fact, this does not apply only to the Prophet’s time. They have always been divided among themselves, a reality that Allah ﷻ described in His saying:

﴿لَا يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ جَمِيعًا إِلَّا فِي قُرَىٰ مُّحَصَّنَةٍ أَوْ مِنْ وَرَاءِ جُدُرٍ بَأْسُهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ
شَدِيدٌ تَحْسَبُهُمْ جَمِيعًا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ شَتَّىٰ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾﴾

“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.” (Qur’an 59: 14)

5) The Giving and Taking of Bribes

An undeniable characteristic of Jews is that they are willing to resort to any means that will help them achieve their goals, even if those means involve practices – such as taking bribes and eating unlawful food – that are contrary to the teachings of their religion.

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿سَمَّعُونَ لِلْكَذِبِ أَكَلُونَ لِلسُّحْتِ فَإِنْ جَاءُوكَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ أَوْ
أَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَإِنْ تُعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ فَكَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ شَيْئًا وَإِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَاحْكُم
بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْقِسْطِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾﴾

“(They like to) listen to falsehood, to devour anything forbidden. So if they come to you (O Muhammad ﷺ), either judge between them, or turn away from them. If you turn away from them, they cannot hurt you in the least. And if you judge, judge with justice between them. Verily, Allah loves those who act justly.”
(Qur’an 5: 42)

6) Hypocrisy

When Islam gained a firm foothold in Al-Madeenah, some Jewish leaders pretended to enter into the fold of Islam, when in reality they only wanted to sow dissension from within the ranks of Muslims. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا قَالُوا ءَامَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا إِلَىٰ شَيَاطِينِهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ
إِنَّمَا فَخِئْشُم مُمْسِكِينَ وَكَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَسْتَهْزِئُ بِهِمْ وَيَمُدُّهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿١٥﴾﴾

“And when they meet those who believe, they say: “We believe,” but when they are alone with their Shayaatin (devils – polytheists, hypocrites, etc.), they say: “Truly, we are with you; verily, we were but mocking. Allah mocks at them and gives them increase in their wrong-doing to wander blindly.”
(Qur’an 2: 14,15)

7) Blending in with their Environment

Regardless of the evils that were rampant in society, Jews did not speak out against them, but instead blended into their environment. Because they tried to appease evil people among themselves and abstained from forbidding one another from evil, Allah ﷻ cursed them in His Noble Book, saying:

﴿لُعِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَلَى لِسَانِ دَاوُدَ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾ كَانُوا لَا يَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَنْ مُنْكَرٍ فَعَلُوهُ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾﴾

“Those among the Children of Israel who disbelieved were cursed by the tongue of Daawood (David) and ‘Iesa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary). That was because they disobeyed (Allah and the Messengers) and were ever transgressing beyond bounds. They used not to forbid one another from the Munkar (wrong, evildoing, sins, polytheism, disbelief, etc.) which they committed. Vile indeed was what they used to do.” (Qur’an 5: 78, 79)

8) Not Benefiting from Knowledge

In the form of a comparison, Allah ﷻ described how the Jews had knowledge with them but did not apply it:

﴿مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ حُمِلُوا التَّوْرَةَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَحْمِلُوهَا كَمَثَلِ الْحِمَارِ يَحْمِلُ أَسْفَارًا بِئْسَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥﴾﴾

“The likeness of those who were entrusted with the (obligation of the) Taurat (Torah) (i.e., to obey its commandments and to practice its legal laws), but who subsequently failed in those (obligations), is as the likeness of a donkey who carries huge burdens of books (but understands nothing from them). How bad is the example (or the likeness) of people who deny the Ayaat (proofs, evidences, Verses, signs, revelations, etc.) of Allah. And Allah guides not the people who are Zaalimoon (polytheists, wrongdoers, disbelievers, etc.).” (Qur’an 62: 5)

9) Hatred and Malice

Entrenched in the souls of Jews is a deep hatred for anyone who is not Jewish. They even hate anything that is non-Jewish, particular if it has any connection with or link to the Prophet ﷺ; for example,

they openly showed their hatred when the *Qiblah* changed and when alcohol became prohibited. 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood ؓ said, "When the Verse that forbade alcohol was revealed, the Jews said, 'Did not your brothers who died used to drink it?'"^[1] Allah ﷻ then revealed the following Verse:

﴿لَيْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا طَعَمُوا إِذَا مَا اتَّقَوْا
وَوَءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا وَءَامَنُوا ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا وَأَحْسَنُوا وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ
الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾ (٩٣)

"Those who believe and do righteous deeds, there is no sin on them for what they ate (in the past), if they fear Allah (by keeping away from His forbidden things), and believe and do righteous deeds, and again fear Allah and believe, and once again fear Allah and do good deeds with Ihsan (perfection). And Allah loves the good-doers." (Qur'an 5: 93)

10) Jealousy

The Jews were jealous of the Prophet ﷺ for having been chosen by Allah ﷻ to be the Seal of all Prophets ﷺ. They thought and hoped that the awaited Prophet ﷺ - whom they knew because he was vividly described in the Torah - would be one of them, so that they could rally around him and use him to defeat their enemies. When they realized that the awaited Prophet ﷺ was not one of them, they were in a state of shock, and their jealousy began to grow; they became jealous of both the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ؓ. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ ④ الَّذِي يُوَسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ
⑤ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ﴾ ⑥

"And from the evil of the witchcrafts when they blow in the

^[1] Refer to *Al-Mustadrak* by Al-Haakim, the Book of Drinks (4/143, 144). Al-Haakim said, "Its chain is authentic," and Adh-Dhahabee concurred.

knots, and from the evil of the envier when he envies." (Qur'an 113: 4, 5)

When, out of their jealousy and rancor, the Jews put a magic spell on him, the Prophet ﷺ would ward off their spell by reciting the last two Chapters of the Qur'an - Soorah Al-Falaq and An-Naas. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَدَّ كَثِيرٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يَرُدُّونَكُمْ مِن بَعْدِ إِيمَانِكُمْ كُفَّارًا حَسَدًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ أَنفُسِهِمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنَّ لَهُمُ الْحَقَّ فَاعْفُوا وَاصْفَحُوا حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٠٩﴾﴾

"Many of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) wish that if they could turn you away as disbelievers after you have believed, out of envy from their own selves, even, after the truth (that Muhammad ﷺ is Allah's Messenger) has become manifest unto them. But forgive and overlook, till Allah brings His Command. Verily, Allah is Able to do all things." (Qur'an 2: 109)

11) Arrogance and Pride

From the very beginning, the Jews were an arrogant people, thinking that they were superior to the people of all other nations and that they were the chosen people of Allah. Paradise, they believed, was exclusively their right and destination. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَقَالُوا لَنْ يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَن كَانَ هُودًا أَوْ نَصْرَىٰ تِلْكَ أَمَانِيُّهُمْ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿١١١﴾﴾

"And they say, "None shall enter Paradise unless he be a Jew or a Christian." These are their own desires. Say (O Muhammad ﷺ), "Produce your proof if you are truthful." (Qur'an 2: 111)

On many occasions, they flaunted their imagined superiority to the Prophet ﷺ. For example, ibn 'Abbaas ؓ said, "No'maan ibn Adaa, Bahree ibn 'Amr and Sha's ibn 'Adee went to the

Messenger of Allah ﷺ and spoke to him, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ spoke to them, inviting them unto Allah ﷻ and warning them about His Wrath. They said, 'What are you frightening us about, O Muhammad? We are the children of Allah and His beloved ones (which is similar to the saying of the Christians).'" Allah ﷻ then revealed these Verses about them:

﴿وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ نَحْنُ أَبْنَاءُ اللَّهِ وَأَحِبُّهُوَ قُلْ فَلِمَ يُعَذِّبُكُمْ بِذُنُوبِكُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ بَشَرٌ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقَ يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٧﴾﴾

"And (both) the Jews and the Christians say: "We are the children of Allah and His loved ones." Say: "Why then does He punish you for your sins?" Nay, you are but human beings, of those He has created, He forgives whom He wills and He punishes whom He wills. And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them, and to Him is the return (of all)." (Qur'an 5: 18)

12) Miserliness

Also from the very beginning, Jews were known for their miserliness and for their refusal to spend their wealth for noble causes. During the Prophet's lifetime, they tried to infect others with their diseased outlook on spending wealth, for they would go to certain men from the *Ansaar* and say to them, "Do not spend your wealth (for good causes), for indeed, we fear that in spending it all of you will become poor. So do not be hasty in spending, for you do not know at what cost you spend (your wealth)."^[1] Allah ﷻ then revealed these Verses about them:

﴿الَّذِينَ يَبْخَلُونَ وَيَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبُخْلِ وَيَكْتُمُونَ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا ﴿٣٧﴾﴾

^[1] Refer to *Diraasaat Fis-Seerah*, pg. 151.

“Those who are miserly and enjoin miserliness on other men and hide what Allah has bestowed upon them of His Bounties. And We have prepared for the disbelievers a disgraceful torment.”
(Qur’an 4: 37)

“And hide what Allah has bestowed upon them” refers to those passages of the Torah that confirm the Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ. And in another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَمَاذَا عَلَيْهِمْ لَوْ ءَامَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَأَنْفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِهِمْ عَلِيمًا ۝٣٩﴾

“And what loss have they if they had believed in Allah and in the Last Day, and they spend out of what Allah has given them for sustenance? And Allah is Ever All-Knower of them.”
(Qur’an 4: 39)

13) Intransigence

To be stubborn is to be inflexible, yet it is hoped that a stubborn person, upon being shown incontrovertible evidence, will eventually accept the truth. Someone who is intransigent, on the other hand, is a person who is irreconcilable: No matter how clear the truth becomes to him, he refuses to accept it. And as such, the Jews were intransigent, for they themselves knew the Prophet ﷺ when they saw him for the first time better than they knew their own children, for a detailed description of him ﷺ was given in the Torah. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَيْنَ آتَيْتَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ بِكُلِّ آيَةٍ مَا تَبِعُوا قِبْلَتَكَ وَمَا أَنْتَ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَتَهُمْ وَمَا بَعْضُهُمْ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَةَ بَعْضٍ وَلَئِنِ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِنَّكَ إِذًا لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ۝٤٥﴾

“And even if you were to bring to the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) all the Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), they would not follow your Qiblah (prayer direction), nor are you going to follow their Qiblah

(prayer direction). And they will not follow each other's Qiblah (prayer direction). Verily, if you follow their desires after that which you have received of knowledge (from Allah), then indeed you will be one of the Zaalimoon (polytheists, wrongdoers, etc.)." (Qur'an 2: 145)

Part of the meaning of this Verse is: O Muhammad, even if you present to them one-hundred proofs, they will still not believe. And so the following Verse certainly applies to them:

﴿قُلْ أَنْظَرُوا مَاذَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا تُغْنِي الْآيَاتُ وَالنُّذُرُ عَنْ قَوْمٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾ (١١)

"Say: "Behold all that is in the heavens and the earth," but neither Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) nor warners benefit those who believe not." (Qur'an 10: 101)

Did The Jews Abide By The Terms Of The Agreement They Made With The Prophet ﷺ?

The terms of the agreement that the Prophet ﷺ made with the Jews of Al-Madeenah represented a major part of the hitherto discussed constitution. Under the terms of the constitution, Jews were guaranteed a free and noble life under the banner of the newly-formed Islamic country. They had the right to worship as they pleased, and they enjoyed not only prosperity and freedom, but also safety, for if anyone attacked them, Muslims were morally and legally bound to defend them.

But none of this consoled or pleased the Jews; they did not live up to the terms of the agreement, at first showing envy and minor rebelliousness and eventually attempting to kill the Prophet ﷺ and support invading armies against their Muslim neighbours. And so in the end, each of the three Jewish tribes of Al-Madeenah was soon punished for its betrayal and treachery - which we will study in more detail in later chapters, *In Sha Allah*. In the

following Verse, Allah ﷻ pointed to how Jews are when it comes to fulfilling their covenants:

﴿الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتَ مِنْهُمْ ثُمَّ يَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَهُمْ فِي كُلِّ مَرَّةٍ وَهُمْ لَا يَتَّقُونَ﴾
 ﴿٥٦﴾

“They are those with whom you made a covenant, but they break their covenant every time and they do not fear Allah.” (Qur’an 8: 56)

5

“And If Allah Did Not Check One Set Of People By Means Of Another, The Earth Would Indeed Be Full Of Mischief”

The Universal Law Of Checking One Set Of People By Means Of Another

We have hitherto discussed in this book some of the universal laws of Allah ﷻ - constant laws by which Allah ﷻ rules and governs all that exists. According to the dictates of one such law, no nation is allowed to wreak havoc on earth and remain in power indefinitely; instead, Allah ﷻ always sends another nation to keep the first in check. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَوْلَا دَفَعُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ لَفَسَدَتِ الْأَرْضُ
وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٥١﴾﴾

“And if Allah did not check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief. But Allah is full of Bounty to the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists).”
(Qur’an 2: 251)

And in another Verse, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿الَّذِينَ أَخْرَجُوا مِنْ دِينِهِمْ بغيرِ حَقِّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ وَلَوْلَا
دَفَعُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ لَفَسَدَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٥١﴾﴾

يُذَكَّرُ فِيهَا اسْمُ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

“Those who have been expelled from their homes unjustly only because they said : “Our Lord is Allah.” – For had it not been that Allah checks one set of people by means of another, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, wherein the Name of Allah is mentioned much would surely have been pulled down. Verily, Allah will help those who help His (Cause). Truly, Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty.” (Qur’an 22: 40)

If a Muslim is to live in harmony with this law, he must not allow falsehood to reign supreme on earth; rather, he must struggle against falsehood and put evildoers in check, which is why, when the command to fight was revealed, the Prophet ﷺ immediately began to prepare his Companions ﷺ to take on the Quraish.

It is interesting to note that the above-mentioned Verse from *Soorah Al-Baqarah* is preceded by an example of the age-old struggle between truth and falsehood. That example involved the war that took place between Taaloot along with his believing soldiers and Jaaloot along with his followers. Allah ﷻ ended the Verse by saying:

﴿وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

“But Allah is full of Bounty to the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists).”

Allah thus made it clear that warding off corruption by means of putting nations in check is a blessing that comprehensively benefits all people. And in the second Verse – from *Soorah Al-Hajj* – after first announcing that He ﷻ protects his obedient slaves and gives them permission to fight their enemies, Allah ﷻ ends the Verse by establishing an important principle:

﴿وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ﴾

“Verily, Allah will help those who help His (Cause). Truly,

Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty."

The Prophet's Companions ﷺ understood this law, knowing fully well that in order to destroy falsehood and those who promote falsehood, a nation, endowed with good leadership and correct morals, must rise up to the challenge. In short, the above-mentioned universal law of keeping nations in check required the legislation of fighting – the legislation of *Jihaad*, which will remain obligatory upon Muslims until the Day of Resurrection.

Like many other duties in Islam, fighting was legislated in stages. The first stage did not even involve fighting; it was a stage during which Muslims, who for the most part lived in Makkah, were simply required to be wary of the enemy – and not to fight back. When certain Muslims asked the Prophet ﷺ permission to fight during that stage, he ﷺ responded, "Be patient, for indeed, I have not been commanded to fight."^[1]

In the second stage, Muslims were given permission to fight, though fighting was not made obligatory upon them. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلِمُوا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾﴾

"Permission to fight is given to those (i.e., believers against disbelievers), who are fighting them, (and) because they (believers) have been wronged, and surely, Allah is Able to give them (believers) victory." (Qur'an 22: 39)

In the third stage, it became obligatory upon Muslims to fight those who fought them. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿١٩٠﴾﴾

"And fight in the Way of Allah those who fight you, but transgress not the limits. Truly, Allah likes not the transgressors." (Qur'an 2: 190)

^[1] Refer to *Tafseer Al-Aaloosee* (6/108).

And finally, in stage four, it became obligatory upon Muslims to fight the polytheists collectively. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَقَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَافَّةً كَمَا يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ كَافَّةً وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ﴾ (36)

“And fight against the Mushrikoon (polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah) collectively, as they fight against you collectively. But know that Allah is with those who are Al-Muttaqoon (the pious).” (Qur’an 9: 36)

When it came to fighting, this gradual progress of legislation was needed considering the situation of the newly-formed Islamic country. Muslims needed time to train, to increase in numbers, and to acquire more and better military equipment. At first, Muslims were given the option of standing up to the Quraish, a tribe that had constantly persecuted Muslims for many years and that had just usurped a great deal of wealth that emigrating Muslims had left behind in Makkah. Fighting was a choice and not an obligation; the obligation to fight came later on, when Islam grew stronger in Al-Madeenah, and its enemies grew fiercer abroad.

Another reason why Muslims were at first given a choice to fight is that they were challenging the Quraish outside of Makkah – by attempting to overtake the Makkan trading caravan that was headed by Abu Sufyaan. But when Muslims were threatened within their own city (Al-Madeenah), they were no longer given a choice, but were instead required to fight, in accordance with the terms of the Second Pledge of Al-‘Aqabah, in which the *Ansaar* pledged to defend Islam and the Prophet ﷺ.

As soon as the command to fight was revealed, the Prophet ﷺ began to prepare his Companions ﷺ, training them in the various arts of war. He ﷺ even fully participated with them not just in training but in actual battles as well. And he ﷺ made it clear that fighting for the cause of Islam is one of the best and noblest acts of worship a person can perform. In short, the Prophet ﷺ applied the following saying of Allah ﷻ:

﴿وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَمِنْ رِبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ تُرْهَبُونَ 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)

In developing strong Muslim fighters, the Prophet ﷺ relied on mainly two methods: First, the giving of spiritual guidance and incentive; and second, actual, physical training.

1) Spiritual Guidance and giving the Incentive to Fight

The Prophet ﷺ strove to raise the morale of his Companions ﷺ, promising them that, if they fought sincerely for the sake of Allah ﷻ, they would achieve one of two ends: Victory or Paradise (through martyrdom). From that time onward, Muslims have entered into battle knowing that, if they do what is Islamically required of them, they will achieve one of those two noble ends. And so, in order to achieve those ends, the Prophet’s Companions ﷺ spent all of their energy and employed all of their skill whenever they entered into battle. Encouraging his Companions ﷺ to perform *Jihaad*, the Prophet ﷺ once said, “By the One Who has my soul in His Hand, had it not been for some men who are believers and whose souls are not content to stay behind from me (when I go out to do battle), and had it not been for the fact that I cannot find anything (i.e., any riding animal) upon which to carry them, I would not have remained behind from any (military) unit that goes out in the Way of Allah. And by the One Who has my soul in His Hand, I indeed hope that I am killed in the way of Allah and am then brought back to life, and that I am then again killed (in the way of Allah) and am then

brought back to life, and that I am then again killed (in the way of Allah) and am then brought back to life, and that I am then again killed (in the way of Allah).”^[1] And according to another narration, the Prophet ﷺ said, “No one enters Paradise and then loves to return to the world, not having anything that is his on earth, except for the martyr: He wishes to return to the world so that he can be killed (in the way of Allah) ten times, because of what he sees in terms of (the) honour (that is bestowed upon the martyr).”^[2]

2) Physical Training

Thrusting with a spear, striking with a sword, shooting with a bow and arrow, and riding on a horse – these are some of the skills of war that the Prophet ﷺ encouraged his Companions to learn. It is related that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Whoever learns archery and then abandons it is not from us [or he ﷺ said, ‘then he has indeed disobeyed (my command).’].”^[3] Here, the Prophet ﷺ reminds all Muslims, even older men (for they are prone to forgetting what they had previously learned), that they must not only train, but also maintain the skills they learn through training – in terms of being active and being able to hit a target. On one occasion, the Prophet ﷺ said, “And make ready against them all you can of power: Lo! Verily, power is archery (firing arrows). Lo! Verily, power is archery.”^[4]

Muslims are commanded to spiritually and physically prepare for battle, and to take all necessary precautions before they fight. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا خُدُوعًا فَحَذَرُكُمْ فَانْفِرُوا ثُبَاتٍ أَوْ اَنْفِرُوا جَمِيعًا ﴿٧١﴾﴾

[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of *Jihaad* and *Siyar*, chapter “Hoping for Martyrdom”; *Hadeeth* number: 2797.

[2] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of *Jihaad* and *Siyar*, chapter “The Mujaahid Wishes to Return to this World”; *Hadeeth* number: 2817.

[3] *Saheeh Muslim* (1919).

[4] *Saheeh Muslim* (1919).

“O you who believe! Take your precautions, and either go forth (on an expedition) in parties, or go forth all together.” (Qur’an 4: 71)

Based on this Verse and the above-mentioned Verse from *Soorah Al-Anfaal* (Qur’an 8: 60), it becomes clear that Muslims are commanded to take all necessary precautions against their enemies and to make all necessary preparations for war. What is interesting here is that Allah ﷻ gave a general command to prepare for war and to take precautions, without going into specific examples or situations. This is because times change, weapons change, and the situation of the enemy – the enemy’s strength and numbers – constantly changes.

Jihaad for the Prophet’s Companions ﷺ was a process through which they purified their souls. In battle, they had to sacrifice their lives, but they knew that, if their souls were not purified and if their intentions were not sincere, they would be punished rather than rewarded for their feats on the battlefield. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Verily, the first person against whom Judgment will be passed on the Day of Resurrection is a man who had been martyred. He will be brought (forward), and He (i.e., Allah ﷻ) will tell him about His blessings (upon him), and he will acknowledge them. He ﷻ will say, ‘Then what did you do for them (i.e., to show thankfulness for them)?’ He will say, ‘I fought for You until I became martyred.’ He (i.e., Allah ﷻ) will say, ‘You have lied; instead you fought so that it could be said: (what) a brave person. That has indeed been said [about you (and so that is your reward)].’ Then instructions will be given regarding him, and he will be dragged on his face until he is thrown into the Hellfire. And (also among the first to be judged is) a man who learned knowledge, taught it, and recited the Qur’an. He will be brought (forward), and He (i.e., Allah ﷻ) will inform him about His blessings (which He had bestowed upon him), and he will acknowledge them. He will say, ‘Then what did you do for them?’ The man will say, ‘I learned knowledge and taught it, and I recited the Qur’an for You.’ He (i.e., Allah ﷻ) will say, ‘You have lied; instead you learned knowledge so that it could be said: (He

is) a scholar. And you recited the Qur'an so that it could be said: (He is) a *Qaari* (reciter), and (all of) that has been said.' Then instructions will be given regarding him, and he will be dragged upon his face until he is thrown into the Hellfire. And (also among the first to be judged is) a man, whom Allah was generous towards, having given him from every single kind of wealth. He will be brought forward, and He (Allah) will inform him about His blessings (which He had bestowed upon him), and he will acknowledge them. He (i.e., Allah) will say, 'Then what did you do for them?' He will say, 'I did not leave any cause which You love that (people) should spend on it, except that I spent (my wealth) on it for You.' He (i.e., Allah) will say, 'You have lied, but instead you did that so that it could be said: (He is) generous! And that has indeed been said (of you).' Instructions will then be given regarding him, and he will be dragged on his face until he is thrown into the Hellfire."^[1]

For the reasons mentioned in this *Hadeeth*, the Companions ﷺ strove to perform *Jihaad* for the sake of Allah ﷻ, hoping for His reward and fearing His punishment. When they spoke, they spoke for Allah; and when they spent their wealth or fought in the cause of Allah ﷻ, they did so seeking Allah's Pleasure. Therefore, by fighting in the way of Allah ﷻ, the Companions ﷺ reaped the fruit of purifying their souls, not just in terms of their intentions, but in the following respects as well:

a) Freeing the Self from Attachment to this Life

As much as anything else, purification of the soul involves freeing the soul from attachment to this life, so that it instead becomes attached to the life of the Hereafter. What better practically achieves this aim than *Jihaad*, in the performance of which one knows that death is a strong possibility? Through fighting in the way of Allah, one abstains from looking back at this world, instead being preoccupied with looking forward to the Hereafter and to Paradise.

^[1] *Saheeh Muslim* (1905).

The Mujaahid (one who fights in the way of Allah) sells his soul to Allah ﷻ, seeking thereby His Pleasure. It is Allah ﷻ Who grants life, and then He ﷻ honours the Mujaahid by buying what He ﷻ blessed him with in the first place. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَىٰ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ بِآتٍ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةُ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ وَعَدَا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ وَالْقُرْآنِ وَمَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِعَهْدِهِ مِنَ اللَّهِ فَاسْتَبْشِرُوا بِبَيْعِكُمُ الَّذِي بَايَعْتُمْ بِهِ وَذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿١١١﴾﴾
 الْحَمِيدُونَ السَّخِيحُونَ الرَّاكِعُونَ السَّاجِدُونَ الْأَمْرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّهْيِ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَالْحَافِظُونَ لِحُدُودِ اللَّهِ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١٢﴾﴾

“Verily, Allah has purchased of the believers their lives and their properties; for the price that theirs shall be the Paradise. They fight in Allah’s Cause, so they kill (others) and are killed. It is a promise in truth which is binding on Him in the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel) and the Qur’an. And who is truer to his covenant than Allah? Then rejoice in the bargain which you have concluded. That is the supreme success. (The believers whose lives Allah has purchased are) those who repent to Allah (from polytheism and hypocrisy, etc.), who worship Him, who praise Him, who fast (or go out in Allah’s Cause), who bow down (in prayer), who prostrate themselves (in prayer), who enjoin (people) for Al-Ma’roof (i.e., Islamic Monotheism and all what Islam has ordained) and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e., disbelief, polytheism of all kinds and all that Islam has forbidden), and who observe the limits set by Allah (do all that Allah has ordained and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which Allah has forbidden). And give glad tidings to the believers.”
 (Qur’an 9: 111, 112)

b) Practically training one’s Soul to make Sacrifices

Based on what they learned from the Prophet ﷺ, the Companions ﷺ believed with certainty that Paradise is surrounded by that which

one dislikes – i.e., duties that are difficult to perform. Paradise is not achieved through giving one's body comfort and rest; to the contrary, one must accustom one's body and soul to hardship and deprivation, so that it becomes strong enough to pass the many tests of this life. And from the Noble Qur'an, the Companions ﷺ learned that Allah ﷻ, according to His infinite Wisdom, decreed that human beings are put to trial in this life, so that those who believe and shine and strive and make sacrifices can be distinguished from those of lesser mettle. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِن يَمَسَّكُمْ فَرْحٌ فَقَدْ مَسَّ الْقَوْمَ فَرْحٌ مِّثْلُهُ وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ
 نُدَّوِلْهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ وَاللَّهُ
 لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾ وَلِيَمَحَّصَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَيَمْحَقَ الْكٰفِرِينَ ﴿٤١﴾ أَمْ
 حَسِبْتُمْ أَن تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ الصَّابِرِينَ
 ﴿٤٢﴾ وَلَقَدْ كُنتُمْ تَمَنَّوْنَ الْمَوْتَ مِن قَبْلِ أَن تَلْقَوْهُ فَقَدْ رَأَيْتُمُوهُ وَأَنْتُمْ نٰظِرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾﴾

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

c) With *Jihaad* comes honour

Striving in the way of Allah ﷻ – the Companions ﷺ both knew and believed – enables a Muslim to strengthen his soul and increase his degree of honour. Allah ﷻ clarified to them in the

Noble Qur'an that the believer is honourable and that he derives his honour from his faith in Allah ﷻ and his adherence to Islam.

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿ يَقُولُونَ لَئِن رَّجَعْنَا إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ لِيُخْرِجَنَّ الْأَعَزُّ مِنَهَا الْأَذَلَّ وَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُولِهِ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَكِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ۝٨ ﴾

“They (hypocrites) say: “If we return to Al-Madeenah, indeed the more honourable (‘Abdullah bin Ubai bin Salool, the chief of hypocrites at Al-Madeenah) will expel therefrom the meaner (i.e. Allah’s Messenger ﷺ).” But honour, power and glory belong to Allah, His Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), and to the believers, but the hypocrites know not.” (Qur’an 63: 8)

But as soon as a Muslim forsakes his religion and *Jihaad* and becomes preoccupied with the world, he loses his honour and ends up debasing his own self. The Prophet ﷺ said, “If you trade in *Al-‘Eenah* (*Al-‘Eenah* refers to when a man buys merchandise for someone else and then buys it from him for a lesser price), if you take to the tails of cows (i.e., if you use livestock to till and irrigate your land, becoming very much preoccupied in that endeavour), if you are satisfied with planting, and if you forsake *Jihaad*, Allah will set humiliation upon you, and He will not remove it until you return to your religion.”^[1] It is feared that if a person makes the world the limit of his knowledge, his main concern, and his main preoccupation for which he works, without doing anything else or thinking about anything else, then the following saying of Allah ﷻ applies to him:

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا وَرَضُوا بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاطْمَأَنَّنُوا بِهَا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا غَافِلُونَ ۝٧ أُولَٰئِكَ مَا لَهُمْ نَارٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ۝٨ ﴾

“Verily, those who hope not for their meeting with Us, but are pleased and satisfied with the life of the present world, and those

^[1] Abu Daawood, the Book of Transactions, chapter “The Prohibition of *Al-‘Eenah*”; *Hadeeth* number: 3462. And it is an authentic *Hadeeth*.

who are heedless of Our Ayaat (proofs, evidences, Verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), those, their abode will be the Fire, because of what they used to earn." (Qur'an 10: 7, 8)

And the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever dies without fighting (in the way of Allah) and without saying to his soul that he intends to do so, dies upon one of the branches of hypocrisy."^[1] The Prophet's Companions ﷺ performed *Jihaad* in all of its forms, which is why they were given the glad tidings that are mentioned in the following Verse:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِيْنَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾﴾

"As for those who strive hard in Us (Our Cause), We will surely guide them to Our Paths (i.e., Allah's religion – Islamic Monotheism). And verily, Allah is with the Muhsinoon (good-doers)." (Qur'an 29: 69)

Some Of The Goals Of Performing *Jihaad* In The Way Of Allah ﷺ

1) Protecting the Freedom to Believe in Islam

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلَّهِ فَإِنِ
أَنْتَهُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ
مَوْلَانَكُمْ نَعِمَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَنَعِمَ النَّصِيرُ ﴿٤٠﴾﴾

"And fight them until there is no more Fitnah (disbelief and polytheism: i.e., worshipping others besides Allah) and the religion (worship) will all be for Allah Alone (in the whole of the world). But if they cease (worshipping others besides Allah), then certainly, Allah is All-Seer of what they do. And if they turn away, then know that Allah is your Maula (Patron, Lord,

^[1] Saheeh Muslim (1910).

Protector and Supporter, etc.), (what) an Excellent Maula, and (what) an Excellent Helper!" (Qur'an 8: 39, 40)

Sayyid Qutub wrote in *Fee Dhilaal-al-Qur'an*:

"There is another duty that is required of Muslims: It is to destroy any power or enemy that stands in the way of the *Da'wah* (the propagation of Islam), that takes away from people the freedom to spread Islam, that threatens people's freedom to embrace the Islamic creed, and that puts people to trial in that way. Muslims must continue to fight until no worldly power puts Muslims to test in their faith. This in no way means that people should be forced to have faith; rather, it means Allah's religion reigns supreme on earth, so that if a person wants to enter into the fold of Islam, he should have no reason to fear doing so, and he should not fear that any power on earth will prevent him from embracing Allah's religion or from spreading it. Within the limits of these general principles, *Jihaad* was legislated in Islam. Therefore, *Jihaad* is a struggle for beliefs, a fight to stop those who want to besiege Islam."^[1]

2) Protecting Places of Worship and Religious Symbols

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُدْفِعُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ خَوَّانٍ كَفُورٍ ﴿٣٨﴾ أذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ
يُقْتُلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلَمُوا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ
بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ لَفَسَدَتِ
صَوَامِعُ وَبِيَعٌ وَصَلَوَاتٌ وَمَسَاجِدُ يُذَكَّرُ فِيهَا اسْمُ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ
﴿٤٠﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٤٠﴾ الَّذِينَ إِنْ مَكَّنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوْا
الزَّكَاةَ وَأَمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَلِلَّهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ ﴿٤١﴾﴾

"Truly, Allah defends those who believe. Verily! Allah likes not any treacherous ingrate to Allah [those who disobey Allah but

^[1] *Fee Dhilaal-al-Qur'an* (1/187).

obey Shaitaan (Satan)]. Permission to fight is given to those (i.e., believers against disbelievers), who are fighting them, (and) because they (believers) have been wronged, and surely, Allah is Able to give them (believers) victory. Those who have been expelled from their homes unjustly only because they said : "Our Lord is Allah." – For had it not been that Allah checks one set of people by means of another, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, wherein the Name of Allah is mentioned much would surely have been pulled down. Verily, Allah will help those who help His (Cause). Truly, Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty. Those (Muslim rulers) who, if We give them power in the land, (they) order for Iqamat-as-Salaat [i.e., to perform the five compulsory congregational Salaat (prayers) (the males in mosques)], to pay the Zakaat and they enjoin Ma'roof (i.e., Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do), and forbid Al-Munkar (i.e., disbelief, polytheism, and all that Islam has forbidden) [i.e., they make the Qur'an as the law of their country in all the spheres of all life]. And with Allah rests the end of (all) matters (of creatures)." (Qur'an 22: 38-41)

Commenting on Allah's saying, "For had it not been that Allah checks one set of people by means of another, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, wherein the Name of Allah is mentioned much would surely have been pulled down," An-Nasafee (may Allah have mercy on him) said, "This means: Had not Allah ﷻ made Muslims victorious over the disbelievers through a struggle on their part, the polytheists would have subjugated the adherents of different religions and destroyed their houses of worship. The monasteries and churches of Christians would not have been spared; synagogues would have been leveled to the ground; and *Masjids* would also have been destroyed. Or the polytheists would have come out victorious over the Muslims and over those who were under their protection – the Jews. And they would have destroyed the houses of worship of both Islam and Judaism."

3) Overcoming Corruption and Injustice on Earth

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَمَّا بَرَزُوا لِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا
وَتَقَاتِلْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٢٥٠﴾ فَهَزَمُوهُمْ بِإِذْنِ
اللَّهِ وَقَتَلَ دَاوُدُ جَالُوتَ وَءَاتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَهُ مِمَّا
يَشَاءُ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ لَفَسَدَتِ الْأَرْضُ
وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٥١﴾ تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ تَتْلُوهَا
عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٢٥٢﴾﴾

“And when they advanced to meet Jaaloot (Goliath) and his forces, they invoked: “Our Lord! Pour forth on us patience and make us victorious over the disbelieving people.” So they routed them by Allah’s Leave and Daawood (David) killed Jaaloot (Goliath), and his forces, they invoked: “Our Lord! Pour forth on us patience and make us victorious over the disbelieving people.” So they routed them by Allah’s Leave and Daawood (David) killed Jaaloot (Goliath), and Allah gave him [Daawood (David)] the kingdom [after the death of Taaloot (Saul) and Samuel] and Al-Hikmah (Prophethood), and taught him of that which He willed. And if Allah did not check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief. But Allah is full of Bounty to the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists). These are the Verses of Allah, We recite them to you (O Muhammad ﷺ) in truth, and surely, you are one of the Messengers (of Allah).” (Qur’an 2: 250-252)

In his Tafseer (explanation) of Allah’s saying:

﴿وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ لَفَسَدَتِ الْأَرْضُ﴾

“And if Allah did not check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief,”

ibn Katheer (may Allah have mercy on him) said, “Had not Allah

checked one set of people by means of another, as He ﷺ had defended the Children of Israel with the fighting of Taaloot and the bravery of Daawood, they (the people of a given time or given nation) would have been destroyed (by the mischief-spreading party or nation).”^[1]

The author of *Al-Kashshaaf* said that the above-mentioned Verse means: “Were it not that Allah checks one set of people by means of another the evil-doers would always come out victorious, the earth would become corrupted, and its growth and prosperity would come to a grinding halt.”^[2]

And Shaikh ‘Abdur-Rahmaan As-Sa’dee said in his *Tafseer*, “Indeed, this Verse contains many lessons for the Islamic nation; among them are the merits, benefits, and fruits of *Jihaad* in the way of Allah; the lesson that *Jihaad* is the only means to preserve one’s religion, one’s country, one’s body, and one’s wealth; the moral that, even if life becomes difficult for the Mujaahid (one who fights in the way of Allah), his end destination is good and blessed; and the lesson that those who abstain from *Jihaad*, even if they find short-term comfort now, will later pay the price with an interminable period of fatigue.”^[3]

4) Testing, Training, and Improving the Spiritual Mettle of Believers

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَضَرْبَ الرِّقَابِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَتَخْتَمُوهُمْ فَشُدُّوا الْوَتَاقَ فَإِمَّا مَأْ
بَعْدُ وَإِمَّا فِدَاءً حَتَّىٰ تَضَعَ الْحَرْبُ أَوْزَارَهَا ذَٰلِكَ وَلَوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ لَآنْتَصَرَ مِنْهُمْ وَلَٰكِن
لِّيَبْلُوَ بَعْضَكُمْ بِبَعْضٍ وَالَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَلَنْ يُضِلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ۝٤ سَيِّدِيهِمْ
وَيُضِلُّهُم بِأَنفُسِهِمْ ۝٥ وَيُدْخِلُهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ عَرَّفَهَا لَهُمْ ۝٦﴾

^[1] *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* (1/262).

^[2] *Tafseer Al-Khashshaaf*(1/382) and *Tafseer Abu As-Sa’ood* (1/245).

^[3] *Tafseer As-Sa’dee* (1/309).

“So, when you meet (in fighting – Jihaad in Allah’s Cause), those who disbelieve smite at their necks till when you have killed and wounded many of them, then bind a bond firmly (on them, i.e., take them as captives). Thereafter (is the time) either for generosity (i.e., free them without ransom), or ransom (according to what benefits Islam), until the war lays down its burden. Thus [you are ordered by Allah to continue in carrying out Jihaad against the disbelievers till they embrace Islam (i.e., are saved from the punishment in the Hell-fire) or at least come under your protection], but if it had been Allah’s Will, He Himself could certainly have punished them (without you). But (He lets you fight), in order to test you, some with others. But those who are killed in the Way of Allah, He will never let their deeds be lost, He will guide them and set right their state. And admit them to Paradise which He has made known to them (i.e., they will know their places in Paradise more than they used to know their houses in the world).” (Qur’an 47: 4-6)

In regard to Allah’s saying, “But (He lets you fight), in order to test you, some with others,” ibn Katheer commented in his *Tafseer*: “This means: Allah ﷻ has legislated *Jihaad* and fighting your enemies in order to test you and to test your mettle.” Similarly in *Soorah Aal-’Imraan*, Allah ﷻ mentioned the wisdom behind the legislation of *Jihaad*, saying:

﴿أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ
الصَّابِرِينَ﴾ (١٤٢)

“Do you think that you will enter Paradise before Allah tests those of you who fought (in His Cause) and (also) tests those who are As-Saabireen (the patient ones etc.)?” (Qur’an 3: 142)

A test though it may be, and as unappealing as it may be, fighting in the way of Allah ﷻ is a blessing for believers; it is in their own best interests. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهُ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ

لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢١٦﴾

“Jihaad (holy fighting in Allah’s Cause) is ordained for you (Muslims) though you dislike it, and it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you and that you like a thing which is bad for you. Allah knows but you do not know.” (Qur’an 2: 216)

Through *Jihaad*, Allah ﷻ tests believers and trains them. In regard to *Jihaad* being a test, believers are asked to sacrifice that which is dearest to all people – their very lives and souls. As for the training the believers undergo through *Jihaad*, they are constantly required to remove all worldly desires and ambitions from their souls, for their sole concern is to raise the Word of Allah ﷻ above all else. With this single-minded attitude, the *Mujaahid* purifies his soul from all forms of impurities and deficiencies – such as extravagant lust, jealousy, pride, etc. With each battle and with each foray, the *Mujaahid* becomes nobler in character.

5) Threatening the Polytheists and Foiling Their Evil Plots

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَمِنْ رِبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ تُرْهَبُونَ بِهِ ۚ عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ وَءَاخِرِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَهُمُ 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)

He ﷻ also said:

﴿قَاتِلُوهُمْ يُعَذِّبَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ وَيُخْزِهِمْ وَيَنْصَرِكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَيُشْفِئ

صُدُّورَ قَوْمٍ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٤﴾ وَيُذْهِبَ غَيْظَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَيَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَنْ يَشَاءُ
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٥﴾

“Fight against them so that Allah will punish them by your hands and disgrace them and give you victory over them and heal the breast of a believing people, and remove the anger of their (believers’) hearts. Allah accepts the repentance of whom He wills. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.” (Qur’an 9: 14, 15)

And He ﷺ also said:

﴿فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَىٰ وَلِيُبْلِيَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْهُ بَلَاءً حَسَنًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧﴾ ذَٰلِكُمْ
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ مُوهِنٌ كَيْدِ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٨﴾﴾

“You killed them not, but Allah killed them. And you (Muhammad ﷺ) threw not when you did throw but Allah threw, that He might test the believers by a fair trial from Him. Verily, Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower. This (is the fact) and surely, Allah weakens the deceitful plots of the disbelievers.” (Qur’an 8: 17, 18)

6) Exposing the Hypocrites

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَىٰ مَا أَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ حَتَّىٰ يَمِيزَ الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُظْلِمَكُمْ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَجْتَبِيٰ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ
فَتَأْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَإِنْ تُؤْمِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَلَكُمْ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٧٩﴾﴾

“Allah will not leave the believers in the state in which you are now, until He distinguishes the wicked from the good. Nor will Allah disclose to you the secrets of the Ghaib (unseen), but Allah chooses of His Messengers whom He pleases. So believe in Allah and His Messengers. And if you believe and fear Allah, then for you there is a great reward.” (Qur’an 3: 179)

“Commenting on this Verse, ibn Katheer said, “There must be some ordeal through which Allah brings out (the goodness of) his obedient slave and exposes His enemy; and through which the patient believer is distinguished from the evildoing hypocrite. This refers to the Day of Uhud, during which Allah tested the believers. Their faith, patience, forbearance, steadfastness, and obedience to Allah and to His Messenger ﷺ - these qualities became manifest in them on that Day. Meanwhile, the veil covering the reality of the hypocrites was lifted, so that their opposition, their escaping from *Jihaad*, and their disloyalty to Allah and to His Messenger ﷺ all became manifest.

7) Establishing Allah’s Rule on Earth

To be sure, one of the goals of *Jihaad* is to establish Allah’s rule on earth. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿ إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِمَا أَرَبَكَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَكُنَ لِلْخَائِبِينَ حَصِيمًا ﴿١٥﴾ ﴾

“Surely, We have sent down to you (O Muhammad ﷺ) the Book (this Qur’an) in truth that you might judge between men by that which Allah has shown you (i.e., has taught you through Divine Inspiration), so be not a pleader for the treacherous.” (Qur’an 4: 105)

8) Defending against enemy Aggression

In Islam, one of the goals of *Jihaad* is to defend against enemy aggression or attack, which can take on various forms, among which are the following:

a) For disbelievers to attack and persecute, within their own lands, Muslims who live among them

This is especially difficult for Muslims if they are not able to move to another country in which they can safely and freely practice their religion. When such an instance of oppression occurs, it is incumbent upon the Islamic country of that era to gather an army

to attack the polytheists that are persecuting their Muslim brothers. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿فَلْيُقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يَشْرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ
وَمَنْ يُقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيُقْتَلْ أَوْ يَغْلِبْ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧٤﴾
وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ الَّذِينَ
يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا
وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ نَصِيرًا ﴿٧٥﴾﴾

“Let those (believers) who sell the life of this world for the Hereafter fight in the Cause of Allah, and whosoever fights in the Cause of Allah, and is killed or gets victory, We shall bestow on him a great reward. And what is wrong with you that you fight not in the Cause of Allah, and for those weak, ill-treated and oppressed among men, women, and children, whose cry is: “Our Lord! Rescue us from this town whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from You one who will protect, and raise for us from You one who will help.” (Qur’an 4: 74, 75)

Commenting on this Verse, Imam Al-Qurtubee (may Allah have mercy on him) said, “This is an exhortation to perform *Jihaad*, which involves saving weak (Muslims) from the hands of disbelievers and polytheists, those who inflict upon them harsh torture and punishment, in order to tempt them away from Islam. Allah ﷻ made *Jihaad* obligatory to raise His Word (above all else), to grant victory to His religion (and its adherents), and to save those among his believing slaves who are weak (and unable to defend themselves), either with arms or with wealth.”^[1]

b) For disbelievers to leave their homeland and attack Muslims in their lands

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا

^[1] Tafseer Al-Qurtubee (5/279).

يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿١٩٠﴾ وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ تَقْبَلُوهُمْ وَأَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِّنْ حَيْثُ أَخْرَجْتُمُوهُمْ
وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ وَلَا تَقْبَلُوهُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ حَتَّىٰ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِيهِ فَإِن
قَاتَلُوكُمْ فَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ كَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْكٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٩١﴾ فَإِنِ انْتَهَوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٩٢﴾

“And fight in the Way of Allah those who fight you, but transgress not the limits. Truly, Allah likes not the transgressors. [This Verse is the first one that was revealed in connection with Jihaad, but it was supplemented by another (9 : 36)]. And kill them wherever you find them, and turn them out from where they have turned you out. And Al-Fitnah is worse than killing. And fight not with them at Al-Masjid-al-Haram (the sanctuary at Makkah), unless they (first) fight you there. But if they attack you, then kill them. Such is the recompense of the disbelievers. But if they cease, then Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Qur’an 2: 190-192)

Islamic jurists agree that if disbelievers attack the lands of Muslims, Muslims must perform *Jihaad* and defend their lands, for whenever disbelievers win battles and become occupiers, they inflict great punishment upon the occupied Muslims and change the laws of the land from Islamic Law to whatever man-made laws it is that they follow. ibn Qudaamah (may Allah have mercy on him) said, “*Jihaad* is obligatory in three situations, the second of which occurs when disbelievers attack a given country. The citizens of that country must fight them and drive them out of their lands.”^[1]

Some scholars from the *Hanafee Madhhab* have said, “If it is feared that any given place will be attacked by the enemy, the *Imam* (i.e., the leader of the Muslims) or the inhabitants of that place must protect it. If they are not able to withstand the enemy, it becomes incumbent upon those that are closest to them (such as those who live in a neighbouring land) to help them until there are sufficient numbers (or sufficient weaponry) to resist the enemy.”^[2]

[1] Refer to *Al-Mughnee* (9/279).

[2] Refer to *Haashiyah Ibn ‘Aabideen* (4/124).

c) For the enemy to oppress its own disbelieving citizens

Verily, Allah ﷻ has forbidden His slaves from wrongdoing and oppression; all people have the right to justice. If Muslims do not help the oppressed and weak, though they are able to do so, they are committing a sin, since they have been commanded to perform *Jihaad* in order to uphold the truth, vanquish falsehood, spread justice, and bring an end to oppression. Only if they do those things can they achieve success. When Allah ﷻ praised Muslims for being the best of nations, He ﷻ explained that they deserve that praise because they enjoin good and forbid evil – and spreading justice is a part of enjoining good and forbidding evil. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿كَذَابِ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ كَذَبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا فَأَخَذَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ
وَاللَّهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ۝﴾

“Like the behaviour of the people of Fir’aun (Pharaoh) and those before them; they denied Our Ayaat (proofs, evidences, Verses, lessons, sings, revelations, etc.). So Allah seized (destroyed) them for their sins. And Allah is Severe in punishment.”
(Qur’an 3: 11)

And He ﷻ also said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ
شَتَانُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ ءَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا أَعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ۝﴾

“O you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah and be just witnesses and let not the enmity and hatred of others make you avoid justice. Be just: that is nearer to piety, and fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do.” (Qur’an 5: 8)

And it is a part of justice to save a disbeliever from injustice and oppression. A Muslim hates a disbeliever for his disbelief, but at the same time he is commanded to act justly with him. As-

Sarakhsee (may Allah have mercy on him) said, "If one of the (disbelieving) kings of war demands exemption and requests that he be left to rule in his kingdom as he wishes - and his wishes involve killing, plundering, or any other form of oppression that is not acceptable in a Muslim country - then his demands must not be met, for acknowledging the right to oppression when one has the ability to resist it, is *Haraam* (forbidden)."

d) For disbelievers to prevent Muslims from spreading the message of Islam

It is incumbent upon Muslims to spread the message of Islam to all of mankind. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾﴾

"Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good (Islam), enjoining Al-Ma'roof (i.e., Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do) and forbidding Al-Munkar (polytheism and disbelief and all that Islam has forbidden). And it is they who are the successful." (Qur'an 3: 104)

The enemies of Allah ﷻ of every era try their utmost to prevent Muslims from conveying the message of Islam to non-Muslims. Allah ﷻ commanded Muslims to fight such people, saying:

﴿الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَضَلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ① وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَءَامَنُوا بِمَا نُزِّلَ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ كَفَّرَ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَأَصْلَحَ بَالَهُمْ ② ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا اتَّبَعُوا الْبَاطِلَ وَأَنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّبَعُوا الْحَقَّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ كَذَلِكَ يَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ أَمْثَالَهُمْ ③ فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَضَرْبِ الرِّقَابِ حَتَّى إِذَا أَتَخْتَمُوهُمْ فَشُدُّوا الْوَتَاقَ فَإِمَّا مَأْتٍ بَعْدُ وَإِمَّا فِدَاءٌ حَتَّى تَضَعَ الْحَرْبُ أَوْزَارَهَا ④ ذَلِكَ وَلَوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ لَآنصَرْنَا مِنْهُمْ وَلَكِنْ لِيَبْلُوَ بَعْضَكُمْ بِبَعْضٍ وَالَّذِينَ قَاتَلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَلَنْ يُضِلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ④﴾

“Those who disbelieve (in the Oneness of Allah, and in the message of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ), and hinder (men) from the Path of Allah (Islamic Monotheism), He will render their deeds vain. But those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and believe in that which is sent down to Muhammad ﷺ), for it is the truth from their Lord, He will expiate from them their sins, and will make good their state. That is because those who disbelieve follow falsehood, while those who believe follow the truth from their Lord. Thus does Allah set forth their parables for mankind. So when you meet (in fight – Jihaad in Allah’s Cause), those who disbelieve smite at their necks till when you have killed and wounded many of them, then bind a bond firmly (on them, i.e., take them as captives). Thereafter (is the time) either for generosity (i.e., free them without ransom), or ransom (according to what benefits Islam), until the war lays down its burden. Thus [you are ordered by Allah to continue in carrying out Jihaad against the disbelievers till they embrace Islam (i.e., are saved from the punishment in the Hellfire) or at least come under your protection], but if it had been Allah’s Will, He Himself could certainly have punished them (without you). But (He lets you fight), in order to test you, some with others. But those who are killed in the Way of Allah, He will never let their deeds be lost.” (Qur’an 47: 1-4)

From what I have mentioned hitherto, it becomes clear that there are many noble goals and benefits to *Jihaad*, benefits that extend even to non-Muslims. *Jihaad* was perhaps one of the most important results of the Prophet’s migration and one of the most important of pillars upon which the Prophet ﷺ established an Islamic country.

A country without a strong army is a country whose days are limited; the enemy will not fear that country and will attack it at its earliest convenience. On the other hand, if a country has a strong army, the enemy will think many times before attacking it or even before imposing their will upon its citizens. So in short, the presence of a strong army in a country ensures the safety of its citizens.

The Most Important Military Missions That Preceded The Battle Of Badr

As soon as the Muslims, under the leadership of the Prophet ﷺ, achieved a sense of stability in Al-Madeenah, they had to prepare for a long and hard struggle against both the Quraish and other enemies. The leaders of the Quraish were not satisfied with persecuting Muslims within Makkah; they also didn't want Muslims to establish a presence and to become strong outside of Makkah. Quraish's leaders feared that if Islam spread throughout Arabia, it would mean an end to their rule in Makkah, an end to the tribal system of law that dominated Arabia, an end to their religion and to the customs of their forefathers. In short, they knew that, if Islam gained a strong foothold in Al-Madeenah, somewhere down the road Muslims would set their sights on Makkah. We have hitherto discussed the many attempts the Quraish made to prevent the Prophet ﷺ from even reaching Al-Madeenah, and as soon as he ﷺ arrived there, they made it amply clear that they were as much the enemies of those who harboured the Prophet ﷺ - the native inhabitants of Al-Madeenah - as they were enemies of the Prophet ﷺ himself.

One incident that clearly establishes their attitude towards Al-Madeenah's inhabitants involves Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh ؓ, one of the leaders of the *Ansaar*. Prior to the advent of Islam, Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh ؓ was a friend of Umayyah ibn Khalaf, one of Makkah's chieftains. Whenever Umayyah visited Al-Madeenah, he stayed there as a guest of Sa'd ؓ, and vice-versa. Their cordial friendship continued until the early days of Islam. For when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ arrived in Al-Madeenah, Sa'd ؓ set out towards Makkah, with the intention to perform 'Umrah (the lesser pilgrimage); once he arrived there, he stayed in the house of Umayyah ibn Khalaf. Sa'd ؓ said to Umayyah, "See if you can find a time when (the *Masjid*) is empty, so that I might perhaps make circuits around the House (i.e., the Ka'bah)." Umayyah took him out during the middle of the day, and they

were met on the way by Abu Jahl, who said, "O Abu Safwaan (i.e., Umayyah), who is this with you?" He said, "This is Sa'd." Abu Jahl said to Sa'd ﷺ, "How is it that I see you walking around Makkah in safety, when you have granted refuge to those that have changed their religion! You claim that you will support and help them. Lo! By Allah, had it not been for the fact that you are with Abu Safwaan, you would not have safely returned to your family." Raising his voice, Sa'd ﷺ responded, "By Allah, if you prevent me from this (from performing pilgrimage here in Makkah), I will prevent you from that which you will find even more severe upon you than that: Your road through Al-Madeenah (i.e., I will prevent you from passing through Al-Madeenah on your way to doing business in Ash-Sham)"^[1]

According to the narration of Al-Baihaqee, Sa'd ﷺ responded to Abu Jahl's threat with the following words: "By Allah, if you prevent me from performing circuits around the Ka'bah, I will cut off your trade (routes) to Ash-Sham (Syria and surrounding regions)." ^[2]

This narration proves that Abu Jahl considered Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh ﷺ to be an enemy of the Quraish, for he made it amply clear that had he not arrived in Makkah under the protection of a Makkan chieftain, he would have been killed. Abu Jahl was announcing a policy shift regarding how Makkah's chieftains treated the people of Al-Madeenah; for prior to the establishment of a Muslim country in Al-Madeenah, no native of Al-Madeenah needed a guarantee of protection in order to enter Makkah. Quite the opposite, the leaders of the Quraish loathed even the idea of there being any hostility between them and the people of Al-Madeenah, since they depended on cordial relations with them in order to safely traverse their lands on their way to doing business in Ash-Sham, which they relied on for their livelihood. In fact, the leaders of the Quraish were known to have said, "By Allah, we do not

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of Battles, chapter "The Prophet ﷺ Mentioned Who was Going to Die in Al-Badr"; *Hadeeth* number: 3950.

^[2] Refer to *Dalaail An-Nabuwwah* by Al-Baihaqee (3/25).

detest fighting any Arab people as much as we detest (the idea of) fighting you (i.e., the people of Al-Madeenah)."^[1] This story also proves that, until Abu Jahl showed open hostility to the people of Al-Madeenah, Makkan trading caravans would travel safely through Al-Madeenah on their way to Ash-Sham. The newly-formed Muslim country made no attempts to stop them from passing through, which means that they didn't initially treat them as enemies, overtake any of their caravans, or place any economic embargo upon them. Therefore, it was the leaders of the Quraish who first declared war on the people of Al-Madeenah, and not the other way around. They treated Muslims as enemies of war, forbidding them entry into Makkah, unless they entered under the protection of a Makkan chieftain.

But that was not the only incident which proves that the Quraish were the first to declare war. On another occasion, but still only shortly after the Prophet ﷺ arrived in Al-Madeenah, the Quraish tried to incite a civil war in Al-Madeenah. 'Abdur-Rahmaan ibn Ka'ab ibn Maalik related from one of the Prophet's Companions ؓ that the disbelievers of the Quraish wrote a letter to 'Abdullah ibn Ubai and other members of the Aus and Khazraj tribes that still worshipped idols. This occurred when ibn Ubai and others like him still professed their polytheistic beliefs, for a short while later those among this group that didn't sincerely embrace Islam, professed to embrace Islam while still harbouring disbelief in their hearts; hence they became known as "the Hypocrites." In their letter, which was sent prior to the Battle of Badr, Quraish's leaders wrote the following message: "You have indeed granted refuge to our companion (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ), and we indeed swear by Allah that you will fight him and expel him (from Al-Madeenah) or we will all come to you (with a large army), until we fight those among you who fight, and take captive (as slaves) your women."

'Abdullah ibn Ubai and his fellow polytheists then gathered all the men they could find in order to fight the Prophet ﷺ. When

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah Ibn Hishaam (Ar-Raud Al-Anf, 2/192)*.

news of their intentions reached the Prophet ﷺ, he ﷺ went to them and said, "Quraish's threat has had a profound effect upon you, but (know this): what they have planned for you (in terms of them coming to fight you) is not greater than the plotting that you are doing against your own selves (i.e., by fighting Muslims, among whom are your own relatives), for you want to fight your children and your brothers!" When they heard this from the Prophet ﷺ, they dispersed, abandoning the idea of fighting the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ.

Here is a wonderful example of what a great leader and teacher the Prophet ﷺ was, in terms of how he was able to bring an end to an incipient rebellion in its very early stages. He ﷺ reached with his words the very depths of their hearts, for he ﷺ was appealing to that which they valued most: tribal and familial loyalty. He ﷺ wanted to make them understand the shame involved in the internecine fighting that they wanted to instigate. After the Quraish declared war – both in speech and in action – on the Islamic country of Al-Madeenah, and after they stole all of the wealth that Makkah's Muslims left behind once they migrated to Al-Madeenah, Allah ﷻ permitted Muslims to fight. It was only natural, considering the open hostility that the Quraish showed, for Muslims to do what was necessary to both ensure the stability of Al-Madeenah and to take decisive action against the Quraish. What followed, then, were a number of small-scale military missions and battles that preceded the Battle of Badr; some of the more important of them are as follows:

1) The Battle of Al-Abwaa

The first military expedition that the Prophet ﷺ organized was the Battle of Al-Abwaa, which is also known as the Battle of Waddaan. Both Al-Abwaa and Waddaan are names of places that are separated from one another by six or eight miles of land. Although this military expedition is referred to as a battle, no actual fighting took place. Instead, a peace treaty was agreed upon between the Muslims and the people of Banu Darnrah (who

are from the tribe of Kinaanah). This battle – or expedition – took place in Safar, the year 2 H, and two-hundred Muslims, some of them riding and others walking, participated in the expedition.

2) The Unit of ‘Ubaidah ibn Al-Haarith ﷺ

The first military banner that the Prophet ﷺ ever handed out was the one he ﷺ gave to ‘Ubaidah ﷺ prior to this particular mission. The unit consisted of sixty men from the *Muhaajiroon*; meanwhile, Quraish’s unit consisted of 200 men, some of whom were on horses and the rest were on foot, and Abu Sufyaan ibn Harb was their leader. It wasn’t really a full scale battle that occurred, but only a number of skirmishes beside the water source of the Raabigh valley. During one of the skirmishes, Sa’d ibn Abee Waqqaas ﷺ fired an arrow, which is memorable because it was the first arrow that was ever fired for the cause of Islam. These skirmishes took place after the Prophet ﷺ had returned from Al-Abwaa.

3) The Unit of Hamzah ibn ‘Abdul-Muttalib ﷺ

ibn Ishaq related that, after the Battle of Al-Abwaa, the Prophet ﷺ sent Hamzah ibn ‘Abdul-Muttalib ﷺ to the seashore, from the direction of Al-‘Ees (the name of a place that is situation between Yanbo’ and Al-Marwah from the direction of the Red Sea). Hamzah’s unit consisted of 30 *Muhaajiroon* riders. When they reached the coast, they faced Abu Jahl ibn Hishaam and an army that was comprised of three-hundred riders from the Quraish. A battle most probably would have ensued, but Majdee ibn ‘Amr Al-Juhanee mediated between the two groups, making peace between them. Both groups then withdrew from one another without any fighting having taken place.

4) The Buwaat Expedition

The Buwaat expedition took place in the month of Rabee’ul-Awwal, in the year 2 H. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ had set out with 200 of his Companions ﷺ, with the intention of overtaking a caravan that belonged to the Quraish and that was headed by

Umayyah ibn Khalaf. Umayyah had with him 100 men and 2500 camels; the Muslims did not find Quraish's caravan, and so, without incident, they returned to Al-Madeenah.

5) The Al-'Ushairah Expedition

Before setting out for this expedition, the Prophet ﷺ appointed Abu Salamah ibn 'Abdul-Asad ؓ to act as governor of Al-Madeenah in his absence. The main outcome of this expedition was not a battle, but a peace pact that was made with the Banu Mudlij Tribe and their allies from the Banu Damrah tribe. As soon as the pact was settled upon, the Muslims, without further incident, returned to Al-Madeenah.

6) The Unit of Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ

After the Al-'Ushairah Expedition was concluded, the Prophet ﷺ sent Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ on a mission to the land of Al-Hijaz. Sa'd ؓ had with him eight groups of men from the *Muhaajiroon*. They traveled until they reached a place called Kharraar, which is situated near Al-Juhfah, but without any incident occurring, they returned safely back to Al-Madeenah.

7) The first Expedition of Badr

The Prophet ﷺ set out with a number of his Companions ؓ because a man named Kurz ibn Jaabir Al-Faihree raided grazing livestock that belonged to the inhabitants of Al-Madeenah and stole some camels and other livestock cattle. The Prophet ﷺ pursued Kurz until he ؓ reached the valley of Safwaan, which is situated beside Badr; however, Kurz managed to escape his pursuers, and so the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his Companions ؓ then returned to Al-Madeenah.

8) The Expedition of 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh Al-Asdee ؓ to Nakhlah

At the end of Rajab, the Prophet ﷺ sent eight groups of *Muhaajiroon* men, with 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh ؓ as their leader, to

the Nakhlah valley, which is situated south of Makkah. The Prophet ﷺ instructed them to bring back news about Quraish's movements, but they did even more than that. Seeing the opportunity to overcome a trading caravan that belonged to the Quraish, they did so, killing its leader, 'Amr ibn Al-Hadramee, seizing its merchandise as war booty, and taking two of its men as captives: 'Uthmaan ibn 'Abdullah and Al-Hakam ibn Kaisaan. They then returned with their two captives to Al-Madeenah; the problem was that neither 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh ؓ nor the men who were with him had realized that they attacked the caravan on the first day of one of the four inviolable months, months during which fighting was prohibited. And so the Prophet ﷺ did not make a decision as to what he ﷺ should do with the spoils they came back with, until Allah ﷻ revealed the following Verse:

﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ وَصَدٌّ عَن سَبِيلِ
 اللَّهِ وَكُفْرًا بِهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ عِندَ اللَّهِ
 وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ وَلَا يَرَالُونَ يُقْبِلُونَكَ حَتَّى يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَن دِينِكُمْ
 إِنِ اسْتَطَعُوا وَمَن يَرْتَدِدْ مِنكُمْ عَن دِينِهِ فَيَمُتْ وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ فَأُولَئِكَ
 حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا
 خَالِدُونَ ﴿٢١٧﴾

"They ask you concerning fighting in the Sacred Months (i.e., 1st, 7th, 11th and 12th months of the Islamic calendar). Say, "Fighting therein is a great (transgression) but a greater (transgression) with Allah is to prevent mankind from following the Way of Allah, to disbelieve in Him, to prevent access to Al-Masjid-al-Haraam (at Makkah), and to drive out its inhabitants, and Al-Fitnah is worse than killing. And they will never cease fighting you Until they turn you back from your religion (Islamic Monotheism) if they can. And whosoever of you turns back from his religion and dies as a disbeliever, then his deeds will be lost in this life and in the Hereafter, and they will be the dwellers of the Fire. They will abide therein forever." (Qur'an 2: 217)

When this Verse was revealed, the Prophet ﷺ kept both the spoils and the captives. It was an expedition that was marked by three firsts: it was the first time that Muslims gained spoils of war, the first time that a man was killed by a Muslim during fighting, and the first time that Muslims captured prisoners of war.

Lessons And Morals And Other Issues Of Interest

1) When was *Jihaad* Legislated?

Shaikh Dr. Muhammad Abu Shohbah is of the view that *Jihaad* was legislated in the beginning of the second year of the Islamic calendar. He said that the reason why the legislation of *Jihaad* occurred in the second year following the Prophet's migration is that, during the first year of the Prophet's stay in Al-Madeenah, Muslims were busy organizing the affairs of the their newly-formed country – such as building the Prophet's *Masjid*, finding means of earning sustenance, establishing bonds of brotherhood, making a peace pact with their Jewish neighbours, and so on.^[1] Dr. Saaleh As-Shaamee, another present-day historian, differs, maintaining that permission to engage in *Jihaad* was given during the end of the first year, and not the beginning of the second year, of the Islamic calendar.^[2]

2) The Difference between a Unit (or mission; in Arabic, *Sariyyah*) and an Expedition (in Arabic, a *Ghazwah*)

For the most part, authors of *Seerah* books and historians distinguish between two kinds of military expeditions during the Prophet's lifetime, calling them by different names. If the Prophet ﷺ himself went out with his Companions ﷺ to meet the enemy, regardless of whether fighting occurred in the end or not, they referred to that occurrence as an expedition (a *Ghazwah*). But if the Prophet ﷺ sent a group of Muslims to overtake the enemy, or to gather information about them, historians refer to that

^[1] Refer to *As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah* by Abu Shohbah (1/75, 76).

^[2] Refer to *Ma'een As-Seerah* (pg. 175).

group as a unit (*Sariyyah*), regardless of whether or not they ended up engaging in fighting. For the most part, such units consisted of small numbers of men with limited goals for their mission. Throughout the Madanee period of his biography, which spans approximately ten years of his life, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent out about thirty-eight units on missions. And as for expeditions, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ led a total of twenty-seven of them.

3) The Carrying out of a Census in Al-Madeenah, and the Influence it had on Sending out Military Units

In the first year of the Islamic calendar, immediately after bonds of brotherhood were established between the *Ansaar* and the *Muhaajiroon*, the Prophet ﷺ ordered some of his Companions ﷺ to conduct a census. The purpose of the census was not to enumerate the general population of Al-Madeenah, but instead to enumerate Al-Madeenah's Muslim population. According to one account, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Write for me (the names of) those people who have pronounced their (entry into the fold of) Islam." Of the total number of Muslims, fifteen-hundred of them were men who could fight.^[1] Muslims began to say to one another in astonishment, "How can we be afraid when we have with us fifteen-hundred (fighters)?" They said this because, prior to the taking of the census, they went to sleep with their weapons lying beside them, fearing for their lives; also, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, wanting to protect them from treachery or a surprise attack, forbade them from going out at night alone. Immediately after the census was conducted, Muslims grew more confident about their strength relative to that of the Quraish and other tribes, and the Prophet ﷺ began to send out units and to go out himself on expeditions. The census was yet another step in the process of establishing a new and strong country.^[2]

^[1] Refer to *Al-Wathaa'iq As-Siyaasiyyah* by Humaidullah (pg. 65).

^[2] Refer to *Ar-Raud Al-Anf* (5/43).

4) Protecting the Prophet ﷺ

Several of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ would personally stand guard in order to protect the Prophet ﷺ. The Mother of the Believers, 'Aishah ﷺ, said, "One night, the Prophet ﷺ was not able to sleep, and so he ﷺ said, 'Would that a righteous man from my companions guarded me tonight.' The sound of weapons (clinging) was suddenly heard, and the Prophet ﷺ said, 'Who is this?' '(It is) Sa'd, O Messenger of Allah, I have come to stand guard over you.' The Prophet ﷺ then slept until we heard the sound of his snoring."^[1] This occurred prior to the Battle of Badr.^[2] Based on the *Hadeeth* of 'Aishah ﷺ, it becomes clear that one should be cautious when caution is called for and that people should protect their leader when they fear for his life; the *Hadeeth* also points to the virtue of Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ﷺ. Also, it is important to understand that the Prophet ﷺ placed his complete trust upon Allah ﷻ and that he ﷺ said what he ﷺ said first to take the precaution that is a part of the teachings of Islam, and second to establish a precedent for leaders and followers of ensuing generations.^[3]

5) The Wording of the Peace Treaty that was Enacted with the Banu Damrah Tribe

The wording of the peace treaty between the Muslims and the Banu Damrah Tribe was as follows:

"In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. This is a letter from Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, to Banu (Banu means, 'the children of') Damrah ibn Bakr ibn 'Abd-Manaat ibn Kinaanah, informing them that they are safe in terms of both their wealth and their lives; that they have help (from us) against

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of Hoping for Something, chapter, "The Prophet's Saying, 'Would that Such and Such (Happened)'" ; *Hadeethu* number: 7231.

^[2] Refer to *Tafseer Al-Qurtubee* (6/230).

^[3] Refer to *Wilaayatus-Shurta Fil-Islam* by Dr. 'Umar Muhammad Al-Humaidanee, pg. 63.

those who desire (to attack) them, unless they fight against the religion of Allah, and as long as the sea moistens wool (an expression, meaning, this agreement is a lasting one); and that, if the Prophet ﷺ calls upon them to help (the Muslims against the enemy), they will answer his call.”^[1]

During the expedition of Al-Abwaa, the Prophet ﷺ took advantage of a golden opportunity by forming a military alliance with the leader of the Banu Damrah tribe. The geographical location of the Banu Damrah tribe made them of great strategic importance to the Prophet ﷺ in regard to his conflict with the Quraish, which is why he ﷺ took from them a guarantee of neutrality should a battle erupt between the inhabitants of Al-Madeenah and the inhabitants of Makkah. For up until the Battle of Badr, the Prophet’s strategy was to send small groups of *Muhaajiroon* men to overtake – or at least frighten – caravans that belonged to the Quraish, and those small groups were not travelling under the protection of an army. Therefore, it was comforting for those groups to know that they needed worry only about the Quraish, and not about neighbouring tribes, such as the Banu Damrah tribe and their allies.

The need to form an alliance was mutual: The Banu Damrah tribe and their allies lived close to Al-Madeenah, and so since it was the nearest big city to them, they relied on its marketplace for their sustenance. They too, therefore, found it in their best interests to form an alliance with the newly-formed Islamic country.

The alliance between the Muslims of Al-Madeenah and the Banu Damrah tribe has continued to have political implications ever since the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ. Those implications are that prevailing political circumstances might make it desirable, and sometimes necessary, to form military or economic alliances with a foreign non-Muslim country. Thus the forming of such political alliances has its basis in the teachings of the *Shariah* (i.e., in Islamic law). Such alliances must be formed in order to remove harm, to

^[1] *Al-Wathaa'iq As-Siyaasiyyah* by Muhammad Humaidullah (pg. 220), number: 159.

provide some mutual benefit, or to fulfill a known Islamic goal. Muslims must have a say in such alliances, which means that they must have a say in their matters and not be like the citizens of a colony that is obedient to some imperial power.

A basic principle in Islam is that one should 'neither harm (others) nor reciprocate harm (done to him).' Based on this principle - which is supported by many *Ahadeeth* and Verses of the Qur'an - an alliance with a foreign power might be necessary in order to remove some kind of harm. It must be remembered, however, that a Muslim leader may form an alliance with a foreign power only if it is in the best interests not of himself as an individual, nor of his family or of the upper classes, but of the Islamic country and its citizens that he governs. In an alliance between a Muslim and non-Muslim country, Muslims might be called upon to defend their non-Muslim allies against another non-Muslim army or country, and that is permissible; similarly, Muslims may call upon their non-Muslim allies for help, asking them to provide soldiers or weaponry for an impending battle; such non-Muslim soldiers will then fight under the banner of the Islamic country of the time. Furthermore, it is important to note that the Prophet ﷺ stipulated that the Banu Damrah tribe abstain from fighting the religion of Allah ﷻ, for only in that case could they expect to receive help from Muslims if they came under attack from their enemies. The alliance between the Muslims and Banu Damrah should not be taken lightly, for it was an important step in ensuring the security of Al-Madeenah and its Muslim inhabitants.

6) "And I am Indeed the First Man to have Fired an Arrow in the Way of Allah"

The mission that 'Ubaidah ibn Al-Haarith ؓ led was the first ever in which Muslims and polytheists faced each other in battle. The battle took shape in the form of skirmishes, during which some arrows were fired. By shooting an arrow towards the polytheists of the Quraish, Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ became the first Arab to shoot an arrow in the way of Allah ﷻ. The battle did not last long,

for both the Muslims and the polytheists quickly withdrew from the place of battle. The withdrawal of the Muslims was well-organized; Muslims withdrew while Sa'd ﷺ stood firm, shooting arrows in order to prevent the enemy from advancing and not moving from his spot in spite of the volley of arrows that were being fired at him.

During the battle, 'Utbah ibn Ghazwaan ﷺ and Al-Miqdaad ibn Al-Aswad ﷺ fled from the polytheists to the military unit of 'Ubaidah ibn Al-Haarith ﷺ. Both men ﷺ had embraced Islam earlier, and so they fled towards the Muslims on that day probably because it was the first opportunity that presented itself for them to escape from the Quraish.

In regard to this mission and to all of the military missions prior to the Battle of Badr, it is important to note that the Prophet ﷺ was sending men from the *Muhaajiroon* only. For in accordance with the terms of the Second Pledge of Al-'Aqabah, the *Ansaar* were required to defend and protect the Prophet ﷺ, and military missions outside of Al-Madeenah did not involve protecting the Prophet ﷺ. So perhaps the Prophet ﷺ felt that the time was not ripe to ask of the *Ansaar* that they participate in military missions, when that was not what they had originally promised to do. This policy ended during the days prior to the Battle of Badr, when prominent members of the *Ansaar* announced on behalf of all members of the *Ansaar* that they were willing to sacrifice their lives even if the Prophet ﷺ asked them to fight their way through the lands of many Arab tribes until they reached a far off place; they said this not in the form of an exaggeration, but in order to express their complete obedience to Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ.

7) The Peace Treaty that was enacted between the Muslims and the Juhainah Tribe

During the year that followed the Prophet's arrival in Al-Madeenah, a peace treaty was agreed upon between the Muslims and the Juhainah tribe. What is most interesting about this treaty is that the Juhainah tribe had already signed a peace

treaty with the Quraish, which proves that it is permission, in Islam, for Muslims to make peace with the allies of their enemies, thus ensuring the neutrality of those allies.

The peace treaty proved useful when the military unit of Hamzah ibn 'Abdul-Muttalib ﷺ, which consisted of just thirty men, faced a much larger force – a Makkah trading caravan that was headed by Abu Jahl and that consisted of three-hundred men. The two opposing forces met at Al-'Ees, an land over which the Juhainah tribe held sway. Both the polytheists and Muslims lined up for battle, but just as the battle was about to begin in earnest, Majdee ibn 'Amr, one of the leaders of the Juhainah tribe, stepped in and tried to make peace between both groups – a smart move on the part of Majdee, since his tribe was allied to both the Muslims of Al-Madeenah and the polytheists of Makkah. Majdee succeeded as a peacemaker and without any fighting having taken place, both groups returned to their native lands.

This incident is yet another example of the Prophet's wisdom as a leader: He ﷺ first made peace treaties with neighbouring tribes and only then did he ﷺ send out military units, thus safeguarding the lives of the Muslims who were sent out on missions. In regard to the incident in question, the Prophet ﷺ first made peace with the Juhainah tribe and then sent his Companions ﷺ into territory over which the Juhainah held power. We also learn from this incident that it is permissible for Muslims to withdraw from a battle if an ally mediates between them and their enemy, so long as doing so does not involve any negative repercussions for Muslims.

Although the Quraish did not suffer any direct losses in fighting Hamzah ﷺ and his unit, Hamzah's mission did have negative repercussions for the Quraish. Quraish's leaders now became terrified at the prospect of travelling through Arabia with their precious trading caravans, for their eyes were now opened to a grave danger that threatened their wealth as well as their status in Arabia. Upon returning to Makkah with his caravan, Abu Jahl said to the other leaders of the Quraish, "O people of Quraish,

Muhammad ﷺ has indeed settled down in Yathrib (i.e., Al-Madeenah), and he has sent out his advance guards. All that he wants now is to get something from you (in terms of spoils of war), so beware of passing by his route and of even approaching him, for he is indeed like a fierce lion. He is very angry with you, for you have driven him out just as *Qirdaan* (small parasites) are driven away from the hooves of camels. By Allah, he indeed has with him magicians: I have never seen him ﷺ or one of his Companions ﷺ except that I have also seen devils alongside them. And you indeed know about the enmity of the children of Qailah (i.e., the Aus and Khazraj tribes of Al-Madeenah, both of which are descendants of a woman named Qailah). And so he (i.e., the Prophet ﷺ) is an enemy who has sought the help of (other) enemies.”^[1]

8) The Unit of ‘Abdullah ibn Jahsh ﷺ

When the Prophet ﷺ sent this unit on its mission, he handed a letter to the unit’s leader, ordering him not to read the contents of the letter until he had traveled with his men for two days. On this occasion as on many other occasions, the Prophet ﷺ relied on secrecy in matters that pertained to war. It was important to keep the unit’s purpose and intended direction a secret in order to protect the members of the unit, for at the time Al-Madeenah was still inhabited by many Jews and polytheists. It was feared, or rather it was expected, that if one of them learned of the mission’s objective, he would immediately send news of that mission to the people of Makkah. Secrecy was so important to the mission that not even the members of the unit knew what the mission entailed; only after two days passed, when ‘Abdullah ibn Jahsh ﷺ read the contents of the Prophet’s letter, did they realize what they were supposed to do. Here, one should appreciate the effect of the Prophet’s training: they listened and obeyed, travelling through enemy territory still not knowing the purpose of their mission, a reality that attests to their strong faith and, as long as they were serving the cause of Islam, their lack of concern for their own safety.

^[1] Refer to *Seerah Ibn Hishaam* (1/218,219).

Not knowing that it was the first day of one of the four inviolable months, 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh ﷺ and his men attacked the Makkan caravan and killed a man. The Quraish tried to take advantage of the situation by launching a vicious slander campaign against the Muslims. Some of the remnants of Ibraaheem's religion remained a part of Makkan society, and one such remnant was the belief that four months in particular were inviolable - months during which, among other things, fighting was prohibited. So based on the actions of a few individual Muslims, the leaders of the Quraish slandered the Muslims to other Arabs, trying to depict the Muslims as people who did not value what was sacred. The Quraish would say among themselves and especially to others: "Muhammad ﷺ and his companions ﷺ have deemed lawful the inviolable month, shedding blood, taking wealth, and capturing prisoners during it."^[1]

At first the Quraish succeeded in their slander campaign, not only gaining the ear of other Arab tribes, but also managing to influence affairs within Al-Madeenah itself. Muslims argued among themselves and blamed the members of 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh's unit for instigating fighting during an inviolable month. The Jews of Al-Madeenah fanned the flames of the ordeal, saying, "Indeed, war will certainly occur between the Muslims and the Quraish; nay, between the Muslims and all Arabs, as a reward for violating the sanctity of an inviolable month." That the Jews began to utter such words reveals the deep hatred they harboured towards Islam and Muslims. Just when the members of 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh's unit thought that they had become spiritually destroyed as a result of what they had perpetrated, Allah ﷻ revealed Verses that conclusively refuted the claims of the Quraish, who used talk about the inviolable months as a shield to cover their own crimes. Allah ﷻ made it clear that fighting during an inviolable month is a great transgression, but that, with Allah ﷻ, the crimes of the Quraish were even greater transgressions - such as preventing people from embracing and practicing Islam, disbelieving in Allah ﷻ,

^[1] Refer to *Sunan Al-Baihaqee* (9/59), which took this narration from *As-Saraayah Wal-Bu'ooth An-Nabawiyyah* (pg. 100).

preventing Muslims access to the Ka'bah, driving out Muslims from Makkah, and putting people to trial in their religion. To put people to trial in their faith is certainly a greater crime than fighting during one of the inviolable months. The leaders of the Quraish feigned to forget about the above-mentioned crimes that they had perpetrated, or, perhaps even worse, they didn't consider them to be crimes in the first place. In making an outcry against fighting during the inviolable months, the Quraish's only goals were to dissuade people from entering the fold of Islam and to incite the tribes of Arabia to make war against the Muslims of Al-Madeenah.

At first, even the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was troubled by the actions of 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh ؓ and the men of his unit, and he ﷺ blamed them for what they did. Then when Allah ﷻ revealed the above-mentioned Verse from *Soorah Al-Baqarah*, Quraish's claims were refuted, and Allah ﷻ made it clear that, because of their great crimes, they had no right to claim that their rights had been violated.

After 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh's unit returned to Al-Madeenah, the Prophet ﷺ set an important precedent regarding how a leader should care for the safety of his followers. Two men from the unit, Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ and 'Utbah ibn Ghazwaan ؓ, did not return with the others, for they were busy searching for a stray camel. Then when the Quraish came seeking to ransom the freedom of the two captives, the Prophet ﷺ refused, saying, "I fear that you have attacked Sa'd ibn Maalik (i.e., Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ؓ) and 'Utbah ibn Ghazwaan ؓ." The Prophet ﷺ refused to free the two prisoners, regardless of how much ransom money was being offered, until Sa'd ؓ and 'Utbah ؓ returned safely to Al-Madeenah. It was only then that the two prisoners were ransomed and regained their freedom. As for one of the prisoners, Al-Hakam ibn Kaisaan ؓ, he embraced Islam and remained in Al-Madeenah, settling there alongside his fellow Muslims. But the other prisoner, 'Uthmaan ibn 'Abdullah ibn Al-Mugheerah, remained a disbeliever. In regard to this story, we

learn an important lesson: A leader must have concern for the safety of his followers, especially when they place themselves in the way of danger for the cause of Islam. The compassion that the Prophet ﷺ showed for his followers fourteen centuries ago has become a part of modern-day military doctrine, for it is an established fact that, when a soldier knows that his leader cares about his safety and well-being, he will not hesitate to sacrifice everything he has to offer in order to further the cause for which he is fighting. Consider the effect that the Prophet's leadership had on 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh ؓ, for no sooner did he read the contents of the Prophet's letter, which detailed the dangerous nature of the mission, than he ؓ said to his men, "Whosoever among you wants and desires martyrdom, then let him proceed forward. And whosoever hates for that to occur (to him), then let him return (to Al-Madeenah). As for me, I am proceeding forward as per the command of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ."^[1] And of course, all of his men followed his lead with a similar degree of passion and enthusiasm.

9) Among the Goals of the Military Units

When one engages in an in-depth study of the Prophet's military missions and expeditions prior to the Battle of Badr, one finds that the goals behind them were as varied as they were important. One goal was to increase the level of awareness, both within and outside of Al-Madeenah, about the plight of the *Muhaajiroon*, who had been made to suffer a great deal at the hands of the Quraish, and who continued to suffer since the Quraish seized all of the wealth that they had left behind in Makkah. Another important goal was to harm the Quraish economically and to regain some of the wealth that they had seized from the *Muhaajiroon*. Yet other goals were to weaken the Quraish militarily, to train the Companions ؓ in the various forms of warfare, to gain information about Quraish's activities, to test the strength of the Quraish – and, important but often overlooked, to instill fear and

^[1] Refer to *Seerah ibn Hishaam* (2/602); it is a narration of Ibn Ishaq from 'Urwah.

terror into the hearts of enemies that lived inside of or near Al-Madeenah. The military missions and expeditions of the Prophet ﷺ achieved all of the above-mentioned goals.

One of those goals, as I have just mentioned, was to instill fear and terror into the hearts of enemies that lived inside of or near Al-Madeenah. In this regard, the success rate and frequency and sheer boldness of the missions signaled to Islam's enemies the strength and abilities of the Muslims, who, only having established a country a year before, were now engaging in military skirmishes with one of Arabia's most powerful tribes – the Quraish. Hence neither the Jews of Al-Madeenah nor neighbouring tribes dared to even think about attacking the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ. Even if, only after the sending of a few units, Islam's enemies abandoned the idea of attacking Al-Madeenah, the Muslims still did not rest; in fact, whenever a unit returned or an expedition ended, the Prophet ﷺ would quickly send out another unit or leave himself for another expedition. Goals were achieved simultaneously, for the sending out of many units had the effect of continually weakening the Quraish economically and making them fear sending caravans northward towards Ash-Sham (Syria and surrounding regions), since, in order to do so, they had to travel past Al-Madeenah. Consequently, the Quraish had to send more guards to protect their caravans, which had the effect of raising the prices of their goods – not to mention the terror that afflicted both the men guarding the caravans and the owners of the merchandise who feared losing their wealth.

In relation to people and tribes that lived in between Makkah and Al-Madeenah, the Prophet's military missions and expeditions achieved two important ends: First, the Prophet ﷺ gained the support, or at least the neutrality, of certain Arab tribes; and second, the Bedouins of Arabia became less of a threat to the Muslims of Al-Madeenah. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ agreed to peace treaties with the Juhainah tribe and its allies, as well as with other tribes in the region. It was important to do so because all tribes in the region were natural allies of the Quraish, with whom

they shared a common religion, and with whom they had allied themselves for years – the alliance of the tribes in Arabia with the Quraish is referred to in the Qur'an as "Al-Eelaaf (refer to the Noble Qur'an, 106: 1-4)," based upon which the Quraish traveled in safety on their way to doing business in Yemen to the south and Ash-Sham to the north. After certain tribes agreed to make peace with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the Muslims became the ruling power in the region that surrounded Al-Madeenah, and the trading caravans of the Quraish were more threatened than ever before.

Through the missions and expeditions of the Prophet ﷺ, the Bedouins were held in check. Prior to the advent of Islam, Bedouins posed a major threat to trading caravans in the region. Wherever Bedouins held sway, passing caravans had to pay a tribute tax to them if they wanted to pass through safely. The Muslims refused to pay any such tax. In response, a Bedouin named Kurz Al-Faihree raided Muslim territory and stole livestock animals that belonged to the Muslims of Al-Madeenah. Kurz was then taught an important lesson when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ pursued him all the way to Safwaan, which is situated near Badr, approximately 150 kilometers from Al-Madeenah. The authors of *Seerah* books refer to this pursuit as the Smaller Battle of Badr. The Prophet's pursuit of Kurz all the way to Safwaan served as an important lesson for other Bedouins as well, who would thereafter not dare to even think about raiding Muslim territory, even if that territory was outside of Al-Madeenah. Muslims not only refused to pay tribute tax to Bedouins, but also forced them to retreat when they passed through their land and even entered into peace agreements with them, thus saving themselves from their harm.

The military missions and expeditions of the Prophet ﷺ, which continued throughout his lifetime, had an impact on later conquests. The constant sending of military units made Al-Madeenah resemble a beehive, with its inhabitants never tiring of their duties. Even while the above-mentioned goals were being achieved, Muslims were also being trained and prepared for future

conquests, which the Prophet ﷺ promised them on many occasions. When one goes through the list of Companions ﷺ that were sent by the Prophet ﷺ on missions, one finds that they are the very Companions ﷺ who later on played a major role in the many conquests that took place in the first century of Islam. For example, the leader of the conquest of Ash-Sham (Syria and surrounding regions) was Abu 'Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarraah ﷺ; Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ﷺ led Muslims to victory in Al-Qaadisiyyah and in other battles as well; Khaalid ibn Al-Waleed ﷺ led Muslims to victory over the Romans at Al-Yarmook; 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas ﷺ led the Muslim army to victory in Egypt and Libya; and the list goes on and on. Although both Khaalid ﷺ and 'Amr ﷺ embraced Islam in the latter stages of the Prophet's lifetime, the Prophet ﷺ appointed them to lead some important missions.

In fact, one can correctly say that the Companions ﷺ were being trained twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Their daily schedule would begin early with the *Fajr* prayer, which they would perform in the *Masjid* with their leader, the Prophet ﷺ, who exhorted them to pray both on time and with the congregation in the *Masjid*. The Prophet ﷺ informed his Companions ﷺ that praying *Fajr* on time was the key to an active and productive day. He ﷺ said, "When one of you sleeps, the *Shaitaan* (the Devil) ties on the back of his head three knots, and he strikes the place of each knot (saying): 'Upon you is a long night, so sleep.' If he wakes up and remembers Allah, one of the knots becomes untied. If he then performs ablution, another knot becomes untied. And if he then prays, all of his knots (i.e., the third and last one) become untied: He is then energetic and in a happy state (of mind); otherwise, he becomes sad, troubled, and lazy."^[1]

^[1] *Saheeh Bukhaaree*, the Book of *Tahajjud*, chapter "The *Shaitaan* Ties (Knots) Over the Back of One's Head if One Does not Pray at Night (i.e., the *Fajr* prayer)"; *Hadeeth* number: 1142. It is also related in *Saheeh Muslim*, the Book of the Traveler's prayer and Its Shortening, chapter "What is Related Regarding Who Sleeps the Entire Night Until the Morning"; *Hadeeth* number: 776.

After *Fajr* prayer, each of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ would then betake himself to his work and to his other affairs, pausing throughout the day to perform the other four daily prayers. After they performed the 'Eesha prayer, they would sleep throughout the first and second thirds of the night. With one-third of the night remaining, most of them would get up to perform late-night voluntary prayers (*Salaatut-Tahajjud*), the performance of which filled their hearts with spiritual nourishment.

These daily activities they would always perform; additionally, they would serve the needs of their Islamic country whenever they were called upon to do so. They constantly trained for war; even their leisure sports had behind them the purpose of training them for battle. Hence they practiced riding horses, racing, and shooting arrows. The Prophet ﷺ not only encouraged them to do all of the above, but also participated in the training himself. And perhaps more so than any other art of war, the Prophet ﷺ encouraged his Companions ﷺ to practice archery. 'Uqbah ﷺ related that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "For a single arrow, Allah ﷻ admits three people into Paradise: The one who made it, hoping to achieve reward (from Allah ﷻ) for doing so; the one who hands it (to the archer who fires it); and the one who fires it. So shoot (arrows) and ride (horses), but for you to shoot (arrows) is more beloved to me than for you to ride (horses). And there are only three (lawful) games: For a man to train his horse; for (a man) to play with his wife; and (for a man to) fire arrows from his bow. And when one is taught firing (or archery) but then abandons it, it is a blessing that he has denied."^[1] It is of course because the Companions ﷺ followed the Prophet's guidance in these and all of their affairs that they, despite their small numbers and humbleness, were granted victories and conquests far to the east and to the west.

As circumstances changed, the goals of the Prophet's military units

^[1] Related by Ahmad and Al-Haakim, and the latter said about the *Hadeeth*, "It is authentic." And Adh-Dhahabee concurred with *Al-Haakim's* ruling of the *Hadeeth*. Refer to *Fathul-Rabbaanee* (13/129) and to *Al-Mustadrak* (2/104).

and expeditions likewise changed. At first, the main purpose of the missions was to gather information; later on, units were sent not just to gather information about the Quraish, but also to overtake their trading caravans, a practice that continued until the Battle of Badr. After this first major and decisive battle, the Muslims increased in strength, and consequently their military missions became more daring. Some units were dispatched to kill specific people who were trying to inflict a great deal of harm upon Muslims; examples of targets were Ka'ab ibn Al-Ashraf, Al-'Asmaa bint Marwaan, and Abu 'Afk. Ka'ab was killed because of his crimes, but also because the Muslims wanted to discourage the Jews from concocting future plots against Islam. The Muslims killed Al-'Asmaa and Abu 'Afk partly because of their crimes and partly in order to discourage the polytheists and hypocrites of Al-Madeenah from harming Muslims.

Later on, when the Muslims suffered a setback on the Day of Uhud, Bedouins underestimated the Prophet's Companions ﷺ, thinking that they could raid Al-Madeenah. They were so confident that Muslims had become weak after the Battle of Uhud that they attacked Muslim reconnaissance units outside of Al-Madeenah, as occurred at Ar-Rajee' and at the Well of Ma'oonah. The Prophet ﷺ then changed his strategy, sending military units not to overtake caravans of the Quraish but to deal with the rash and brazen Bedouins that had attacked Muslims. With quick and decisive strokes, the Prophet ﷺ attacked Bedouin groups before they could gather together and plan an attack on Al-Madeenah.

Until the end of his lifetime, the Prophet ﷺ adapted the purpose of military missions to the changing circumstances of the Muslim nation. After the Conquest of Makkah, the Prophet ﷺ wanted to remove all remnants of polytheism and idol-worship from the Arabian Peninsula, and so he ﷺ sent military units from Makkah to destroy idols throughout Arabia, the most famous of which were Al-'Uzzaa, Manaat, Al-Laat, Suwaa', and Dhil-Khalasah. Islam then spread very rapidly throughout Arabia, and people

began to embrace Islam in throngs. That is how matters stood when the Prophet ﷺ died. But his Companions ؓ were well-trained, and they continued from where he ﷺ left off, spreading the message of Islam to all inhabited parts of the earth, and fighting against any enemy that stood in the way of the propagation of Islam.

Muslim and non-Muslim historians alike have always been amazed at the speed with which Islam spread during the first century of the Islamic calendar. What most surprises unbiased non-Muslim historians is the mercy that the Prophet ﷺ instilled into his Companions ؓ in general and the leaders of his military campaigns in particular. The Prophet ﷺ taught principles of just warfare that his Companions ؓ applied throughout their many conquests. One example of the Prophet's just warfare is related in a narration from Anas ؓ, who said that, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would send an army (to do battle), he ﷺ would say, "Go forth in the name of Allah. Do not kill decrepit, old men; young children, or women. Do not secretly (and wrongly) take (from the spoils of war), but instead gather together your spoils (of war). Rectify and make well your affairs, and do well (by one another), for indeed, Allah loves the good-doers."^[1] And Abu Moosa ؓ related that, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would send one of his Companions ؓ on a mission, he ﷺ would say, "Give glad tidings (to people), and do not alienate or repel (them). Make matters easy, and do not make matters difficult."^[2]

[1] *'Aun Al-Ma'bood, Sharh Sunan Abu Daawood* (7/274).

[2] *Saheeh Muslim, the Book of Jihaad and Siyar, chapter "The Order to Make Matters Easy and to Abstain from Alienating and Repelling (People)" Hadeeth number: 1732.*

6

The Moral And Spiritual Training Of the Prophet's Companions ﷺ Continued In Al-Madeenah

Among the earliest Verses of the Qur'an to be revealed in the Madanee period of the Prophet's biography were the first Verses of *Soorah Al-Baqarah*, which discussed the qualities of the believers, the disbelievers, and the hypocrites – and even the People of the Book: Jews and Christians. More emphasis was placed on describing the Jews than describing the Christians, since it was the Jews who, from the day the Prophet ﷺ arrived in Al-Madeenah, strove hardest to oppose and attack Islam and Muslims. In fact, *Soorah Al-Baqarah* contains a long and detailed description of the nature of Jews.

Since the scope of the Prophet's *Da'wah* widened significantly after he ﷺ arrived in Al-Madeenah, verses of the Qur'an – such as those from *Soorah Al-Baqarah* – directed the call to embrace Islam to all people (hence the phrasing: "O mankind!"). For example, Allah ﷻ said:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ
﴿٢١﴾ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمْ الْأَرْضَ فِرَاشًا وَالسَّمَاءَ بِنَاءً وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ
مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقًا لَكُمْ فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أَنْدَادًا وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾﴾

“O mankind! Worship your Lord (Allah), Who created you and