HISTORY OF ISLAM

Maulana S. Ali Naqi Naqvi

IMAMIA MISSION (HIND)
ALIGARH
2002

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Maulana Syed. Ali Naqi Naqvi

English translation of ***Tareekh-e-Islam*** by
Justice Murtaza Husain

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IN THE NAME OF GOD,

THE BENEFICENT, THE MERCIFUL,

ALL PRAISE BE TO GOD,

SUPPORTER OF WORLDS,

AND BLESSINGS BE ON THE CHIEF OF

PROPHETS AND MESSENGERS

AND HIS PURE PROGENY.

CONTENTS

PREFACE
1. BEGINNING OF CREATION 1
2. BEGINNING OF ISLAM 9
3. BIRTH OF THE PROPHET[S.A] 45
4. THE REVOLUTIONARY MESSAGE OF ISLAM AND ITS CLASH WITH HOSTILE POWERS 73
5. MIGRATION TO MEDINA 118
6. HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF HIJRAT 143
7. BATTLE OF BADR 173
8. SECOND AND THIRD YEAR OF HIJRAT 229
9. BATTLE OF UHUD 241
10. TRAGEDIES OF RAJEI AND BIR MAUNA 286
11. GHAZWAE AHZAB (KHANDAQ) 296
12. ADMONITION OF BANI QURAYZAH 323
13. ENCOUNTER AT HUDAIBIYA 342
14. BATTLE OF KHAIBAR 365
15. FADAK 388
16. INFIDELS BREACH OF FAITH AND RENEWAL OF HOSTILITIES 412
17. EVENT OF MUBAHELA 446
18. THE LAST PILGRIMAGE 469
19. LAST DAYS OF THE PROPHET[S.A.] 493
INDEX
BIBLIOGRAPHY

PREFACE

Syed-ul-Ulema Maulana Syed Ali Naqi of Lucknow was a well- known figure in the muslim world. He was a distinguished Shia theologian, scholar, orator, historian and interpreter of Quran and *Hadees*. He was born in 1905 and died in the year 1988. From both paternal and maternal sides he was a descendant of Ghufran Maab Maulvi Dildar Ali Saheb who served Shiaism for about thirty five years during the time of the early Nawabs of Oudh, Asafuddaula and Saadat Ali Khan. He had written a large number of books. Some of them, like *Miratul Uqul* and *Asaratul Ahzan* are still considered outstanding in their respective fields. He had five sons all of whom were renowned scholars and theologians and authors of numerous books on religious matters. His family has produced, generation after generation, so many theologians that it has come to be known as *Khandane Ijtehad* (the House of the Theologians).

Maulana Ali Naqi himself had produced about two hundred books on different religious topics including the tragedy of Karbala and interpretation of Quran and traditions.

History of Islam is a well-known work in Urdu by the late Syed-ul-Ulema, Tabasarahu. It was published by the late Syed Ibne Husain Naqvi Saheb, the then Gen.Secretary, Imamia Mission, in four volumes. It gives a graphic account of the creation of the universe, and of the concept of Islam as it developed through different prophets and divine messengers from the time of Adam[AS] to Prophet Muhammad[SAW]. It also presents a critical and analytical account of the crucial and often controversial incidents of the Prophet's life time; in particular, those vitally important incidents that have been totally suppressed or superficially treated by the biased writers. While drawing the attention

of the readers to these events, he has provided a plethora of evidence from reliable, mostly contemporary, sources to enable them to draw their own conclusions.

Unfortunately the late Syed-ul-Ulema could write only upto the passing away of the Prophet[SAW]. Had this project been completed, doubtlessly, it would have been a very useful and authentic commentary on Islamic history. However, though incomplete, it is very informative in respect of the Shiite view of the events of the period that it covers.

The need to have an English translation of the *Tareekh-e-Islam* had been a long felt one. Eventually, the late Abid Husain Tabatabai Saheb, the then General Secretary of the Imamia Mission, succeeded in persuading a very competent and scholarly person, Justice Murtaza Husain Saheb, to undertake the stupendous task of translating all the four volumes despite his numerous pre-occupations. The translation was completed and typed out but unfortunately Tabatabai Saheb passed away before it could be published. Later on it was decided to have a fresh look at the translation to bring it closer to the Urdu text. It was also considered desirable to update the references wherever possible for the convenience of the present day readers. Some alterations have also been made in respect of the chapter divisions. In this edition shorter chapters on inter-related subjects have been clubbed together under a single chapter-heading.

Regarding the spelling of the Arabic names and phrases it was felt preferable to follow the one that comes closest to the pronunciation popular with the Urdu/Hindustani speaking reader-ship of the sub-continent. In respect of the Quranic quotations, the text of Abdullah Yusuf Ali's translation of the Holy Book has been followed throughout.

Translating the works of an erudite scholar like the late Syed-ul-Ulema is indeed a very difficult task. He excelled in the art of saying a lot in the fewest possible words. He

was quite at home with the nuances of the Arabic and Persian usages as well as with the idiomatic Urdu. For these reasons any accurate and exact transferring of his matter to any other language is next to impossible. However, in the present book no effort has been spared in following the spirit and approach of the original text as also the author's line of thought.

Acknowledgement

As the General Secretary of the Imamia Mission, it is my pleasant duty to thank, first and foremost, Justice Murtaza Husain for translating all the four volumes of the *Tareekh-e-Islam* into English. It was indeed very kind of him to render this great service to the community at the request of the Mission. I also thank Prof.S.Jafar Zaki for reviewing the text in the light of the decision of the Mission. I am also very grateful to Mr.S.Mazhar Abbas, Retd. Superintending Engineer (P.W.D.), Lucknow, for his assistance in comparing the English translation with the Urdu Text. The assistance of Maulana S.Isar Husain Saheb Naqvi in checking the proper names and references is also gratefully acknowledged. Acknowledgement of Ms.Saman Hasan is made in particular, for personally composing and editing the text. Last but not the least, I extend my thanks to Al-Haj Ghulam Muhammad Bhat Saheb, the publisher of the seven volumes of Syed-ul-Ulema's *Tafseer-e-Quran*, for his generous donation for the publication of the present book.

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August 31, 2002

1

BEGINNING OF CREATION

There was God and nothing but God. By an indication of His will, appeared an essence of light that brightened the prevailing darkness of non-existence with possibilities of life. Thirteen other lights were radiating in that luminous space. The lustrous background, thus created, was, later on, filled up with millions of smaller and larger sparkling lights. The duration of that condition cannot be estimated because there was, then, no concept of time.

Thereafter, creations of souls in general took place which, along with light, swept the breeze of life for all except God. Living beings, to be born till the day of resurrection, were now present in the form of spirits possessing qualities of will and intelligence. The Creator took a pledge from them regarding the knowledge of, and obedience to, their Lord. They affirmed and covenanted the same. Neither the power addressing them needed a tongue nor the addressees ears to hear. He was free from body and substance and they too were devoid of physical existence. When the contents of this conversation became available in words, we learnt that God's utterance was:

> " Am I not your Lord (Who cherishes and sustains you)?" They said: "Yea! We do testify!"[1]

Matter had its turn after the souls. Its formation was accompanied by shaping of physical elements. The earliest

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[1] Quran 7:172

objects known to have appeared in material world are water and air. Water was made to flow below and the air was spread above it. Strong blows of the wind stirred the water and created waves. The fury of waves produced foams and raised vapours. The rising vapours went upwards and, covering the air space, formed skies which were settled in seven layers wherein magnificent settlements of Angels were established. These holy creatures, immune from material dirt and sins, are solely devoted to worshipping and obeying their Lord. Management and planning of worldly affairs according to divine commands is also assigned to them.[2]

The skies were adorned with thousands of shining stars and planets, including the sun and the moon. Some stars continuously move around the sun. By the Creator's will a thick layer of foam settled on a small portion of water surface as cream settles on milk. Gradually it solidified and came to be known as earth. The place from where the formation of earth commenced was called Mecca, where Muslims go for *Haj*.[3]

Water flowing around and beneath the earth was shaking it whereby it was unsettled and restive. To make it weighty and firm, mountains were created which pierced into the earth like strong pegs. Streams of water gushed out

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[2] God being invisible and beyond all physical perception, it was necessary to have some means of contact between man and Him, otherwise it would not have been possible to follow the Divine will. It is through the medium of a celestial messenger, an angel, that God causes His will and His command to be revealed to His human messenger for the guidance of mankind.-*Tr.*

[3] *Haj* is the third religious duty of a Muslim, the first two being daily prayers (*Namaz*) and fasting (*Roza*). It is obligatory for every adult man and woman to go once in his or her lifetime to Mecca.-*Tr.*

of mountains to irrigate the dry earth. But the same could not reach high mounds and remote places. For that purpose clouds were brought into existence which, laden with the treasure of water, travelled to far off places to irrigate them.

Irrigation, through running streams and rainfall, awakened the dormant fertility of the earth and gave it life. Greenery flourished and varieties of trees, creepers and plants started blooming and waving upon the surface of the earth. There was now no dearth of colour and fragrance but there was no sound, barring that of the roaring seas, flowing streams and thundering clouds. When fruits and leaves of trees provided food for living beings, the quietness of the world was broken by humming life through creation of different kinds of living beings and animals of various forms and colours emerging from the ocean of non-existence and collecting upon the sea-shore of existence. Flocks of the newly created grazing cattle, flying birds, animals and beasts filled the atmosphere with noise and clamour. These creatures lacked the capacity to co-ordinate movement and determination with the result that the entire arena of activity, filled up with roaring lions, howling wolves, and hissing snakes, presented a hell like scene. To discipline them a species of living being, made of fire and known as Bani-Jan or Jinn was employed. They were required to make them realize their limitations by confronting them with daunting problems. Owing to their exceedingly hot temper, the jinns, instead of bringing the second universe to order, further flared up the already burning fire of wrath and ferocity. They created havoc through fighting amongst themselves and causing bloodshed. Giving up obedience to their Creator, they started flouting His commands.

At that time there were angels in the heavens who were made of light. The jinns, made of fire, were upon earth. The former were obedience and servitude personified whereas the latter were embodiments of infidelity and misdeeds. Angels, for that reason, were annoyed with the jinns. Ultimately they were punished by the Creator and their entire community was expelled from the earth. One of them, who till then was apparently obedient and pious, was saved in consequence of having hitherto worshipped his Lord. He was accommodated in the ranks of the angels in the higher world. He adjusted himself with them so well as if he was one of them. His name was Azazeel. Later on he came to be known as Iblis or Satan.

There was now a proclamation of the Creator among the angels that He was going to settle on earth a Vicegerent.[4] The angels, who had witnessed bloodshed and corruption of Bani-Jan, submitted: "Wilt Thou place therein one who will make mischief therein and shed blood? Whilst we do celebrate Thy praises and glorify Thy holy (name)?" He said: " I know what ye know not."[5]

In other words, they were told that they had no business to interfere in Divine action wisdom whereof was shrouded in mystery. The angels then kept quiet. Once again there was an announcement:

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[4] Quran is the holy book of Muslims. It is the unflinching faith of every Muslim that each and every word of the book was revealed by Almighty God to Muhammad[S.A.W.], the Prophet of Islam, through an angel, named Gabriel, and is preserved intact. The book comprises 114 *Suras* spread over 30 *Paras* (Chapters). Each *Sura* consists of varying number of *Ayats* (Verses).-*Tr.*

[5] Quran 2:30

> Behold! thy Lord said to the angels: "I am about to create man, from sounding clay from mud moulded into shape; When I have fashioned him (in due proportion unto him) and breathed into him of My spirit, fall ye down in obeisance unto him."[6]

All the angels heard that command and none questioned it. The creator, through special resources of His supreme power, collected samples of dust from bitter, sweet, even, uneven and all sorts of soil. Adding water to it, a lump of clay was prepared and a figure was moulded out of it. It was dried in air. When it became so dry as to tinkle when tapped. God breathed the spirit of His choice into it, which gave him life. He was the first human being and father of mankind, Adam^s.

The angels were told to bow down before him. All fell in prostration except Azazeel, who refused to do so on the plea that he was created from fire, which was higher in status than clay. His haughtiness and denial invited the Creator's displeasure and he was commanded to leave the ranks of the angels and go away. He left the place but, to defeat the claim of human supremacy, he took reprieve from God till the doomsday with a determination to waylay and lead human beings to perversity in order to show that they were unworthy of the honour bestowed upon them. To show that the supremacy of His word prevailed and, also, to prove the hollowness of Satan's claim, God gave him the required reprieve with a clear indication to him that he will also find such true and pious servants of God whom he would not be able to swerve from the path of truth and piety. Obviously, therefore, the human beings who deviate from the right path and indulge in corruption, assist Satan in

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[6] Quran 15:28-29

supporting his claim whereas those firmly following the path of virtue and obedience co-operate with their Creator in the fulfillment of His expectations.

The first female individual, named Eve, was created from the clay that was left after the moulding of Adam's[AS] figure. She was made Adam's[AS] partner in life. They were asked to stay in God's pleasant garden for sometime, but they were prohibited from getting near a particular tree. They were warned that if they did so, it shall be an act of transgression and they shall be made to leave the paradise at that very moment.

Satan, who bore malice against Adam[AS] for the superiority and honour conferred upon him, succeeded in convincing him, through Eve, that there was no harm if they tasted the fruit of the prohibited tree without going near it. Adam[AS] showed slackness in not obtaining his Lord's permission in this regard and acted upon the advice of his wife. It was, in fact, Iblis who was maliciously instrumental in it.

As soon as they tasted the fruit of the prohibited tree garments of paradise went off their body. God, then, ordained them to leave paradise and descend upon earth, where they, in any case, were bound to come some day, since Adam[AS] was created for the Vicegerency of God upon earth. They now repented their action and expressed sorrow and apologized to their Lord who ultimately accepted their penitence. They had, however, to go to earth which was to be inhabited by their progeny. They accordingly went down and produced children who, through God's blessing, fastly and abundantly multiplied, as the entire earth had to be populated by them.

God imparted knowledge to Adam[A.S.] of all the things which were needed for human life. His children also inherited that knowledge and, on its basis, explored the unknown things and voluntarily attained such heights as were possible through human competence and endeavour.

But now the great problem faced by Adam[A.S.] was the furtherance of his progeny for which marriage of his children was a pre-requisite. It was not desirable, in the interest of human values, to lay down the custom of marriage between real brothers and sisters. To solve that problem assistance was taken from the nymphs (houris) of paradise and the surviving members of the community of Bani-Jan. The human race thus developed through them.

Adam[A.S.] had many sons. Among them one, Shees[A.S.], who had imbibed all the qualities of his father, became his successor. Two other sons of Adam were Habeel (Abel) and Qabeel (Cain). They were opposed to each other in qualities and behaviour. Habeel was good-natured whereas Qabeel was perfidious. Adam[A.S.] was more inclined towards Habeel because of his goodness whereby Qabeel on account of his evil nature bore malice against Habeel. To add to it, the two brothers happened to present offerings to their Lord on a particular day. Burning of the offering by a stroke of lightning was considered to be an indication of its acceptance by God. Only Habeel's offering was burnt this way. It was thus apparent that Qabeel's offering was not acceptable to God, as it was not offered sincerely. Qabeel's sentiments were thereby so much hurt that he decided to put an end to Habeel's life. He told Habeel:

> "Be sure I will slay thee." Habeel said: "God doth accept the sacrifice of those who are righteous. If thou dost stretch thy hand against me,

to slay me, it is not for me to stretch my hand against thee: for I do fear God, the Cherisher of the Worlds."[7]

Ultimately Qabeel killed Habeel. It was the first human blood that was shed upon earth. Descendants of Shees[AS] flourished and spread all over the world. They produced guides and preachers known as prophets and messengers who propagated goodness and attempted to remove evil. Facing odds, they tried their best to enable the human race to attain high ideals. The precepts and ethics preached by them were, in theory and practice, religion and *Shariat*. Their basic tenets have remained unchanged and, in fact, constitute the core of that code of human conduct that is called Islam.

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[7] Quran 5:30-31

2

BEGINNING OF ISLAM

"The Religion before God (Allah) is Islam."[1]

The truth emerging from this Quranic assertion is that Islam [2] has always been the divine religion. All the prophets and messengers of God came to preach and propagate Islam. The message conveyed to mankind by Adam[AS], Nuh[AS] (Noah) and all the apostles of God was basically that of Islam. The life of every prophet is, thus a piece of the history of Islam. But the word Islam was, for the first time, used by God's prophet Ibrahim[AS] (Abraham), who had the distinction of being called *Khaleeullah* (God's friend). It is laid down in the Quran:

> And strive in His cause as ye ought to strive, (with sincerity and under discipline). He has chosen you, and has imposed no difficulties on you in religion; it is the cult of your father Ibrahim[AS]. It is He who named you Muslims, both before and in this (Revelation).[3]

Ibrahim[AS] and his son Ismail[AS] (Ishmael) were the first to adopt the title, Muslim, for themselves. They had prayed to God that their progeny should also continue to be Muslims.

> And remember Ibrahim[AS] and Ismail[AS] raised the foundation of the House (with this prayer):

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[1] Quran 3:19

[2] The word *Islam* means submission to the Will of God. -*Tr.*

[3] Quran 22:78

> "Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us for Thou art the All-Hearing, the all-Knowing. Our Lord! Make us Muslims, bowing to Thy (Will); and show us our places for the celebration of due rites; and turn unto us (in Mercy); for Thou art the Oft-Returning, Most Merciful."[4]

This makes it clear that those children of Ibrahim[as], who descended through Ismail[as] and followed the true religion, were followers of Islam, which was the religion of their patriarch and for the continuance of which in their progeny they had prayed to their Lord. The intervening branches of Ishaq[as] (Isaac), descending through Musa[as] (Moses) and Isa[as] (Christ), were theoretically the preachers of Islam, though, on the basis of their own religious laws (*Shariat*), their followers were known as *Musai* (Jews) or *Isai* (Christians). Those laws were peculiar to the descendants of Israil (Isaac's progeny) and not to those of Ismail[as]. The religion of the descendants of Ismail[as] was the same as that of Ibrahim[as]. It was, in all respects, the undiluted or correct religion known as Islam. That religion, according to Quran, was opposed to Judasim, Christianity and polytheistic creeds.

> "Ibrahim[as] was not a Jew nor yet a Christian; but he was true in Faith, and bowed his will to God's, (which is Islam), and he joined not gods with God."[5]

Ibrahim[as]'s Islamic achievements

Ibrahim[as] was the first, as a Muslim, to openly denounce polytheism or worshipping more than one god. It

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[4] Quran 2:127-128
[5] Quran 3:67

was known as *Shirk* and was prevalent in three forms. Firstly, worshipping of celestial objects like stars, moon and sun was done. Ibrahim[AS] opposed it in a philosophical manner. "When the night covered him over, he saw a star: he said: 'This is my Lord'. But when it set, he said: 'I love not those that set.' "[6]

Had he started his arguments with denying the star being a god those having faith in it would not have listened to him. By accepting the star as god he took his opponents with him as companions in the journey in quest of truth. In other words, he made it clear that God should be one who neither declines nor sets. It was a criterion good enough to attain the truth but to convince the opponents of the hollowness of their faith he proposed to show to them that none of their objects of worship was worthy of it.

> When he saw the moon rising in splendour, he said: "This is my Lord." But when the moon set, he said: "Unless my Lord guide me, I shall surely be among those who go astray."[7]

This assertion shows that he had his own concept of God who was other than those being worshipped by the people. Then came the turn of the rising sun.

> When he saw the sun rising in splendour, he said: "This is my Lord; this is the greatest (of all)." But when the sun set, he said: "O my people! I am indeed free from your (guilt) of giving partners to God. For me, I have set my face firmly and truly

[6] Quran 6:76
[7] Quran 6:77

towards Him Who created the heavens and the earth, and never shall I give partners to God."[8]

The journey was now over and the goal of truth reached. It was established that the objects that were being worshipped were not worthy of it.

The second form of polytheism which was then practised was idolatry i.e. worshipping of idols carved out of stone or any other material. It was such an evident form of associating others with God that those practising it were known as polytheists or *Mushrik*. It is even now prevalent in one form or another. Ibrahim[as] had to start his fight against it among his own men. His father was Tarukh but one of his respected relations was so close to him that Ibrahim[as] used to address him as father. Quran, too, uses this word for him. In the beginning Ibrahim[as] politely pleaded to him:

"O my father! Why worship that which heareth not and seeth not, and can profit thee nothing."[9]

When it had no effect, Ibrahim's[as] tone became terse and he said:

"Takest thou idols for gods? For I see thee and thy people in manifest error."[10]

When this too was of no avail Ibrahim[as] thought of a device to convince the people about the ineffectiveness of the idols and futility of their worship as gods. He found an opportunity for the same when they went out to their festival ground to perform some polytheistic rites. They had

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[8] Quran 6:78-79
[9] Quran 19:42
[10] Quran 6:74

asked Ibrahim[as] to accompany them but he had refused on the pretext of being unwell. When they had left, Ibrahim[as] took up a hatchet and broke the idols to pieces sparing only one idol, which was the largest. A hue and cry was raised when the idolaters returned to their place. The whole episode is thus referred to in the Quran:

> So he broke them to pieces, (all) but the biggest of them, that they might turn (and address themselves) to it. They said, "Who has done this to our gods? He must indeed be some man of impiety!" They said, "We heard a youth talk of them: He is called Ibrahim[as]." They said, "Then bring him before the eyes of the people, that they may bear witness." They said, "Art thou the one that did this with our gods, O Ibrahim[as]?" He said: "Nay, this was done by — this is their biggest one! Ask them, if they can speak intelligently!" So they turned to themselves and said, "Surely ye are the ones in the wrong!" Then were they confounded with shame: they said, "Thou knowest full well that these (idols) do not speak!" Ibrahim[as] said, "Do ye then worship, besides God, things that can neither be of any good to you nor do you harm? Fie upon you, and upon the things that ye worship besides God! Have ye no sense?" They said, "Burn him and protect your gods, if ye do (anything at all)!"[11]

The story of their attempt to burn Ibrahim[as] shall follow soon. The truth was obvious. The intention was to show the helplessness of their gods as also their

[11] Quran 21:58-68

unworthiness to be treated as gods. They could not rebut the argument. But they were intensely resentful of the demolition of their gods and decided to kill Ibrahim^a^s.

The third form of polytheism faced by Ibrahim^a^s was human worship. Even the king of that time, Namrud (Nimrud)[12], claimed to be god and his people treated him as such. Ibrahim^a^s challenged his claim and argued the matter with him. It is mentioned in the Quran as below:

> Hast thou not turned thy vision to one who disputed with Ibrahim^a^s about his Lord, because God had granted him power? Ibrahim^a^s said: "My Lord is He Who giveth life and death." He said: "I give life and death." Said Ibrahim^a^s: "But it is God that causeth the sun to rise from the East: Do thou then cause him to rise from the West." Thus was he confounded who (in arrogance) rejected faith. Nor doth God give guidance to a people unjust.[13]

Namrud's inability to meet Ibrahim's^a^s arguments made him furious. As a result of it, and also in consequence of his revolt against infidelity, Namrud and his people decided to put an end to Ibrahim's^a^s life through burning. There is a reference to it in the *Sura al-Ambia.*[14] At another place it is mentioned:

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[12] It is said that Namrud ordered two prisoners brought to his presence. He then ordered one to be put to death and the other to be set free to demonstrate that he could give life and death. But that was not what Ibrahim^a^s meant. So he forwarded the second challenge to him.- *Tr.*

[13] Quran 2:258

[14] Quran 21:68

"They said, 'Build him a furnace, and throw him into the blazing fire!' "[15]

Divine wisdom permitted all this to happen and did not intervene because human actions had yet to reach the utmost extent. If divine power had come into play earlier neither the extreme limit of the tyrant's cruelty nor that of Ibrahim's[as] patience could have been revealed. The tyrants could say that they never intended to burn him but were only trying to intimidate him. The oppressed too could have become object of misunderstanding on the ground that being a human being he, at some stage might have shown some infirmity. When all that could be humanly done had been done, a stage was reached when the body of Ibrahim[as] left the catapult and now even the oppressors could not save him if they had so wished. Nor was there any possibility left for Ibrahim[as] to avoid the intended doom by asking Namrud's pardon by a change in his attitude. When human power had reached its limit, the Divine Will manifested itself through the command:

"We said, 'O Fire! Be thou cool, and (a means of) safety for Ibrahim[as]!' "[16]

This personal sacrifice of Ibrahim[as] was the first one made for Islam. He himself did not show the slightest slackness on that score though the creator did not allow it to materialize. He saved Ibrahim[as] as other divine objectives were yet to be achieved through him.

After the above demonstration of God's omnipotence and manifestation of truth the entire community ought to have acquired faith. But there was no remission in their

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[15] Quran 37:97
[16] Quran 21:69

apostasy and contumacy. When all attempts to bring them to rectitude failed, Ibrahim[a.s] decided to migrate to carry on his mission at other places. Only two faithful persons accompanied him in that journey. One was his wife, Sara and the other was his real nephew, Lut[a.s] (Lot), referred to in the Quran:

> "But Lut had faith in Him: He said: 'I will leave home for the sake of My Lord: For He is exalted in Might, and Wise.' "[17]

These three are the first migrants of Islam who left Babylonia[18] (Iraq) for Syria. After staying at two or three places, Ibrahim[a.s] finally settled down at Palestine and sent Lut[a.s] to Jordan for preaching his message. Lut[a.s] happened to meet shameless and debauched people there who indulged in despicable sensual acts. Lut[a.s] tried his best to reform them. But the result was this:

> But his people gave no other answer but this: they said, "Drive out the followers of Lut[a.s] from your city: these are indeed men who want to be clean and pure!"[19]

These are the early delineations of Islamic history that show sufferings, hardships, tortures, poverty and exile as its precious legacy. That is why the Prophet of Islam had said that Islam had begun with poverty and homelessness. How then does it behove the Muslims to feel disturbed and lose courage in the face of trials and mishaps? They should regard them as their peculiar characteristics and be always ready to endure them. When Divine wisdom found no scope

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[17] Quran 29:26
[18] Birth place of Ibrahim[a.s].-*Tr.*
[19] Quran 27:56

of improvement in the people of Lut, it resolved to inflict punishment on them.

The conduct of this first preacher of Islam on this occasion is also notable. Many of the earlier Prophets and Messengers had, on account of persistent recalcitrance and resistance by their people, prayed to their Lord to chastise them. The peculiarity of the missionaries of Islam has been that in spite of being defied and even tortured by their people they never thought of cursing them. Instead of that they prayed to God for their forgiveness. Accordingly, Ibrahim^s also repeatedly pleaded to Almighty to pardon the people of Lut^s when he learnt from the angels that they had come to punish them.

No doubt if Ibrahim^s were to describe his persistent pleading, he would have called it a request, imploration or prayer. But since the Almighty had conferred upon him the honorific of 'friend of God', so to demonstrate the informality of friendliness He called Ibrahim's^s intercession as 'disputation'. The remonstration of Ibrahim^s was not a fault as it was in full accord with God's attribute of 'the Nourisher' and 'the Merciful'. Rather, it was a proof of the sublimity of Ibrahim's^s vision and extent of his courage. Hence it was that God termed it a 'dispute':

> When fear had passed from (the mind of) Ibrahim^s and the glad tidings had reached him, he began to plead with Us for Lut's people.[20]

To term Ibrahim's^s persistent supplication or entreaty as 'dispute' was also due to the affection and regard which

[20] Quran 11:74

almighty God had for him as His friend. Hence God also praised it in the following way:

> For Ibrahim[as] was, without doubt, forbearing (of faults), compassionate, and given to look to God.[21]

In spite of it, Ibrahim's[as] request was not accepted as it was not in keeping with the Divine will and Lut's people had to face the Divine wrath. Only Lut and members of his family were saved except his wife who didn't have the qualities of true faith.

"Take warning, then, O ye with eyes (to see)!"[22]

Birth of Ismail[as] and migration of Hajra to Hijaz[23]

A long period had elapsed since Ibrahim[as] had settled in Syria. He and his wife, Sara, had long been married but they had no issue. Sara then earnestly advised Ibrahim[as] to

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[21] Quran 11:75

[22] Quran 59:2

[23] The chain of mountains which, descending from Palestine towards the Isthmus of Suez, runs almost parallel to the Red Sea down to the southern extremity of the Arabian peninsula, is designated in the Arabic language as *Hijaz* (barrier), and gives its name to all the country it traverses until it reaches the province of Yemen. At times the mountains run close to the sea, at times they move far away from the coast, leaving long stretches of low land, barren, desolate and inhospitable with occasional green valleys and rich oases formed in the track of the periodical rain-torrents. Beyond this range, and eastward, stretches the steppe of Najd — "the highland of Arabia" — a vast plateau, with deserts, mountain gorges and, here and there, green plantations refreshing to the eye. In Hijaz, the barrier-land, lie the holy cities, Mecca and Medina, the birthplace and cradle of Islam.-*Tr.*

have conjugal relations with Hajra, who was already with her, so that God might bless them with children. Ibrahim^s acted upon her suggestion and consequently Hajra gave birth to a son, Ismail^s. Ibrahim's^s attention was then, naturally, more diverted towards Hajra. The stay of Hajra with Sara now became a source of annoyance for her. She desired Ibrahim^s to take away Hajra and the child from there and leave them at some far off place. Under the garb of that development divine wisdom had planned the creation of a big nation, a big country and establishment of a centre of gravitation for the entire world. Ibrahim^s was, therefore ordained by God to respect Sara's wish and take Hajra and her son to some place far away from Syria.

Just consider the distance between Palestine and Mecca! One feels compelled to conclude that it was the guidance of Almighty God that took His friend to a far off place where there was no water, greenery, nor cultivation of any sort. Under divine guidance he left his wife, who had complete faith in her Lord, and her suckling child at that place with no ostensible means of support and returned to Syria.

How distressing the scene must have been! A respectable lady left in a barren land with no one else but her sibling. After a short while the child felt thirsty. In search of water, Hajra made seven rounds of the near by hillocks of Safa and Marwa. Those performing *Haj* commemorate the rounds made by Hajra as an obligatory exercise in the form of running between Safa and Marwa. When, after the seventh round, Hajra came near her child she witnessed the astounding miracle of divine power. A stream of water was gushing out from beneath the feet of

her child. The source of this stream of water is called the well of Zam Zam.

Appearance of water at that place attracted birds from all sides. Guided by these birds human beings also reached there and settled down. Thus was laid the foundation stone of the centre of Islam, which in a way showed that homelessness, exile, migration, hunger and thirst were to be the prominent and inseparable features of its history. These very hardships and sufferings were undoubtedly a prelude to future prosperity and happiness as well:

> "So, verily, with every difficulty, there is relief. Verily, with every difficulty there is relief."[24]

Son's Sacrifice

The most significant sacrifice offered by Ibrahim[as] was that of his son. The Jews and Christians, who also possess divine books, claim that the son sacrificed was Ishaq[as]. It is, however, apparent from the Quran and inferable from Bible as well that the son concerned was Ismail[as]. Commonsense also supports that view because had that event been related to Ishaq[as], its remembrance, in some form or the other, ought to have been retained by Bani Israil since Ishaq[as] was their ancestor. It is an acknowledged fact that no such remembrance exists in their religious traditions. On the other hand, the descendants of Ismail[as] commemorated it before the advent of Islam and also thereafter in the form of *Idul Azha* and *Haj* rituals. It is thus obvious that the sacrifice in question related to Ismail[as] and not to Ishaq[as].

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[24] Quran 94:5-6

The details of this event are vividly described in the Quran and also in the Bible. Its importance is evident from the fact that the story of Ibrahim^as being flung into fire is mentioned in the Quran in a few sentences only whereas the story of the son's sacrifice is detailed in several continuous verses:

> Then, when (the son) reached (the age of) serious work with him, he said: " O my son! I see in vision that I offer thee in sacrifice: now see what is thy view!" [25]

Leaving out the details of intervening links for the sake of brevity and also because these shall be apparent from the later description, Ibrahim^as saw in the dream that he was slaying his son with his own hand. It was not a command in words calling for immediate compliance. Ibrahim^as, therefore, took no steps on that day. The next night also he had the same dream. That day also passed off without any action. On the third successive night he again saw exactly the same dream. He then felt that it was a divine command that had to be carried out. He at once got ready for it. Had he kept it to himself and not disclosed the details to Ismail^as, the proposed sacrifice would have remained a personal achievement of Ibrahim^as alone with Ismail^as playing no active and prominent role in it. Ibrahim^as wanted that his son also should voluntarily attain a place of pride in that solemn affair. He, therefore, called him and said:

> "O my son! I see in vision that I offer thee in sacrifice: now see what is thy view!" (The son) said: " O my father! Do as thou art commanded:

[25] Quran 37:102

thou will find me, if God so wills one practicing Patience and Constancy!"[26]

It was a trial of Ibrahim^s from God that a severe command like the killing of the son was communicated through such a weak medium as a dream. It could have been conveyed through an angel as a God's message; but in that case, Ibrahim^s would have been left with no choice but to obey it. The Creator desired to choose such a medium of communication which imperfect souls could dismiss as a mere dream. In this way the supreme perfection of Ibrahim's^s character was highlighted. Through this means it was also demonstrated that it is only the prophets who attach the value of a divine revelation to whatever they see in dream. Save for a prophet, it is not expected of any ordinary person to act upon such dreams.

To his son also Ibrahim^s conveyed, "I see in vision." He did not say that he was ordained to do so because, if treated as a command, the last phrase, 'see what is thy view' would have become irrelevant. It was also a test for Ismail^s, meant to find out what he thought about his father's dream. Thus, so far as the question paper of the test was concerned, it was just a dream. God expressed His Will to Ibrahim^s through a dream and he also described it to Ismail^s as a dream.

At the stage of answering the paper, a change of words takes place. Ismail^s did not say that "accomplish your dream"; instead, he said, " Do as thou art commanded." Ibrahim^s now proceeded to comply with the command. He

[26] Quran 37:102

took Ismail[as] to the plain of Mina[27] to slay him. The son was laid in front and a knife was placed upon his neck. What happened thereafter is described thus in the Quran:

> So when they had both submitted their wills (to God), and he had laid him prostrate on his forehead (for sacrifice), We called out to him, " O Ibrahim[as]! Thou hast already fulfilled the vision!" — thus indeed do We reward those who do right. For this was obviously a trial — and We ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice.[28]

It is noteworthy that the word used in the Quran for "becoming ready to sacrifice" is *Aslama* (surrendering to the Will of God as a muslim). It was thereby impressed upon the muslim mind that willingness for sacrifice is the prominent quality of a Muslim as this indicates the Islamic spirit present in him.

It is generally understood and said that the Creator had thereafter set aside his command for sacrifice. It should, however, be remembered that an order relates to the actions of the person bound by it. Ibrahim[as] had covered all the stages so far as the order for slaying was concerned. So, after this, what sense does 'cancellation' make? It may be recalled that the order in question was not in words. It was through a dream only.

Had Ibrahim[as] dreamt that he had slain his son, then it could be inferred that a part of the order was yet to be complied with. The dream was only to the effect that he was slaying his son. This he had done. The view that the Divine

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[27] Mina is a suburb of Mecca where pilgrims offer sacrifices during *Haj* pilgrimage.-*Tr.*

[28] Quran 37:103-107

order was revoked is, therefore, not correct. Moreover, the point that clinches the issue is God's own declaration made after the event. It was not said that "O Ibrahim[A.S], I have now cancelled my order and have set it aside." On the other hand it was declared: "Thou hast already fulfilled the vision!"

Obviously, therefore, the order was not cancelled before its compliance. Its full compliance in the form it was received was endorsed by the appreciative phrase: "And We ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice."

It is, in fact, a proclamation of a general principle that God's management of material world is linked with sacrifice and any amount of sacrifice for high ideals and for winning God's pleasure is rewarded accordingly, as is evident from the following verse: "For this was obviously a trial and We ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice."

In fact all the do's and don'ts and also the entire code of religious canons are related to the principle of sacrifice. The sole purpose of appointing prophets, messengers and religious leaders was to provide noble examples of sacrifice through them. Had God treated Ismail's[A.S] sacrifice as the most supreme, it would not have been postponed nor would there have been any necessity to substitute it by a yet greater sacrifice. The Creator knew that the most perfect and complete sacrifice from amongst the descendants of Ismail[A.S] was yet to be offered. Had Ismail's[A.S] sacrifice assumed finality, that generation would not have come into existence that was to make a complete history of sacrifices through its lofty actions. It was, therefore, thought proper by the Creator to prevent Ismail's[A.S] sacrifice for the sake of a greater sacrifice. It, however, in no way detracts a bit from the importance of the magnificent performance of Ibrahim[A.S]

and Ismail[as]. They had, so far as their will and actions were concerned, gone through all the stages of sacrifice.

Construction of Kaaba

When Ismail[as] grew up the Creator commissioned Ibrahim[as] and Ismail[as] to jointly construct God's house, known as Kaaba. According to the Quran, it was the first house which, unattributed to any individual and associated exclusively with the Creator, was built for all the people: "The first House (of worship) appointed for men was that at Bakka (Mecca): full of blessing and of guidance for all kinds of beings." [29]

To term the house (*Bait*) as a center of guidance for all clearly indicates the existence of certain beings who shall be its inmates (*Ahlul Bait*) and shall also be the source of divine blessing and guidance for the entire human race. The most perfect amongst them was to be distinguished through divine proclamation:

"We sent thee not, but as a Mercy for all creatures."[30]

The construction of Kaaba was infact meant to provide a centre for that divine religion (Islam) which is the source of deliverance and salvation for mankind. Both the father and the son engaged themselves in its construction with all sincerity. Mason's job was done by God's friend (Ibrahim[as]) whereas Ismail[as] did a labourer's work. People of the tribe of Jurhum had already settled there and, therefore, there was no dearth of masons and labourers. Still the Creator willed that His house be constructed by the holy hands of His friend and his son. The followers of Islam

[29] Quran 3:96
[30] Quran 21:107

were, thereby, taught that when their religious and spiritual leaders were deputed by the Creator to do hard work and to labour they should never consider this as something degrading for themselves. This was the occasion when Ibrahim[as], along with his son, was raising the walls of Kaaba and simultaneously praying to God to keep his progeny within the fold of Islam.

Proclamation for Haj

When the construction of Kaaba was completed, Ibrahim[as] was, thus, addressed by God:

> "And proclaim the Pilgrimage among men: they will come to thee on foot and (mounted) on every kind of camel, lean on account of journeys through deep and distant mountain highways.[31]

It was also the beginning of the fulfilment of the prayer made by Ibrahim[as] when he had brought his wife Hajra and his infant son Ismail[as] to this place:

> "O our Lord! I have made some of my offspring to dwell in a valley without cultivation, by Thy Sacred House; in order, O our Lord, that they may establish regular Prayer: so fill the hearts of some among men with love towards them, and feed them with Fruits: so that they may give thanks." [32]

To turn the hearts of the people towards this place, God made it a centre for *Haj*. In no other religious obligation the Creator took upon Himself the responsibility of making the people act upon it. But, in respect of *Haj* such an attraction was bestowed upon it that the entire populations of Arabia,

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[31] Quran 22:27
[32] Quran 14:37

both believers as well as non-believers, were impressed by the call of *Haj*. When Prophet Muhammad[S.A.W] was ordained to preach Islam, the Arabs were ignorant of religious injunctions like prayer, fasting, payment of purification tax and such other duties but the ritual of *Haj* was even then observed by them with all dignity and glory, though some undesirable rites were also incorporated in it. However, the importance of the centrality of Kaaba was fully entrenched in their mind. No doubt this was entirely due to the extraordinary effect of the spiritual appeal that the Creator had instilled in Ibrahim's[A.S] call. This very fact guarantees the preservation and perpetuity of this Islamic centre.

Ibrahim's[A.S] Progeny

Children of Ibrahim[A.S] were divided into two branches, Bani Israil and Bani Ismail. Bani Israil are descendants of Ishaq[A.S], son of Ibrahim[A.S] from Sara. Ishaq's son Yaqub[A.S] (Jacob) was known as Israil and, therefore, his descendants are known as Bani Israil. Bani Ismail descended from Ismail[A.S], son of Ibrahim[A.S] from Hajra. The latter lived and flourished in Hijaz and were designated as the sole custodians of the centre of Islam, Kaaba.

Bani Israil and Islam

Ibrahim[A.S], along with Ismail[A.S], had prayed for their progeny to continue to be Muslims. Ibrahim[A.S] himself being a Muslim and also a central figure, all of his faithful descendants, even those from Ishaq[A.S], called themselves Muslims. They also practised the tenets of Ibrahim's[A.S] creed.

> Were ye witnesses when Death appeared before Jacob? Behold, he said to his sons: "What will ye worship after me?" They said, "We shall worship

thy God, and the God of thy fathers, — of Abraham (Ibrahim), Ismail and Isaac (Ishaq), — the One (True) God; to Him we bow (in Islam)."[33]

This shows that in the beginning Bani Israil were also followers of Islam. That is why the Quran has repeatedly reminded them that Muhammad[s.a] had not brought any new religion. It was the same as that of their venerable ancestors.

Ishaq [a.s.]

No such important event relating to Ishaq[a.s] is mentioned in the Quran that could become a part of the history of Islam. The Old Testament (Torah) does contain certain events concerning Ishaq[a.s] under the heading *Israiliyat*, echoes of some of these find place in Islamic historical and biographical books too. But these are unacceptable both on the ground of common sense and narration. If, in accordance with a particular view, Ishaq[a.s] is treated as the *Zabeeh* (object of sacrifice), then the great event of his life (sacrifice) should have got deeply involved with the history of Islam. But it has already been discussed above that *Zabeeh-ullah* is Ismail[a.s], not Ishaq[a.s].

Yaqub [a.s.] and Yusuf [a.s.], (Jacob and Joseph)

The account of the lives of this pair of father and son has been presented in the Quran as "the best of all narratives (*Ahsanul Qasas*)".

Its main parts are the dream of Yusuf[a.s], the jealousy of the brothers, taking out of Yusuf[a.s] by his brothers on the pretext of recreation and frolic, throwing him into the well, falsely telling their father that Yusuf[a.s] was devoured by a wolf, incessant weeping of Yaqub[a.s] whereby he lost his

[33] Quran 2:133

vision; the false lamentation of the brothers of Yusuf[as], their sarcastic comments on their father's grief instead of any expression of sympathy, carrying of Yusuf[as] to Egypt by the people of a caravan after they had brought him out of the well, the selling of God's prophet (Yusuf[as]) as a slave in the market, the severe trial of the prophet in the king's palace at the hands of the king's wife, his steadfastness till the very end, his imprisonment for no fault but his innocence, his elevation to the throne, arrival of Yusuf's[as] brothers as supplicants on account of famine, bestowing of favours on them by Yusuf[as] without disclosing his identity, the repentance and apologizing of the brothers for their previous conduct when acquainted with the real facts in their last journey and magnanimity of Yusuf[as] in pardoning them — all these links in the chain of the story are miraculously detailed in the Quran and can be seen in the original text or in its translation. This story should never be taken as just a family feud having no relevance to the Islamic history. The fact is that be it the quarrel between Habeel (Abel) and Qabeel (Cain) or hostility of the brothers of Yusuf[as], the root cause of the quarrel is always either the difference in belief or their personal qualities. If the nature and approach of the two brothers are similar there can be no conflict between them. Conflict always arises between the good and the bad, the righteous and the unrighteous, the truthful and the false.

Had the brothers of Yusuf[as] been one with him ideologically, they would never have had any inclination towards hostility. Their words and actions, mentioned in the Quran, show that they were devoid of faith in God and of the spirit of obedience to Him. This is borne out by their following comment on their father, Yaqub[as]:

> They said: "Truly Joseph (Yusuf) and his brother are loved more by our father than we: but we are goodly body! Really our father is obviously wandering (in his mind)!"[34]

This clearly shows that they had no faith in the Prophethood of Yaqub[as]. The same is again apparent from their objection to the weeping and wailing of their father:

> They said: "By God! (Never) wilt thou cease to remember Joseph (Yusuf) until thou reach the last extremity of illness, or until thou die!"[35]

One psychological truth emerging from this observation is that no oppressor relishes the discussion of the persecution of the oppressed. This underlying fact should always be kept in mind. Objections to the commemorations of the travails of the oppressed are made by only that person who himself is responsible for the persecution or by one whose mentality is like that of the oppressor.

The very description of this event in the Quran in great detail is in itself an evidence of the fact that it has some significant connection with Islamic history. These events do indeed play a great role in shaping the history, and also the mentality, of the Muslims. That nation may feel disturbed by an account of sufferings and hardships whose history begins with comfort, luxury, power and authority. As regards the Islamic history, its image since the very beginning has been a patch-work of tears, blood, the yoke and the fetters. Still, ease emerged from these very hardships and the setbacks were followed by success. The

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[34] Quran 12:8
[35] Quran 12:85

Muslims of today, and of all times, should never be upset by pain and suffering. Also, the magnanimity of conduct finally exhibited by Yusuf[a.s], when in power, should not be lost sight of. Forgiving his brothers, he said:

> "This day let no reproach be (cast) on you; God will forgive you, and He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy!"[36]

It was this very magnanimity of character that was shown by Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa[s.a] when Islam was at its zenith. At the time of the conquest of Mecca, when all his Quraish opponents, who had perpetrated every kind of persecution both before and after *Hijrat*, were standing helpless before the Prophet[s.a] he pardoned them, repeating Yusuf's[a.s] above cited words. He assured them of their safety saying, "I tell you that which Yusuf[a.s] had told his brothers." Today also Islam expects its followers that, wherever they are in power, they should behave generously with the minority in spite of difference in faith and creed. It is also the demand of humanity from every group in power anywhere on earth to behave in the same generous manner with those who follow different creed and now are helplessly under their control.

Descendants of Ismail[a.s]

When Hajra and her son Ismail[a.s] were brought to Mecca there was absolutely no habitation there. After the appearance of the spring of Zam Zam, birds were attracted to it whereby human beings also came to know that water was available there. People of the tribe of Jurhum passed through this place around this time.

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[36] Quran 12:92

History refers to three classes of Arabia. The first refers to the descendants of Yarub son of Qahtan of Yemen who came to be known as *Arab-e-Aarba*. It comprised the tribes of Aad, Samud (Thamud), Tasm (Amalika), Jadis, and Jurhum the first. When their impiety and sinfulness transcended all limits they became objects of divine wrath and were destroyed. For that reason they are known as *Qabail-e-Baida* (the destroyed and extinct tribes).

The other subdivision was *Arab-e-Mutaarriba*. They had matrimonial alliances with the people of *Arab-e-Aarba*. The Arabic language developed amongst their descendants. They belonged to the tribe of Jurhum who had settled upon the soil of Mecca and were known as Jurhum the Second. Ismail[AS] was brought up in this very tribe. He grew up speaking Arabic language and was married in the same tribe. Arabic became the mother tongue of his descendants. In this way, the third section, called *Arab-e-Mustariba* (naturalized Arabs) came into being. It was God's Will that the name and prestige of the Arabs should be preserved till the day of resurrection through this very group, the *Arab-e-Mustariba*.

Arab-e-Aarba had become extinct much earlier. Descendants of *Arab-e-Mutaarriba* might still be existing somewhere among the nomadic tribes but we do not find any trace of them in the pages of history. Those who are the upholders of the honour and pride of the Arabs are, of course, the descendants of Ismail[AS] (belonging to *Arab-e-Mustariba*); who are spread all over the world. It was God's promise to Ibrahim[AS] that He shall bless Ismail's[AS] descendants with abundance and appoint twelve chiefs from amongst them. There is a reference to it in Chapter XVII of *Taurait* (Torah) in the following words:

> "And Ismail[as], I have heard you in respect of him, I will now bless him, will make him productive with abundant growth and twelve chiefs will grow out of him and will make him a great nation."

This shows that the term "chief" was used for prominent persons among the descendants of Ismail[as] even at that very early time and is still used for those descending from the holy Prophet[saw].

Amongst the sons of Ismail[as] the descendants of Qaidar multiplied abundantly and settled down in Hijaz. They are the progenitors of the Prophet of Islam[saw]. The lineage of God's prophet (Muhammad[saw]) upto Adnan is unanimous and is laid down in all reliable books of history and genealogy. The personality of Adnan was outstanding among the descendants of Ismail[as]. Their future generations took pride in being known as *Ale*-Adnan in the same manner in which *Arab-e-Aarba* were proud of being called *Ale*-Qahtan. Though the Prophet's[saw] lineage from Adnan to Ismail[as] is mentioned in several books yet a tradition attributed to him, says: "Keep quiet after tracing my ancestry upto Adnan." It is thereby understood that he did not confirm the commonly known pedigree from Adnan to Ismail[as] and he himself also did not disclose any other relatively correct pedigree. It might have been either to minimize the importance of the science of genealogy or the purport of Prophet's[saw] above saying could have been what has been inferred by Ibne Ishaq: "From Adnan the descendants of Ismail[as], son of Ibrahim[as], were divided into different clans."[37]

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[37] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.1 p.5

It follows that from Adnan to Ismail[as] the pedigree of all the descendants of Ismail[as] is common. Some intervening branches possibly became extinct after some time and the remaining ones associated themselves with any one branch. It is also possible that some branches had only one issue or survivor. Adnan was however, the person whose descendants multiplied into different tribes. In that event, the import of Prophet's[saw] above noted saying can be that: "When you reach Adnan[38] in my particular pedigree it is futile to move further because thereafter my pedigree and that of other descendants of Ismail[as] is the same."

Adnan had two sons, Maad and Ak. Ak was married in Ashari clan of Yemen. His descendants spread in Yemen. Descendants of Maad continued to stay at Hijaz. The Prophet of Islam[saw] was from amongst them. In the battle of Siffin the clans belonging to the progeny of Ak were with Muawiya and had desperately fought against the army of Ali[as].

Nizar

Maad had four sons, Nizar, Quzaa, Qunus and Iyad. Their descendants grew as four distinct clans. The names of the clans of Quzaa and Iyad continued to appear in history for a long time. The clan of Qunus became untraceable after some time. Nizar was the most prominent amongst them and his descendants appear to have distinguished themselves amongst the Arabs.

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[38] Adnan, one of the descendants of Ismail[as], who flourished about the first century before Christ had, like his ancestor, married the daughter of Jurhumite chief and established himself at Mecca. His son Maad became the real progenitor of the Ismailites inhabiting Hijaz and Najd.- S.Ameer Ali.- *Tr.*

Muzer

Nizar had three sons, Muzer, Rabia and Anmar. Descendants of the first two got much prominence. The clan of Anmar was divided into two branches, Khasham and Bajila. The names of persons associated with those branches appeared in historical records for a long time.

Ilyas

Progeny of Muzer continued through his two sons, Ilyas and Ailan.

Mudrika

Ilyas had three sons, Mudrika, Tabikha and Qamaa. The original name of Mudrika was Amir but he, in his childhood, having successfully chased a gang of camel-lifters got the title of Mudrika.

Khuzaima

Mudrika had two sons Khuzaima and Huzail. Two different clans came into existence through their descendants.

Kinanah

Kinanah, Asad, Asadah and Hun were sons of Khuzaima. Descendants of the first two find prominent place in history in the form of two clans. Those of the other two find no mention.

Nazar

Kinanah had four sons Nazar, Malik, Abd Munaf and Milkan. Amongst them the descendants of the first two got prominence whereas those of the other two ceased to be known.

Malik

Nazar had two sons, Malik and Namla. Malik is amongst Bani Hashim's ancestors. The generation of the other son apparently became extinct.

Fihr[39]

Malik had only one son, Fihr, who is famous and well known.

Beginning of the race of Quraish

There is a difference amongst historians and genealogists about the time since when this race got the title of Quraish. Some say that Quraish was the title of Nazar son of Kinanah and his descendants also came to be known as Quraish. The opinion of some others is that it was the title of Fihr son of Malik and his descendants were called Quraish. Prior to that they were known as Kinani.

The reasons given for this appellation are also different. Some say that Quraish is derived from *taqarrush*, meaning acquisition through effort and they were called Quraish because they were interested in earning through trade. Others suggest that *taqarrush* means "assembly" and because through Fihr the entire community was united so they were called Quraish. In any case this title embodies a good tradition of character building for the race of Quraish because it either enjoins them not to sit idle and treat earning of livelihood through hard labour below their dignity, or it tells them to avoid divisions and follow the path of unity and harmony to the possible extent.

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[39] Fihr, surname Quraish, descendant of Maad, who flourished in the third century, was the ancestor of the tribe which gave to Arabia her prophet and legislator.-S.Ameer Ali.- *Tr.*

Ghalib

Fihr had four sons. Ghalib, Muharib, Haris and Asad.

Loay

Ghalib had two sons Loay and Taym, who gave rise to two different clans and both of them became famous in history. Loay had four sons, Kaab, Amir, Sama and Awf who also became progenitors of four separate clans.

Murra

Murra, Adi and Husais were three sons of Kaab. The clans descending from the first two have prominent place in history. There is no record of the descendants of the third son.

Kilab

Murra had also three sons, Kilab, Taym and Yaqza. Descendants of the first two developed into important clans whereas those of the third one left no trace.

Qusayy

Kilab had two sons, Qusayy and Zuhrah. The former was a prudent man of mature intellect and wise thinking. He had willed his children to avoid drinking liquor with the warning:

> "O, my children always avoid drinking liquor because even if it gives some benefit to the body, it damages the organs of intellect and definitely destroys religious instincts."[40]

Ibne Shahr Ashob says that Qusayy's real name was Zaid and adds:

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[40] *Amali Bani Saduq*

"He was taken away from his ancestor's home to a distant place in his childhood and was, therefore, called Qusayy "[41]

His practical and constructive achievement is that he gathered distantly scattered people of Quraish and got them settled near Kaaba. He, thus, accomplished the job of consolidating the nation in an extremely succesful manner and that is why he got the title of *Mujamma* (gatherer). Trusteeship of Kaaba, which had earlier passed out of the hands of Ismail's descendants, was regained by Qusayy. All those distinguished offices which were source of authority over the entire nation got concentrated in him.

In respect of him Ibne Hisham, in *Seerat,* says:

> Qusayy is the first person amongst the descendants of Kaab son of Malik, who got so much power that the entire nation came under his sway. *Hijaba* (custody of the keys of Kaaba), *Siqaya* (regulation of the supply of water from the wells of Mecca), *Rifada* (collection of annual tax to feed poor pilgrims during *Haj* days), and *Liwa* (handing over of national standard to those leaving for war) were the offices that were combined in him (Qusayy). In this way he enjoyed full dignity and glory associated with Mecca. His commands were obeyed by his people in the same way as religious regulations were.

Abd Munaf

Qusayy had four sons Abd Munaf, Abdud Dar, Abdul Uzza and Abd. The descendants of the first two became

[41] *Manaqib* Vol.1, p.84

well known in the world of history, in particular the branch of Abd Munaf. Ibne Hisham says: "In the life time of his father itself, Abd Munaf had gained high respect and widespread fame."

The actual name of Abd Munaf was Mughaira.[42] The title of Abd Munaf might have been given and publicized by some paternal or maternal relative. It cannot be used as an evidence of disbelief in the Oneness of God on the part of Prophet's ancestors.[43] Ibne Shahr Ashob writes:

> He got this title because his rank grew and attained eminence. That is to say, the title refers to a quality and not to any idol as his (real) name was Mughaira.[44]

Hashim

Abd Munaf had four sons, Hashim, Abd Shams, Muttalib and Nawfil. Among them Hashim was his father's real successor and holder of the official honours of Mecca. He was also renowned for his generosity and hospitality. His real name was Amr. He got the title of Hashim because he had arranged to feed his tribe during the days of famine. A poet says:

> Amr is he who feasted his people through serving them broken pieces of bread, soaked in soup, when the Meccans were run down by hunger due to famine.[45]

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[42] *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p.1091
[43] *Hadeeqa-e-Sultania* Vol.2, p.140
[44] *Manaqib* Vol.1, p.84
[45] *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p.1089

Bani Umayya are the descendants of Abd Shams. The descendants of Muttalib and Nawfil do not appear to have lasted for long.

Abdul Muttalib

Hashim had four sons, Abdul Muttalib, Asad, Abu Saifi and Fazla. Abdul Muttalib was the most prominent amongst them. His real name was Sheba. His title *Abdul Muttalib* refers to his association with his uncle, Muttalib. This Muttalib was so generous and gracious by nature that Quraish called him as *Al Faiz* (the generous). The reason of his association with Muttalib as his slave (*Abd*) was that when in his last days Hashim went to Medina, he married a lady of Najjar in the tribe of Bani Adi.[46] She gave birth to Sheba. Hashim returned to Mecca leaving Sheba with his maternal family. Thereafter, Hashim died. Sometimes after his death, Muttalib went to Medina to bring his nephew. His maternal relatives refused to send him but his mother permitted him to go with his uncle. Muttalib brought him to Mecca seating him on his camel behind him. The ignorant passers-by mistook him for a slave. They referred to him as Abdul Muttalib and gradually that title got publicity. After the death of Muttalib, his nephew, Abdul Muttalib got all the honours of the family just as he had inherited his father, Hashim's official honours after his death. Ibne Hisham writes: "He got that high status amongst his people which was not possessed even by his ancestors. They loved him deeply. He was highly respected by them."[47]

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[46] S.Ameer Ali has given the name of that lady as Salma in *The Spirit of Islam.-Tr.*

[47] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.1, p.87

Providence also helped in enhancing Abdul Muttalib's popularity and fame. The sacred well of Zam Zam, which had disappeared long ago, was rediscovered and dug out through his efforts. Other sacred items (relating to Kaaba), which were missing, were also recovered through his efforts. He also made special arrangements to provide drinking water to *Haj* pilgrims. This earned him the title of *Saqi-ul-Hujjaj* (cupbearer of *Haj* pilgrims). A poet, named Huzaifa, son of Ghanim, says: "Quencher of the thirst of *Haj* pilgrims; charity and alms-giving were the speciality of Hashim and Abd Munaf, who were leaders of the family of Fihr."[48]

The Event of the Elephant

A very significant event of the time of Abdul Muttalib is the one known as ' the Event of the Elephant.' Its details, in brief, are that some mischievous elements informed Tubba, king of Yemen, that huge offerings in the form of cash and jewellery were placed inside Kaaba and if he attacked it he would get immense wealth. He consulted the monks who were with him. They informed him about the religious sanctity and respect enjoyed by Kaaba. They also told him that it was built by their patriarch Ibrahim[AS] and commanded great respect. Tubba, then, punished the mischief mongers and developed regard and respect for that place, though he himself had not seen it. Thereafter, he visited Mecca, made obligatory rounds of the sacred structure of Kaaba and performed *Haj* rituals. He also placed covering upon it and issued special orders for the maintenance of its sanctity. Ibne Hisham says: "It is

[48] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.1, p.94

popularly believed that Tubba was the first to place covering upon Kaaba and issue instructions about it."[49]

Several kings succeeded Tubba. Ultimately a revolution took place and a person named Zunawas acquired possession of the kingdom of Yemen putting an end to the rule of Himyari kings. He compelled the people of Yemen to adopt Judaism as their religion. When they did not obey him, he ordered their general massacre. They sought help from Caesar of Rome against Zunawas. Caesar asked Najashi, king of Abyssinia, to extend help to them in defence of Christianity. He sent an army of seventy thousand soldiers to Yemen under the command of one Aryat. One of the officers of that army was Abraha Ashram. Later on Aryat and Abraha fought among themselves. Aryat was killed and Abraha became the king of entire Yemen.

Abraha built a church at Sana and considered it to be matchless in the world. He was keen to make it the centre of *Haj* for the whole of Arabia but the long-standing centrality of Kaaba was a hindrance. He then decided to destroy Kaaba upon the strength of his military force. He started with a large army whereby a great commotion was raised among the Arabs. Some tribes lying on the way tried to oppose him but they were defeated. He ultimately succeeded in reaching near Mecca.

The result

There was then no military strength at Mecca. The tribes that had tried to oppose the march of Abraha were all vanquished. Apparently there was no obstacle now for him to achieve his objective. But on account of his spiritual insight the keeper of the sacred House, Abdul Muttalib, was

[49] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.1, p.14

unperturbed. Abraha stayed outside Mecca and sent a message to Abdul Muttalib that he had nothing to do with the people. He simply wanted to raze the structure to the ground. If they did not intervene, he would have no quarrel with them. Abdul Muttalib sent a reply that they were not strong enough to fight. As regards the house, it was not theirs; it belonged to God. If He did not stand in his way he and his people would have nothing to do with it. A face-to-face talk also took place between Abdul Muttalib and Abraha. On that occasion Abdul Muttalib complained to Abraha that his men had unlawfully detained his (Abdul Muttalib's) camels. Abraha said that it was strange that he was anxious about his camels but was saying nothing about the holy house with which the honour of his nation was bound. Abdul Muttalib confidently gave the following historic reply:

> "I was owner of the camels so I am complaining about them. The house belongs to someone else. He will himself take care of it."[50]

These words carry that weight of truth against which even the seven spheres cannot stand. Only that person has a right to utter such words who is able to see the Will of God with his inner eyes.

Abraha paid no heed to the warnings of Abdul Muttalib and adamantly stuck to his plan. Abdul Muttalib advised Meccans to retire to the neighbouring hills and valleys for shelter. He himself, accompanied by some notable persons of Quraish, caught hold of the chain hung outside the house

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[50] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.1, pp.31-32

of Kaaba and prayed to God in verse which, briefly, meant "everybody takes care of his house himself so Thou too look after Thine." After having made that submission he quietly waited for the result.

Abraha with full confidence and trust in his material strength moved forward but the result that ensued was the one of which Abdul Muttalib's spiritual conscience was already aware. A mysterious flock of small birds arrived and destroyed Abraha and his entire army. The poets of Arabia made this extraordinary manifestation of divine power the subject of their compositions and thus it became an irrefutable event of Arabian history. Holy Quran also refers to it in *Sura Al-Fil* (*Sura* 105, The Elephants). In his work, *Seerat*, Ibne Hisham has reproduced a large number of verses of the Arab poets related to this incident.

3

BIRTH OF THE PROPHET S.A.

Abdul Muttalib had ten sons and six daughters. On account of the number of his sons, he was known as *Abu Saadatul Ashr*. His sons were Abdullah, Abu Talib R.A., Hamza, Abbas, Zubair, Haris, Hajl, Muqawwim, Zirar and Abu Lahab. Amongst them the first three are important in the history of Islam. Abbas had also embraced Islam later. He was the progenitor of the Abbaside Caliphs. Abu Lahab gained notoriety on account of his hostility to the Prophet S.A..

Abdullah

He was the father of the Prophet S.A. of Islam.[1] It is said that with the passage of time the spring of Zam Zam had filled up. When Abdul Muttalib tried to dig it, the people of Quraish did not let him do so. He felt sad for his helplessness because he had then only one son, Haris, who too was just a child. Abdul Muttalib had then prayed to God that if he had ten sons he shall sacrifice one of them for the sake of God. The Almighty fulfilled his wish. When the number of his sons reached ten he remembered his pious commitment of sacrificing one of them. He drew a lot for it, which fell upon the name of Abdullah. All of his people prevented him from sacrificing Abdullah. They suggested that instead of him the lot should be drawn for the sacrifice of camels. Abdul Muttalib then drew the lot between sacrificing ten camels or Abdullah. It again fell upon

[1] Abdullah was married to Amina, a daughter of Wahab, the chief of the family of Zuhri.-S.Ameer Ali .- *Tr.*

Abdullah's name. Drawing and redrawing of the lot continued, with Abdul Muttalib increasing the number of camels to be sacrificed by ten on each occasion. Ultimately the lot fell upon the sacrifice of one hundred camels instead of Abdullah. Abdul Muttalib was not satisfied and made two further attempts to determine the issue. The verdict was repeatedly in favour of one hundred camels.[2] It was in fact an expression of the divine will and hence the religious law of Islam later on fixed the price or Wehrgeld (*Dait*) for one man's life as one hundred camels.

The Prophet[S.A.][3] did not have the privilege of being brought up under the care of his father because, according to one view, his father had died when he was still in his mother's womb.[4] According to other views he was two months[5], seven months[6] or at the most one year[7] old when his father died.[8]

Abu Talib [R.A.]

He was Abdullah's brother and real uncle of Muhammad[S.A.] . The mother of Abdullah and Abu Talib[R.A.] was Fatima, daughter of Amr Makhzumi. After Abdul

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[2] *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p.1079

[3] It would appear that twenty-one generations intervened between Adnan, and the Prophet[S.A.] and, assuming the time separating one generation from its successor to be of an average duration of thirty years, all these generation were spread over 630 years.-*Shaheed-e-Insaniyat*,S.Ali Naqi.-*Tr.*

[4] *Murawwajuz Zahab* Vol.1 p.398

[5] *Aalamul Wara* p.7

[6] *Usule Kafi* p.278

[7] *Murawwajuz Zahab*

[8] Abdullah died in the course of a journey to Yathrib in the twenty-fifth year of his age and, a few days later, the afflicted wife gave birth to a son, named Muhammad[S.A.].-S.Ameer Ali.- *Tr.*

Muttalib's demise the whole life of Abu Talib[R.A.] was devoted to Islam itself. This fact is made evident at every stage of the history of Islam since its inception and shall be dealt with at the proper place.

Birth of the Prophet S.A. of Islam

When the date of the prophet's death did not remain undisputed amongst the Muslims, it is hardly a mater of surprise to find lack of unanimity in respect of the date of his birth. It is, however, gratifying to note that there is unanimity about the month of his birth, namely, Rabiul Awwal. There are different views amongst the Sunnites about the date of the Prophet's[S.A.] birth in that month. Some say it was the second of Rabiul Awwal whereas some others favour the 8th or the 10th. The general belief among them is that it was Monday the 12th Rabiul Awwal. Among Imamia scholars Kulaini also favours 12th of Rabiul Awwal. [9] Most of them are, however, of the view that the Prophet[S.A.] took birth on Friday, the 17th Rabiul Awwal.[10] Since Imamia community depends solely on sources drawn from the *Ahle-Bait*, [11] their insistence upon 17th Rabiul Awwal must also be on this account, for who else can be better informed about family matters than the members of the family itself. Ibne Shahr Ashob says that the Prophet[S.A.] was born fifty-five days after the Event of Elephant, [12] whereas Masoodi[13] is of the view that it was fifty days after that event. [14]

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[9] *Usule Kafi* p.277

[10] *Aalamul Wara* p.4

[11] *Ahle-Bait* or *Ahlul Bait*, people of the house of Muhammad[S.A.], is the designation usually given to Fatima[A.S.] and Ali[A.S.] and their pious children and descendants.- *Tr.*

[12] *Manaqib* Vol.I p.93

Bringing up

It was a common belief amongst the Arabs that the atmosphere of a city spoiled the purity of a language. On that account it was customary for them to entrust their infants to a Bedouin foster-mother to make them learn the language free of corruption. Muhammad[SA] was, accordingly, entrusted to a Bedouin lady of the tribe of Bani Saad named Halima, daughter of Abdullah (son of Haris). He stayed with that tribe till he attained the age of four or six years.[15]

Doubly-orphaned child

Muhammad, who was already father-less, lost his mother also at the age of six. She had gone to her maternal home in Medina along with her child to see her relations. While returning she fell ill on the way and died at a place known as Abwa.[16]

Some psychologists are of the view that very often the orphanhood of a child helps him in developing self-confidence and courage to face difficulties. By depriving His Prophet[SA] of the support of his father and mother in his childhood, God put an end to the very idea of the influence

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[13] *Murawwajuz Zahab* Vol.1 p.398

[14] Muhammad [SA] was born (at Mecca) on the 12th of Rabiul Awwal in the year of Elephant, a little more than fifty days after the destruction of Abyssinian army, or the 29th of August 570. His birth, they say was attended with signs and portents from which the nations of the earth could know that the Deliverer had appeared.- S.Ameer Ali.- *Tr.*

[15] *Murawwajuz Zahab* p.399 All biographers state that the infant Prophet[SA] sucked only from one breast of his foster-mother leaving the other for the sustenance of his foster-brother. *Introduction to Islam*- M.Hamidullah, p.6 -*Tr.*

[16] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad, *Seerat* Ibne Hisham, and *Aalamul Wara* p.7

of extraneous factors in respect of his inherent perfection. A renowned Egyptian poet, Shauqi Buck has said:

> What to say of that orphan who manifested the traits of superiority from the very beginning. Sometimes orphanhood is a blessing in disguise and an impetus to the development of intellect.

Grandfather's training

After the death of the parents, his grandfather Abdul Muttalib took up the responsibility of maintaining and bringing up Muhammmad[S.A.]. He brought up his grandson with utmost care and attention. Ibne Saad says:

> His grandfather Abdul Muttalib took him under his care and brought him up with that much of affection and devotion, that was not enjoyed by his own children.[17]

Even in the early days of childhood Abdul Muttalib's eyes saw in Muhammad[S.A.] the signs of his future greatness and grandeur. A carpet used to be spread near the Kaaba for Abdul Muttalib to sit upon which even his sons would not dare to use in his absence. But Muhammad[S.A.] during his childhood would come and sit upon it without any hesitation and if his uncles attempted to remove him, Abdul Muttalib would stop them, saying "let my child sit there. By God there is greatness in him which will surely manifest itself."[18]

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[17] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.I p.74
[18] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.I p.108

Affectionate upbringing of Abu Talib[RA]

When Muhammad[SA] was about eight years of age his highly revered and loving grandfather also passed away.[19] During his last moments Abdul Muttalib entrusted to Abu Talib[RA], the real uncle of the Prophet[SA], the charge of his nephew, even though Abu Talib[RA] was neither senior in age nor prosperous among his sons. Still he chose him as his guardian probably because Abu Talib[RA] had great love for Abdullah, father of Muhammad[SA], and also by now Abdul Muttalib had realized that no one had as much of affection for Muhammad[SA] as Abu Talib[RA]. Over and above everything else, the main reason was probably the fact that Abdul Muttalib knew that amongst all his sons it was Abu Talib[RA] alone who had inherited the qualities and manners of the descendents of Ibrahim[AS] which were coming down from generation to generation and for whose perfection God had sent the last Prophet[SA]. Therefore, in the eyes of Abdul Muttalib the caressing lap of Abu Talib[RA] was the most proper and suitable place for this Prophet[SA]. The love and affection shown by Abu Talib[RA] in looking after God's Prophet[SA] is undisputedly an exemplary fact of history. It was evident to everyone that the love that he had for the Prophet[SA] far exceeded his love for his own children. Ibne Saad says:

> He loved him (Prophet[SA]) more than his own children. The Prophet[SA] did not sleep but by his side and accompanied him wherever he went. Abu Talib[RA] loved him intensely and more than

[19] Abdul Muttalib died toward the year 579 A.D. shortly after his return from a journey to Sana, where he had gone as the representative of the Quraish to congratulate Saif the son of Zul Yezen, on his accession to the throne of the Tobbas.-S.Ameer Ali.- *Tr.*

anything else; he fed him with his own hands. While other children (of Abu Talib[R.A.]) could be seen untidy with disarranged hair, God's Prophet[S.A.] would be well-dressed even in the morning with kohl (*kajal*) in his eyes and oil in his hair.[20]

Journey to Syria

When Muhammad[S.A.] was twelve years old, Abu Talib[R.A.] travelled to Syria with a trade caravan.[21] Upon the insistence of the Prophet[S.A.], Abu Talib[R.A.] took him with him.[22] In the course of that journey Abu Talib[R.A.] met a monk named Bahira when he halted for a while near his monastery. When the monk cast a glance at the face of the Prophet[S.A.] and observed his features he made some inquiries about him. He directed Abu Talib[R.A.] to take special care of him and to beware of the Jews lest, out of jealousy, they caused harm to him. He also advised Abu Talib[R.A.] not to take the boy to Syria and to send him back to his town. Abu Talib's[R.A.] reply was: "God's protection is sufficient".[23]

On the basis of this story the Christians have erected a baseless edifice making Bahira the source of all the facts and information given in the Quran about the earlier nations and religions. The very nature of the event shows the desperation of the Christians to overcome their bewilderment in respect of the greatness of the Prophet[S.A.] with the help of an unsound conjecture.

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[20] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 pp.75-76

[21] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.76

[22] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.1 p.113. According to another report the Prophet[S.A.] was only nine years old at that time. See *Murawwajuz Zahab* Vol.1, p.405

[23] *Manaqib* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.23

Magnanimity of Character

Those watching Muhammad[s.a.] from his childhood were impressed by the sublimity of his character and refinement of manners. He kept himself aloof from the unhealthy customs and habits of the days of ignorance. He was distinguished amongst his people for his compassion, sense of justice, trustworthiness, sociability, fulfillment of neighbourly obligations, forbearance, tolerance and truthfulness. The Quraish in general called him *Ameen*, that is, trustworthy.[24]

The League of the *Fuzul*

When the Prophet of God was about twenty years old the chieftains of Quraish bound themselves by a solemn covenant known as *Hilful Fuzul*. Representatives of all the tribes of Quraish, namely, Bani Hashim, Bani Haris, Bani Zuhrah and Bani Taym, collected at the house of Abdullah son of Judaan Taymi and bound themselves by an oath to defend every oppressed person, whether Meccan or outsider, and to support the just against any wrong or injustice to which he might be subjected and not to rest till redress was obtained for him. The proposal for this had originated from an uncle of the Messenger of God, Zubair, son of Abdul Muttalib.[25] Such a civilized covenant based upon the principles of gentlemanliness and humanitarianism had never been executed in the history of Arabs.[26] The Messenger[s.a.] of God was an enthusiastic supporter of this agreement and always felt happy about it. Even after attaining prophethood he upheld that covenant and used to

[24] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.76; Sirat Ibne Hisham Vol.1 p.115
[25] *Murawwajuz Zahab* Vol.1 p.396
[26] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.82

say, "if somebody should appeal to me even today, by virtue of that pledge, I shall hurry to his help."[27]

Second journey to Syria

In the twenty-fifth year of his age Muhammad S.A. travelled to Syria for the second time. The details relating to that journey are that a lady named Khadijah, daughter of Khuwaylid, was a respectable and rich trader. She used to send merchandise for sale to Syria every year through different persons on terms of having a share in profits. This year either Muhammad S.A. himself, upon the initiative of Abu Talib R.A.,[28] offered to undertake that job or Khadijah herself, as Ibne Hisham says[29], offered the job to him with a promise that she will pay him double the share in profits to that she was paying to others. It seems more probable that, impressed by Muhammad's S.A. outstanding qualities Khadijah herself had made the offer to him. It was the maiden performance of Muhammad S.A. as a trader but, through his truthfulness, honesty and prudence, Khadijah earned double of the usual profit and she paid more than the stipulated remuneration to Muhammad S.A.

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[27] This chivalrous league received the name of the *Hilful Fuzul* or the Federation of Fuzul in memory of an ancient society instituted with a similar object among the Jurhum, and composed of four personages, named Fazl, Fazal, Mufazzal and Fuzail, collectively called Fuzul. Muhammad S.A. was the principal member of this new association, which was founded about 595 A.D., shortly after his marriage. The league of the Fuzul exercised efficient protection over the weak and the oppressed and during the first year of its institution, the simple threat of its intervention was sufficient to repress the lawlessness of the strong, and to afford redress to the helpless. -S.Ameer Ali.- *Tr.*

[28] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.I p.82

[29] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.I p.118

Marriage

Khadijah was a respectable lady of the distinguished tribe of Quraish. Three generations back her ancestry combined with that of God's Prophet^{SA} in the following order:

Qusayy ibn Kilab

Abdul Uzza	Abd Munaf
Asad	Hashim
Khuwaylid	Abdul Muttalib
Khadijah	Abdullah Muhammad^{SA}

This pedigree shows that Khadijah was senior to Prophet^{SA} in terms of relationship and ranked with his father. It was, therefore, not unexpected that she should have been older than Muhammad^{SA} in age. Historians have stated that, at the time of marriage, Muhammad^{SA} was twenty five years old[30] and Khadijah, forty.[31] According to one source Khadijah's father was not alive. He had died prior to the war of Fujjar.[32] There is another report which says that he was still alive and had himself performed Khadijah's marriage.[33] This, however, appears highly improbable.

[30] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.1 p.118
[31] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.84
[32] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.84
[33] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.1 p.118; *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) pp.1128-1129

Beside the lofty family status, God had also bestowed upon Khadijah considerable amount of wealth and property. The people of Quraish were profoundly impressed by her status and prestige. In such a situation, according to Ibne Saad, everyone among the Quraish was eager to marry her even at the expense of his own wealth[34]. On that account it seems reasonable to presume that it was her first marriage. Several scholars are of this view.[35] The trustworthiness and integrity shown by Muhammadˢᵃ during the trade expedition had so impressed Khadijah that she herself sent a lady, Nufaysah, daughter of Mamba, to Muhammadˢᵃ to persuade him to send a proposal for marriage. Nufaysah approached him and asked him why he was not getting married. He replied that he had no money for that. Nufaysah said that she could arrange a match for him wherein no money would be needed and moreover the lady concerned was a woman of physical charm, wealth, property and grandeur besides being equal in pedigree. On being asked, she disclosed Khadijah's name. Muhammadˢᵃ then expressed his willingness and Nufaysah promised to arrange the marriage. Nufaysah happily went to Khadijah and informed her about Muhammad'sˢᵃ response. Khadijah then sent a message to Muhammadˢᵃ to come on a particular day and time and also asked her uncle, Amr bin Asad, to perform her marriage with Muhammadˢᵃ. On the appointed day Muhammadˢᵃ, accompanied by Abu Talibʳᵃ and other uncles, went to the house of Khadijah.[36] On behalf of Khadijah Amr bin Asad and, on behalf of the Prophetˢᵃ,

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[34] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.84
[35] *Manaqib* Ibne Shahr Ashob Vol.1 p.86
[36] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.84

Abu Talib[R.A] recited the formula of *Nikah* and the ceremony ended nicely and pleasantly.[37]

The address delivered by Abu Talib[R.A] before the gathering prior to *Nikah* is a memorable piece of oratory. He said

> Every praise is for God who placed us amongst the progeny of Ismail[A.S] and built a house for us where *Haj* is performed and established a *Haram* (precinct of Kaaba) which is the centre of peace and security and where fruits of all sorts come and made us arbitrator of disputes of the people and blessed us in this city where we are staying. After this, you should know that my nephew, Muhammad[S.A], son of Abdullah, is a person whose worth, if weighed against that of any other person of the Quraish, would appear heavier and whose superiority would be evident if compared with others. Nobody in the world can come up to his stature. What does it matter if he is not well-endowed in respect of wealth and property for, after all, wealth is an ephemeral, fleeting shadow. The fact of the matter is that he has an inclination towards Khadijah and she too is inclined towards him. I am willing to pay any amount of dower,

[37] In spite of the disparity of age between Muhammad[S.A] and his wife, who was much the senior of her husband, there always existed the tenderest devotion on both sides. This marriage brought him that repose and exemption from daily toil which he needed in order to prepare his mind for his great work. But beyond that it gave him a loving woman's heart that was the first to believe in his mission and that was ever ready to console him in his despair, and to keep alive within him the thin flickering flame of hope when no man believed in him. -S. Ameer Ali.-*Tr.*

prompt or deferred, from my property that you suggest.[38]

The words of this address are proof of the speaker's faith in his Creator. For the sublimity of its style it would suffice to say that not only its sense but also its letters frequently resemble the words of God, which were yet to be revealed.

K.A.Hameed says, "twelve ounces of gold and twenty-five camels were fixed as dower and the same was immediately paid through the munificence of the uncle, Abu Talib R.A."[39]

There is a unanimity in respect of two distinctions of Khadijah; first, that she was the first lady to be married to the Prophet S.A. of God and, second, that as long as she was alive he did not marry any other woman.[40] The significance of this second distinction gets further enhanced when we notice that amongst the Prophet's descendants and custodians of his mission, daughters of royal families came as wives but no discriminatory exception was made in their favour while establishing matrimonial relations with other ladies. When the daughter of Mamun Rashid complained to her father about Imam Muhammad Taqi's A.S. marrying another lady his reply was: "I cannot make unlawful for him that which has been permitted by God."

Another illustration in the history of Islam of a husband not marrying another woman in the lifetime of his first wife is that of Ali A.S. In the lifetime of Fatima A.S. , the daughter of the Prophet S.A. and Khadijah, Ali A.S did not marry any other

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[38] *Aalamul Wara* pp.85-86
[39] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Vol.1 p.38
[40] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.1 p.119

woman just as before this, in her mother, Khadijah's lifetime Prophet[S.A] had no other wife. This clearly indicates that no wordly grandeur could persuade these noble souls to renounce that which is permitted by God. Only the loftiness of personal qualities and sublimity of status in the eyes of God could entitle a lady to such a unique distinction. It thereby follows that no other wife of Ali[A.S] attained the position of Fatima[A.S] just as no other wife of the Prophet[S.A] attained the position of Khadijah.

Birth of Ali[A.S]

When the Prophet[S.A] of Islam was about thirty years of age his loving and kind uncle, Abu Talib[R.A] and aunt, Fatima binte Asad, who had brought him up as a real mother begot that child the glad tidings about whose birth were received by Abu Talib[R.A] through Divine agencies and conveyed by him to his wife about thirty years back in the following words: "Wait for thirty years; God shall bless you also with a child resembling this one (Muhammad[S.A])."[41] That child took birth in God's house (Kaaba)[42] and he was named Ali[A.S].[43] No doubt Muhammad[S.A] was as happy in the birth of Ali[A.S] as he might have been if a real brother were born. It was later on revealed to the world that Ali[A.S] was not just a brother but also a helper of the Prophet[S.A] of God in accomplishing the mission of his life and who, next to the Prophet[S.A], played the most vital role in shaping the history of Islam.

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[41] *Usule Kafi* p.287 ; *Manaqib* Ibne Shahr Ashob Vol.1 p.19

[42] *Izalatul Khifa* p.251

[43] Ali[A.S] was born to Abu Talib[R.A] on the 13th of Rajab in the 30th year of the Event of Elephant at Mecca in the Kaaba itself.-*Shaheed-e-Insaniyat*,S.Ali Naqi.- *Tr.*
It was about the year 605 of the Christian era. *Tr.*

Reconstruction of Kaaba

When Muhammad ﷺ was thirtyfive years old the Quraish undertook the job of the reconstruction of Kaaba. It is said that the rain-water that filled the valley lying in between the nearby mountain used to flow towards the Kaaba which till then had no roof. The structure could not bear the brunt of the water that flowed in during torrential rains and consequently, cracks were produced. Its crumbling down was apprehended. Moreover, the articles kept inside the Kaaba were also being stolen. The treasure kept in a cavity beneath the Kaaba had already been pilfered. [44]

Ibne Saad says that some ornaments and a deer made of gold were stolen away from that treasure. The people of Quraish then decided that the entire building should be re-built and a roof provided to it.[45]

For that purpose a prominent person of the Quraish stood up and said, "O people, you have to be careful that only legitimate earnings are to be spent over this construction and no money acquired through flesh-trading, usury or criminal misappropriation is to be utilised."[46] It shows that because of the teachings of Ibrahim ﷺ, the concept of legitimate and illegitimate earning amongst the Quraish had survived. It is a different story that most of them did not follow it in practice. Ibne Ishaq has specified that the person who made this announcement was Abu Wahab bin Amr bin Aiz bin Imran bin Makhzum, a brother of Prophet's ﷺ paternal grandmother.

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[44] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.I p.122
[45] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.I p.93
[46] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.I p.122

To ensure that the privilege of the reconstruction of Kaaba did not become the exclusive distinction of any particular family, the Quraish allotted different sections of the proposed building to different families. The portion having the main door was allotted to the descendants of Abd Munaf and Zuhrah, the wall between *Rukne Aswad* and *Rukne Yamani* to Bani Makhzum and some other families, the back portion to Bani Jamah and Sahem and a side portion to Bani Abdul Dar, Bani Asad and others. The allotted portions were duly constructed. A difference arose amongst them when the stage of contructing that portion arrived where the Black Stone (*Hajre Aswad*)[47], was to be placed. Each family desired to have that honour. The dispute became so severe that it was feared that it would soon lead to violence and bloodshed.[48]

According to Ibne Ishaq these factions got fully determined to fight it out and started hurling abuses at one another. A member of Bani Abdul Dar even filled a cup with blood, placed it in front of himself and, along with Bani Adi, swore to sacrifice his life. As a symbolic demonstration of the seriousness of their determination they dipped their hands in the cup that held the blood. For this action they were nicknamed by the Arabs as *Laaqatuldam* (blood lickers). This dispute delayed the construction work by four to five days.[49]

To end the dispute they ultimately decided, probably at the suggestion of the oldest person amongst the Quraish,

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[47] The Black Stone was set probably by Ibrahim^AS himself to mark the starting point of the obligatory circumambulation (*Tawaf*) of Kaaba .- *Tr.*

[48] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.93

[49] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.1 p.124

Abu Umayya bin Mughaira Makhzumi, to make that person their arbitrator who would be the first to enter the mosque through the door known as Babe Bani Sheba. They agreed that this decision should be binding upon all. It so chanced that the first man to enter through that door was Muhammad[S.A.]. All were happy to see him and agreed to abide by his verdict. When the matter was placed before him, he sent for a sheet of cloth[50] or, according to some scholars, he took off his own cloak[51] and spread it on the ground and placed the black stone upon it. One person each from every faction was asked to lift it together. When the black stone came upto the spot where it was to be placed, he himself lifted it up and put it there. On account of the amicable solution of this knotty problem Muhammad's[S.A.] personality assumed special importance among the Arabs. It is recorded in history that at that moment an experienced elderly person loudly commented that this man, Muhammad[S.A.], shall one day surpass all others and attain a position of grandeur and importance.[52]

Conferment of Prophethood

By now the world had come to know Muhammad[S.A.] as a perfect human being but the office for which the Creator of the world had sent this gem of a man was yet to manifest itself. No doubt that office was attached to his personality since the beginning of the creation. The purity and the perfection of his character, visible to the world for long, was simply a reflection of the luminosity of that great office. The message which he had to renew and bring to perfection for the reformation of mankind was hitherto

[50] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.I p.124
[51] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.I p.93; *Murawwajuz Zahab* Vol.I p.397
[52] *Murawwajuz Zahab* p.398

being silently conveyed through the way of his every day life.

As a fundamental article of belief the factuality of Oneness of God was not new for him. It was a legacy from Ibrahim[A.S.] that had continued to pass as a family heritage among the ancestors of Muhammad[S.A.] from one generation to another. His own extraordinary wisdom, an essential concomitant of his superb human qualities, was in itself a guarantee of his gaining the real perception of the Creator of the universe. There was no need for him to retire to any cave to think and meditate upon it. The Divine wisdom, however, desired that he should not open his mind to the world as God's representative until the people became fully aware of his moral conduct and human qualities that would attract the good among them and quieten the bad ones whenever he declared himself as God's messenger. Till that time it was, therefore, necessary that he should give no such hint, by word or deed, that could make the people suspect that he was preparing the ground for making some special claim. Nor was he to perturb them and make them apprehend that he was going to preach any particular religious creed. That is why he preferred to retire to lonely places to worship his Lord. For several years prior to the conferment of prophethood he had made a cave, known as *Ghare-Hira*, the central place for this purpose.[53] It is preposterous to say that the Prophet of God had no idea of his high status or that he felt bewildered or frightened on hearing God's Message or that he himself could not perceive that it was divine revelation and needed its confirmation from others.

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[53] Ghar-e-Hira means the cave of research. It is a cave of the mountain known as Jabal-an-Nur (mountain of light).- *Tr.*

Falsehoods such as these that have crept into the history of the Muslims are surely the handiwork of anti-Islamic elements that, wearing the mask of Islam, had mixed up with the Muslims and were given undue importance as men of learning by the unscrupulous seekers of worldly power to divert the people's attention from the genuine sources of Islamic learning. Abdullah bin Salam, Kaabul-Ahbar and such other Jewish converts to Islam had invented stories like these to lower the prestigious status of the Prophet[S.A]. The later historians, under court patronage, have knowingly blackened the pages of their so called 'histories' by indiscriminately accepting and reproducing these fictions.

To us, conferment of Prophethood upon Muhammad[S.A] (*Besat*) simply means that God's Wisdom now deemed it proper that the mission hitherto quietly carried out by Muhammad[S.A], through his character and conduct should be done openly. Accordingly, he was now divinely ordained to present himself as God's messenger. It is this formal deputation, which is known as *Besat*, or conferment of Prophethood. It is unanimously accepted that Muhammad[S.A] was then forty years of age but some difference is there in respect of the exact date. The Sunnite historians believe that the first revelation took place on the 17th of the month of Ramzan [54] whereas the Imamia sect, upon the authority of the Prophet's family, is of the view that it was the 27th of Rajab.[55]

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[54] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.1 p.149; *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.129
[55] *Aalamul Wara* p.5

The First Revelation

The first divine announcement or revelation indicating that God had chosen Muhammad[SA] as his Messenger comprises the following five verses of *Sura Iqraa*, 96th *Sura* of the holy Quran:

> Proclaim! (or Read!) In the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who created— Created man, out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood: Proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful,—He Who taught (the use of) the Pen,— taught man that which he knew not.

If examined closely it will be seen that the first message conveyed to a nation to which being illiterate was a matter of pride and ignorance of reading and writing had acquired the status of national characteristic, draws attention to these very qualities. It is a clear proof of the importance that Islam attaches to the opening of the gates of intellect and learning. Polytheism (*Shirk*) was a very serious national ailment, which had caused the spread of numerous evils and, therefore, *Sura-e-Ikhlas* (112th *Sura* of Quran emphasizing the Oneness of God) should have been the first revelation. Yet all the commentators concur that it was not and, actually, it was revealed much later. The reason for this is that though polytheism is no doubt the most serious of all ailments, yet for every ailment there is an internal cause. Polytheism and immoralities are just like diseases. The searching eyes of a physician move from the symptoms of a disease to its causes for its proper treatment. The root cause of polytheism and other evils is ignorance and hence the first voice raised by Islam was against ignorance itself. Those who assign sword a prominent place in the preaching of Islam should ponder over the fact that in the first

revelation of Islam the word 'sword' does not figure; instead, it is 'the pen'.

It is, indeed, a matter of pity that the Muslims themselves failed to understand this point otherwise, after the demise of the Prophet[S.A.], they would not have marched forward sword in hand to propagate Islam. For spreading knowledge and understanding (about Islam) they should have entered the field with their pens. If it had been so, the history of the Muslims would have been totally different and the fine fabric of Islam would never have been sullied by blots of unmerited criticism.

The First Muslims

After having received the first message of God and having been ordained to proclaim his prophethod it was but natural and in accord with the ethics of teaching and principles of preaching that Muhammad[S.A.] should have first conveyed this message to the members of his own household. And this he did. It was the inner awareness of the purity of his life and its deep effect on their hearts that let them to unhesitatingly accept his message. Let us see who these blessed persons were.

They were: first, his life-partner, Khadijah, who had decided to have him as her husband after having been impressed by his sterling qualities and magnanimity of character. His cousin, Ali[A.S.], who had opened his eyes in his lap and who was brought up and treated by him as his own child and had completed ten years of his life under his tutelage, was the second. As per the Arab and, more particularly, the Hashimite scale of growth, a lad of ten is very close to youth. Ali[A.S.] needed no proof or reasoning to recognize and endorse Muhammad's[S.A.] prophethood since he had all along been looking at a being whose formal

nomination as prophet of God was to be made when its time arrived. He was always with him and was observing with the help of God-gifted insight his extra-ordinary qualities. At a later stage, while narrating the events of his childhood, Ali[a.s] himself referred to this fact:

> I followed and walked behind the Prophet[s.a] as the young of a camel follows its mother. Every day he used to set-up a new beacon of light for me through his rectitude. I used to see the glow of prophethood with my own eyes and also enjoyed its fragrance.[56]

In the words of Dr. Iqbal: "Ali was the first Muslim and the lord of the valorous, the chief stock of faith (in God) for His devotees." The order in which people took lead in embracing Islam, as described by the earliest historian, Ibne Ishaq, is that Khadijah binte Khuwaylid was the foremost to accept the Prophet's mission. Among the males, Ali ibne Abu Talib[a.s] was the first. Thereafter, Zaid bin Harisa, who lived with the Prophet[s.a] as his child and was called as his son, embraced Islam. He too was counted among the inmates of the Prophet's house. According to Tabarsi the third man to accept Islam was Jafar, a brother of Ali and known as *Jafar-e-Tayyar* in accordance to a tradition of the Prophet[s.a]. The congregational prayers (*Namaz*) initially comprised only five persons, namely the Prophet[s.a], who led the prayers, and Ali[a.s], Jafar, Zaid and Khadijah (who formed the second line).[57] Thereafter, some

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[56] *Nahjul Balagha* Vol.2 p.183 ; *Nahjul Balagha* is a compilation of sermons, discourses and sayings of Ali[a.s] made on different occasions. *Tr.*

[57] *Aalamul Wara* p.25

of those few people who used to pay friendly visits to the Prophet[S.A.] individually were told about Islam. From among them the first to embrace Islam was Abu Bakr, who belonged to the tribe of Bani Taym. He was followed by Usman, Zubair bin Awam, Abdul Rahman bin Awf, Saad bin Abi Waqas and Talha bin Ubaidullah, all of whom embraced Islam within a few days.[58] There is yet another version about Abu Bakr, which has been cited by Tabari through Muhammad bin Saeed. It is to the effect that he, Muhammad bin Saeed, once asked his father whether Abu Bakr was the first to adopt Islam. He replied in the negative and added that fifty others had embraced Islam before him.

Taqayya (Dissimulation) in Practice

For three long years after the revelation of the Prophethood the law of *Taqayya* was strictly observed and the pious work of propagating the message of Islam was done quietly and secretly.[59]

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[58] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.I p.153-158

[59] *Takeyye* (*Taqayya*) is the natural defence of the weak and suffering against the strong. People have not the fibre of a martyr and the majority of them have, to submit where they cannot oppose. The primitive Christian had to practice *Takeyye*. The Ismailias had special reasons for concealing their religious views in all countries within the sway of the Abbaside caliphs; this long-enforced habit became at last a second nature with them. From them the Shias borrowed the practice of *Takeyye*. Before Persia and Turkey had entered upon terms of amity, a Shia was unable to perform the *Haj* unless he conformed to Sunni rites, and *Takeyye* in such cases was almost a necessity. But *Takeyye*, "the natural offspring of persecution and fear," has become so habitual with the Persians that they conform to it even in circumstances when there is no necessity. They practise it to avoid giving offence or wounding susceptibilities, just as the Protestant shows a certain deference to Romish rites in Catholic countries. S.Ameer Ali.- *Tr.*

Ibne Saad says: "For three years since the first revelation the Prophet[S.A.] preached (his message) confidentially. Ultimately he was commanded to declare his prophethood (and preach openly).[60]

Later historians, like Tabari and Shaikh Shah Abdul Haq, also give a similar account.[61] K.A. Hameed writes:

> Barring a few persons the generality of the people did not have faith in the Prophet[S.A.] in the beginning. The pace of the propagation of religion was extremely slow. After four years the number of the Muslims was just thirty-nine. Even those who had adopted Islam were so afraid of the general public that they recited Quran and performed other religious rites at home after closing the doors. After facing penury and hardships for four years the Prophet[S.A.] started preaching the Oneness of God openly before the Kaaba.[62]

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[60] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.132

[61] *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p.1169; *Madarijun Nubuwwa* Vol.2 p.47-48

[62] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Aalam* Vol.1 p.40; Altering three years to four and rushing precipitately to the stage of public preaching leaving the intermediary ones, is the result of that recklessness which, besides deliberate distortions and literary impertinences, is frequently observed in the writings of this author. Such aberrations shall be critically noticed in the course of this work whenever found necessary.-*Tr.*

***Dawate Asheera*: The first public preaching to a restricted audience**

After the members of the household should come the turn of the near relations and then that of the general public. Message of the Prophet[S.A] had already attracted the members of his own family. Now, after three years of secret preaching came the divine injunction: "And admonish thy nearest kinsmen."[63]

It was a direction to preach among the nearest of kin. In the absence of this, the verse regarding public preaching would not have been revealed. In compliance thereof, the Prophet[S.A] arranged a feast. On the first day all the relatives came, partook of food, but gave no chance to the Prophet[S.A] to say a word. On the following day again a feast was arranged wherein all of the stock of Abdul Muttalib were present. To this gathering the Prophet[S.A] declared his prophethood, saying:

> "I have brought to you the goodness of this world and hereafter. God has enjoined upon me to call you towards Him."

He then asked:

> "Who among you is prepared to be my helper in spreading the message of Islam and be designated as my brother, my legatee and my successor?"

This announcement clearly indicates that under Islamic law public opinion has nothing to do with the succession of the Prophet[S.A] as it solely depends upon the discretion of God and His Prophet[S.A]. The covenant of help and loyalty

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[63] Quran 26:214

mentioned on this occasion was meant to be an indicant of this discretion.

The question put by the Prophet[saw] elicited no response from the audience. Only Ali[as], though the youngest of them all, stood up and offered every kind of assistance to the Prophet[saw] in his mission. The Prophet[saw] put his hand on Ali's shoulder and said:

> "That settles it. He is my brother, and my successor. It is incumbent upon you all to obey him."[64]

This event is so undisputed that besides books of history and traditions it has also become a part of Quranic commentaries. Tabari, Ibne Aseer and Abul Fida in their historical works, *Mualemul-Tanzeel Baghwi, Tafseer Khazin Baghdadi, Jamaul-Jawame Seoti* and other commentaries on Quran and, amongst compilations of traditions, *Kanzulul Ummal* of Mulla Ali Muttaqi and Behaqi's biography of the Prophet[saw] known as *Dalaelul Nubuwwa,* all refer to this event. Moreover, British writers too mention this event in emphatic terms in their works. An eminent contemporary, Maulvi Imamuddin Ramnagri, makes the following statement in his article, *Investigatory Proof of Muhammad's[saw] Prophethood*:

> Besides Ali[as], who was quite young and a Muslim since before, no other person responded to the Prophet's offer. Ali[as] stood up and enthusiastically proffered support. Other elderly persons, taking it as just a childish act greeted it with derisive laughter. The coming events,

[64] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.217; (Holland) pp.1172-73

however, proved that God's Prophetﷺ was true, his message was true and that righteous person was also true who alone had pledged his support.[65]

The First Public Preaching

After the task of preaching before a limited gathering was over the Prophetﷺ received the following divine command:

> Therefore expound openly what thou art commanded, and turn away from those who join false gods with God.[66]

The Prophetﷺ rose to comply with that command. On a day when there was a huge gathering of infidels in front of the Kaaba, he went up the hill of Safa and said:

> " Tell me if I inform you that an army of the enemies is coming to attack you from behind this mountain, will you believe me?"

From the front rows many voices were heard saying, "We shall certainly believe you because we have never heard anything but truth from this tongue." After eliciting this admission, the Prophetﷺ said:

> Alright, now listen that God has made me His Prophet. He has deputed me to guide you and to tell you that as a result of idolatry and other evil practices that you indulge in, you shall have to face the blaze of hell.

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[65] *The Maulvi*, Delhi Sept. 1959, p.10

[66] Quran 15:94

It was a message meant to revolutionize the whole approach to life. Obviously, it was not to the taste of the people who responded with insolent guffaws and impertinent loose talk. After having said what he had to say, the Prophet[saw] came down from the hill. From that day onwards a battle-line was drawn between him and the pagans. This was the start of the fight between truth and falsehood in the course of which the Prophet[saw] was to face severe hardships.

Birth of Fatima Zahra [as]

In the fifth year of Muhammad's[saw] prophethood and on the twentieth day of Jamadul Awwal, [67] God blessed the Prophet[saw] and his wife, Khadijah, with a daughter who was destined to be the first link of that chain of pious progeny which, according to the Will of the Creator, was to be the custodian and protector of Islam till the day of resurrection. The source of this noble line was named Fatima[as] upon whom the honorifics of "The leader of the women of the two worlds" and "A Piece of the Prophet's Self" were to be bestowed in the coming years.

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[67] *Aalamul Wara* p.90; *Usule Kafi* p.290

4

THE REVOLUTIONARY MESSAGE OF ISLAM AND ITS CLASH WITH HOSTILE POWERS

Since the Prophet[SAW] was born in Arabia and his early listeners were mostly Arabs, the history of the Arabs with an account of their past and present has a significant place in the history of Islam. But, since the Prophet's[SAW] message was meant not for the Arabs alone but for the entire world, it is, therefore, also necessary to look at and examine the condition of the world that was prevailing at that time. So far as the condition of Arabia is concerned, Khwaja Muhammad Lateef Ansari has correctly said: "Before studying the history of Islam and Muslims, it is very necessary to know the geographical situation of the land since the history of a country is deeply influenced by its geography."[1]

As regards the geographical conditions of Arabia, the desert of Syria is in its north; in the east are the gulfs of Persia and Oman; towards the south is the Arabian Sea and in the west, the Red Sea. Thus there is sea on three sides and a desert on one side. The desertland of Arabia is a peninsula which is the biggest in the world. In area it is twice as large as France. The people of Arabia call their country an island *Jazeeratul Arab*, though theoretically it is not an island but a peninsula. From practical point of view it

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[1] *Islam aur Musalmanon ki Tareekh* Vol.I

may be called an island because a very hot desert lies to its north which, in a way, cuts it off from the adjoining land. Any further discussion of the geographical features shall not be quite relevant to our purposes.

The pre-Islamic period in Arabia is called 'the Age of Ignorance' or 'the Era of Darkness'. It would, however, be wrong to infer from this that the Arabs were then living like primitive jungle tribes totally unacquainted with culture and civilization. It was, in fact, a period of decadence and retrogression that had followed an era of learning and civilized way of life. Now the luminous lamps of wisdom were extinguished and the darkness of vicious practices was spread all over the land. It is in conditions like this that the reformation of a society becomes extremely difficult. The disposition of savage tribes, like a clean slate, easily accepts every reformative impression whereas the benightedness of this type is hard to remove. Here, people adopt certain evil customs after investing them with attractive attributes and, instead of being ashamed, feel proud of them. This is what we see in the modern western civilization too where in the name of peacekeeping blood is shed and immorality is hailed as a cultural activity.

The condition of the Arabs in the period under consideration was just like this. Their idolatry was not of a simple kind where the idols are adored as a source of satisfaction of one's needs. The Arabs had actually invented a kind of specious philosophy in favour of idol worshipping. It was very much similar to what is being done today, after fourteen hundred years of enlightenment, to provide a rational basis to the practice of worshipping idols. They also maintained that idol worshipping directed one's attention towards God. Drinking and gambling were

indulged in as, for them, these practices showed man's large-heartedness. Even the abhorrent and shocking custom of burying the girls alive was considered as a necessary concomitant of one's regard for his honour and the victimization of the weak was justified on the ground that it showed one's valour. Qualities of politeness and forgiveness were equated with timidity and cowardice and, therefore, were treated with contempt. Thus, their ignorance was not just the ordinary, simple kind of ignorance. It was an ignorance of a very complex nature, compounded of false convictions and perverted values. The moral reformers, considering it as a disease past all cure, had candidly admitted their helplessness in effecting any change.

The Arabs had, however, come to acquire a sense of superiority which would not let them bow before the might of other powers. But this feeling, in course of time, also started generating chauvinistic tendencies among the members of various clans, which in turn gave rise to internal rivalries and civil wars. Gradually a sense of class superiority also developed which by creating distinctions between the high and the low destroyed the very concept of the equality of human beings. The murder of an important person was not deemed to have been fully avenged with the perpetrator of crime alone suffering death; hundreds of his innocent tribesmen had also to be slain in retaliation. In the case of the murder of an ordinary person by one belonging to a superior class, the former's blood was not considered worthy of any kind of requital. This invidious distinction between the important and unimportant persons had resulted in the growth of wealthy persons like Abdullah bin Jadaan, who took water only from utensils made of gold. To feed his guests he had got prepared such a big bowl that a

person could eat from it without dismounting from his horse.[2]

Religiously the Arabs were in a very degenerated state. They had no common religion. A large segment of the population was idolatrous. The Kaaba, which was built by Ibrahim[as] for the worship of one God had been turned into an abode of idols. In accordance with their calendar, three hundred sixty idols were installed so that each idol may have a special day exclusively for its worship.[3]

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[2] Margin of *Al Bayan wal Tabien* Vol.1 pp.36-37

[3] Worship of sun (al Lat) was common among the Arabs of the south and of the Hijaz. A temple dedicated to the sun was located at Taif and sanctified by all Arabs and the Quraish in particular. The god was represented in the form of a square white stone. Another deity, Manat, was a large stone situated between Mecca and Medina. It symbolised the goddess of death or fate and was worshipped by the tribes of Hudhail, Khazaa, Al Aus, al Khazraj and many others. The moongod, Wud, was in the shape of a man and worshipped by the people of the south. It was the main deity at Dumatal Jandal until the advent of Islam. Among the long list of idols there was that of Surwa, which was in the form of a woman and symbolized evil and destruction; another of Yaghut, which was in the form of a lion, Yauq, in the form of a horse, another of Nisr, which had the shape of an eagle. Other well known idols were those of Rida and Shams, which were worshipped by the Tamim tribe; the idol of Dhul Halsa was worshipped by the tribes of Khasham and Azd at Sara, and the deity of fertility and wine, Dul al Shara, was considered the most holy at Petra. In the temples of these idols and around the idols themselves pillars of stones were erected on which sacrificial blood was poured. As a result, it was believed that the pillars too were the abodes of spirits and were sanctified. The temples were called Kaaba and served as shrines for pilgrimage. Consequently, Kaabas abounded throughout the peninsula, the most famous being that at Mecca. It follows that idolaters denied the Oneness of God and rejected any revelation coming from Him; nor did they believe in the hereafter, or in the punishment for sins.- *Tr.*

Some of the Arabs were Sabians who worshipped stars. Beside these, there were Christians, Magians and Jews who, though not in name but in actuality, had come within the fold of polytheism. The Jews called Uzair as the Son of God. The Christians, beside calling Jesus as the son of God, were further involved in the enigma of trinity which identified the Father (God), the son (Christ) and the Holy Ghost with one another and believed in the simultaneous existence of the Three in One and One in Three. In this way neither the Jews were following the teachings of Moses nor the Christians, of Jesus. As regards the Magians it is doubtful if they were ever related to any prophet. In any case, their faith at that time was based on the concept of two gods, namely Yazdan, the God of good and Ahraman, the God of evil, which was nothing but naked polytheism. There were also some who did not believe in the existence of God at all and used to shout with pride: 'There is no God in this world.' In the present day terminology they can be described as naturists.

In this all-pervading darkness of deviation there were a few descendants of Ibrahim^s^, the ancestors of Muhammad^s^, who believed in Oneness of God and valued uprightness of manners; but they had no voice at all. Their virtues were confined within their own selves.

The situation that was prevailing in Arabia was also present in other parts of the globe. From materialistic point of view there were only two powerful empires at that time, the Roman and the Persian. The Arabian territory of Syria was under the suzerainty of the Romans whereas Iraq was under that of Persia. The religion of the Romans was Christianity but they had deviated from its basic tenets. Ignoring knowledge and wisdom and overriding the Greek

thinkers, they had come to equate faith with blind following. Iranians, now following Zorastrianism, had become fire-worshippers and were no longer enjoying the blessing of Monotheism.

So far as civilization was concerned, both the empires had taken to materialism. The hectic pace of hedonistic pursuits had made the people indifferent to morality and social obligations. Thus, both these countries had become centres of selfishness and oppression, which indicates decline of culture and civilization.

Europe had, then, no mentionable position. It was, in fact, passing through an era of barbarism with no sense of civilization. India had also forgotten the lesson of Oneness of God taught by its early teachers and was engulfed in the darkness of polytheism. On account of the political supremacy of the foreign Aryan invaders over its native inhabitants, it got further involved in discrimination between the high and the low on the basis of caste and community. It is still struggling to get out of that discriminatory approach but its hold has become so strong that no success is being achieved in practical terms.

In this state of darkness Muhammad[SAW] stood up with a light-spreading torch. Right from the beginning he did not address his message to Arabs alone. Nor did he begin with the words, " O, Arabs". Instead, he used to say " O, People". In the very first revelation, when the Creator reminded mankind of His munificence through him, He did not use the word 'Arab' but 'Man'. It starts with the following words:

> Proclaim! (or Read!) In the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who created — Created man, out

> of a (mere) clot of congealed blood; Proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful, — He Who taught (the use of) the Pen, — taught man that which he knew not.[4]

In this way the banner of the Prophet's[S A] message was raised far above tribal and national demarcations to flutter in the wide universal region of the entire humanity.[5] It is a different matter that the circle of those who paid heed to that message expanded slowly and gradually. In the beginning those who heard this message were only Arabs residing in Mecca. They were mostly polytheists and idolaters. After this the message reached the people of Medina, a majority of whom were Jews. Thereafter, the Prophet's[S A] message was carried to Yemen, which was inhabited by the Christians. It was then conveyed to Rome, Persia, Egypt, Abyssinia and other countries through letters and emissaries.

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[4] Quran 96:1-5

[5] Prophet Muhammad's[S A] message is Islam, submission to the Will of God. Its distinctive features are two: (1) A harmonious equilibrium between the temporal and the spiritual (the body and the soul), permitting a full enjoyment of all the good that God has created (Quran 7:32), enjoining at the same time on everybody duties towards God, such as worship, fasting, charity etc. Islam was to be the religion of the masses and not merely of the elect. (2) A universality of the call — all the believers becoming brothers and equals without any distinction of class or race or language. "The only superiority which it recognizes is a personal one, based on greater fear of God and greater piety." Quran 49:13.

Describing the purpose of his mission in one sentence the Prophet [S A] himself had remarked: " Only the improvement of mankind and the perfection of manners." - *Tr.*
Tabaqat Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.138

Since it was the Arabs who were first addressed by the Prophet[SAW], it was they who took a leading part in thwarting his revolutionary mission. Those who were in the forefront among them were the people of the tribe of Quraish, wherein Muhammad[SAW] was born. Their hostility was because the message of Islam was in direct conflict not only with most of their habits but also their views.

Dr. Wahid Mirza, formerly Professor at Lucknow University, has said:

> The Prophet[SAW] was teaching the lesson of tolerance, forbearance, humility and forgiveness to those who deemed forgiveness as an evidence of weakness and foregoing vengeance, a sign of meanness and cowardice. He was trying to teach equality and fraternity to those who prided themselves upon superiority of their family and were used to preserving tenaciously the genealogical records of their ancestors. In addition to this, Islam had also to struggle against many other evil practices and proclivities of the Arabs. The Arabs could not even think of the most pious persons achieving the highest merit in the eyes of God or that, after subscribing to Islam, the lowest of man could claim superiority over the members of the noblest families of Arabia.

It was a complete cultural, social, political and economic revolution encapsulated in a brief phrase, 'There is no *ilah* (god) but ***Allah*** (God)', to which the Prophet[SAW] was inviting the people. Had the Arabs been just a simple, ignorant class of people passing through the stage of primitivism, they might have tolerantly treated his message as an innocuous statement. But, despite their ignorance, the

Arabs had extraordinary power of discernment. They could grasp the implications of this simple phrase from its very first presentation. Therefore, they stood up in defence of their false gods which were not just idols of gold, silver and stone but also symbols of their personal pride, power and authority as well as of their faith, beliefs, whims, fancies, customs and habits. On that account the entire nation geared itself against a single man. His main opponents were Bani Umayya who already had ancestral malice against him. Maulana Shibli writes:

> The prophethood of Muhammad[ﷺ] was considered by the family of Bani Umayya as the victory of its opponents, Bani Hashim, and on that account it opposed the Prophet[ﷺ] to the maximum.[6]

Besides them there were two other hostile clans, Bani Mughaira and Bani Makhzum. The person playing the leading role among them was the uncle of Abu Jahl and the father of Khalid bin Waleed, Waleed bin Mughaira. The Prophet[ﷺ] himself said:

> The people who bear us the greaest malice and enmity are Bani Umayya, Bani Mughaira and Bani Makhzum.[7]

The First Martyr

The open preaching of Islam set the surrounding areas afire. The historians in general have not recorded the details of it. The Prophet[ﷺ] did not keep quiet after announcing his mission from the top of the hillock of Safa. Whenever he

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[6] *Seeratun Nabi* Vol.1 p.158

[7] *Tatheerul Jinan*; quoted in *Sawaiq-e-Moharriqa* p.144

would come across large or small groups of people he would say loudly:

> "Say, there is no god but God, you shall benefit from it."

This message hurt everybody. Whereas some of them simply ignored it and kept silent, others used to get worked up and try to harm the Prophet[ﷺ]. Askari, relying upon Allama Hajra Asqalani, has narrated an incident in his book, *Kitabul-Awail*, thus:

> When God commanded his Prophet[ﷺ] to publicly convey the message of Islam, he stood up in the mosque at Mecca (*Masjidul Haram*) and said, "Say there is no god but ***Allah*** (God) and you shall benefit from it". Hearing it people fell upon him. When the hue and cry was heard by members of his family, Haris bin Abi Hala came running and started beating those who had fallen upon the Prophet[ﷺ]. They attacked Haris in retaliation and killed him. He was the first martyr of Islam.[8]

This Haris was the brother of Hind bin Abi Hala who is mentioned as the son of Khadijah by the generality of the historians. But those who do not believe in any earlier marriage of Khadijah hold that Haris was the son of Khadijah's sister. She had brought him up like her own child. On that account the Prophet[ﷺ] also treated him like his child. His martyrdom is, thus, the sacrifice of a precious soul on behalf of Khadijah over and above that of her

[8] *Asaba* Vol.1 p.599

wealth. Unfortunately, the historians, by and large, have ignored it.

Negotiations with Abu Talib ^RA

The infidels now wanted to somehow suppress the Prophet's^SA voice. The experienced ones among them were of the view that initially peaceful methods should be tried. Accordingly, they decided to try to achieve their aim through Abu Talib^RA. Some of the prominent and senior persons among them were on friendly terms with him. A few of them also had trade dealings with him and there was also a close or distant relationship of all of them with him. They knew that in the physical world he was the main support of the Prophet^SA. They also believed that it was impossible that Abu Talib's^RA words should have no effect on him. They were, thus, quite sure that he would abide by his uncle's advice and give up his mission and, thus, their purpose would be served. If, however, the Prophet^SA did not listen to him and continued his activities he would forfeit Abu Talib's^RA sympathy and would be abandoned by him as well as by the Bani Hashim under his control. In such a situation they would then chalk out a suitable strategy to deal with him. With that plan in mind they approached Abu Talib^RA in the form of a deputation.

It appears that most of the historians have lumped together the talks which were held in a planned way between the deputationists and Abu Talib^RA in several rounds. In the initial meeting they coolly and politely said to Abu Talib ^RA:

> You are our chief and we consider you to be the best of us. You are witnessing what these stupid people have done after taking your nephew with

them. They have abandoned our gods, find fault with us and befool us.[9]

Probably their intent at that time was just to make Abu Talib[RA] persuade his nephew to stop his activities. Abu Talib[RA] may have responded to their request in some vague and evasive manner. When after waisting for some time they felt that their submission had no effect, as there was no change in Muhammad's[SA] activities, they foolishly assumed that Abu Talib[RA] must be feeling somewhat disgusted with his nephew for not paying heed to his advice. They, however, were aware of the fact that Muhammad[SA] had been brought up by his uncle as his own son. The act of rearing and nursing a child creates strong bonds of love. Therefore, they argued that Abu Talib[RA] might agree to hand over Muhammad[SA] to them and let them deal with him as they wished if a better substitute was provided to him in his place. With this assumption they took with them Ammara, a smart and handsome son of Waleed bin Mughaira and, presenting him to Abu Talib[RA], said:

> We have brought before you that Quraishi youth who is unparalleled in beauty, stature, personality, nobility of blood and appearance. You take him. He will be your helper. You shall also be master of his property. Handover your nephew to us so that we may kill him as the integrity of our tribe can be maintained only in this way. Considering the end, it is the best course.

Abu Talib's[RA] reply was courteous but dismissive. He said:

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[9] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.I p.134

> Good God! What a wonderful piece of justice you people propose to render to me. You want me to take your child, bring him up, feed and nurture him while you take away my nephew from me to kill him. This can't be called justice. It is simply pressurising a weak person by show of strength.[10]

Hearing these words, they lost whatever hope they had from Abu Talib[RA]. They realized that Abu Talib[RA] was not at all displeased with his nephew. It must have been from this stage that Abu Talib[RA] started having apprehensions regarding the safety of the Prophet[SA]. He was so concerned about it that one evening, when he did not find the Prophet[SA] at his house, he felt certain that some harm had been done to him. He hurriedly collected some youths from amongst the families of Hashim and Muttalib and asked them to accompany him after arming themselves with sharp iron weapons. They were further told that after he entered the mosque each one of them should sit by the side of some prominent leader of the other side, especially Abu Jahl, and to kill each one of them as soon as it was known that Muhammad[SA] had been killed. He expressed his readiness to face the consequence of their action. They assured Abu Talib[RA] that they shall act accordingly. Meanwhile, Zaid bin Harisa was seen coming. Abu Talib[RA] impatiently asked him if he had seen his nephew. He informed him that he was with him a little while ago. But Abu Talib[RA] was so emotionally surcharged that he refused to enter his house before seeing Muhammad[SA] with his own eyes.

Zaid hurriedly rushed to the house near the mountain of Safa where Muhammad[SA] was talking to his adherents. Zaid

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[10] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.I p.134

conveyed Abu Talib's[RA] anxiety to him. He immediately came to Abu Talib[RA] who asked him:

" O, son where have you been? Is every thing all right?"

The Prophet[SA] replied:

"Surely, I am all right."

After this Abu Talib[RA] said to him:

"Now enter your house and stay there."

This minor incident was sufficient in itself to indicate the determination and courage of Abu Talib[RA] as also to boost the Prophet's[SA] morale and enhance his trust in his uncle's devoted attachment. But this was not all. The next morning, the young-at-heart patriarch caught hold of Muhammad's[SA] hand and, accompained by Hashimite and Muttalibite youths, went to the place where all the elders of Quraish had assembled and said to them: "O people of Quraish! do you know the plan that I had made last evening?" When they expressed their ignorance he narrated the whole story to them. He also asked his companions to show their weapons to them. Thereafter, Abu Talib[RA] disclosed his determination to them and said: "By God, if even a hair of Muhammad[SA] had been damaged I would not have spared anyone of you though all of us were to perish ultimately". The entire gathering was thunder-struck and Abu Talib[RA] returned, taking the Prophet[SA] with him. Ibne Saad says: "A deep despondency descended upon the people. The most distressed and perturbed among them was Abu Jahl."[11]

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[11] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.134-135

The idolaters of Quraish might well have anxiously pondered over the matter in their spare time. Muhammad^{SA} was not giving up his mission and Abu Talib^{RA} would not abandon Muhammad^{SA}. In such a situation what course was to be adopted? In the next stage of their deliberations they decided to deal with Abu Talib^{RA} firmly. But they thought it better to speak to Abu Talib^{RA} first and warn him of the dire consequences if he did not agree to change his attitude. It was to be a kind of challenge to face open hostility. They hoped the opposition of the combined might of the Arabs would intimidate Abu Talib^{RA} and thus, force him to stop Muhammad's^{SA} activities or to forsake him totally. Accordingly, they again went to him and in a harsh and blunt tone said to him.

> O Abu Talib^{RA}! Your nephew heaps insults on our gods, calls our forefathers as benighted beings and treats us as imbeciles. We can not bear this insult any more. You should either keep yourself aloof or come out openly for confrontation so that the matter is finally settled between us.[12]

It seems that from the very beginning Abu Talib^{RA} believed in the genuineness of the Prophet's^{SA} mission. Like his ancestors, he was a monotheist. When the outsiders regarded the Prophet^{SA} as truthful and trustworthy, how Abu Talib^{RA} could think otherwise? He did not lack perception or courage to express himself as is evident from his open and persistent support to the Prophet^{SA}. He was not at all deterred or affected by the pressure of the society. From all this one has to conclude that Abu Talib^{RA} had accepted Muhammad's^{SA} prophethood on that very day when he had declared it before the members of his family. Following the

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[12] *The Maulvi*,Delhi,Sept.1959, Maulvi Imamuddin of Ramnagar,

dictates of expediency, which were in accordance with the Divine wisdom, he, however, felt that if he openly declared that he had become a Muslim, he would not be able to take care of the Prophet[S.A] in the manner in which he had been doing it. He would, therefore, tell his children to offer prayers along with Muhammad[S.A] but he himself would not join the congregation. In the poems he would refer to Muhammad's[S.A] prophethood so as to influence the thinking of others but he himself desisted from openly testifying it by reciting the set phrases. In words and deed he did all that was enjoined by Islam but did not make a public statement pertaining to his acceptance of Islam. The result was that, barring Abu Lahab, who was under the influence of Bani Umayya, he succeeded in keeping all the Bani Hashim, both Muslims and non-Muslims, united in the Prophet's[S.A] favour. It was again due to that policy of Abu Talib[R.A] that the infidels refrained for a long time from open confrontation with Muhammad[S.A]. But now their patience was exhausted and they had come to Abu Talib[R.A] fully determined to settle the matter once for all. To their angry and passionate remonstration, Abu Talib[R.A] preferred not to reply. He assumed the posture of meditative silence of a deeply concerned person and thus gave them an impression that he understood their feelings and that he would surely speak to his nephew. This attitude cooled down their fury for the time being. However considering the gravity of the situation, Abu Talib[R.A] thought it proper to apprise Muhammad[S.A] about it. He said to him:

> O my son, our clansmen had come to me and told me like that. Now take pity upon yourself and

me. Do not place that much burden upon me which I may not be able to bear.[13]

The critical situation in which the Prophet[s.a.w] was placed at that moment is to be kept in mind. A father-less and mother-less child, he was brought up by his uncle with loving care. The whole nation was after his blood right from the moment the message of truth had come upon his lips. In this wide world he had only his uncle who had been supporting and protecting him. Now the things had come to such a pass that if his uncle were like the generality of the uncles, he too would no more be with him. That uncle was now talking about the number and might of the enemies and referring to his old age, growing infirmity and scarcity of supporters. From this it could be inferred that the uncle was now finding himself helpless in further protecting him and on that account was extremely perturbed. In spite of all this, the Prophet[s.a.w] gave that historic reply which marks the acme of human character. The few words uttered by him enshrine the spirit of perseverance of the prophets and messengers of God since the time of Adam. He said:

> O, uncle! By God, if they place the sun in my one hand and moon in the other, I shall not refrain from extending invitation to truth. Either God shall grant me success in my mission or I shall perish in pursuit of it.[14]

K.A.Hameed, who, owing to his pro-Umayyad bias, has used insolent words about Abu Talib[r.a] throughout his book, *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam*, was obliged by the weight of truth to reproduce his reply to his nephew in full.

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[13] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.1 p.89
[14] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.1 p.89

It clearly defines Abu Talib's[RA] stand in respect of Muhammad[SA] and his mission. It also endorses my understanding of Abu Talib's[RA] character. K.A.Hameed writes:

> Tears welled up in the eyes of the aged uncle and he said, "I knew from the start what your reply shall be. I will undoubtedly continue to help you as long as I am alive." Turning to the people of Quraish, Abu Talib[RA] said, "You know Muhammad[SA]. He is a noble and respectable person. You yourself have given him the title of 'trust-worthy'. His viewpoint is different from yours. He worships one God. Why do you want him to deviate from this and, for that, inflict tortures on him?" [15]

If Abu Talib[RA] had not been in agreement with the Prophet's[SA] mission then why, instead of showing anger, his eyes brimmed over with tears on hearing his nephew's reply? And, if really he had come to forbid his nephew from preaching, then why did he tell him that he already knew what his reply would be before he had come to the place where Muhammad[SA] was? The truth is clearly what has been said earlier. It was all a matter of policy. Abu Talib[RA] did not want his nephew to give up his mission in the face of mounting pressures and hardships. He knew that Muhammad[SA] will never stop in what he was doing and that he, Abu Talib[RA], must stand by him till the last moment even if it led to his and his children's sacrifice.

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[15] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam*, Vol.1 p.45-46

Direct negotiations

The sequence of events found in history books does not seem to give the correct order of the happenings. Hence it is that after the description of the above event reference is made to the use of the methods of temptation and persuasion by the opponents. It is said that when they failed in achieving their objective by intimidating Abu Talib[RA], they decided to approach Muhammad[SA] directly. A representative deputation with Utbah, son of Rabia, as one of its members, was sent to the Prophet[SA] for this purpose. This Utbah was the father of 'the Liver-eater' Hinda, wife of Abu Sufyan and mother of Muawiya. Utbah said to the Prophet[SA]:

> O Muhammad[SA]! It is no use creating a rift among the people. If you covet leadership we are prepared to recognize you as our leader. If you wish to marry the prettiest girl of any prominent family, tell us and we shall arrange it. If you desire wealth we can pour any amount thereof at your feet.

In reply to this Muhammad[SA] did not say any thing. Instead, he started reciting some verses of the Quran to Utbah. This astonished Utbah who told the Quraish to leave him as he was.

This event has no logical connection with the earlier reported severity of tone and angry looks of the Meccans who had come to warn Abu Talib[RA]. The stage of persuasion always comes before that of intimidation. Hence, Utbah's mission, for which no exact date can be fixed, must have preceded most of the events described before it.

When the means of temptation as well as of intimidation failed the Quraish felt frustrated and thought of doing away with the Prophet's[S.A.] life. This is the weapon generally used by the forces of evil when dealing with the upholders of truth and righteousness. But, the presence of a person of the stature of Abu Talib[R.A.] was a daunting and forbidding factor.

Persecution of Muslims

The infidels were now burning with rage and anger; firstly, because all the steps taken by them to stop the Prophet[S.A.] from carrying on his mission had failed and, secondly, because the attraction for Islam was increasing and its circle expanding day by day. Barring the affluent persons, the suppressed and downtrodden members of every clan and tribe, including even the servants and dependants of the nobility, were joining that circle. They could not, however, dare to cause any direct harm to the Prophet[S.A.] because of the presence of Abu Talib[R.A.]. As Syed Mohsin Ameen says: "God was protecting His Prophet[S.A.] through his uncle Abu Talib[R.A.]."

The infidels, therefore, diverted their attention towards the weaker sections of Muslims and started persecuting them severely. Ibne Saad says:

> When the number of Muslims increased and their faith became known and was openly talked about, the infidels of Quraish started attacking those of their relatives who had adopted Muhammad's[S.A.] creed and subjected them to severe

tortures, including imprisonment, so that they may give up their new faith.[16]

Khwaja Muhammad Latif has referred to some of those modes of torture in the following words:

> Yasir, a poor Muslim, bore the persecution patiently and ultimately died because of it. His wife, Samiyya, was speared to death by Abu Jahl. His son Ammar was also the target of similar tortures. Ibnul Art was also cruelly dealt with. On one occasion he was laid upon glowing embers and was let off only when they had cooled down. Bilal Habashi and Suhail Rumi were frequently taken to the desert and were forced to lie bare-backed upon burning sand with blocks of hot stones placed upon their chest. Still, they would not stop chanting "*Ahadun, Ahadun,* (One (God), one)." Zaneera was a Muslim slave girl. Her eyes were gouged out by Abu Jahl. Muhammad[s.a.] would console them and exhort them to bear their sufferings with fortitude and wait for divine succour.[17]

Migration to Abyssinia

The Prophet[s.a.] did not feel so much pained by his own sufferings as by those of his followers. When excesses against them continued unabated, the Prophet[s.a.] advised them to migrate to Abyssinia which then, as now, had a Christian government. In obedience to Prophet's[s.a.] command they started moving out one by one and gathered somewhere outside Mecca. Ultimately a caravan of eleven

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[16] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.136

[17] *Islam aur Musalmanon ki Tareekh* Vol.1 p.58-59

males and five females reached Abyssinia in the month of Rajab in the fifth year of the Prophethood.[18]

They stayed there for above two months and then came back. The reason for it might have been a patriotic urge for home-coming or the hardships usually faced in a foreign country or the impression that, with the passage of time, the Quraish, convinced that no amount of hardship would make them abandon their faith, might have changed their attitude. There is also a weak narration that they had heard in Abyssinia that all the Meccans had embraced Islam. Anyhow, when they came back the situation that they found was contrary to their expectations. The infidels were now more aggressive and inflicted harsher tortures on them. The Quraish got further infuriated when the returning people talked of the good behaviour and courteous attitude of the Christians of Abyssinia towards them. The Prophet[SA], therefore, again asked them to migrate. This was in the seventh year of his prophethood. This time eighty-three men and eighteen women (eleven Quraishis and seven others) left for Abyssinia under the leadership of Jafar ibne Abi Talib[RA].[19] According to Tabarsi seventy persons had left with Jafar by sea[20] while Mohsin Ameen Amli maintains that there were eighty males and eighteen females. Jafar's wife, Asma binte Umais, was one of them.[21]

Jafar's Missionary Achievement

The infidels had no personal grudge against the migrants. Their departure, therefore, gave them neither peace nor respite. It was their faith and their mission that

[18] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.136
[19] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.138
[20] *Aalamul Wara*
[21] *Ayanul Shia* Vol.2 p.92

caused distress to them and they could not see it flourishing in Abyssinia. They chased the migrants in order to prevent them from reaching Abyssinia but their boats had already set sail. Safe from the clutches of their enemies, they eventually arrived at Abyssinia.

Khwaja Muhammad Latif Ansari writes:

> They got peace and freedom in Abyssinia and could enjoy a life of content and ease in a congenial atmosphere. The infidels of Mecca, however, could not tolerate it. They sent presents to Negus (Najashi), king of Abyssinia, through Amr bin Aas and Abdullah bin Abi Rabia. The emissaries told him that some roguish persons of Mecca had taken refuge in his country. They pleaded that those persons be handed over to them. The king refused to do anything without hearing the other party. The leader of the immigrants, Jafar, brother of Ali[A.S], was called. When he came along with his men, Negus questioned them about their faith, the tenets of their religion and the reason for their own countrymen being against them. Jafar then submitted: "O king! Our countrymen were plunged in the depth of ignorance, ate carcasses, spoke filthy language and had not a single grain of humanity in them. They were unfamiliar with kind-heartedness, hospitality and the rights of the neighbours. They did not observe any rule or regulation. It was in such conditions that Merciful God, through His Grace, raised amongst us a man of whose trustworthiness, truthfulness, integrity, nobility of blood and piety we were fully aware. He called us to believe in the

Oneness of God and taught us to give up idolatry and making others His associates. He enjoined upon us to speak the truth, to honour our commitments, keep clear of sins, offer prayers and keep fast. Our only fault is that we have put our faith in this true messenger of God. For this 'crime' our people have risen against us, have persecuted us in order to make us give up the worship of one God and return to the worship of idols of wood and clay and stone. We have sought refuge in your country to escape their cruel persecution." Jafar's speech moved Negus to such an extent that he desired to hear some of those words of God that were revealed to the Prophet[S.A.W.]. Jafar then recited *Sura Maryam* of holy Quran. Eyes of Negus were filled with tears when he heard it. He acknowledged the truthfulness of God's Prophet and said: "Undoubtedly Muhammad[S.A.W.] is the same Prophet information about whose coming was given by Jesus Christ. Thank God that I happen to be in his time." The disappointed infidels of Mecca now had no option but to return to their land. The Muslim migrants stayed in Abyssinia for a long time and led a life of ease and contentment.[22]

Pace of Islam's progress

It was a matter of extreme concern for the polytheists that in spite of all the preventive steps taken by them the circle of Islam was continuously widening. Owing to Abu Talib[R.A.] all the Hashimites were supporters of Muhammad[S.A.W.] except Abu Lahab who, though a son of Abdul Muttalib,

[22] *Islam aur Musalmanon ki Tareekh* Vol.1 p.61-63

had got married among the Umayyads. His wife, Umme Jamil, was an aunt of Muawiya. Under her influence he had distanced himself from his family. While others were somewhat hesitant in showing their insolence to Muhammad[S.A.] directly on account of Abu Talib[R.A.] and other Hashimites, they used Abu Lahab and his wife for this purpose. It is evident from a *Sura* of Quran that Abu Lahab's lust for property and wealth had made him a tormentor:

> "Perish the hands of Abu Lahab! Perish he! No profit to him from all his wealth, and all his gains!"[23]

There is also a clear reference in this *Sura* to the conduct of Abu Lahab's wife who used to scatter thorny sticks on the passage generally taken by Muhammad[S.A.], to cause him pain through entanglement with them in the darkness of night.

The rest of the Hashimites were with the Prophet[S.A.]. Among them was Hamza, the youngest son of Abdul Muttalib. He had a distinguished position among the Quraish and was well known for his bravery and courage. He also had not yet made a public declaration of his acceptance of Islam. But the continued persecution of the Prophet[S.A.] by the Quraish, specially the highhandedness of Abu Lahab, moved him so much that he not only came out openly in support of God's Prophet[S.A.] but also announced his faith in Islam.[24]

The historians have, in general, attached great significance to adoption of Islam by Umar bin Khattab who

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[23] Quran 111:2

[24] *Aalamul Wara* p.32

was reportedly a man of harsh temperament and bore severe enmity towards the Prophet[SAW]. One day he, reportedly, left his house with the intention of killing Muhammad[SAW] but on arriving at the place where Muhammad[SAW] was, he was transformed to such an extent that he rushed to him and embraced Islam.[25]

Our authentic traditions are not vocal to that extent. However, one strange fact in this connection that deserves to be noted is that during the 8 or 9 years of Islam's preaching that preceded this event we do not find any historian mentioning any prominent role of opposition or obstruction of Umar. His name does not figure in any of the conferences held by the Quraish against the Prophet[SAW], nor in any of the deputations which waited upon Abu Talib[RA], nor in any of the earlier confrontations recorded in history. How then can one believe that he was prominent among those who opposed the Prophet[SAW]? Nevertheless, it is a fact that he had now joined the ranks of Islam and the historians claim that through this conversion the glory and gandeur of Islam was enormously enhanced. However, the facts detailed by them show that the intensity of persecution of the Prophet[SAW] and Hashimites by the disbelievers and non-believers had, instead of abating, multiplied several folds after this event.

Confinement to Shebe Abu Talib [RA]

All the schemes of the polytheists had hitherto met with failure. The circle of Islam was getting wider day by day. They were specially worried by the success achieved by Jafar, rather by Islam, in Abyssinia. They were now fully convinced that neither the Prophet[SAW] could be stopped from

[25] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.1 p.119-120

carrying on his mission nor Abu Talib[RA] could be prevailed upon to withdraw his support from him. It had also become clear to them that other Hashimites, even those who had not adopted Islam, were supporting and helping Muhammad[SA] on account of Abu Talib[RA]. They, therefore, decided to put social, commercial and economic pressure upon all the Hashimites in the hope that, in the face of extraordinary hardships, they would either compel Abu Talib[RA], and also the Prophet[SA], to change their behaviour or would disassociate themselves from them. In any case there would be a rift among them. After this if Abu Talib[RA] or a few others continued to remain with the Prophet[SA] it would not matter much. All the clans, then, formed a confederacy against the Hashimites which decided to boycott them completely to the extent that they would not marry among the Hashimites, have no trade dealings or social contacts with them and take every possible step to finish Muhammad[SA]. These terms were reduced in writing in the form of a solemn document which was signed by the representatives of different clans and hung inside the Kaaba. The proposed boycott and besiegement of the Hashimites started from the first of Muharram of the seventh year of Prophethod.[26]

Abu Talib[RA] collected all the Hashimites and lodged them securely in his house which was like a fortress in the valley of a mountain and was known as Shebe Abu Talib[RA]. According to Tabarsi, they were in all forty persons and in their presence Abu Talib[RA] swore by Kaaba, its sanctuary, the pillar and the place that he will kill all of them if the slightest harm was caused to Muhammad[SA].[27] Abu Lahab

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[26] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.139-140
[27] *Aalamul Wara* p.23

was the sole Hashimites who, cut off from them, sided with the other clans of Quraish.[28]

The polytheists prevented supply of food and water to the besieged people. Meccans themselves were not selling anything to them. Merchants coming from outside also could not sell anything to them due to the fear of being deprived of their goods and cash by the Meccans. They were so vigilant that Abu Jahl, Aas bin Wail, Nazar bin Haris and Aqba bin Abi Maeet picketted all the approaches to Mecca and any person coming with provisions for sale was warned that he would be made to suffer if he sold anything to Bani Hashim.[29] As a result of this, very often Hashimites had nothing to eat or drink and the distressful cries of the starving children could be heard even outside the valley.[30]

To add to it there was the constant danger of the enemies attempting to kill the Prophet[S.A.] at night. On that account, Abu Talib[R.A.] used to keep awake all the night. Sword in hand, he would station himself close to the Prophet's[S.A.] bed during his sleep. To further protect him, Abu Talib[R.A.] used to shift him from one place to another in the night and kept his sons and nephews around him in daytime. All this continued not for three or four months but for full three years. During that period the Prophet[S.A.] could come out of the Sheb only during the period of *Haj* when bloodshed was strictly prohibited. In those days he would contact people of different clans and preach to them God's message. Abu Lahab followed him on those occasions and

[28] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.140
[29] *Aalamul Wara* p.33
[30] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.140

warned the people, saying: "He is my nephew. Do not listen to him. He is (God forbid) a liar and a sorcerer."

At the end of *Haj* season, the Prophet[SA] and all the Hashimites would again withdraw themselves to the Sheb.

These hardships and sufferings made the besieged people not only physically weak and infirm but also caused them financial difficulties. The entire wealth of Khadijah, who was called "the queen of the merchants of Arabia", was spent during this period in the service of Islam and the Prophet[SA] because whenever they could secure some provision after long periods of starvation they had to pay exorbitant price for it. The polytheists attempted to find out whether the Hashimites, specially Abu Talib[RA], were in any way demoralised on account of these hardships or not. But the steadfastness of that young-at-heart old man was as strong as ever and the enemies, as usual, again met with disappointment.

It is an undisputed fact that only the Hashimites were facing the ordeal of siege and blockade. Muslims of other clans were not affected at all. The most surprising thing about this episode is the strange role of these Muslims who did not show any sympathy with the Prophet[SA] throughout this long period of three years. There is no evidence whatsoever that they ever attempted to secretly provide water or food to the Prophet[SA] or used their influence with the leaders of the polytheists for the removal of the blockade or even softening of its rigours. There is no such narration about them, though it is said about Abul Aas bin Rabii, an unbeliever, that occasionally, out of regard for his relationship with Khadijah, he used to send provisions to

the besieged people at night.[31] There is not even a single weak evidence to indicate that any of the claimants of loyalty and self-sacrifice exhibited any sympathetic concern for the incarcerated people. Their behaviour is not only a significant eye-opening incident but also a riddle which no amount of consultation of books of history and traditions can ever solve. Eventually, an act of divine dispensation came to their rescue. The deed of agreement sealed by the dignitaries of Quraish and hung inside the Kaaba was eaten away by termites. It is astonishing that only that portion of the document remained intact that contained the name of God and His praise and virtues. Another startling feature of the incident is that, though confined in a fortress and having no communication with the outside world, God's Prophet[SAW] got knowledge of the selectively partial damage caused to the document. This cannot be explained in materialistic terms. It is another matter that the historians, avoiding any reference to miracles and things of like nature out of their concern for modern taste, mention this incident in such a manner which either precludes or underplays Divine role. One such instance is that of the author of '*Musalmanan-e-Aalam*', who says:

> Call it a chance or divine contrivance; the white ants had eaten away the deed of agreement. When that information reached the Prophet[SAW], he turned towards Abu Talib[RA] and said, "O, Uncle, a tiny insect of God has finished the document of the Quraish. The document, which was an embodiment of injustice, oppression and cruelty,

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[31] *Aalamul Wara* p.33-34

According to some historians, Khadijah's daughter was married to Abul Aas; others maintain that it was her niece.

> has been eaten away by the insects and nothing of it is left except the name of God."

One may call the basic event as 'a chance or divine contrivance' but the statement 'when information reached the Prophet of God' (suggesting a physical means of communication) is not supported by the fact. It is evident from the actual situation, as the author himself mentions at a later stage, that till that moment no one had gone inside Kaaba to see the enwrapped document and, therefore, the Meccans had no information about the damage caused to it. It is obvious, therefore, that for the Prophet[ﷺ] there was no means of getting this information except through divine revelation. When the Prophet[ﷺ] disclosed this fact to Abu Talib[رضی اللہ عنہ], had there been an uncle other than him with the slightest element of doubt in his prophethod, he might have argued with him about this source of information. But it was Abu Talib[رضی اللہ عنہ] whose faith in the Prophethood of the Messenger had stronger foundations than the mountains. He, therefore, instead of questioning his nephew immediately went to the chief of Quraish and said:

> Is this fact disclosed by Muhammad[ﷺ] correct? If it is true, you should stop opposing him. If on the other hand, it turns out to be incorrect, I assure you that I shall hand him over to you.

It is apparent from this assertion that the Prophet[ﷺ] had not received information through any earthly source otherwise its accuracy could not be made a basis to test the veracity of the Prophet's[ﷺ] stand. It also follows that Abu Talib[رضی اللہ عنہ] was not supporting the Prophet[ﷺ] only owing to his affection for his nephew but on account of his faith in the authenticity of his Prophethood. Had the relationship been the sole cause of his support he would not have, on the mere

supposition of information being incorrect (an impossibility for him), offered to surrender him.

What happened next is narrated by the same author:

> Abu Talib[RA], accompanied by the chiefs of the Quraish, reached Kaaba. A huge crowd of people had gathered there to see the document. They noticed that the fact was absolutely correct. Except God's name nothing was left of the document.[32]

The earliest historian, Ibne Saad has narrated these events thus:

> God then apprised His Prophet about the document and the fact that the termites had eaten away those portions of the writing, which referred to threats of oppression and persecution and spared that part of it which had reference to God. The Prophet[SA] conveyed this information to Abu Talib[RA]. He immediately called his brothers and told them about it. They came to the mosque where Abu Talib[RA] informed the nonbelievers of the Quraish that his nephew, who never said anything false, had told him that God had set the termites upon their document and they had eaten away all of its contents relating to oppression, atrocities and severance of the ties of relationship and only that portion had remained intact that referred to God. He added that if what his nephew had said was correct then they should give up their evil thoughts. If, on the other hand, his assertion tuned out to be wrong, he was ready to hand him over to them and they shall be free to kill him or spare

[32] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e- Alam* Vol.1 p.55-56

him. They responded by saying that his proposal was quite fair. Some persons were sent to examine the document. When they unwrapped it they found it exactly in the condition that the Prophet[SAW] had mentioned. They were now totally demoralized and lowered their heads in dejection and shame. Abu Talib[RA] then said that the truth had been revealed. He wanted to know for what offence he and his relatives were kept in confinement. Thereafter he and his companions went behind the curtain of Kaaba and, embracing its wall, said: " O God help us against those who have oppressed us, have ignored our rights of nearness and have meted out that treatment to us which was not proper."[33]

Tabarsi says that the forty persons who had affixed their seals on the wrapped document gathered together. They checked their seals and found them intact. It indicated that no tampering had been done. Seals were then broken and it was noticed that except the name of and reference to God, nothing else was left. Now Abu Talib[RA] addressed them and said, "After this you should fear God and shun oppression and cruelty." All kept quiet and gave no reply. After this quietening act Abu Talib[RA] returned back to his fortress along with his companions.[34]

Ibne Saad says that a conflict arose in the ranks of the Meccans and one group comprising Mutam bin Adi, Adi bin Qais, Zamaa bin Aswad, Abul Bakhtari ibne Hashim and Zuhair bin Ubi Umayya got up and denounced the acts of oppression and tyranny. They themselves went to Shebe

[33] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.140
[34] *Aalamul Wara* p.34

Abu Talib[RA] and told Hashimites and Muttalibites to come out and live in their houses. They then came out of the siege and returned back to their houses. This took place in the tenth year of prophethood.[35]

Death of Abu Talib [RA]

After coming out of the painful confines of Shebe Abu Talib[RA], the Hashimites hardly had any time to breathe in peaceful atmosphere when, within two months[36], and perhaps as a result of the rigours of several years, Prophet's[SA] most affectionate and devoted uncle, Abu Talib[RA], died on fifteenth of Shawwal[37] in the tenth year of his prophethood. He was then a little over eighty.[38]

Can those who look at the first ten years of the history of Islam and find the names of Muhammad[SA], Islam and Abu Talib[RA] appear inextricably together at every stage ever imagine that any such element could enter into the history of Islam that would expel for ever this staunch supporter and protector of Islam from its precincts on the basis of a fabricated story? Cursed be the pressures and demands of the politics of the despots that have influenced the histories, compilations of traditions and Quranic commentaries of the major sect of Islam. It was solely for this reason that the references to Ali's[AS] priority in Islam as also to his father's services to Islam have been deliberately omitted from them. In pursuance of this policy a spurious narration has also been concocted to the effect that when Abu Talib[RA] was on his deathbed the Prophet[SA] asked him to recite *Kalma* (declaration of faith in the Oneness of God and prophethood

[35] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.141
[36] *Aalamul Wara* p.34
[37] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.79
[38] *Asadul Ghaba* Vol.1 p.79

of Muhammad[S^]) but he declined. The mendacious and mercenary stooges of the Umayyads have further ramified this baseless episode. According to them, the Prophet[S^] for a long time prayed to God for Abu Talib's[R^] forgiveness and salvation but God forbade him from doing so. Thereafter, the Prophet[S^] informed the Muslims that Abu Talib[R^] (God forbid) was in Hell. The whole story is blatantly a product of Umayyad politics.

From the point of view of common principles of preaching, demands of sagacity and, above all, Quranic injunctions, it was obligatory for the Prophet[S^] to start his mission first from his family, then move to his kinsmen and, after that, to the world at large. What could have been the reasons that made him wait for full ten years, infact upto the last moments of his uncle's life, to preach the message of Islam to him? The Prophet[S^], 'truthful' and 'trust-worthy' even in the eyes of *Kafirs*, was he, in the conceit of those narrators, like the other timeserving politicians and hence, acting upon the principle of expediency, extracted maximum possible benefits from his uncle purely on the basis of relationship before asking him to recite the *Kalma*? Does it mean that the Prophet[S^] feared that his uncle would get furious the moment he preached Islam to him and withdraw his support from him after which there would be no end to his trouble? The Umayyad narrators would make one believe that the Prophet[S^], who got *Kalma* recited by his uncle's children and his aunt, Fatima binte Asad and other relatives, could not muster sufficient amount of courage to ask his uncle to do the same. But now, after he had got all that he could get from his uncle, in the closing moment of his life, he openly presented to him the message of Islam, which he refused to accept. Thereupon, as the story goes, the Prophet[S^] started telling others about Abu

Talib's[R.A] being (God forbid) a condemned soul. Are Muslims prepared to believe, and make others believe, that their prophet was such a crafty person? If he was not, and definitely he was not, then one would naturally try to find some reference, no matter how weak, to some earlier attempt on the part of the Prophet[S.A] to make his uncle recite *Kalma*. But there is no such reference. Logically also there is no probability of such an event having ever taken place for, in that case, under the tenet of *Al Bughdu fi Allah* (hostility to God), which is also a necessary corollary of righteousness, the Prophet[S.A], on getting such a heart breaking reply from a loving guardian and close relative should have felt so hurt psychologically as to refuse to have any further help from him and abandon forever the protection of his guardianship. There ought to have been at least some hint about some bickering in the family or some bitterness in mutual relationship on that account. On the contrary, we find perfect unity and understanding in the family throughout the ten years of trials and tribulations. This by itself clearly indicates that the Prophet[S.A] was absolutely satisfied with Abu Talib's[R.A] way of life and took his words and actions as sufficient proof of his faith in God and his message. There was, therefore, no need or occasion for him to get the *Kalma* formally recited by Abu Talib[R.A] in his last moments and, on his supposed non-compliance, to tell his people that (God forbid) Abu Talib[R.A] was in the hell. God and his Prophet[S.A] are witness to the fact that these spurious stories are the work of that graceless progeny which, having no doubts about its ancestors' certain damnation, wanted to deprive the descendents of Ali[A.S] and Fatima[A.S] of the honour of their patriarch's assured beatification through such concoctions and thus bring them down, at least in this respect, to its own level.

The real truth about Abu Talib's[R.A.] stand in respect of Islam is what has been discussed earlier. Between him and his God his faith was perfectly well understood. The Prophet[S.A.] knew it very well and so did the other members of the household. Hence it is that there was no tension between them; no ill will, no bad blood. There was no room left for acceptance or rejection. His conduct throughout had been according to the role devised for him by his God and Prophet[S.A.]. He discharged his duties to the perfection. He continued to move on this path till his last breath. So, there never was any question of presenting Islam to him at any stage and getting a formal acceptance from him.

It is also a noteworthy fact that Abu Talib[R.A.] did not suffer from any protracted illness and hence no information about his illness was conveyed to the Prophet[S.A.]. Enfeebled by the hardships of the blockade, he had passed away suddenly.

According to the oldest historian, Ibne Saad, the Prophet[S.A.] was not with Abu Talib[R.A.] in his last moments when he collected his near relatives and made a will that they should continue to follow and help the Prophet[S.A.]. Ibne Saad's words are:

> At that time Abu Talib[R.A.] called the children of Abdul Muttalib and said to them: "There shall always be prosperity for you as long as you continue to listen to Muhammad[S.A.] and follow his religion. You should continue to follow and help him. You shall thus attain success and victory."

Ali[A.S.], son of Abu Talib[R.A.], says:

> I went and informed the Prophet[S.A.] about Abu Talib's[R.A.] death. He started weeping and then told

me to go and bathe the dead body, wrap it in the winding sheet and bury it. Thereafter he said: "May God grant pardon to him and shower his blessings on him."[39]

It was also the occasion when the injunction for obligatory bath in the event of touching a dead body, prescribed in Jafri school[40] and followed to this date, was given by the Prophet[SA]. Ibne Saad says, " Ali[AS] added that the Prophet[SA] then (after he had bathed his father's body) told him to take a bath himself."[41] At this stage there was a possibility of some misunderstanding but it has been removed by Ibne Aseer according to whom: "When Abu Talib[RA] died he was a little over 80 years of age. Thereafter Khadijah died. Till then the ritual prayer for a dead body was not laid down in Islamic *Shariat*.[42]

Tabarsi adds that after instructing Ali[AS] about bathing Abu Talib's[RA] body and putting it in the winding sheet the Prophet[SA] told him to inform him when the dead body was to be taken out for burial. Ali[AS] complied with it. When the dead body was lifted the Prophet[SA] came and accompanied it to the burial place.[43]

Abu Talib[RA] was buried in the graveyard of Mecca, known as *Jannatul-Mualla*, near the grave of Abdul Muttalib and others. Ibne Saud has destroyed this graveyard also like that of *Jannatul-Baqi*. Prior to it the tombs of these graveyards were places of pilgrimage for the Muslims.

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[39] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.78
[40] Religious laws followed by Shias.-*Tr.*
[41] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.78
[42] *Asadul Ghaba* Vol.1 p.19
[43] *Aalamul Wara* p.88

Death of Khadijah

Soon after Abu Talib's[RA] death the Prophet[SA] had to face another blow. It was the death of his faithful life-partner, Khadijah, who had sacrificed her entire wealth and suffered manifold hardships for the sake of Islam. There is somewhat a weak narration that after the siege of Shebe Abu Talib she was the first to die and Abu Talib[RA] died a year later.[44] Most of the writers are, however, of the view that Khadijah died after Abu Talib[RA]. The difference between them is about the length of the intervening period. Ibne Saad says that Abu Talib[RA] died on 15th of Shawwal and Khadijah, a month and five days thereafter.[45] It means that she died on 20th of Ziqad. There is yet another narration according to which she died only three days after Abu Talib's[RA] death.[46]

Most of the historians agree that both Abu Talib[RA] and Khadijah died in the same year. This view gives strength to the version that the interval between the death of the two was one month and five days. If the interval were of three days only the phrase would have been the "same week". The version that they died within a year shows that their deaths were not in the same week or the same month.

Abul Farj Asfahani says that Khadijah was buried at a place known as 'Hajon'.[47] It appears from Arabic literature that Hajon was situated opposite to Safa, at the other end of Mecca. One of the Arabic poets has said that: "These places became so deserted as if there never breathed a person

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[44] *Ayanul Shia* Vol.2 p.102
[45] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.141
[46] *Aalamul Wara* p.7
[47] *Maqatilul Talibeen* p.32

between Hajon and Safa and in Mecca there never had been a story-teller to narrate a story (about it)."

The grave of Khadijah is at a little distance from *Jannatul Mualla* and, like other tombs, has been made desolate by the Saudi Arabian authorities.

Effect of these Incidents

How grievously the Prophet[SAW] was affected by the death of Abu Talib[RA] and Khadijah in quick succession is evident from the fact that the Prophet[SAW] called this year as *Aamul-Huzn* (the year of mourning).[48] Ibne Saad says: "Two tragedies befell the Prophet[SAW] after which he kept himself confined to his house. He curtailed his outside movements. The Quraish now started tormenting him in the way they never had done before nor could have even imagined of doing so."[49]

Journey to Taif

After Abu Talib's[RA] death every inch of Mecca became a thicket of thorns for the Prophet[SAW] and persecution at the hands of the infidels suddenly became extremely severe. He now desired to keep himself out of their view for some time so that the ferocity of their opposition may abate somewhat and also he may get a larger and more responsive circle for preaching his mission outside Mecca. He, therefore, took Zaid bin Harisa with him and left for Taif. According to Ibne Saad this happened "in the later days of Shawwal, in the tenth year of prophethood."[50]

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[48] *Aalamul Wara* p.7
[49] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.141
[50] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.142

Abu Talib[RA] having died on 15th Shawwal, the Prophet[SA] should have left for Taif only a week after this. If the narration, already found credible about Khadijah's death taking place one month and five days after Abu Talib's[RA] death is kept in mind, then Khadijah was alive when the Prophet[SA] left for Taif. His daughter, Fatima[AS] , was also there. This explains the reason why the Prophet[SA] took Zaid bin Harisa with him in this journey and not Ali[AS]. It was necessary for him to leave Ali[AS] at home to take care of the female members of the household. Zaid bin Harisa was the only choice after Ali[AS] because, though a slave, he had the privilege of being brought up like a son by the Prophet[SA].

One cannot help noting with dismay that just as during the three-year siege of Shebe Abu Talib[RA], at this stage also we do not come across the names of those who were to be subsequently introduced as fore-runners in embracing Islam. During the extreme hardships and sufferings of the post-siege period, no name of any of the so-called loyalists or death-defying companions appears in any book of history whatsoever. These names would crop up only when circumstances would appear favourable and present prospects of power and glory. Then one would find hordes of people coming forward and making tall claims about their long-standing services to Islam. But, at this moment, life was a bed of thorns, not of roses, with rising flames of fire all around instead of glittering piles of gold. It was the faint hope of gaining something by it in the future that had made them accept Islam nominally. For these 'sagacious' people it was not the time to answer to the demands of Islam and court suffering and make sacrifices.

Taif was, and still is, a fertile place famous for its fruits. It is about 96 km. from Mecca. Its inhabitants are

hardworking and laborious.[51] Khwaja Muhammad Latif writes: " Taif is a flourishing and fertile habitation about 64 km. from Mecca."[52] Tabarsi says that the tribe of Saqeef had its permanent settlement there.[53]

The Prophet[SAW] stayed at Taif for ten days and talked to all the prominent citizens individually. They, however, did not accept his message and apprehending that his preaching might corrupt their youth, they plainly told him to go away and stay somewhere else. That was not all. They instigated the loutish section of their tribe to torment him. These rogues started pelting him with stones. Zaid bin Harisa alone was there to shield him and while doing so, he was seriously injured in the head. The Prophet[SAW] was also hurt and his legs bled on account of the injuries.

It was in this condition that the Prophet[SAW] returned to Mecca. But now there was no security for him even in the house of God. Reaching near the mountain of Hira he, according to the custom of the Arabs, sent words to Mutam bin Adi, an old friend of Abu Talib[RA], to afford him protection. Mutam readily agreed out of regard for old ties. He instructed his children and other near relations to arm themselves as he had taken Muhammad[SAW] under his protection. All of them gathered in the vicinity of Kaaba and the Prophet[SAW], accompanied by Zaid bin Harisa, went to the house of God. Mutam sternly told the chiefs of Quraish not to cause any harm to Muhammad[SAW] as he had promised shelter to him. The Prophet[SAW] then went upto the pillar of

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[51] *Tareekhe Musalmanane Aalam*
[52] *Islam aur Musalmanon ki Tareekh*, Vol.1 p.66
[53] *Aalamul Wara* p.85

the mosque, paid reverence and offered prayers. He returned to his house cordoned by Mutam and his children.[54]

Intensity of persecution and expansion of Islam

All the incidents of Prophet's physical torture, pelting of stones and hurling of filth and rubbish upon him relate to the post-Abu Talib[RA] period. It was the patience and perseverance of the great missionary of truth that after a short spell of seclusion after his uncle's death, he again came out to preach his message and face with fortitude the bitter incidents of his visit to Taif. On his return to Mecca he sought protections from Mutam so that he may feel free and safe while offering prayer at Kaaba. But he knew that he was sent not to seek shelter from others but to spread the protective cover of his benevolence over the world engulfed by the darkness of ignorance. Continued protection of Mutam would surely make him feel secure but it would hinder his work. He, therefore, on reaching his house politely told Mutam that there was no further need for his protection and relieved him of his responsibility. Whenever he would come out and move in the lanes of Mecca, Ali[AS] would be with him as often as it was possible. But he could not do much because it was not God's will that the Prophet[SA] should use any physical force against his opponents at that stage. It was in fact a trial of Ali's[AS] patience also that in spite of being in full bloom of youth and vigour he could not take any such action whereby the infidels could accuse him for disturbing law and order. The Prophet[SA] would move out all alone when Ali[AS] or Zaid bin Harisa, engaged in attending to domestic needs, were not available. On such occasions the infidels would feel emboldened and harass him to the maximum. The

[54] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.142

Prophet[S.A.], however, would neither raise his head nor turn his eyes towards the miscreants, nor reprimand or scold anyone. He simply took no notice of them. He would deliver the message of truth whenever a suitable occasion presented itself. During the *Haj* season when people kept their weapons in sheaths, the Prophet[S.A.] used to move about freely and visit the camps of the tribes coming to Mecca from different places. He invited them to follow truth and assist him in carrying out his mission. The result of those efforts, in the words of Ibne Saad, was that: "No tribe of Arabia responded favourably to his invitation. On the contrary, they hurt him and hurled abuses at him."

But how long the effect of the excellence of Prophet's[S.A.] character and bearing, his perseverance, patience and firmness could be delayed? There were many Meccans whose conscience inevitably forced them to think that there must be some weight in the utterances of a person who, lonely and bereft of his uncle's protective support, facing verbal and physical onslaughts, was not budging a bit from his stand.

According to K.A.Hameed:

> Many of them began to feel in their hearts that, whatever views and principles of this man might be, he was certainly a pious, truthful and sincere person. He had never done anything objectionable since his childhood days. He was aware of the secrets of life and knew about the hereafter as well.[55]

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[55] *Tareekhe Musalmanane Aalam* Vol.1 p.59-60

It is said that one's thinking affects one's nature. Gradually the Meccans started showing some flexibility in their attitude. Now they began to hear his discourses with close attention. The more they heard him the more was their craving for the message of God. Ultimately it brought a change in them. They, who were tyrants, oppressors and mischief-mongers now began to feel a softening of heart and those who were leading a life of misery and despondency found solace and hope (in his words).

The growth of this feeling among the masses had its impact on that privileged class which saw in Prophet's mission a threat to its interests. This led to an increase in its hostility towards him.

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MIGRATION TO MEDINA

He who seeks finds. The Messenger who was in search of seekers of truth, the cloud that was floating hither and thither to find out thirsty land and the helping hand that was looking anxiously for people to come and grab it, eventually succeeded in getting what they had sought. Ibne Saad says:

> That time now had come when God's Will thought it proper to give prominence to His religion and help the Prophet[s^] in fulfilling His promise. Accordingly, the Prophet[s^] was directed towards a band of supporters who were destined to be distinguished by this honour, that is, of being Prophet's[s^] helpers.[1]

Medina of today was, then, known as Yesrib. The Prophet[s^] had his maternal home there. Two powerful tribes of that place, Aus and Khazraj, were idol-worshippers and were frequently engaged in fighting with each other. A number of Jews were also living there for a long time. They had heard from their ancestors, upon the strength of Torah, the prophecy pertaining to the Prophet of Islam's arrival and settlement on that land. They often narrated that prophecy to the people of Aus and Khazraj with a warning that on his arrival their idolatry shall come to an end and they shall have to bow before him. From their talks the

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[1] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.146

Medinites too had begun to have some idea of the expected arrival of the Messenger of God.

It was the normal practice of the Prophet[s.a] to try to contact every newly arrived tribe at Mecca during the *Haj* season. In the course of these visits he came across some people who had come from Yesrib and were at that moment getting their heads shaved. Referring to the incident Ibne Saad says:

> The Prophet[s.a] sat near them and invited them towards God. He recited Quran to them. They responded positively to the message of God and His Prophet[s.a], adopted the new faith at once and were ready to testify its authencity.[2]

When they went back to Medina they asked their own people to embrace Islam. Many of them did so. There was hardly any house of those helpers (*Ansar*) where the Prophet of God[s.a] was not the topic of discussion. Ibne Saad on the authority of some unknown historians says that among the Medinites, As'ad bin Zurara and Zakwan bin Abde Qais were the first to adopt Islam. The details about it are that this As'ad bin Zurara and Abul Heesam bin Tayhan were two Medinites who, guided by their own intellect, often used to discuss among themselves about the Oneness of God. In connection with a personal dispute, As'ad and Zakwan happened to go to Utbah bin Rabia at Mecca. Utbah told them that the man who was offering prayer on the other side had become such a headache for them that they had no time for anything else. Utbah added that that man claimed to be God's Prophet and said such and such things. After this when they got up, Zakwan said to As'ad

[2] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.146

that the faith that was being preached by that man was identical with the one that he, As'ad, used to express his views about. As'ad and Zakwan then went to the Prophet[SA]. He described the principles of Islamic faith to them and both As'ad and Zakwan embraced Islam. After returning to Medina, As'ad narrated the entire story to Abul Heesam who said that, along with them, he too would testify that Muhammad[SA] was God's messenger. In this way Abul Heesam embraced Islam. This Abul Heesam is that devoted and sincere friend of Ali[AS] whom, as mentioned in a sermon of *Nahjul Balagha*, he used to remember with tears in his eyes in his closing years.

Referring to Ali bin Ibrahim[AS], that great exponent of traditions of the holy family and outstanding commentator of Quran, Tabarsi has given a detailed description of the background of this event in *Aalamul Wara*. He says that the tribes of Aus and Khazraj were so much at loggerheads with each other that they did not remove the firearms from their bodies at any time of the day or night. The last confrontation between them was that of Buas wherein Aus defeated Khazraj. As'ad and Zakawan belonged to the tribe of Khazraj. In the month of Rajab they went to Mecca to perform Umra and also to make the people of Mecca their allies. As'ad and Utbah bin Rabia were old friends. He stayed with him and disclosed his purpose to him. Utbah said that besides the long distance between his town and Medina, they were so much worried those days that they could not take up any other matter. Upon As'ad's enquiry Utbah told him about the Prophet[SA] and the religion being preached by him.

As'ad and his companion had already heard from the Jews about the last prophet and his preaching of Oneness of

God. Upon their enquiry, Utbah informed them that the said preacher at that moment was sitting at *Hajre Ismail*. He warned them neither to go to him nor to hear a word from him otherwise he, being a sorcerer, would cast the spell of his speech over them. As'ad said that he had already put on *Ahram* for *Umra* and, therefore, had to go to that side for *Tawaf*. Still Utbah advised him to take the precaution of plugging his ears with cotton wool so that he did not listen his words. The attempts of the unrighteous people to prevent others from listening to the preachers of truth mostly act as an impetus for independent-minded seekers of truth. As'ad acted upon the suggestion of his host at that time and plugged his ears with cotton wool but it struck to him while performing *Tawaf* that there won't be a more stupid person than him if he were to return to his city without getting first hand information about the important event that was taking place in Mecca and deserved to be reported to the people at home. He thought that it would be considered as an extremely foolish action on his part. He, therefore, removed cotton wool from his ears, went to the Prophet$^{s\wedge}$, greeted him in Arabic style by saying *An'am Sabaha* (good morning). The Prophet$^{s\wedge}$ raised his head and said, "God has given us a better form of greeting, which is that of the inhabitants of Paradise. It is, *Salamun Alaikum* (we wish you well- being)." As'ad then asked: "What are those other things to which you invite the people?" The Prophet$^{s\wedge}$ replied:

> Testimony of the fact that there is no god but God and that I am His Prophet. I also tell the people not to associate others with God, be good to their parents, and not to kill their children for fear of poverty and starvation because God has promised means of sustenance to them and their

children. They are also told not to indulge in obscene acts, openly or secretly, nor kill the innocent. These are divine instructions for the people to make them act wisely. They are also told not to go near the property of an orphan, unless it is in his interest but that too till he attains majority. People are also instructed to be just in measuring and weighing the goods. No one is burdened with constraints beyond his capacity. Whatever people have to say, they should say it with honesty even if it relates to one's own kith and kin. They have to fulfil their covenant with God. These all are instructions for the people that they are required to follow "[3]

As the Prophet's[saw] discourse was proceeding, new light was being kindled in the nooks and corners of As'ad's heart and mind. As soon as the Prophet[saw] stopped, As'ad spontaneously uttered: " I testify that undoubtedly there is no god but God and you are His Prophet." After this As'ad added:

O Prophet! I belong to the tribe of Khazraj of Yesrib. Our brotherly relations with the tribe of Aus have been cut off. If our relations were normalized through you there would be nobody

[3] It is the aim of Islam to offer a complete code of life, without neglecting any one of the various domains of human activity. Its objective is a coordination of all these aspects. The concern for 'centralization' is displayed in the fact that all Islamic practices touch simultaneously the body and the soul. Not only do the temporal practices acquire a sacred moral character when they conform to divine prescriptions but the spiritual practices also possess a material utility. The rules of conduct, whether spiritual or temporal, emanate from the one and the same source, the Quran, which is the word of God.- *Tr.*

better than you for us. We had been hearing from the Jews about your expected arrival. We have also been informed by them that you shall sometime visit and settle down at Medina. Thank God, He has brought me to you. I had come to seek the support of the noble men of Quraish against the people of Aus. Now, if through your mediation, our hostility comes to an end there shall be nothing better than that.

After this talk As'ad went to Zakwan and told him that the man he had met was the same last Prophet the Jewish scholars had been telling them about and had also specifically described his distinctive qualities. He advised him to go to him and embrace his religion. Accordingly Zakwan went to the Prophet[s] and got converted to Islam. Returning back to Yesrib, they preached Islam and many persons had the honour of embracing it.[4] Most of the historians say that the first batch through which Islam reached Medina comprised six persons.[5]

First Pledge of Aqba and Appointment of the First Preacher of Islam

Ibne Saad has stated that during the *Haj* season in the following year, twelve persons from Yesrib came to Mecca, embraced Islam at the hands of the Prophet[s] and pledged allegiance to him.[6] They returned to Medina and Islam

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[4] *Aalamul Wara* p.36-37

[5] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham p.286-287

[6] The pledge taken by them was: "We will not associate anything with God; we will not steal, nor commit adultery, nor fornication; we will not kill our children, we will abstain from calumny and slander. We will obey the Prophet[s] in everything that is right; and we will be faithful to him in weal and sorrow." *Seerat* Ibne Hisham p.289 - *Tr.*

started flourishing there. At that time As'ad bin Zurara was leading the congregational prayers. Tribes of Aus and Khazraj jointly made a request to the Prophet[SA] to depute a *Hafiz* (one knowing Quran by heart) to help them in learning the holy book by heart. He sent Mus'ab bin Umair who stayed at the house of As'ad bin Zurara and taught Quran to them.[7] Tabarsi's version, however, is that the same two persons, As'ad and Zakwan, who had met the Prophet[SA] in the beginning had requested him to send some such person with them who could teach Quran and tenets of Islam. The Prophet[SA] then sent for Mus'ab bin Umair.

This Mus'ab was a young man of tender age who was brought up with utmost fondness and affection by his wealthy parents. From among his brothers and sisters, he was most dear to his parents. He had never gone out of Mecca. When he embraced Islam and his parents' harsh measures failed to make him change his mind, he was turned out of his house. He came to the Prophet[SA] and shared with him the hardships of Shebe Abu Talib. He learnt by heart the portions of Quran revealed during that period and also became acquainted with the tenets of Islamic theology. The Prophet[SA] ordered him to go with As'ad and Zakwan. He went to Medina with them and stayed at As'ad's house. He used to address gatherings of the people of Khazraj every day. Mostly the young people were impressed by his preaching, and felt inclined to accept the message of Islam.[8]

The place where the twelve persons (the second batch of the Medinites) had met the Prophet[SA] was the valley of a mountain known as *Aqba*. The entire episode of their

[7] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.148
[8] *Aalamul Wara* p.37-38

meeting the Prophet[s^] and swearing allegiance to him is, therefore, known as the First Pledge of Aqba.

Success of Islam in Medina

It is nothing but misfortune resulting from hostility and bigotry that Muslim writers in general have not incorporated in their works those facts of Islamic history and events related to Prophet's[s^] companions which have come down to us through the members of Prophet's[s^] own family. But, still, it is somewhat consoling to note that in spite of the continuous acts of depredations some gems from that vandalized treasure house are preserved in authentic historical records. Hence, whatever is going to be mentioned under the above heading is extracted from Tabarsi's compilation of the information derived from the members of the Prophet's[s^] family. Tabarsi, upon the authority of that blessed family, writes:

> Abdullah bin Ubayy was a leading member of the tribe of Khazraj. In the battle of Buas he had refused to side with his tribesmen against the people of Aus because he was of the view that the stand of his people was not just. The effect of his upright and impartial conduct was that his tribe met with defeat. The people of Aus and Khazraj then decided to make Abdullah their common king. A crown was prepared for that purpose. Search was going on for a befitting lustrous jewel to be embedded in it. In the meantime As'ad and Zakawan along with Mus'ab arrived from Mecca and started propagating the message of Isalm. As a result, the plan of Abdullah's kingship failed to materialize. Abdullah, cosequently, disapproved of As'ad's mission and started creating disturbance.

The weight and authority of this man caused worry to As'ad. He, therefore, desired to have some influential person with him who, in position and prestige, might equal or even surpass Abdullah. After much deliberation he told Mus'ab that his maternal uncle, Saad bin Maaz, was a well to do person of Aus. He was a man of sobriety and of sterling character, respected and obeyed by the people of Bani Amr and Bani Awf. It would be a great achievement if he joined their movement. With that idea As'ad and Mus'ab went near Saad's house and sat on the platform of a nearby well. When the children and youngsters saw As'ad sitting with a stranger they gathered around them. Mus'ab began to recite Quranic verses to them. When Saad learnt about it, he felt worried. Usayd bin Huzayr, a nobleman of the tribe, was then sitting with him. Saad told Usayd that it was very bad that Abu Amama A'aad bin Zurara had brought a Quraishi young man to their locality and he was addressing the youth who could be led astray. He told Usayd to go and tell them not to stay in their locality. Usayd left the place for that purpose. When As'ad saw him coming towards them he told Mus'ab that that man was a respectable person and even if he accepted their message it would not be an ordinary success. When Usayd reached near them he told As'ad that his maternal uncle had sent him to advise them not to stay in their midst nor corrupt their youth otherwise they could come to harm at the hands of his tribesmen. Mus'ab asked him to sit down for a while and listen to what he was going to present.

Thereafter he would be free to act according to his wishes. If he did not relish that which was going to be recited, they shall leave that place. Mus'ab recited a *Sura* of Quran which touched the core of Usayd's heart. Usayd at once asked Mus'ab what was required of a person who wished to join their circle. Mus'ab said that he had to take a bath, wear clean clothes, utter words of faith in Oneness of God and Prophethood of Muhammad[S^], and offer two units of *Namaz*.[9] Hearing this Usayd precipitantly jumped into the well near which they were sitting. When he came out he wrung his clothes to dry them up and desired to learn the formula and offer prayers. Usayd then told As'ad that he was going to his maternal uncle and shall try to bring him there. Since Usayd was long in returning he was being eagerly awaited at Saad's place. Seeing him from some distance, Saad said to those sitting near him, "By God Usayd was coming as a changed person." When Usayd arrived, this was at once confirmed. Thereafter, Saad bin Maaz himself went to Musab who started reciting "Ha Mim. A revelation from God. Most Gracious, Most Merciful."[10] Musab himself says: "By God, lustre of Islam was visible in Saad's face even before a word was uttered."

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[9] *Namaz* (worship or prayer) is the pillar of religion," is the saying of Prophet[S^]. The Quran speaks of it more than a hundred times and calls it variously *Salat* (inclination), *Dua* (prayer, appeal), *Zikr* (remembering), *Tasbih* (glorification), *Inabah* (returning, attachment) .- *Tr.*

[10] Quran 41:1-2

Saad had already heard from Usayd what was to be done for embracing Islam. He without uttering a word told one of his companions to bring clean clothes from his house. He then took bath, recited the prescribed formula (*Kalma*) and offered two units of prayer. He caught hold of Mus'ab's hand and requested him to accompany him and preach his message without having apprehension from any one. Saad then went to a gathering of people of Bani Amr and Bani Awf and said that everyone, male, female, young and old should come near him. After this he asked them: "What do you think about my position?" They replied: "You are our leader whose obedience is obligatory for us. Whatever order is given by you we are ready for it." He said: "Well then, it is prohibited to every male and female among you to utter a single word before reciting the prescribed formula of Islamic faith (*Kalma*). We should thank God that He has bestowed this honour upon us. It is that very thing the Jewish scholars had all along been telling us about."

All the members of the tribe present at that moment embraced Islam and there was not a single house which did not have a male or female Muslim. Now all the prominent persons of the tribes of Aus and Khazraj also adopted Islam like others because each one of them had heard about it from the Jewish scholars.[11]

The Second Pledge of Aqba and Agreement on Proposed Migration

The people of Medina who had accepted the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ without having seen him were anxious to go to him and hear his discourses directly. They were

[11] *Aalamul Wara* p.38-39

waiting for the *Haj* season to visit Mecca and when the time drew near they started exchanging promises and pledges with one another regarding the proposed visit. As the time for departure arrived, seventy persons belonging to the tribes of Aus and Khazraj left for Mecca.On arriving there they paid their respects to the Prophet[s^] and, probably, also made a request to him to visit Medina. The Prophet[s^] directed them that after performing *Haj* they should quietly collect to meet him at the lower side of Aqba (the hill which had witnessed the first pledge) in the stillness of night on the first day (12th Zilhij) of the middle period of *Tashriq* (the middle period of three days which follows the performance of the rites of *Haj* pilgrimage) and then he will have a detailed talk. The Prophet[s^] reached there at the appointed time along with Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib. The Meccans also reached there one by one. The first among them to reach was Rafe bin Malik Zarqi. Gradually all the seventy persons collected there. Abbas, who had perhaps accompanied the Prophet[s^] for that very purpose, addressed them in a dignified patriarchal style. He said:

> I have learnt about the invitation extended by you to Muhammad[s^]. You should not labour under the misconception that Muhammad[s^] is a homeless, shelterless person desperately needing a place of habitation. It is certainly not like that. He is the darling of his family and an extremely popular personality of his tribe. Each one of us has ever been prepared to shed his blood for a single drop of his sweat. This has been our consistent stand not for one or two days but for full thirteen years. For the sake of his own mission he is inclined to accept your invitation. I want to know from each one of you if you have sufficient

strength, knowledge of the art of warfare, courage to face adversities and sufferings and also perseverance and steadfastness to stick to your stand even if all the tribes of Arabia were suddenly to combine against you? You should consult each other, consider and ponder over all the aspects of the matter and then make a fresh pledge of loyalty. After that you are welcome to take him with you. But if you have the slightest apprehension of any weakness in your determination then you should not think of it. We have been taking care of him for thirteen years and shall continue to do so and shall not leave him as long as we are alive. God shall crown him with success even at this place.[12]

Tabarsi says that the Prophet[S.A] did not think it proper to have a detailed talk at Aqba and asked them to collect at Abdul Muttalib's house where the matter was thoroughly discussed. Abbas, Hamza and Ali[A.S] were with the Prophet[S.A] on that occasion. Those who had come from Medina included those who had already embraced Islam and also a few others who had not yet adopted it. Abdullah bin Ubayy was one of them.[13]

The speech of Abbas prevailed upon the audience with all its seriousness. There was silence for sometime. Thereafter, from among the Medinites, Baraa bin Marur stood up and said:

We have heard what you have said. We assure you that had there been the least wavering in our heart we would have not extended this offer. We

[12] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.149
[13] *Aalamul Wara* p.39

have thoroughly considered the matter and have decided not to show the least deviation from truth and loyalty. We shall not hesitate in offering our lives to help the Prophet[S.A.] of God.

Hearing this the Prophet[S.A.] recited some Quranic passages and extended his hand to secure the bond of allegiance. The first to swear the same was Baraa bin Marur. According to some, Abul Haseem or Asaad was the first to formally pledge allegiance. Thereafter all the seventy Medinites bound themselves in allegiance. Those among them who were not Muslims, also followed suit and embraced Islam.[14]

Tabarsi says that the Prophet[S.A.] asked them to select twelve representatives (*Naqib*) and give their names to him so that they might be made responsible to speak on their behalf. Nine persons of the tribe of Khazraj and three of Aus were accordingly nominated. Those of Khazraj were (1) As'ad bin Zurara, (2) Baraa bin Marur, (3) Abdullah bin Huzam (father of Jubayr), (4) Rafe bin Malik, (5) Saad bin Ubbada, (6) Manzar bin Amr, (7) Abdullah bin Ravaha, (8) Saad bin Rabi, and (9) Ubbada bin Samit.

Those nominated from Aus were (1) Abul Hesam bin Tehan, (2) Usayd bin Huzayr and (3) Saad bin Khasuma.

Thereafter they said, "O Prophet of God, now please accompany us." But he said that he was waiting for divine command.[15]

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[14] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol. 1 p.149-150
[15] *Aalamul Wara* p.39-40

Departure of Companions

To leave one's place in haste and trepidation for fear of life is called 'escape' or 'running away'. A person thus escaping does not bother to consider what might happen to those he was leaving behind. But to move from one's place to another place more suitable for the achievement of one's aim is termed *Hijrat*, that is, 'Migration'. The person who embarks upon such an expedition does so with full preparation. He does not have only his personal safety in his mind. He has the interest of the entire community as also the safeguard of his ideals in view. Had the Prophet's[sa] intention been solely to seek personal safety then this was the best opportunity for a considerable number of Medinites were there who wanted to take him to Medina under their protection. But he did not accept their offer as he had to act according to God's directive.

This waiting for divine command was, in other words, also due to a desire to have some time for completing all those arrangements which were necessary for the security of the community and fulfilment of his moral obligations.

The people of Medina left for their town after this settlement. When the polytheists of Mecca came to know that the Muslims were planning to migrate to Medina they started persecuting them afresh and with greater ruthlessness. The Prophet[sa] then directed the Muslims to gradually leave for Medina.This is how a leader of lofty character acts. He does not go away leaving his people unprotected in hostile surroundings. He stays on till he has made full arrangement for their safety. Historical accounts reveal that barring the Prophet[sa] and a few other people no one from amongst his companions was left in Medina.

These few people were those who on account of sickness, captivity or infirmity were unable to move out.[16]

Plan to kill the Prophet and Prophet's Migration (Hijrat)

The backround of Prophet's[S.A.] migration (*Hijrat*), as generally understood, is that when the infidels decided to kill him he left Mecca. It gives an impression that *Hijrat* was planned only to save his life. As stated earlier and also borne out by historical facts, the plan for *Hijrat* existed since before and was in the process of being executed. While dealing with migration to Abyssinia it has been earlier stated that if the polytheists had any personal enmity with the migrants they ought to have felt happy by their departure. But their enmity was with the mission, not with the individuals. Moreover, the remote chance of the success of this mission in distant Abyssinia did not bother them much. The migration to so near a place as Medina was a matter of serious concern as its fertile soil would definitely strengthen the roots of Islam and facilitate its expansion. This infuriated them. When they noticed that almost all the followers had already gone and only the Prophet[S.A.] was left, and he too was about to leave, they decided to put an end to his life. Accordingly, they chalked out a plan for that. This clearly shows that *Hijrat* was not due to the apprehension of death. It was the other way round. The assassination itself was planned to prevent the Prophet's[S.A.] migration from Mecca. This is reported by a historian in the following words:

> When the Polytheists saw that Prophet's[S.A.] companions had taken their women and children towards Aus and Khazraj, they felt that it was a

[16] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol. 1 p. 152,153

secure and safe place for them because they (Aus and Khazraj tribes) were powerful people. They thought that the Prophet[S.A.] too shall go there. Thereupon, they collected at *Darul Nadwa*. There was not a single man of wisdom and discretion among them who did not attend that meeting and participate in the deliberations and consultations about the Prophet[S.A.].[17]

Tabarsi says that from amongst the nobility of Quraish forty persons had assembled at *Darul Nadwa*. All the participants barring Utbah bin Rabia (maternal uncle of Muawiya) were above the prescribed age of forty.[18] When all had collected they deliberated upon the ways and means of killing the Prophet[S.A.]. The main point under consideration was that if the Prophet[S.A.] was put to death his tribesmen, Bani Hashim, shall definitely avenge his blood and this will lead to an endless sequence of revenge-murders. Abu Jahl then proposed that instead of making any one person individually responsible for murder a team comprising representatives of all tribes and clans be selected to jointly kill the Prophet[S.A.] so that the children of Abd Munaf may never be able to decide from whom to seek the revenge.[19] Ultimately fifteen persons including Abu Lahab (who belonged to Bani Hashim) were selected for entering into Prophet's[S.A.] house at night in order to kill him.[20]

It is thus apparent that the plan to kill the Prophet[S.A.] was made by the polytheists with the sole object of preventing

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[17] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol. 1 p.153
[18] *Aalamul Wara* p.40
[19] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.153
[20] *Aalamul Wara* p.41

his *Hijrat* and thereby destroying the prospects of Islam's progress.

The problem now faced by the Prophet[S.A.] was not that of his own safety but of those noble objectives for which *Hijrat* was being contemplated. Now that stage had arrived where it had become necessary that the Creator Himself should take such steps that would make the infidels taste the humiliation of the miscarriage of their wicked plan and the Prophet[S.A.] should safely slip out from amongst them. That divine contrivance to frustrate their plan and bestow success upon the Prophet[S.A.] in his mission is referred to in the holy Quran in the following words:

> Remember how the Unbelievers plotted against thee, to keep thee in bonds, or slay thee, or get thee out (of thy home). They plot and plan and God too plans, but the best of planners is God.[21]

What was the God's contrivance? Ibne Saad elucidates it thus:

> Gabriel came to Prophet of God, informed him about the incident (the plot) and conveyed the divine command to him that he should not take rest in his bed that night. The Prophet[S.A.] directed Ali[A.S.] to sleep in his bed that night.[22]

Tabarsi says:

> The Prophet[S.A.] directed that his bed should be spread. Then he called Ali[A.S.] and said, "O Ali sacrifice yourself for me." He replied "with heart and soul." The Prophet[S.A.] then told him "sleep in

[21] Quran 8:30
[22] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.153

my bed and cover yourself with my sheet." He (Ali^s) then slept in his bed, covering himself with his (Prophet's^s) sheet." [23] [24]

According to Shaikh Shah Abdul Haq, Mohaddis-e-Dehlavi, Ali^s was told to lie in Prophet's^s bed to keep the polytheists under deception and unaware of the fact that the Prophet^s had gone away.[25] He has also explained the question as to why Ali^s was left at Mecca as follows:

> The main reason for leaving Ali^s at Mecca was that he had to return those valuable articles to their owners which they had left with the Prophet^s for safe-keeping owing to their strong faith in his honesty and trustworthiness, the qualities for which they had named him 'Truthful' (*Sadiq*) and 'Trustworthy' (*Ameen*).[26]

This shows that though the non-believers were after the Prophet's^s life yet they had so much faith in his integrity that their valuables were in Prophet's^s custody till the night of *Hijrat*. It was the concern for those deposits and also for the full discharge of moral obligations which prevailed upon the Prophet^s to leave behind in dangerous conditions that person who was reared by him in his lap and was loved the most by him. More than that, it was the protection of the

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[23] *Aalamul Wara* p.41

[24] Ibne Shahar Ashob writes in *Manaqib* (Vol.1 p.99) that the Prophet^s told Ali^s, "God has commanded me to leave after making you lie down in my bed." Ali^s enquired, "Will your goodself be safe in that event?" The Prophet^s replied, "Yes, I shall be safe." Hearing this a smile appeared upon the lips of Ali^s and he placed his forehead on the ground in prostration before God and it was the first prostration of thanks on earth.- *Tr.*

[25] *Madarijun Nubuwwa* p.72

[26] *Madarijun Nubuwwa* p.72

great cause itself which required that such a loved one was left in his bed in the midst of drawn swords. Ibne Saad reports:

> Ali[A.S] slept in the bed of the Prophet[S.A] covering himself with that red-coloured *Hazrami* (made at Hazramut) sheet which was used by the Prophet[S.A] while sleeping.[27]

This sacrifice of Ali[A.S] for the sake of Islam is a fact that is universally acknowledged. Shah Abdul Haq Mohaddis-e Dehlavi writes:

> Ali ibne Abu Talib[A.S] was sleeping in Prophet's[S.A] bed covering himself with that special sheet (of cloth) which the Prophet[S.A] generally used for sleeping. In this way he is the first person who sold away his self and made a sacrifice of it in love of God's Prophet[S.A]. It is said that the following Quranic verse was revealed in respect of this event: "And there is the type of man who gives his life to earn the pleasure of God; and God is full of kindness to (His) devotees."[28]

> Ali[A.S] himself has referred to it in a few verses. Regarding this event he says: "I made a shield for one who is the best amongst those who walk on earth and those who make rounds of God's House (*Khana-e-Kaaba*). The Prophet[S.A] apprehended that the plan chalked out against him by the polytheists might succeed. God then, set him free from their noose.

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[27] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.153
[28] Quran 2:207

Only these two verses are mentioned in *Mawahib-e-Ladania*. The following two other verses are cited in *Rauzatul Ahbab*:

> "The Prophet[S.A.] passed the night in peace and calmness in the cave, fully secure under the protection of God, and I passed the night in the condition that I was watching the movements and activities of the enemies. They were not recognizing me. However I was fully prepared for being killed or made a captive."[29]

K.A.Hameed has written, "The Prophet[S.A.] made Ali[A.S.] to sleep in his bed and himself left on 12th September, 622."[30]

Acording to Ibne Saad:

> The Meccans posted themselves around the Prophet's[S.A.] dwelling throughout the night. Peeping now and then through the crevices of the door, they were making sure that the Prophet[S.A.] was still lying in his bed. There were consultations amongst them that who should move forward to finish the life of the person in slumber.[31]

They were determined to enter into the house in the night itself but Abu Lahab dissuaded them, suggesting that they should keep a watch in the night and enter into the house in the morning. On that suggestion they continued the siege for the whole night.[32] Through God's connivance the Prophet[S.A.] had escaped from their midst in the early hours of the night itself. "When morning dawned, Ali[A.S.] rose from

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[29] *Madarijun Nubuwwa* p.82
[30] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Vol.1 p.66
[31] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.153
[32] *Aalamul Wara*

the bed. They enquired where the God's Prophet[S.A] was. He replied that he had no information about it."[33]

Tabarsi writes:

> When it dawned and the bright light of the day appeared, they leapt over the walls, entered into the house and reached near the bed. Ali[A.S] sprang out of the bed, stood before them and asked "what do you want?" They enquired, "where is your cousin brother?" Ali[A.S] retorted "had you made me his custodian?" Hearing this, they went out in search of God's Prophet[S.A].[34]

After putting Ali[A.S] in his bed the Prophet[S.A] quietly came out of the siege laid by the plotters. He moved fast to get out of the limits of Mecca and reach the spot chosen by the Creator as his place of shelter before the enemies learnt about his departure. It was just a chance that at that very moment Abu Bakr happened to come out of his house for some work. Seeing the Prophet[S.A] going ahead he hurriedly moved forward, overtook him and asked him where he was going. It was a very delicate occasion because the knowledge of Prophet's[S.A] movements by anybody carried the risk of the divulgence of the secret. The Prophet[S.A], in his absolute wisdom, thought it safe to catch hold of Abu Bakr's hand and asked him to accompany him. In this way he became Prophet's[S.A] fellow traveller. The Prophet[S.A] took him upto a cave in Mount Thawr, popularly known as *Ghar-e-Thawr*[35] and both entered into it.[36]

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[33] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.154

[34] *Aalamul Wara*

[35] That cave is four miles to the south of Medina.- *Tr.*

[36] *Aalamul Wara*

The Sunni historians maintain that after receiving divine commandment for *Hijrat*, the Prophet[s^] himself went to the house of Abu Bakr, spent the night there and thereafter went to the cave of Thawr along with him.[37] This needs to be seen in the light of the known facts.

The Prophet[s^] had left his house in the night itself. So, to say that he spent the whole night in the house of Abu Bakr does not seem to be correct. Moreover, right from the early hours of the dawn, the Meccans had started their pursuit of the Prophet[s^] and had placed guards at all exit-points to prevent him from leaving Mecca. In such circumstances Prophet's[s^] coming out of Abu Bakr's house and going towards *Ghar-e-Thawr* after day-break is highly improbable. On the basis of a logical analysis of the events, the early version of the episode sounds more authentic.

Anyway, the infidels now went in search of the Prophet[s^] and looked for him here and there but he could not be found. Services of diviners who were expert in identifying people through their foot-prints were availed of. With their assistance they reachced upto *Ghar-e-Thawr*.

Tabarsi has specially refered to a man of the tribe of Khuzaa, named Abu Karz, who had attained great fame for his skill in identifying foot-prints. He was summoned and told. "this is the day, this is the day for you to show the excellence of your art." He accompanied them and, pointing to the foot-prints, kept on telling them: "look, this is the foot-print of Muhammad[s^]. This is of Ibne Abi Qahafa (Abu Bakr). Here Ibne Abi Qahafa had stumbled while walking." Picking the trail like that he went on moving forward along with others. Ultimately he reached the cave

[37] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.I p.153

(*Ghar-e-Thawr*) and standing near its entrance said, "Either they ascended to the sky or descended into the earth, but those two did not go beyond this place."[38]

Just at that moment Abu Bakr began to cry inside the cave. This was a very dangerous situation because, on the one hand, there was the clue furnished by the diviner and on the other, there was noise of wailing from inside the cave. After all this, there was nothing to prevent the pursuers from getting upto the Prophet[S^A]. It was at this juncture that the Prophet[S^A] uttered those words to his companion which are thus recorded in the Quran: " Have no fear, for God is with us." [39]

It was divine dispensation that those searching for the Prophet[S^A] could not hear the noise raised inside the cave. They saw spiders' cobweb covering the entrance of the cave so thickly and in such a fashion that according to Ibne Saad: "Some of them said that spiders have spun cobweb so densely that it must, in all probability, have been like this since before the birth of Muhammad[S^A]."[40]

The polytheists ultimately went back in a state of bewilderment. After their departure the Prophet[S^A] came out and left for Medina.

Ibne Saad has stated at one place that the Prophet[S^A] had come out of the cave in the night of Monday, the 4th day of Rabiul Awwal.[41] But, a few lines later, he adds that the Prophet[S^A] arrived at Medina on Monday, the second day of Rabiul Awwal. Another version is that he arrived there on

[38] *Aalamul Wara*
[39] Quran 9:40
[40] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.154
[41] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.157

12th of Rabiul Awwal. According to Tabarsi the Prophet[S.A.] reached Medina on 11th Rabiul Awwal.[42]

It is that drawback of the history of Islam that has persisted all along from this stage right upto the Prophet's[S.A.] death. If the differences of dates and days are found in respect of later incidents as well it should not cause any surprise; nor should this be used to make the events themselves appear dubious.

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[42] *Aalamul Wara* p.7 ; According to K.A.Hameed: "The Prophet[S.A.] made Ali[A.S.] to sleep in his bed and himself left on 12th September 622. He arrived at Quba on 16th September 622." *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam*, p.69

6

HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF *HIJRAT*

Prophets's [S.A.] arrival and reception at Medina

The people of Medina already knew about the Prophet's[S.A.] departure from Mecca for Medina.[1] Everyday they used to go outside the town in the morning and return disappointed only when the heat of the sun would become unbearable.[2] Not only men but also women and children would stand waiting for him till it became too hot to stay there.[3] On the day of his arrival also they, as usual, waited till noon. When they were about to return a Jew, watching from a tower, cried out that the person they were waiting for had arrived. The people then rushed towards the Prophet[S.A.] shouting ***"ALLAH-O- AKBAR"***. The joy of Medinites was worth watching. Women, children and even slave-girls were agog with joy and telling one another "God's Prophet has come."[4]

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[1] Medina *Munawwarah* (the illuminated), the city of many names, is situated about eleven days' journey to the north of Mecca. It is said to have been established by an Amalikite chief whose name, Yesrib, it bore until the advent of the Prophet[S.A.]. Thereafter it changed its ancient name and was henceforth styled *Medinatun Nabi*, the city of the Prophet[S.A.], or shortly Medina,the city par excellence. -*Tr.*

[2] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p. 157.

[3] *Aalamul Wara*

[4] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol. 1 p.158

The Prophet[S.A.] stayed at Quba[5] outside Medina with the tribe of Banu Amr bin Awf. According to Ibne Saad it was Monday, the eleventh or twelfth of Rabiul Awwal.[6] K.A.Hameed says it was 6th September, 622. [7] Tabari is definite that it was Monday, the 12th of Rabiul Awwal. [8]

Opinions differ about the person at whose house the Prophet[S.A.] stayed outside Medina. Some say that it was an elderly person of Bani Amr bin Awf, named Kulsum bin Hadam. Others maintain that he was Saad bin Khaseema. Those supporting the first view plead that in fact the Prophet[S.A.] had stayed with Kulsum but as Saad was a bachelor, his house was conveniently accessible to menfolk. The Prophet[S.A.], therefore, stayed at Saad's house in the daytime for meeting people. From this it was assumed by some that he had stayed with Saad.[9]

Waiting for the Brother

Ali[A.S.] was not just a cousin of the Prophet[S.A.] but virtually a child as right from the very beginning he was brought up by him. For people of high character it is not so difficult to put their own lives in danger as that of their dear ones. It was an act of supreme sacrifice on the part of the Prophet[S.A.] that, for the sake of Islam and in obedience to the divine command, he departed from Mecca after leaving Ali[A.S.] on his bed in the midst of the enemies. True enough, he had learnt of Ali's safety from the dangers that night while he

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[5] Muhammad [S.A.] and his companion rested for a few days at a village called Koba (Quba) situated only two miles to the south of Medina (Yesrib) and remarkable for its beauty and fertility.-S.Ameer Ali - *Tr.*

[6] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.157

[7] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* p.69

[8] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.249

[9] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.248

was sheltering in the cave of Thawr but, still, he had every reason to feel worried for him. The provocation received by the infidels through Prophet's[saw] departure and their unbounded rage upon the failure of their plan in which Ali[as] also had played an active role by sleeping on his bed; had created a situation in which every moment of Ali's[as] stay at Mecca was hazardous. To add to it, the Prophet[saw] had also entrusted to Ali[as] a very sacred trust, the protection of the venerable ladies of the family, including his own dear and only daughter, Fatima[as]. Beside her, other ladies whose names are known to us were Fatima binte Asad, Ali's[as] mother and the Prophet's[saw] aunt, and his cousin sister, Fatima binte Zubair bin Abdul Muttalib. These ladies' safe conduct to Medina depended upon Ali[as]. The Prophet[saw], therefore, prolonged his stay at Quba although his companion, Abu Bakr, had entered the city the same day and stayed at the house of a member of Khazraj tribe, Habib bin Asaaf or Kharja bin Zaid bin Abi Zuhair.[10] The Prophet[saw] had decided to enter the city along with Ali[as] and the ladies and therefore he awaited their arrival at Quba.

Ibne Saad has stated that the Prophet[saw] had stayed outside the town for fourteen days.[11] According to a narration, three days after his arrival, Ali[as] also joined him. Shah Abdul Haq describes this in the following words:

> "Ali[as] reached there from Mecca three days after and made the Prophet[saw] happy. The author of *Rauzatul-Ahbab* writes that Ali[as] had walked throughout on foot and that had raised blisters on his feet. The Prophet[saw] moved his holy hand on them and Ali[as] was immediately cured. This event

[10] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.1 p.249
[11] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.159

is just like the one that happened on the occasion of the battle of Khaibar when Ali[as] had pain in his eyes. The Prophet[saw], on that occasion, applied his saliva to the eyes of Ali[as] and he was instantaneously cured. Ali[as] never had any eye trouble after this.[12]

The statement of Shah Abdul Haq regarding Hazrat Ali's[as] arrival (at Quba) after three days does not appeal to reason because, in that event, there was no need for the Prophet[saw] to continue to stay outside Medina for a further period of ten to twelve days. The impression of three days appears to have been created by a statement of Ibne Jarir who has said that Hazrat Ali[as] stayed at Mecca for three days after Prophet's[saw] departure and during that period, he returned those articles to their owners which were left in trust with the Prophet[saw]. Thereafter, he went to the Prophet[saw] and stayed with him at the house of Kulsum bin Hadam.[13] But from three days' stay at Mecca it does not follow that Ali[as] arrived at Medina three days after the Prophet's[saw] arrival. Hazrat Ali's[as] pace of journey, in the company of the ladies, could not have been the same as that of the Prophet[saw] himself and, therefore, he must have taken longer to cover the distance. The version of Tabari, therefore, appears to be more plausible that Abu Bakr had gone to Medina the same evening and stayed with some *Ansar* but the Prophet[saw] stayed on outside Medina for fifteen days. Meanwhile Abu Bakr, perhaps upon the insistence of some people of Medina, again went to the Prophet[saw] and requested him to move into the city as the people were anxiously waiting for him. The Prophet[saw],

[12] *Madarijun Nubuwwa*
[13] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.249

however, refused to move till his brother, Ali^s, had arrived. Thereupon, Abu Bakr, in a tone of despondency said that he did not think that Ali^s would ever come. The Prophet^s retorted: "Why not? God willing, he shall come soon." He stayed there for five more days and Ali^s and the ladies arrived during that period.[14]

This shows that the Prophet^s did not stay for long at Quba after Ali's^s arrival. The version that Ali^s had reached there three days after Prophet's^s arrival, thus, appears to be incorrect. The other probability is that the Prophet^s did not stay at Quba for more than 4 or 5 days as reported by Tabari. According to him the Prophet^s "stayed there on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and started from there on Friday."

Tabari has expressed the view that the people of Bani Amr bin Awf spread the story of a longer stay to reap greater honour. He has used the word *Zaam* (supposed belief) to explain that the intention of Bani Amr bin Awf in spreading the story of a stay of ten or more days was to satisfy their vain urge for greater prestige.[15]

Commencement of Reconciliation

In Yesrib there were two major tribes, Aus and Khazraj, which were perpetually at war with each other. A happy result of Prophet's^s arrival at Medina was that these two important tribes reconciled their differences. This achievement of the Prophet^s is mentioned as God's blessing in the Quran:

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[14] *Aalamul Wara*

[15] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.249

> And hold fast, all together, by the Rope which God (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude God's favour on you; for ye were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His Grace, ye became brethren; and ye were on the brink of the Pit of Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus doth God make His signs clear to you: that ye may be guided.[16]

Efforts towards bringing about this reconciliation had already started during Prophet's[SA] stay outside Medina. Tabari says that Kulsum, at whose house the Prophet[SA] was staying, had lost his eyesight. Only the people of Aus visited the Prophet[SA] at his house. The Prophet[SA] used to closely look at their faces and notice that no one from the Khazraj tribe was among them although the deputations from Medina that had visited him at Mecca used to have several members of their tribe. The Prophet[SA] felt it deeply but never talked about it. After a few days As'ad bin Zurara of the tribe of Khazraj came to the Prophet[SA] with a veil on his face and that too in the darkness of night, after *Isha* prayers. He greeted the Prophet[SA] who was pleased to see him. When questioned about the reason for his delayed visit, As'ad said that he was eager to pay respects to him at the earliest but on account of the hostility between his tribe and that of Aus he was reluctant to visit the house of a person belonging to that tribe. He had ultimately come when he could no more restrain himself. A prominent person of Khazraj having advanced to that extent the Prophet[SA] found an opportunity to prepare the ground for bringing the two tribes to terms. He asked the people of Aus

[16] Quran 3:103

that who among them was prepared to give shelter to As'ad, that is, to guarantee the safety of his person and possessions when he was with them. They shouted that Prophet's[S.A.] sheltering him amounted to their sheltering. The Prophet[S.A.] said that it was not enough and insisted that one of them should come forward to take that responsibility openly. Two of them, Aweem bin Saada and Saad bin Khaseema, offered to give him shelter. Thus they became responsible for As'ad's safety. Thereafter, As'ad fearlessly visited the Prophet[S.A.], enjoyed his company and offered prayers behind him. Nobody from Aus, child or adult, ever dared to cause the slightest pain to him even indirectly through hints or gestures. Other people of Khazraj might also have followed As'ad bin Zurara and started visiting the Prophet[S.A.] but the history is silent about it. This much is, however, certain that the very first step successfully taken by the Prophet[S.A.] became the foundation stone of the restoration of peace and cordiality between them in future.

Mosque at Quba

There is no doubt that the mosque of Quba was constructed in the locality of Bani Amr bin Awf outside Medina where the Prophet[S.A.] had stayed. Regarding the time of its construction Shah Abdul Haq has cautiously remarked: "The Prophet[S.A.] arrived and, at first, stayed in the locality of Bani Amr bin Awf, where the mosque of Quba was constructed."[17] Tabarsi, on the other hand, says: "The Prophet of God arrived, moved towards the mosque of Quba and alighted there. People of Bani Amr bin Awf collected near him. They were jubilant and stood in a circle around him. He stayed with Kulsum bin Hadam."[18] This

[17] *Madarijun Nubuwwa*
[18] *Aalamul Wara*

means that the mosque of Quba was already in existence and the Prophet[S.A.] on arriving at the outskirts of Medina alighted from his camel near the mosque. Thereafter, he went to the house of Kulsum bin Hadam and stayed there. The other historian, Tabari, specifically mentions : "The Prophet[S.A.] stayed at Quba on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, laid foundation of their mosque and started from there on Friday."[19] Strangely enough, the same great historian, after mentioning the construction of Prophet's mosque (*Masjide Nabawi*), adds: " The Mosque of Quba was constructed in the same year."[20]

These different versions may be interpreted as suggesting that only the foundation of the mosque at Quba was laid during the few days of Prophet's[S.A.] stay there and it was later on, in the course of the same year, that its construction was completed. Otherwise this obvious contradiction in the two statements shall have to be taken as a slip of pen by a renowned historian.

Entry into Medina

After staying at Quba for a few days the Prophet[S.A.], on Friday after the day had advanced, started for Medina on his camel with armed Muslims marching along with him. Residents of Medina also learnt about it and came out of their houses. Those *Ansars* (Medinite Muslims) whose houses fell on the way requested the Prophet[S.A.] to stay with them. Being an embodiment of highest courtesy, he could not disappoint anybody. Wishing well to all he advised them to let his camel proceed and reach the place willed by

[19] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.249
[20] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.256

God. This used to silence the people and the Prophet's[S.A.] camel would move ahead.

The First Friday Prayer and the First Sermon of the Prophet [S.A.] at Medina

While the Prophet[S.A.] was still moving forward the sun began to decline towards the west. At that moment he was in the locality of Bani Salim. They also requested the Prophet[S.A.] to stay with them. He himself kept quiet but his camel sat down near Bani Salim's mosque. Tabarsi clearly states: "These people had already laid the foundation of a mosque prior to Prophet's[S.A.] arrival." Sitting of the camel near the mosque was a divine indication that Friday prayer shall be held there. The Prophet[S.A.] therefore offered the prayer at the time of *Zuhar* at that very place.[21] However, on this point Tabari gives a different account. According to him the mosque did not exist there. It was constructed after this event. [22]

K.A.Hameed writes that on 12th Rabiul Awwal in the first year of *Hijrat* the Prophet[S.A.] offered Friday prayers along with one hundred Muslims. The sermon which he delivered on that occasion occupies a conspicuous place in the history of the world.[23] He has, however, drastically curtailed that important address, confining it to just eight lines. This important and very comprehensive sermon, based upon the version of Hafiz Ibne Jarir Tabari, is given below in full:

> All praise be to God. I praise him, seek His help and also pardon and guidance from Him. I have

[21] *Aalamul Wara*
[22] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.252
[23] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Aalam* p.7

faith in Him and do not deny Him. I am enemy of him, who disbelieves Him. I testify that there is no god but He (***Allah***). He has no associate. And also that Muhammad$^{s\wedge}$ is His servant and His Messenger, sent by Him with guidance and light and the task to preach and advise at a time when sending of Prophets was in abeyance. There was dearth of knowledge and the people were being led astray and the era of bliss or enlightenment had receded far back. The Doomsday had approached and death was at hand. Whoever obeys God and his Prophet$^{s\wedge}$, is on the right path. Whereas, he who disobeys them is misguided, at fault and benighted. I advise you to save yourselves from Divine wrath. The best advice that one Muslim can tender to another is to make him prepare for the other world and have fear of God. Fear Him to the extent He has warned. There is no advice better than this nor any remembrance better than His. The best way of life is to observe abstinence as God ordains, and be in fear of Him with a sense of His greatness. This shall be of immense help when one arrives at his desired destination, which is the world hereafter. He who pays regard both to the visible and hidden relations between him and his God and has no desire but to attain God's pleasure shall get good name in this world and shall have made provision for the life after death when one shall be at the mercy of his wordly deeds except which nothing else shall be with him. At that stage he shall wish that there were a vast distance between him and that particular occasion. God makes you to fear Him. He is also benevolent and

kind to his vassals. He has shown the truthfulness of what He had said and has fulfilled His promise. Nothing contrary to that could happen because He Himself has said that there is no changeability in His words. He has also said that He is never tyrannical towards His servants. Therefore, you should fear God both for this world and the hereafter. Fear Him outwardly as well as inwardly, because He condones the shortcomings of those who fear Him and also enhances their reward and blessedness. Whoever fears God attains great success. Fear of God shields one from His displeasure, His punishment and His wrath. It definitely brightens one's face, wins for one God's favour and exalts one's status. Go ahead and take your share therein and do not show any slackness in respect of matters concerning God. He has given you the knowledge of His book and has made His path clear so that He may distinguish those who are truthful from those who are not. You should treat others well just as God treats you. Consider His enemies as your enemies. For His sake, discharge satisfactorily the duty of participating in the holy wars. God has made you "the chosen ones" and named you "Muslim" so that if any one dies (in the holy war), he dies after fully demonstrating his love for God and if one survives, he survives for his love for God. There is no strength except in God's support. Remember Him utmost. Strive for the day that is to come. He who keeps his dealings with God proper and straight shall find that God Himself straightens his dealings with others because it is He who enforces

His decisions upon others while others in no way can enforce their decrees against Him. He is the Master of the people; not they, His. God is greatest of all. There is no power but God's and He is great."[24]

Stay with Abu Ayyub Ansari

After offering prayer and finishing his discourse the Prophet[s^] mounted his camel, which moved forward. When the people again requested him to stay with them he replied, "Let the camel move. I shall get down where it stops". The camel kept on moving forward till it reached the place where the Prophet's[s^] Mosque (*Masjid-e-Nabawi*) is situated. Here it suddenly stopped and sat down. Fortunately, that place was close to the house of Abu Ayyub Ansari who gladly came out and carried Prophet's[s^] luggage to his house. Other neighbours also insisted on having this honour. The Prophet[s^] uttered the following aphoristic phrase in reply: "Where the luggage, there the man."[25]

About this event Tabarsi writes:

This place where Prophet's[s^] mosque is situated and where his camel had sat down, belonged to two orphans of Bani Khazraj, named Sahel and Suhail, who were under the guardianship of As'ad bin Zurara. It was infront of the house of Abu Ayyub Ansari. His mother took the Prophet`s[s^] luggage off the camel`s back and took it inside the house. When others pressed him to go with them, the Prophet[s^] looked towards the

[24] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.255-256
[25] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.1 p.160

luggage and found it gone. When he enquired about it he was told that the mother of Abu Ayyub had taken it inside her house. It was then that he said: "Where the luggage, there the man." As'ad bin Zurara got hold of the reins of the camel and took it to his house. [26]

Historical Importance of *Hijrat*

As an eminent contemporary, Habib Rehan Nadwi, has observed, the very fact that the Islamic lunar calendar commenced from the event of *Hijrat* is in itself an ample proof of the importance attached to it during the initial phase of Islamic history. That calendar is said to have been adopted in the sixteenth year of *Hijrat* when the second caliph Umar bin Khattab had been in office for about four years. According to Maqrazi (Vol.I) a cheque was presented to the Caliph which showed 'Shaban' as the month of its issue. The Caliph queried as to how it could be known to which year that 'Shaban' belonged. An advisory committee comprising some prominent 'companions' was formed to consider the matter. Ali[AS] suggested that the Islamic Calender should commence from the day of *Hijrat* and all agreed to it.[27]

Since the new year of the Arabs commenced with the month of Muharram and *Hijrat* had taken place in Rabiul Awwal, the new *Hijra* year was pushed back by about two months to commence from the month of Muharram.[28]

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[26] *Aalamul Wara*

[27] *Dawat* Delhi, Sept.16,1959,pp.215-216

[28] The twelve months of Islamic Calender are Muharram (the sacred month), Safar (the month of departure), Rabiul Awwal (first month of

This belief that the practice of calculating dates from the time of *Hijrat* started during the early years of the second caliphate is not uncontroverted. Ibne Jarir, upon his own authority, has recorded a narration according to which the said calculation had commenced in the time of and under the orders of the Prophet[SAW] himself just after the *Hijrat*. He further says:

> Abu Jafar (Tabari) says, that when the Prophet[SAW] came to Medina he ordered about the fixation of date. This was disclosed to me by Zakaria bin Yahya bin Zaida. He said that he was told by Abu Asim that he had learnt it from Ibne Jareeh, who was told by Abu Salma who, in his turn, was told by Ibne Shahab that when the Prophet[SAW] came to Medina, and he had come there in Rabiul Awwal, he ordered about the fixation of date. It is said that the companions then started

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the Spring), Rabiul Sani (Second month of the Spring), Jamadul Awwal (first dry month), Jamadul Sani (Second dry month), Rajab (Respected), Shaban (the month of the budding of trees), Ramzan (month of heat), Shawwal (month of junction), Ziqad (month of truce, rest or relaxation) and Zil Hij (month of pilgrimage). The ancient Arabs observed the lunar year of 354 days, 8 hours, 48 seconds, divided into twelve months of 29 and 30 days alternaely, in order to make them agree with the solar year of their neighbours, the Greeks and the Romans, and also, in order to make the months fall in the right season, they added a month every third year. This intercalation was called *Nasi*; and although it was not perfectly exact, it served to maintain a sort of correlation between the denomination of the months and seasons. Since the suppression of the *Nasi*, on account of the orgies and various heathen rites observed in the intercalary years, the names of the months have no relation to the seasons. S.Ameer Ali -*Tr.*

writing dates according to one month and two months and thus completed the year.

Thereafter he quotes, as a weak report, that: "There is also a narration that the man who for the first time ordered for fixation of date in Islam was Umar bin Khattab."[29]

From the point of view of commonsense the earlier quoted report appears preferable because it does not stand to reason that so important an issue as the fixation of date did not engage the attention of the Prophet^{SA}, the other Muslims, the first Caliph and even of the second Caliph for a very long time.

Construction of *Masjide Nabawi* (Prophet's Mosque)

The site where *Masjide Nabawi* was built later was a compound in the vicinity of the house of Abu Ayyub Ansari. During his stay at Abu Ayyub's house, the Prophet^{SA} continued to offer congregational prayers in that compound. After some time the Prophet^{SA} desired to have a Mosque there. He asked As'ad bin Zurara to acquire the enclosure for him from its owners, the two orphans. After speaking to the orphans, As'ad told the Prophet^{SA} that the land was being gifted to him and no payment was to be made. The Prophet^{SA} was not prepared to have it as a free gift and bought that piece of land for ten dinars.[30]

Tabari says that the said two orphans were under the care of Maaz bin Afra and the land was also acquired through him. Later on he adds that, in his opinion, the more reliable version is that the land belonged to Bani Najjar. It had some date-palm trees, agricultural plots and a few

[29] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.252
[30] *Aalamul Wara*

graves of pre-Islamic period. The Prophet[ﷺ] wished to pay for the land but they did not want any thing in return except the goodwill of God. The Prophet[ﷺ] got it cleaned of its vegetation, its graves were dug out and then the mosque was constructed. Prior to that he offered prayers at no fixed place but anywhere that he happened to be at the prayer time.[31]

K.A.Hameed writes:

> The first thing that the Prophet[ﷺ] did on reaching Medina was the construction of *Nabawi* Mosque. Its walls were of mud bricks and three yards in height. Roof was laid at that height. Palm trunk was used as a beam. In this way the construction of the mosque was completed.[32]

Tabarsi has given a more detailed account of its construction which shows that if amongst the various structures Kaaba has the distinction of having a Messenger of God, namely Ibrahim[ﷺ], as mason and his son, Ismail[ﷺ], as labourer then *Masjid-e-Nabawi* has also this unique distinction that Muhammad[ﷺ], God's beloved and the best among His Messengers worked, along with the other Muslims, both as a mason and a labourer from the beginning to the end. Tabari mentions: "He (the Prophet[ﷺ]) himself did the work of constructing his mosque along with his companions from among the *Muhajireen* and *Ansar*." [33]

According to Tabarsi the first step taken was to dry up the site as it had a water reservoir. Without drawing out the water and filling up of the pit no construction was possible.

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[31] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.256
[32] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e- Alam* Vol.1 p.67
[33] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.256

Thereafter bricks were prepared and the foundation was dug and filled with bricks. Slabs of stone were brought from the nearby mountain of Hira. Their transportation took several days and the Prophet[S.A.] also participated in it. When Usayd bin Huzayr saw the Prophet[S.A.] bringing a slab on his back, he rushed to him and requested him to let him carry it for him. The Prophet[S.A.] refused, saying that it was impossible that for the comfort of his body he should make some one else toil for him. After putting several layers of stone all around the brickwork was taken up and walls upto a man's height were raised. The area of the entire construction was 100 sq.cubits. There was no roof initially, but after sometime, when people began to feel the heat of the sun, they requested the Prophet[S.A.] for some kind of a shade. Thereupon a thatch of palm-barks resting upon wooden pillars was raised in the front portion of the enclosure. When, later on, the people desired that a proper roof be laid, the Prophet[S.A.] replied: "No. I wish that it remains a thatch like the thatch of Moses."

Death of Sympathisers

Tabari says that the first Muslim to die after Prophet's[S.A.] arrival at Medina was Kulsum bin Hadam, with whom he had stayed at Quba. The second one who died soon after was As'ad bin Zurara who had prepared the ground for *Hijrat*. Even after fourteen hundred years the mentality of some short-sighted Muslims, and even of the so called *Momins*, is that if some one dies by divine decree they connect it to some earlier incident which, thereupon, becomes inauspicious in their eyes. The Prophet[S.A.], attributing such false conceptions to the Jews and hypocrites, warned his followers that these people (that is, the Jews and hypocrites) would say that had he

(Muhammad^{SA}) been a Prophet, his supporters would not have died so soon. He told them not to pay heed to what they said as these (deaths of Kulsum and Asaad) were acts of God, taking place according to His Will and nobody could prevent them.[34]

Great Honour for Bani Najjar

Tabari writes that after the death of As'ad bin Zurara people of his tribe, Bani Najjar, came to the Prophet^{SA} and requested him to choose someone from amongst them as their leader to fill the place of As'ad .The Prophet^{SA} said that since his maternal home was in their tribe they could take him as their leader if they wished so. They were much pleased by this and returned joyfully to their homes. It was a matter of great honour and pride for them that the Prophet^{SA} of God was now their leader.[35]

It has to be kept in mind that even in less important acts of men of high character their commitment to their noble and cherished principles is always at work. After embracing Islam if the democratic concept of the Right of Self-determination still had any validity then the Bani Najjar would have themselves chosen their leader. Also, when they had requested the Prophet^{SA} to appoint their leader, the Prophet^{SA} would have told them to elect one through consultation as his intervention was not necessary. But nothing like this happened. This event clearly demonstrates that important Islamic tenet according to which the moment a person embraces the religion of God, that is, Islam, his right of self-determination automatically ceases to exist. He no longer has a right to choose his guide or leader. His

[34] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.256-257
[35] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.150

leader shall be one who is chosen by God and His Prophet[SAW]. It is unthinkable that a principle introduced so early could be abandoned at any later stage. We should not forget that the divine laws do not change with time. "This was our way with the apostles We sent before thee: thou wilt find no change in our ways."[36]

Rehabilitation of Immigrants

The word, 'rehabilitation' has become a very familiar term after the partition of our country and creation of Pakistan. It is also called resettlement of the refugees. To provide accommodation and jobs to a large number of homeless and uprooted immigrants is a stupendous task even for powerful states of modern times when so much progress has been made in means of procuring and providing assistance. This problem arose at Medina also after the migration of Muslims from Mecca. The saying ' if the heart is accommodative then it is sufficient' was proved to be true by the large-hearted *Ansar*. The Medinites who had surplus houses spared the same for the *Muhajireen*. Those who had only one house, lodged a *Muhajir* in a portion of their houses after separating it with a curtain. No *Muhajir* thus faced accommodation problem. After the construction of *Masjid-e-Nabawi* the Prophet[SAW] got houses built around it gradually for himself, his relatives and companions. The *Muhajireen* soon shifted to their own houses.

The Fellows of *Suffah*

As Khawja Mohammed Latif Ansari has said, the Prophet[SAW] had raised a platform (*Suffah*) near *Masjid-e-Nabawi*, which was covered by a thatch. Indigent Muslims

[36] Quran 17:77

lived there. They were called people or fellows of *Suffah*. The Prophet[S.A] himself was responsible for their up-keep and provided food and clothing to them. Often he used to dine with them.

Fraternization (Mawakhat)

According to the Islamic point of view all human beings are brothers. The point of unity for them is their belief in one Creator. But the fraternal rights can be kept in mind and duly honoured only by those who remember their common paternity. Hence, in practice, only such people can belong to this fraternity who have firm belief in the oneness of God. That is why the Quran says: "The Believers are but a single brotherhood."[37]

To make the ties of fraternity stronger the Prophet[S.A] created contractual brotherhood among his companions. That is, two persons from different families having somewhat similar nature and habits were made each other's brothers. It was once done at Mecca among the intended migrants. When this process was completed, only Ali[A.S] was left out. There were tears in his eyes as no brother was provided for him. Noticing this, the Prophet[S.A] uttered the following historic words: "I have reserved you for myself. You are my brother both in this world and the here-after." It is clear from this that this brotherhood had no connection with the existing hereditary relationship of the Prophet[S.A] and Ali[A.S]. Actually in no other person the qualities and manners of the Prophet[S.A] were so visibly and intensely present as in Ali[A.S].

At Medina the same process was repeated but this time the ties of brotherhood were established between the

[37] Quran 49:10

immigrants (*Muhajireen*) and local helpers (*Ansar*). Every single *Muhajir* was made a brother of one of the *Ansar*. At Mecca the chief object behind the establishment of fraternal ties was to do away with the family based differences and to emphasize the importance of inner qualities and moral values. Now, at Medina, the object was the removal of the distinction between the local and the outsiders by establishing a linkage based on personal traits and disposition. In that process of tying a *Muhajir* to an *Ansar*, Abu Darda was made brother of Salman, Manzar bin Amar of Abu Zar, Huzaifa Yamani of Ammar Yasir, Abu Ayyub of Musab bin Umair, Salama bin Waqsh of Zubair bin Awam, Saad bin Maaz of Abu Ubaida Jarrah, Aus bin Sabit of Usman, Itban bin Malik of Umar and Kharja bin Zaid of Abu Bakr. But the Prophet^{SA} did not choose anyone from amongst the *Ansar* as his or Ali's contractual brother. This was meant to highlight the fact that a Prophet^{SA} or one of somewhat a similar status does not have any affiliation with any particular place or territory. He is above the distinction of the local and the outsider or *Muhajir* and *Ansar*. Choosing a brother for himself, or Ali^{AS}, from amongst the *Ansar* would have been against this principle.

Covenant with Jews

Several Jewish tribes had settled at Medina long time back. Prominent among them were Bani Qurayzah, Bani Nazeer and Bani Qaynuqa. Other Jews were probably their servants or retainers. On the basis of information contained in their ancient revealed books the Jews used to prophesize the arrival of the last Prophet. But when that Prophet actually arrived the religious and temporal leaders of the Jews saw in him a threat to their power and authority. Hence, they declined to accept his prophethood. At the

same time they were certain that he would gain ascendancy and power. Therefore, in the beginning they wanted that, without compromising in respect of their faith, they should have an agreement with the Prophet[S.A.] that would maintain their political identity and also provide a legal security to their life and property.

According to Tabarsi a deputation waited upon the Prophet[S.A.] and offered to enter into a contract with him on the following terms: First, that in the event of a war, they would neither help him nor his adversaries and second, that there shall be no interference in each other's affairs. The Prophet[S.A.] agreed to it. A deed or covenant was prepared at the end of which it was added that if the Jews faltered in honouring the agreement, the Prophet[S.A.] should no longer be responsible for the security of their life and property. Copies of the document were handed over to all the three tribes. Huyee bin Akhtab, Kaab bin Asad and Mukhaireeq (the wealthiest among them) had respectively represented Bani Nazeer, Bani Qurayzah and Bani Qaynuqa in these negotiations.[38] Among Imamia historians an old and authoritative scholar, Ali bin Ibrahim bin Hashim, has given only the above mentioned terms and conditions. K.A.Hameed, however, has given the following terms of agreement in his book, *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam*:

(1) This agreement is between Muhammad[S.A.] and other tribes having business dealings with the Muslims;

(2) The Jews of the tribes of Bani Awf shall be counted with the Muslims;

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[38] *Aalamul Wara*

(3) If any external enemy attacks any of the parties to the agreement then all of them shall jointly resist the invader;

(4) All parties to the agreement shall always strive for the benefit of one another;

(5) Expenses of war shall be equally borne by all;

(6) The allies of the Jews shall have the same rights as the Jews; and

(7) The parties to the agreement shall never indulge in bloodshed within Medina.

In an article entitled 'Prophet's Politics of Agreements' published in the special *Sarware Alam Number* of the, *Dawat* a lenghty agreement has been printed under the heading, *Saheefa*. It can rightly be called as the first constitution not only in the history of Islam but also of the world. This was introduced and enforced by the Prophet[s^] immediately after he met the different tribes of Medina on his arrival. It contained the following items:

(1) This charter drawn by the Prophet of God, Muhammad[s^], shall be binding upon all the *Muhajireen* of Quraish and those people of Medina who have embraced Islam or have made common cause with them and are committed to side with them in wars;

(2) Those who are a party to this charter shall be deemed to have an identity separate from those who are not;

(3) *Muhajireen* of Quraish, by themselves, constitute one group. They shall, as usual, be responsible to pay ransom (*Dait*) for their culprits to secure their release. All this shall be done strictly according to the demands of honesty and justice;

(4) The tribes of Bani Awf, Bani Haris, Bani Saeda, Bani Jusham, Bani Najjar, Bani Amr, Bani Nabeet and Bani Aus shall be responsible for their own people. As in the past, the members of respective tribes shall secure the release of their prisoners after jointly paying their ransom. All this shall be done according to the principle of honesty and justice;

(5) If an indigent Muslim commits a crime or is imprisoned and is himself unable to pay his ransom, it will be obligatory for other Muslims to secure his release after paying the due amount so that the virtues of goodness and sympathy prevailing among the Muslims gain prominence;

(6) No Muslim shall rise against a slave freed by another Muslim;

(7) It shall be obligatory for all Muslims to openly oppose every such person who creates disorder, oppresses the people, misappropriates property by force or acts rebelliously. All the Muslims shall be unanimous in punishing such a person even if he happens to be one's nearest kin;

(8) No Muslim shall have a right to kill a Muslim in lieu of a combatant or to help a combatant against a Muslim;

(9) To take any responsibility or to give protection to some one has the same sanctity as a pledge to God. If a Muslim gives protection to anybody then all the Muslims shall be bound by it even if one giving protection is of a low status. This is so because all the Muslims are brothers *inter se*;

(10) It is obligatory upon the Muslims to help and treat as equals those Jews who have entered into agreement with

us. No injustice should be done to them nor any help rendered to their enemies;

(11) All Muslims shall be equally involved in respect of a peace treaty. No Muslim shall come to terms with the enemy in a holy war ignoring other Muslims, unless it is equally beneficial to all the Muslims;

(12) All the parties siding with Muslims in a war shall be given rest by turns;

(13) It shall be obligatory upon all the Muslims to support the families of their brethren killed in a holy war;

(14) All the God-fearing and pious Muslims are undoubtedly on a path which is the best of all;

(15) No non-Muslim who is a party to this agreement shall provide protection to the life and property of any (non-Muslim) Quraish nor shall render any help to a non-Muslim against a Muslim;

(16) If any person intentionally kills a Muslim and there is proof of it against him, then revenge shall be taken from him unless the heirs of the deceased agree to take the blood money instead of his life. This rule shall be binding upon all the Muslims without any exception. Anything over and above this shall not be acceptable;

(17) It will not be proper for any Muslim, who has bound himself by the terms of this charter and has faith in God and the Day of Judgment to introduce any innovation in it or to enter into any sort of agreement with some one who has no regard for this covenant. He who acts otherwise shall invite God's curse and wrath upon himself on the day of judgement and no plea or repentance shall be of any avail to him;

(18) All the disputes between those who are a party to this covenant shall be referred to God and his Prophet[ss];

(19) It shall be obligatory for the Jews to render financial assistance to the Muslims when they are at war with an enemy;

(20) The Jews of the tribes of Bani Awf, Bani Najjar, Bani Al-Haris, Bani Saada, Bani Jusham, Bani Al Doos, Bani Salba, Bani Jafna and Bani Al Shaitaba who have accepted this covenant and are allies of the Muslims shall continue to follow their own faith while the Muslims shall follow theirs. Barring religious matters, Muslims and Jews together shall be deemed to constitute one single group. Anyone of them committing any atrocity, breach of faith or any other crime shall be liable to punishment for it;

(21) The sub-tribes of the above-mentioned tribes of the Jews shall have the same rights as those tribes;

(22) Those who are a party to this charter shall not undertake any military action without Muhammad's[ss] permission;

(23) There shall be no hindrance in respect of a retaliatory action against an injury or a stroke. Anyone guilty of the breach of contract shall be liable to be punished for it while one who faithfully abides by it shall receive God's help;

(24) If a third power is at war against the Muslims and the Jews joining this charter, both of them shall have to jointly fight against it. They shall help each other, seek the well being of each other and be mutually faithful. The Jews and the Muslims shall separately bear their expenses of war;

(25) The Jews shall continue to bear those expenses along with the Muslims only when they fight together;

(26) The plain of Yesrib, which is surrounded by mountains, shall be a sacred place for all who accept this charter;

(27) Any one taking shelter under anybody shall be entitled to receive the same treatment which is meted out to the person sheltering him. No harm shall be caused to such a refugee. He also shall be bound by this charter and shall not be permitted to commit its breach;

(28) No person shall be granted asylum at a particular place without the permission of the inhabitants of that place;

(29) If there is any incident or conflict among the parties to the charter that which is likely to cause breach of peace, it shall be referred to God and His Prophet[5^]. God shall be with him who abides by the terms of the charter to the maximum;

(30) Nobody shall give shelter to the Quraish of Mecca or to their allies;

(31) The Jews and the Muslims shall jointly defend Yesrib (Medina) in the event of an attack;

(32) If a Muslim enters into an agreement with a Jew, other Muslims shall also deal with him likewise. However, no party shall be liable to cooperate with the other party in a religious war of its own;

(33) In the event of an attack upon Yesrib each party shall defend that portion of the town which lies in front of its habitations;

(34) Associates of the tribe of Aus shall have the same rights which are available to others under this charter provided that they are also loyal to it;

(35) Any party to this charter going out of Medina for war purposes shall be entitled to security and protection. Likewise, those remaining at Medina shall also have the same. No injustice shall be done to anybody nor breach of faith shall be permitted. God and His Prophet[S.A.] shall take care of him who sincerely respects the terms of this charter and abides by them. [39]

The original of this covenant has not yet been available to me hence the text printed in the *Dawat* has been followed. There does appear to be some deficiency in the Urdu translation which can be removed only after a collation with the original Arabic text.

Legislation of AZAN and AQAMAT [40]

There were only a few Muslims at Mecca who joined the Prophet[S.A.] in prayer services held in congregation. When the number of Muslims multiplied at Medina it was felt necessary that there should be some method to inform the people at the prescribed timings of the service that time to offer prayer had arrived and again to inform them that service of prayer was about to commence. [41] *Azan* serves the

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[39] *Dawat*, Delhi, Special Number *Sarware Aalam*-Rabiul Awwal 1381 A.H. p.121-126

[40] *Azan*,call to offer prayer; *Aqamat*, call to stand for prayer. With slight variations the formula of *Azan* and *Aqamat* aim at glorification of God, testifying to His Oneness and Messengership of God, and emphasizing the importance of *Namaz* and its virtues.-*Tr.*

[41] There are five daily services of worship (*Namaz*) which resemble one another in form but not in length. The first daily prayer at dawn (*Fajr*) has only two units or *rakat*. The second, held at noon (*Zuhar*) and the

above noted first purpose, and *Aqamat*, the second one. In *Seerate Halabiya* and other texts it is laid down that the legislation pertaining to *Azan* and *Aqamat* was made in the first year of *Hijrat*.

We do not subscribe to the view that such an important religious injunction was issued by the Prophet[s.a.] on the basis of any dream or suggestion by any companion. It is undoubtedly related to God's decree, as Mohsin Amin Aamli states:

> In *Tabaqat* (Ibne Saad) and *Seerat* (Ibne Hisham) it is mentioned that *Azan* and *Aqamat* were invoked on the basis of a dream seen by some *Ansar*. This is incorrect and does not deserve any consideration since the Prophet[s.a.] did not issue religious injunctions on the basis of dreams. He was always guided by God's revelations. The story of dreams has been strongly refuted in *Seerate*

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third one, held late in the afternoon (*Asr*) are of four rakats each. The fourth service immediately after sunset (*Maghrib*) has three rakats and the fifth one of late evening (*Isha*) is of four rakats. For the prayer service (*Namaz*) one should have a clean dress, a clean place, and know the direction of *Qibla* (Kaaba in Mecca). Ablutions (*Wuzu*), washing of hands, mouth, nostrils, face and feet by water in the prescribed manner is a prerequisite for every service. If water is not available or its use is likely to cause harm, ablution by dust (*Tayammum*) is to be done in the specified mode. One *rakat* or unit of the service comprises standing (*Qayam*), bowing down (*Ruku*) twice prostrating (*Sajdah*) and sitting (*Quud*), all in the prescribed style, uttering specified formula and Quranic extracts. For a detailed discussion of the inter-sectarian controversy regarding the institution of *Azan* see *Tehqiq-e-Azan* by the author of this book, the late Syed-ul-Ulema Maulana Syed Ali Naqi. - *Tr.*

Halabiya upon the authority of Muhammad bin Hanafia.[42]

Four units (*rakats*) of *Namaz*

Tabari says that since the commencement of Prophethood (*Besat*) every service of prayer comprised two units (*rakats*). One month after *Hijrat*, in Rabi-ul-Sani, two units each were added to the services of *Zuhar*, *Asr* and *Isha* in the condition of *Hazar*, that is when one is at his place of residence.[43] Tabari was not just a historian. He is regarded by Sunnites as an *Imam* (leader, guide) in Islamic jurisprudence who knew the traditions by heart. His explicit statement that the addition of two units was restricted to the condition of *Hazar* leaves no room even for suggesting that this addition was optional for prayer offered in the course of a journey.

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[42] *Ayanul Shia* Vol.2 p.123
[43] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt), Vol. 2, p.257

7

BATTLE OF BADR

The Beginning of Holy Wars (*Jehad*) -Its Reason

If the polytheists of Mecca had a purely personal animosity with the Prophet[ﷺ], they should have felt greatly relieved by the departure of their enemy. But the object of their hostility was that mission which the Prophet[ﷺ] was trying to carry out. To frustrate it they had decided to prevent his migration by killing him. Their plan had failed through divine contrivance and the Prophet[ﷺ] safely reached Medina.

It was a great defeat for them against the Prophet[ﷺ]. They were seeing that the Prophet[ﷺ] had reached a place from where he could carry out his mission without let or hindrance. In the beginning they were under the impression that the hostility between the tribes of Aus and Khazraj might create problem for him as the support of one would make the other his enemy. But they were disappointed when they learnt that the Prophet[ﷺ] had brought them to terms and both, having become his *Ansar*, now constituted a single nation. The other centre of their hope were the Jews of Medina who, possessing wealth and power, could make a formidable opposition against the Prophet[ﷺ]. That hope was also belied by the pact made with them by the Prophet[ﷺ]. Still they were not prepared to tolerate Islam's progress quietly and were looking for some means of creating disturbance at Medina. At this stage they received an encouraging piece of information that among the Muslims

of Medina there was a group of those hypocrites (*Munafiqeen*) who secretly were still adherents of their old creed and had joined the ranks of Muslims as a matter of policy. Their leader was Abdullah bin Ubayy. The Quraish of Mecca wrote to him to manipulate Muhammad's[SA] eviction from Medina. Not content with this, they also sent to the residents of Medina the following message:

> O residents of Medina, you have given shelter to a man of our tribe, Muhammad[SA]. We inform you that you can have safety only if you turn him out. Alternatively, you fight with him, arrest him and hand him over to us. If you do not abide by our wish then note that we have taken a vow to attack you, capture your women and kill your young ones.

After receiving that letter Abdullah and his companions sat together to plan an attack upon the Prophet[SA]. The latter, somehow, learnt about it and personally went to the place where the meeting was being held. Addressing those present, the Prophet[SA] said:

> The Quraish have deceived you. If you propose to indulge in bloodshed upon this soil you will suffer a lot and will have to kill your brethren who are bound to help us. It is your duty to assist us as your people have covenanted with us to defend this city when attacked.

The above plan was thus frustrated due to the timely divulgence of the secret and the Prophet's[SA] plain speaking.[1]

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[1] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e- Alam* Vol.1 p.72

These preliminary manoeuverings by the infidels of Mecca clearly indicate from which side the offence was to be expected if the fighting broke out.

It is also a noteworthy fact that the Prophet[S.A.] had no bloody confrontation with any body for full one-year after his arrival at Medina. If he had any intention of going to war with any party he ought to have spent that period in preparing for it. On the contrary, much constructive work was done during this period. Three mosques, one at Quba, the other known as Bani Salim mosque and the third one called Nabawi Mosque, were constructed during the course of this year. Moreover, there was the rehabilitation of immigrants, construction of houses for them and for Prophet's[S.A.] family, and codification of laws of religion and social conduct. How much attention was paid to the requirements of war was to become evident in the following year at the time of the first Islamic war when the Muslims had neither the arms to fight with nor the horses to ride on. It is thus obvious that after having migrated to Medina the Prophet[S.A.] had no plan to fight with the Meccans. Anyone having no equipment of war would never be disposed to invite war. Only if war was to be thrust upon him he, along with his companions, would no doubt come out in the field fully prepared to face death.

Quranic explications and their historic importance

Apparently the Quran[2] is a religious book of Muslims and, as such, those who are not Muslims cannot be forced to

[2] Quran literally means reading or recitation. While dictating to his disciples, the Prophet [S.A.] assured them that it was the divine revelation that had come to him. He did not dictate the whole at one stretch, the revelations came to him in fragments, from time to time, extending over

follow its teachings and injunctions. This is, however, true only with respect to its religious contents like the articles of belief, intimations about the unknown and other matters of faith. But, apart from it the Quran has its historical value also because it was presented by a man of the stature of the Prophet[s.a.] of Islam. This fact is above any sort of dispute based on differences of creed or community. This unanimity is the special distinction of Quran. A non-Muslim may not accept the accounts of earlier prophets contained in the Quran on the ground that these were not physically witnessed by the Prophet[s.a.]. Similarly he may not believe the facts relating to the day of judgement and other events which are yet to happen. But there is no reason for him to dispute the events and affairs relating to the Prophet[s.a.] himself, which being mentioned in the Quran, have a historical importance for all. It is all the more so because the Prophet[s.a.] was a man whose distinctive virtue in the eyes of even the non-believers was truthfulness and reliability. Had he uttered anything contrary to the facts in respect of the events of his time the entire body of non-believers would have raised a hue and cry and accused him of misstating the facts.

Let us now see how the Quran describes the background of the commencement of the war to decide whether the wars fought by the Prophet[s.a.] were aggressive in nature or defensive. The verses of the Quran regarding holy war (*Jehad*), apparently the earliest ones of this kind, are:

> To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight), because they are wronged; —

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a period of twenty three years, which encompasses the whole missionary life of Muhammad[s.a.]. - *Tr.*

> and verily, God is Most Powerful for their aid;— (they are) those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right,— (for no cause) except that they say, "Our Lord is God". Did not God check one set of people by means of another, there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques, in which the name of God is commemorated in abundant measure. God will certainly aid those who aid His cause;— for verily God is full of Strength, exalted in Might, (able to enforce His Will).[3]

Notable facts about these verses are:

They begin with the word 'permission' meaning thereby that previously fighting was prohibited and now permission about *Jehad* was being given. It is this point which supports the view that it was the first verse about *Jehad.* At yet another place in the Quran it is said:

> Hast thou not turned thy vision to those who were told to hold back their hands (from fight) but establish regular prayers and spend in regular charity? When (at length) the order for fighting was issued to them, behold! A section of them feared men as — or even more than — they should have feared God: they said: "Our Lord! Why hast Thou ordered us to fight? Wouldst Thou not grant us respite to our (natural) term, near (enough)?[4]

One fact which emerges from this is that when God had restrained Muslims from fighting and wanted them to

[3] Quran 22:39-40
[4] Quran 4:77

perform only obligatory duties, like prayer and payment of purification dues, then there was a group of Muslims which was not satisfied with that policy of forbearance and tolerance and was insisting for permission to fight. This is clear from the second sentence which states that formerly a particular group was pressing for permission to fight, but when it was decreed they began to show infirmness of purpose.

The background of permission for *Jehad* has been expressed by the word *yuqatalun* (who were being fought against). It means that the Muslims did not take initiative in fighting. The infidels were attacking them and hence they were allowed to fight back in self-defence.

In view of the fact that the war was initiated by the non-believers and also considering the course of events since the beginning of prophethood, the words, 'because they were wronged', were used to indicate that they were being wronged all along yet permission to fight was not accorded to them till actual fighting was thrust upon them.

The phrase: "Verily, God is most powerful for their aid" beautifully indicates that though at that stage the Muslims did not possess material strength to fight with their opponents yet, by depending solely upon God, they could confidently come out to face them.

The compactness of the word "wronged" has been indirectly elaborated through a description of its ultimate result by the phrase "(They are) those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right" and thus compelled to live in exile as wandering destitutes.

In the end the rationale for permission to fight has been elucidated by stating that if righteous people always keep

quiet and are never permitted to repel the oppressors, the latter shall be unduly encouraged and not only the Islamic places of worship, namely mosques, but those of other religions shall also be endangered. The Quran has thus explained the philosophy of *Jehad* to the entire world. If it was intended for the Muslims alone then reference to 'mosques' was enough; there was no need to refer to hermitages, churches and synagogues also.

While explaining the philosophy of *Jehad* the word used by the Quran is *difa* (defence). It means that *Jehad* is a defensive war, not aggressive. It is a triumph of that fourteen hundred years old Islamic principle that the civilized nations are today naming their department of war as department of 'defence' and their minister of war as defence minister.

Misconceptions about Jehad

The first war which the Prophet[5A] of Islam had with Meccans was fought at Badr. In the background of this war a story has unfortunately crept into the books written by some of the Muslims themselves to the effect that before the Battle of Badr the Muslims had started attacking trade caravans of the infidels going from Mecca to Syria and occasionally looted their goods. Just before this battle, Abu Sufyan, who had gone to Syria along with a trade caravan, had learnt that the Muslims were planning to attack and loot them during their return journey. He conveyed that information to his men at Mecca and an army was sent from Mecca under the command of Abu Jahl[5] to guard and

[5] His real name was Amr and he was surnamed for his sagacity, Abul Hakim (father of wisdom). Owing to his fanaticism and bigotry, which prevented his perceiving any good in the new teachings, Muhammad [5A] called him Abu Jahl (father of ignorance). -*Tr.*

defend the caravan of Abu Sufyan. Medina lies on the pathway connecting Mecca and Syria. When the Prophet[S.A.] learnt about it he came out along with his men to attack the caravan. The caravan, however, had taken some other route and the Prophet's[S.A.] men came face to face with Abu Jahl's army. In this way the battle of Badr took place. This account of the causes of the war, if given credence, makes the Prophet[S.A.] responsible for waging the war. But the Quranic verses quoted earlier belie this story. Had Prophet[S.A.] himself initiated the war the idolaters and polytheist ought to have shouted in unison — "How contrary to the fact all this! You start the war by attacking us and plundering our caravan and still assert that you are being fought against."

The fact that the veracity of Quranic statement was not questioned proves that the reality was as mentioned in the holy book. The verses of Quran (22:39,22:40,4:77), as already said, have not just a doctrinal aspect which every Muslim has to take note of and act accordingly. It has a historical significance as well which even the non-muslim scholars have to accept. One must keep in mind that the person through whom these verses were communicated had 'truthfulness' as his special mark of distinction. When he had first presented his message to the people he had referred to this fact and the leading adversaries of his had admitted that they always heard only truth from him; never any falsehood. It was equally impossible for a person with such a reputation to say, through these verses, something which was factually untrue and for his opponents to keep quiet on hearing it.

Beside this when one looks at the war equipments of the muslims at the time of the battle of Badr and finds that there were neither swords nor horses then it becomes quite clear

that no sane person with that kind of equipment could himself initiate the war. Undoubtedly, the introduction of the above story in Islamic history as a cause of the war of Badr is an interpretation similar to that made by some Muslim writers in respect of the tragedy of Karbala that Imam Husain[a.s.] had intercepted and appropriated the revenue from Yemen that was being taken on camel backs to Yazid at Damascus. In that way responsibility for aggression against Yazid was laid upon Husain[a.s.]. Concoction of the story against the grandfather to throw upon him the responsibility for the battle of Badr and of the other one against the grandson to present him as an aggressor are, in our opinion, the doings of one and the same family and its sympathisers. Their aim in doing so was to defend the role of the wrongdoers by tarnishing the characters of the virtuous persons. The Prophet's[s.a.] loud and clear presentation of the proclamatory words of the Quran — "To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight), because they are wronged"— evoked no note of protest from his enemies. Their silence gives a lie to the first story. Similarly, the falsehood of the second concoction is revealed by the conduct of Husain's[a.s.] opponents at Karbala when he addressed them thus:

> Tell me, have I taken your property the restitution of which you want from me? Or, have I killed any one for which vengeance is being taken?

Here, again, there was nothing but absolute silence.

Clashes preceding Badr

The first name which generally strikes one's mind in connection with the Prophet's[s.a.] holy wars is that of Badr but history refers to a few earlier skirmishes also. Wars

fought by the Muslims were of two kind, *Ghazwa* and *Sariya*. *Ghazwa* was the war wherein the Prophet[saw] had himself participated whereas in a *Sariya* someone else was deputed to command. Tabarsi writes that there were twenty-six *Ghazwat* and thirty-six *Saraya*.[6] Mohsin Amin Aamli says that the number of *Ghazwat* given in *Seerate Halabiya* is twenty-seven but, the actual *Ghazwat* listed by him total twenty-eight. Badr is fourth in series, coming after Bawat, Ushaira and Safwan.[7]

Three or four *Saraya* are also mentioned in between these *Ghazwat*. Thus Badr was seventh amongst war operations. Historians having a superficial approach describe the early skirmishes in a manner, which makes one feel that on each occasion the provocation came from Prophet's[saw] side. Tabari refers to one such historian:

> Waqidi has, on his own, stated that in the same year (first year) in Ramzan, that is, seven months after *Hijrat*, the Prophet[saw] prepared a white flag for Hamza bin Abdul Muttalib so that along with thirty persons he may proceed and intercept the trade caravans of Quraish. In the month of Shawwal of the same year, that is, eight months after *Hijrat*, he prepared another white flag for Ubaida bin Haris bin Abd Munaf and ordered him to go towards the valley of Raabigh. Again, in the same year, in the month of Ziqaad, he prepared a white flag for Saad bin Waqas' expedition towards Kharrar. The standard was given to Miqdad bin Amr.

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[6] *Aalamul Wara*: *Ghazwat* is plural of *Ghazwa* and *Saraya* of *Sariya*. - *Tr.*

[7] *Ayanul Shia* Vol.2 p.150

Ibne Ishaq disagrees with Waqidi in respect of the skirmishes of the first year of *Hijrat*. According to him the Prophet[s.a.] made no war-like movements till the end of the first year of *Hijrat*. In the month of Safar of the second year, he did come out for a battle. It was *Ghazwa-e-Waddan* or Abwa. The opponents, that is, the people of the tribe of Banu Zamra, however, surrendered and no fighting took place. A month later, that is, in Rabiul Awwal, Ubaida bin Haris was sent on another expedition with sixty or eighty horsemen, all of whom were from among the *Muhajireen* and none from the *Ansar*. They faced a large party of Quraish polytheists under the command of Akrama bin Abu Jahl but actual fighting did not take place. However, Saad, son of Abi Waqas did release an arrow and it was the first arrow shot by any Muslim. Thereafter Hamza bin Abdul Muttalib was sent towards Saiful Bahr along with thirty men all of whom, once again, were *Muhajireen*. Abu Jahl was coming from the other side with three hundred horsemen. On this occasion Majdi bin Amr, chief of the tribe of Bani Juheena, who was neutral, intervened and no fighting took place. Then, in the month of Rabiul Sani, the Prophet[s.a.] himself went after the Quraish upto Bawat in the vicinity of Rizvi mountain and, finding no trace of them, he returned to Medina. In Jamadul Awwal again he went out to fight the Quraish, reached Ushaira, which is in the centre of Yanbo, stayed there for a few days after Jamadul Sani and thereafter came back to Medina. After this hardly ten days had passed that Kurz bin Jabir Fahri

attacked and took away some cattle grazing outside Medina. When the Prophet[sa] learnt of it he went in pursuit of Kurz but he had already slipped away. This expedition is known as *Ghazwa Badrul Ula* (First battle of Badr). Thereafter, the Prophet[sa] spent the months of Jamadul Sani and Rajab quietly at Medina.[8]

In the meantime, on the last day of Rajab some Muslims under the leadership of Abdullah bin Ḥajash attacked a caravan of Quraish wherein Amr bin Hazrami and a few other Quraish were killed and their belongings were taken possession of by the Muslims. The Prophet[sa], however, did not approve of this action. The Quraish, on the other hand, started propagating that the Prophet[sa] was not observing the sanctity of the sacred months. Thereafter, Abu Sufyan's large trade caravan went to Syria. The Prophet[sa] and his companions intended to attack it. Abu Sufyan conveyed that information to Mecca. To protect this caravan an army was sent from Mecca, which had a confrontation with the Muslims. That very fight is known as the Battle of Badr.

The name of Amr bin Hazrami repeatedly appears in connection with this battle. Firstly, it is said that when Abu Sufyan's messenger reached Mecca the Meccans said whether the blood of the members of their caravan was to be shed in the manner in which Amr bin Hazrami's was? And again, when the news arrived that Abu Sufyan's caravan had safely reached Mecca, some peace-

[8] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.259-261

lovers made a move that the Meccan army should go back. It was also suggested to Hakeem bin Hazam that he should forego the blood of his ally, Amr bin Hazrami, and return to Mecca. He agreed to do so but Abu Jahl was adamant and refused to turn back.[9]

The early historians have described the beginning of the holy war (*Jehad*) in Islam in this manner. We may not feel astonished at this erratic account of these historians because in those days events were not assessed and commented upon from the point of view of reason or logic. But what really shocks us is the fact that the present day writers too, who profess to follow the historical approach of Ibne Khaldun, present the Prophet's[s^] initial stand in a wrong manner ignoring those rational aspects which definitely belie their account. To cite one example, Abdul Bari in his article, 'War scheme of the Prophet[s^]', writes:

> On arrival at Medina the job of first priority for the Prophet[s^] was planning for self-defence. For that purpose he had, first, to get the relations between the Muslims and the Jews properly defined and regulated. The next was to strengthen his hold upon the trade highway between Yemen and Syria so that the Quraish and other tribes, who had vested interest in that route, were compelled to review their hostile and obstructionist policies towards Islam and its followers. The Prophet[s^] took two steps in this respect. In the first place, he started negotiations for an agreement of friendship or neutrality with the tribes living by the side of the highway between Medina and the Red Sea.

[9] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.278

> Secondly, in order to intimidate the caravans of Quraish, he started sending regularly small bands of warriors towards that highway. The purpose of these excursions was just to show to Quraish which way the wind was blowing. That is why there was neither any bloodshed nor any plundering of the caravans. No resident of Medina was included in those invading parties. They comprised only Meccan *Muhajireen* so that the tussle remained confined to the families of the Quraish only and no conflagration resulted from the involvement of other tribes. [10]

In spite of all prevarication and specious justifications the plain fact that emerges from the above account is that it was the Prophet[S.A] who used to organize raids upon the trade caravans of Meccans. Even if there was, according to the writer, no bloodshed in those raids, the same being the cause of the later serious confrontations, the responsibility for the blood that flowed in them lies upon the Prophet[S.A].

In our view, if seen in a rational way, that argument remains unshakably valid for rejecting the above presentation of events which refers to the fact that at the time of the first serious engagement, the Battle of Badr, the Prophet[S.A] had neither swords nor horses with him. One who had no war equipment to fight with could not possibly think of attacking a fully equipped martial race. The pre-Badr skirmishes in our opinion are not such as to be called invasions or raids from the side of the Prophet[S.A]. The fact is that small bands of Meccans had started coming right upto the periphery of Medina to show off their might. Kurz bin Jabir Fahri was the leader of one such raiding party, which

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[10] *Dawat.* Delhi.*Seerate Tayyaba* , 16th Sept.1959

took away some cattles of Medinites that were grazing outside the town. Others also made similar raids. On learning about them either the Prophet[saw] himself used to go out with a few persons or he would depute some one else. Generally the raiders were not found as they used to withdraw after some looting and plundering. That stage was rarely reached where there could be any sort of fighting. Among the few actual confrontations was the one in which Amr bin Hazarmi and some of his companions were killed. Eventually, when a large army of Meccans came to attack Medina, the bloody encounter of Badr took place. That is why the Quran declared "To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight), because they are wronged." Had the provocation for war come from the side of the Muslims the words ought to have been " who are fighting" and not "against whom war is made". This clear assertion by the Quran is a definite proof of the fact that the Muslims were in no way responsible for initiating the war.

The Battle

'Badr' was a well named after its owner, Badr, of the tribe of Bani Ghifar.[11] This battle, having been fought in the vicinity of that well, goes by its name. It took place on 17th or 19th day of Ramzan, nineteen months after *Hijrat*,[12] on a Friday.[13] Being engaged in the war, the Prophet[saw] could not perform the rites of *Etikaf*.[14] In the next year he sat in *Etikaf*

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[11] *Aalamul Wara*

[12] *Ayanul Shia* Vol.2 p.152

[13] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.1 p.153

[14] Sitting in seclusion during the last ten days of the fasting month of Ramzan.-*Tr.*

for twenty days, ten days in lieu of this year's ommision and ten for that year itself.[15]

The military equipment of Muslims in this battle, as given by Shah Abdul Haq, comprised just three horses, seventy camels, six coats of mail (*Zirah*) and eight swords. Two to three warriors in rotation shared each camel. Here again Ali[A.S] had the distinction of sharing Prophet's[S.A] camel.

Whenever it was the turn of the Prophet[S.A] to be on foot Ali[A.S] would request him to continue to ride, as he would prefer to walk by his side. But the Prophet[S.A] would decline the offer, saying, "Neither you people are stronger than I nor I am indifferent in respect of divine rewards and favours."[16] Some writers say that there were only seven camels and two horses in the Muslim army.[17]

Cause of the Battle

A careful scrutiny of the details would reveal that the responsibility for the battle of Badr lies entirely upon two persons, Abu Sufyan and Abu Jahl. Prior to it the Meccans used to raid the outskirts of Medina in small groups and indulged in looting and plundering. Residents of Mecca, in general, were not prepared to involve themselves in any large-scale attack of the nature of a war. But now there was a new factor. Abu Sufyan's large trade caravan contained the merchandise of most of the wealthy people of Mecca. He, in order to instigate the Meccans to fight against the Prophet[S.A], sent a message to Abu Jahl that their caravan was in danger as Muslims of Medina intended to plunder it. Abu Jahl spread that alarming news throughout Mecca.

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[15] *Fiqahul Raza*, p.21
[16] *Madarijun Nubuwwa*
[17] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e- Alam* Vol.1 p.79

K.A.Hameed, probably to absolve Abu Sufyan of the blame, has laid the entire responsibility upon Abu Jahl. He says:

> To enrage the people, Abu Jahl announced at Mecca that the Muslims were determined to loot Meccans' trade caravan while returning from Syria. Those whose goods were in the caravan were furious and decided to attack the Muslims. One thousand soldiers, seven hundred camels and three hundred horses were got ready. Though the caravan for the protection of which the people were instigated to fight had safely reached its destination, yet Abu Jahl, who was the commander of the force, cleverly suppressed that information from the army.[18]

Abdul Bari, who has erred in understanding the nature of the skirmishes preceding the Battle of Badr and has placed the responsibility for the provocative show of strength on the Prophet[sa] and the muslims has, however, shown a preference for truth in respect of this battle. He writes:

> Though there was no attack on the caravan when it passed by Medina while on its way to Syria yet, on its return journey, Abu Sufyan realized that they had goods worth fifty thousand of gold mohars with only thirty or forty guards to protect it. Accordingly, acting upon his own surmise he rushed a camel-rider, named Zamzam, on the second day of Shaban to inform the Meccans that the Muslims were planning to attack

[18] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e- Alam* Vol.1 p.72-73

the caravan and they must come to its rescue. The Quraish were already full of anger. The above rumour acted as a spark to the gunpowder.

The Quranic *Sura, Al Anfal* , clearly indicates that the Muslims had not come out to waylay the caravan. On the other hand they were informed that the Meccan army was arriving to raid Medina. This information had created panic and Muslims were afraid of facing the invaders. There were, of course, some weak-minded among them who wished to God that the news about the army be wrong and the trade caravan might be their sole target so that they could get all its goods. All this is clear from the following verses:

> Just as thy Lord ordered thee out of thy house in truth, even though a party among the Believers disliked it, disputing with thee concerning the truth after it was made manifest, as if they were being driven to death and they (actually) saw it; Behold! God promised you one of the two (enemy) parties, that it should be yours: ye wished that the one unarmed should be yours, but God willed to justify the Truth according to His words, and to cut off the roots of the Unbelievers;— that He might justify Truth and prove Falsehood false, distasteful though it be to those in guilt.[19]

In this verse the following points need special consideration:

(1) If the Muslims were leaving with the intention of plundering the trade caravan then why was there fear, uneasiness, evasiveness and a feeling of being led to death?

[19] Quran 8:5-8

Their fear and apprehensions indicate their awareness of the numerical strength, the quality of the armaments and other preparations of the army of the infidels as also of their own lack of equipment and number. It was, perhaps, this disparity that was the subject of the discussion that took place between them and the Prophet ﷺ, as referred to in the following words: "disputing with thee concerning the truth after it was made manifest." This truth was God's command which, after being known, can not be disputed or questioned by any Muslim.

(2) God had informed that they would have to face one of the two parties. It shows that the caravan was coming from one side and the army, from the other. The movement of the army was not related to any belligerent intention or action of the Muslims. The Muslims were directed to move only when it was known that the Meccan army was approaching Medina.

(3) The words: "ye wished that the one unarmed should be yours." Here, the thinking of those greedy Muslims is disclosed who were harbouring the hope that if the caravan became their target they could get a lot of booty. This lust for wealth, which existed in a section of the Muslims since the very beginning, has been pointed out in a condemnatory manner. This shows that attacking and plundering of trade caravans was never allowed or encouraged by God or His Prophet. However, in spite of God's denunciation the tendency of plundering continued to persist in a large section of the community. It will be noticed that in the next war, the war of Uhad (Infra), this very tendency became the cause of the disaster after which a complete defeat had become a certainty. About the infidels of Mecca who had come to Badr for fighting, the Quran says:

> And be not like those who started from their homes insolently and to be seen of men, and to hinder (men) from the path of God; for God compasseth round about all that they do.[20]

If the Quraish had come out to defend their trade caravan then God would not have mentioned their arrogance and boastful showing off to impress and intimidate others (i.e. Muslims). These words indicate that they had come to attack Medina and to show their strength and, thus, hamper the progress of Islam.

The Myth of Plunder: Its Basis

The Quranic narrations and rational assessments both have a position of certainty and definiteness. In spite of this, it is surprising that in certain Muslim, *not non-Muslim*, circles the background of the war of Badr has been described in a manner which shows that it was the Prophet[sa] himself who had set out from Medina to loot Abu Sufyan's caravan. This astonishment, however, vanishes when one looks at Tabari's account where it is clearly explained how this story was concocted and how it got a wide publicity.

Every student of history knows that, fortunately or unfortunately, the descendants of that very Abu Sufyan ruled over the Muslim Empire for 30 to 40 years who was the originator of that chain of blood-shedding wars against the Prophet[sa] whose first link was the battle of Badr. For another 70 to 80 years, a different branch of the same clan was in power. Tabari, under the heading '*Description of the event of Badrul Kubra*' has given a detailed version of that battle. Regarding the source of this account Tabari says:

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[20] Quran 8:47

Hisham bin Urwa, upon the authority of his father, Urwa, says that he (Urwa) sent a letter to Abdul Malik bin Marwan (the then Caliph) wherein, after introductory formalities, he wrote: "Your (Caliph's) letter inquiring about the departure of Abu Sufyan and others has been received by me. You have asked about the exact situation. The fact of the matter is that Abu Sufyan had started from Syria along with about seventy horsemen belonging to the different clans of Quraish all of whom traded in Syria. They were coming from there with their merchandise. That information reached the Prophet[SAW] and his companions."[21]

Any body pondering over this account can easily understand the nature of the whole affair.

Abdul Malik as Caliph was on the throne of the Islamic Empire. He did not make any inquiry from Urwa bin Zubair about Prophet's[SAW] departure (from Medina). Instead, he asked him about Abu Sufyan's departure from Syria. All this shows that he was more interested only in the history of his family. He was perhaps worried about the commonly talked about details of the battle of Badr which were stigmatizing the character of Abu Sufyan, the great leader of Bani Umayya. He picked up a reporter of his choice to describe the 'facts' in such a way that Abu Sufyan got a clean chit and the responsibility for the war was placed wholly on the Prophet[SAW] and his companions.

The present day students of Islamic history find no difficulty in understanding the real motive of Abdul Malik

[21] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.267

even though more than thirteen hundred years have passed. The contemporary reporter, Urwa, a favourite choice of the state who had not forgotten the earlier favours and was hoping for more in future, knew full well what he was expected to write. He was also aware of the dire consequences of saying something against the wishes of the government. He, therefore, writes:

> Abu Sufyan started with about seventy horsemen of the tribes of Quraish all of whom traded in Syria. They had their merchandise with them. The Prophet[SA] learnt about it. They had fought earlier also resulting in the killing of some persons. Hazrami's son, along with some of his men and some other members of the Quraish, were among those killed.

It is obvious that this writer proposes to establish that on earlier occasions also the Prophet[SA] had indulged in bloodshed. He forgets that the Quran says that the Muslims were permitted to fight because they were fought against and wronged. The Quran lays responsibility of initiating the war upon the Quraish and this writer, professing to have faith in that holy Book, is attempting to place that responsibility upon the Prophet[SA] and the Muslims. It is now for the Muslims to decide to whom to accord credence, to Quran or to what this historian is saying to please the Umayyad?

Urwa, proceeding further, writes:

> This incident (killing of Hazrami's son and other men of the Quraish) was the cause of war between the Prophet[SA] and the Quraish.It had happened prior to the departure of Abu Sufyan and his men to Syria. He and the traders of Quraish

> accompanying him, in their return journey, took another route that ran parallel to the river. When the Prophet[SA] learnt about it he called his companions and told them that they had plenty of goods with them and their strength was very small.

This is the picture of Islam's holy war of Badr which this pro-Umayyad writer has drawn. The Quran is referring with condemnation to the motive of those Muslims who were longing for an encounter with the defenceless trade caravan and this writer is pointedly saying that it was the Prophet[SA] who referred to the huge wealth and poor strength (of Abu Sufyan's party) to induce the Muslims to set out for what was an easy prey. Not content with this, this 'historian', for the sake of the Umayyad caliph, emphatically states :

> They came out with no intention but to take Abu Sufyan and his horsemen. They were convinced that they would be an easy prey and did not expect a big war.

Let us once again recall the situation as mentioned in the Quran. There the muslims are described as arguing with the Prophet[SA] and showing their aversion for marching forward as if they were being led to death that was quite visible to them.

In the face of this reluctance of the Muslims the enthusiasm falsely attributed to them by Urwa was obviously a fabrication done with the sole aim of satisfying the sentiments and wishes of his ruler.

Urwa further states:

> Abu Sufyan received information that the Prophet[SA] and his men proposed to intercept them.

> He sent a man to the Quraish of Mecca to tell them to take care of their trade goods as Muhammad[SA] and his men intended to waylay their caravan. When the Quraish got that information they mustered an army and set out as in Abu Sufyan's caravan. there was one representative of each of their respective families.

According to the Quran the caravan was coming from one side and the army from the other, and the Muslims, while being readied to move out, were told they shall encounter one of them. This has created a situation where one has to choose between one's faith in Quran and loyalty to the Umayyads. The demand of that loyalty is that Urwa's version be accepted, whereas the faith compels us to reject it and go by the Quranic account. It is sad to note that most of the historians of the majority community of Islam show an inclination towards the first version and tend to ignore or suppress the other one.

It may again be recalled that God had informed the Muslims that they would face one of the two parties. Those adopting the religious point of view would say that the medium of that information was a revelation from God to the Prophet[SA]. Since the Quran says, "it was promised to the Muslim", it has to be accepted that the Prophet[SA] had conveyed that promise to his followers after its revelation to him. Some having a preference for physical means of communication may say that through divine arrangement a group of informers had brought the news of the caravan and the army coming from different directions. Whatever that source of information might be the Quran is specific that the information had been received before the Muslims had set out. Still Urwa, eager to favour the Umayyads, emphasises:

"The Prophet^{SA} or his companions had not learnt till they had reached Badr that an army of Quraish had also started."[22]

This historian (Urwa) had to buttress his version from all sides. It struck to him that Badr lies in between Mecca and Medina. That topographical situation would suggest that the Prophet^{SA} had most probably proceeded to intercept the army coming from the side of Mecca. To stall such an obvious inference, he says:

> Badr could lie in the way of the caravan of Quraish if for going to or returning from Syria it followed the route that ran along the coast. But Abu Sufyan, having learnt about Prophet's^{SA} movements, went to Mecca by the river bank route, bypassing Badr. The Prophet^{SA} stayed for the night near Badr and sent Zubair bin Awam and a few others to the well of Badr."

He further says:

> These people (Muslims) had no information that the army of the Quraish was coming for them. The Prophet^{SA} started offering prayers. In the meantime some water-bearers of the Quraish came to draw water from the well of Badr. An Abyssinian slave was also among them. Zubair and his men caught hold of him while his other companions ran away. They brought the arrested slave where the Prophet^{SA} had stayed at night. Assuming him to be from Abu Sufyan's caravan they started questioning him about it. He, on his part, told them about the army of Quraish and its

[22] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.268.

commanders. Whatever he was telling was a fact but they would not believe him because his account was against their expectations. They were deeply obsessed by the idea of Abu Sufyan's caravan and its wealth. The Prophet[SAW], though busy in prayers, was noticing the treatment being meted out to the slave. The situation was like this. When he talked about the arrival of the Quraish and the condition of their army, they beat him, saying that he was a liar and concealing the information about Abu Sufyan and his companions. After severe beating he would be forced to say that they were right and that Abu Sufyan's caravan was about to arrive. They would then spare him. This continued for some time till the Prophet[SAW] having said his prayers told them, "By God, when he (the slave) speaks out truth you beat him and when he tells a lie you spare him." They said, "He is saying that the army of Quraish has come." Whereupon the Prophet[SAW] said, "He is right. It has come to protect their caravan." The Prophet[SAW] called the slave near him and made inquiries. He told about the Quraish and expressed ignorance regarding Abu Sufyan. The Prophet[SAW] questioned about the strength of the army. He said he could not be exact but anyway they were quite large in number.

The narrator (Urwa) is quite categorical when he mentions the events just preceding this dialogue. There is an air of definiteness when he talks about the Prophet[SAW] and his followers moving out of Medina with the intention of attacking and looting Abu Sufyan's caravan. But he uses words like '*zaamu*' and '*fazaamu*' whenever he has to refer

to such events which show, no matter how faintly, the Prophet's[SAW] foresightedness and prudence.

The Arabic word '*zaamu*' means a mere conjecture, that is, an opinion held without any proof and '*fazaamu*' means 'so they believe', again suggesting a conviction whose validity is not established. Referring to Prophet's[SAW] questioning of the slave to find out the strength of the army, Urwa says:

> In order to have some idea of their strength the Prophet[SAW] asked the slave who had fed them on the day before the last. He mentioned some name. The Prophet[SAW] then asked him about the number of camels slaughtered on that occasion. He said, 'nine'. He was then asked who had feasted them on the preceding day. The slave gave out some other name. When questioned about the number of camels slaughtered, he said 'ten'.

The cautious historian keeping the temperament of the Umayyad Caliph in mind, uses the word, '*fazaamu*', and states:

> Muslims so believe (*fazaamu*) that, after hearing the slave, the Prophet[SAW] said that their number should be between nine hundred and one thousand. It ultimately transpired that they were nine hundred and fifty. Thereafter, the Prophet[SAW] went to the well. He got small pits dug out in his camp wherein water was stored. Posting of his soldiers was also done. When the Quraish army arrived they noticed that the Prophet [SAW] was already in control of the source of water.

For the rest of the account the writer never felt the need of using '*zaamu*' since it describes a pre-emptive action of the Prophet[s.a] which, from Umayyad point of view, placed the Quraish in the position of the oppressed. But the moment there is something that shows the righteousness of the Prophet[s.a], he again starts with '*fazaamu*', to make it look dubious. Accordingly, he proceeds to say:

> The Muslims believe (*fazaamu*) that the Prophet[s.a], raising his hands, prayed to God, "My Lord, the Quraish, in full strength, have come to fight Thee. My Lord, I beseech Thee for what Thou hast promised."

An author who is not prepared to report honestly the acts of the Prophet[s.a] that show his greatness and righteousness can hardly be expected to describe the feats of courage and chivalry of Ali[a.s] and other bold and venturesome Muslim warriors. He, therefore, summarily concluded the entire episode with a remark that the Prophet[s.a] threw a handful of dust towards them (the Meccans) and God defeated them.

After this there should not be any difficulty in understanding as to how and why in the books written by some Muslims such matter has been introduced in the background of the battle of Badr which makes the Prophet[s.a] responsible for provoking the war. It is to be remembered that this aspect of the matter affects Prophet's[s.a] whole life, all of his holy wars and the very concept of *Jehad* in Islam. This point is of great significance for the everyday practical life of Muslims. It suggests to them that they can reap great honour by becoming conquerors like Tamerlane or Nadir Shah and by acting ruthlessly like Chingez and Halaku. The Muslims by and large failed to understand that there are

occasions where keeping silence, showing indifference and exercising patience and forbearance assume extraordinary importance. It was this failure that exposed Islam to the stigmatizing charge of having been spread through sword. To a very great extent the Umayyads are responsible for this.[23]

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[23] But for the Ommayads (Bani Umayya), the difference between the followers of the *Ahlul Bait*, the upholders of Ali's (AS) right to the apostolic succession, and those who maintained the right of the people to elect their own spiritual as well as temporal chiefs, would never have grown into a schism; it would have ended in a compromise or coalition after the succession of Ali(AS) to the caliphate. The violence and treachery of the children of Umayya rendered this impossible. They had waded to the throne through manifold crimes and oceans of blood; it was necessary for them to impart a semblance of validity to their tenure of the office of Caliph. They claimed to have the title of *Ameerul-Mominin* by right of election — election by their own mercenaries and pagan partisans. After the sack of Medina and the destruction and dispersion of the family of Muhammad(SA) and the *Muhajireen* and Ansar, it was easy to draw precedents from the early Caliphate, and when that failed, to manufacture traditions. Nor was it difficult to appropriate a title, which might have been assumed, but was not, by those who supported the right of the universality of the people to elect their chiefs. The giants who had built up the Republic were dead or destroyed; their children were fugitives or slaves; who was to question the validity of the title so adroitly usurped. The Umayyad's policy was pursued by the dynasty, which took its place. The same fierce jealousy with which the Bani Umayya had pursued or persecuted the Bani Fatima, characterized the conduct of the Bani Abbas towards the descendents of Muhammad(SA). They had also no claim to the caliphate themselves; they made the affection of the people for the children of Fatima(AS) the means of their own elevation, and when they had attained the desired end they rewarded the Fatmides with bitter persecution. Their title was also founded on quasi-election, and naturally they hunted, like the Umayyads, all who questioned the legality of their claim, or who upheld in explicit terms the doctrine of the devolution of the Imamate by succession in the line of Muhammad(SA). Every

Further Appeasement of the Umayyads

After distorting the facts at the initial stage and thus changing the very concept of a holy war (*Jehad*) in Islam the historians and compilers of traditions had to be attentive to the sentiments of the Umayyad rulers at every step. Hence, in spite of the fact that the first three to enter the battlefield on behalf of the disbelievers and to die for an evil cause were important members of Bani Umayya (with Utbah bin Rabia, the maternal grandfather of Muawiya, as their leader) the historians of that camp have made every possible effort to minimize their culpability in waging the battle of Badr. Tabari, for example, has devoted several pages to show that Utbah had tried his best to prevent the war but Abu Jahl was adamant and the battle took place owing to his mischievous role. In order to exonerate Abu Sufyan to possible extent, it has been stated that when he reached Mecca he informed the Meccan army that he had arrived safely and it should come back. But the Meccans, in a boastful vein, replied that they shall not return till they had stayed at Badr for three days and showed their might to Medinites so that they may never dare to confront them.[24]

In my view it is not just Abu Sufyan who is being absolved of the responsibility but the entire veteran army of the Meccans. It is emphasized that the Meccans had no intention of fighting; they just wanted to browbeat the Muslims by demonstrating their strength. It was the Prophet[ﷺ] and his followers who forced them to fight through their provocative confrontation. The Muslim

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difference of opinion was strictly repressed; even the jurists of the time were punished if they ventured to express opinions, which did not find favour with the sovereigns. S.Ameer Ali - *Tr.*

[24] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.269.277-78

writers, under the influence of the Umayyad Caliphs have, by and large, tended to present such an erroneous view.

Trial of the companions and Miqdad's spirited speech

When the Prophet[s] learnt about the advancement of the army of Quraish then, keeping in view their strength and paucity of resources of his side, he collected his companions in order to assess their feelings. He apprised them of the delicacy of the situation. The earliest account of this situation, which is attributed to Ibne Ishaq, is as follows:

> Abu Bakr stood up, said something and said it very well. Thereafter, Umar bin Khattab stood up to speak. He too said something and said it very well. Then Miqdad stood up and said: "O Prophet[s], lead us to the place where God has ordained you. We are with you. By God, we shall not say what Bani Israilites said to Moses 'You go and your God and fight, we shall continue to sit here.' What we do say is that you proceed and your God and fight and we too shall fight along with you. We swear by Him who has justly conferred prophethood on you that even if you take us to a city situated in the very heart of Abyssinia we shall accompany you and shall fight along with you till you achieve your objective." Hearing this, the Prophet[s] complimented him and blessed him.

The style of this narration invites attention. The author has referred to the first two speeches vaguely without giving their contents. Keeping the sensitivities of others in mind, or perhaps owing to his regard for the concerned persons, he has made no comment on their speeches except that they spoke very well. It is also not disclosed what the

reaction of the Prophet[SAW] was. From this it can be easily inferred that what was said was not to the liking of the Prophet[SAW], or that the substance of their speeches was disheartening. Regarding Miqdad it is clearly mentioned that on hearing his chivalrous speech the Prophet[SAW] felt pleased and blessed him. This fact amply clarifies the actual situation but another account in Tabari leaves nothing in doubt. In respect of the event he quotes the words of a renowned companion of the Prophet[SAW], Abdullah bin Masood:

> I have seen that position of Miqdad which, had it been available to me, would have been more dear to me than any thing else in the world. He was a chivalrous warrior. Cheeks of the Prophet[SAW] used to get red whenever he was in anger. It was one such situation when Miqdad came to him and said, "Be of good cheer O, Prophet[SAW]. By God, we shall not say as Bani Israil said to Moses ' you go and your God, we shall sit here.' We swear by Him who has sent you with truth that we shall be in front of you, behind you, on your right and left till God grants you victory."[25]

Let us compare the above two versions. One tells us about the speekers who had preceded Miqdad. The other, the intensity of the Prophet's[SAW] anger just before Miqdad stood up for speaking. From this one can easily have an idea of the nature of the earlier speeches and their effect upon the Prophet[SAW]. The spirited words of Miqdad that "lead us where God has ordained you" indicate that the Prophet[SAW] had not called any meeting for consultation to chalk out the course of action. He had already received God's command

[25] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.274

to proceed. The companions were told to assemble so that he may gauge their intentions and inner feelings from their utterances. The consequences of all this are present in the pages of history.

Address to the *Ansar*

When people from Medina had pledged allegiance to the Prophet[ﷺ] at Aqba they had said that they shall not be responsible for his safety till he reached Medina but once he was there they shall protect him as they would protect the members of their own families. It could be inferred from this that the *Ansar* were bound to protect the Prophet[ﷺ] only when he was attacked while in Medina. Now that he was going to confront the enemy outside Medina the *Ansar* could refuse to help him on legal grounds. He, therefore, addressed the *Ansar* in particular and asked for their opinion. Saad bin Maaz sought clarification whether only people of Medina were being asked. The Prophet[ﷺ] replied in the affirmative. Saad then submitted:

> Our reply to you is that we have reposed our faith in you, have affirmed that you are the messenger of God, have testified the truth of that which you have brought and have pledged our obedience to you. You, therefore, do not need to ask us for our opinion. Proceed on any expedition you like. We swear by Him who has sent you with truth that if you take us even to the sea and jump into it, we shall be with you. None of us shall step back. We shall not be displeased if, in the near future, we fight with our common enemy along with you. We shall be steadfast in war and prove our loyalty in battlefield. We hope that God will help us to act in a manner that will please your

eyes. So, proceed with God's name, we are with you.

The Prophet[ﷺ] was immensely pleased by Saad's speech. He said, " All right proceed with God's name. I assure you the joy of victory and success."[26]

The Battle: Some Details

Several historians have specifically stated that the battle of Badr took place on Friday, the 17th of Ramzan (in the second year of *Hijrat*)[27]. Mohsin Amin says it was 17th or 19th of Ramzan, nineteen months after *Hijrat*.[28]

Strength of the Army

The Muslim army comprised a little more than three hundred fighters. There is a difference of opinion about this 'a little'. Tabari says:

> Some persons have definitely laid down that the strength of the Muslims was three hundred and thirteen. That number is generally accepted. Ibne Abbas has specified that it comprised seventy-seven *Muhajireen* and two hundred and thirty-six *Ansar*. The other view is that the total number of Muslims was three hundred and eighteen, whereas the third view is that it was three hundred and seven. Most writers have said "two or four more than three hundred and ten." [29]

As against it the strength of the infidel army, according to Urwa bin Zubair, was about one thousand. It is said that

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[26] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.274
[27] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.1 p.153
[28] *Ayanul Shia* p.152
[29] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.272-273

every effort was made that no person fit enough to fight or capable to influence others by his presence should be left at Mecca. Abu Sufyan had mischievously instigated the Meccans in such a manner that none could continue to stay at Mecca restfully. When his messenger, Zamzam bin Amr Ghifari, had arrived at Mecca, he had cut away the reins of his camel, turned its seat upside down and tore his own clothes to inflame the Meccans. He was shouting, "O, people of Quraish, Muhammad[ﷺ] and his men are plundering your goods which are with Abu Sufyan. Act at once. Pay heed to what I say. O, Help,help,help!" This perturbed all the people and they at once got ready to proceed.[30]

It was made binding for everybody either to go himself or send his substitute. In this way none from amongst the noblemen of Quraish was left in Mecca. Umayya bin Khalaf, an elderly and bulky person who could hardly walk freely owing to obesity, had no intention of leaving Mecca. While he was sitting with some others in a place of worship, Utbah bin Abi Moeet came to him, placed a burning brazier before him and said, "You keep on warming yourself as women do." Hearing this taunt, he also decided to go with them. Even those men of Prophet's[ﷺ] family, Bani Hashim, who were still staying at Mecca owing to certain compulsions, were made to accompany them. Abbas, uncle of the Prophet[ﷺ], Aqeel, brother of Ali[ع], and Nawfal, grandson of Abdul Muttalib, were with the Meccan army and were among those who were taken as prisoners of war after its defeat. Only Abu Lahab from among the Bani

[30] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.272

Hashim had not gone. He had sent Aas bin Hisham bin Mughaira in his place.[31]

It is said that they had also forcibly brought with them Abu Talib's[RA] eldest son, Talib, who disappeared during the battle. He was found neither among the prisoners nor among the dead; nor did he return to Mecca. There was no trace of him after this.[32]

Standard of the Army

Ali[AS] was ten years old when the Prophet[SA] had announced his prophethood. Thereafter followed thirteen years of suffering and hardship. The Prophet[SA] was not yet deputed for any armed conflict and, therefore, there was no occasion for Ali[AS] to test or demonstrate his swordsmanship. However, it was Prophet's[SA] discerning eye that saw Ali's latent skill and in the presence of an experienced warrior like Hamza, entrusted the banner of *Muhajireen* to Ali[AS]. Saad bin Ubbada was made the standard-bearer of the *Ansar*.[33]

The First Martyrs

The battle commenced with the discharge of a volley of arrows by the infidels. The first arrow hit Mehja, slave-attendant of Umar bin Khattab and he died. The next victim was Harisa bin Suraqa of the tribe of Bani Adi bin Najjar. He was taking water from a reservoir when an arrow hit him and he expired.[34]

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[31] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.271
[32] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.276
[33] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.276
[34] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.281

Hand to Hand Fight

When the battle started, Utbah bin Rabia, who has been portrayed by the pro-Umayyad writers as a peace-loving person, was the first to come out on behalf of the infidels along with his brother Sheba and son, Waleed. Abu Jahl had allegedly charged him with cowardice and that had fired his blood. After this, these very writers get busy in inflating his importance. They tell us that he at once started putting on his armaments. While doing so he looked for a helmet but none fitted his head, as it was very large. Thereupon, he wrapped a sheet of cloth around his head. But before he could start for the battle-field, one of the non-believers, Aswad bin Abdul Asad Makhzumi, who was known for his bad temper and rudeness, vowed that he would drink water from the reservoir made by the Muslims and also demolish it. He started for that spot. Hamza saw him and struck him with his sword and cut away his leg from the shin. Still, he obstinately continued to pursue his foolish plan and, dragging himself up to the reservoir, threw himself into it in fulfilment of his oath. Hamza killed him inside that very reservoir. By now Utbah was ready. He along with his brother, Sheba, and son Waleed, came to the battlefield and challenged the Muslims. Some young *Ansar* came out but Utbah refused to fight with them. He querried as to why men of his own tribe, the descendants of Abdul Muttalib, were not coming forward. The Prophet$^{s\wedge}$ looked towards the elderly and experienced Hamza and Ubaida and the young, un-tried standard-bearer, Ali$^{a s}$ and said: "O Ali, you rise. O Hamza, you rise. O Ubaida bin Harisa, you rise."[35]

Ubaida was a cousin brother of the Prophet$^{s\wedge}$ and very old. Hamza was Prophet`s$^{s\wedge}$ uncle but of his age. As

[35] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.270

compared to them, Ali[A.S] was just a youngster. He was then in his 24th year. Hamza fought with Sheba and killed him in no time. Ali[A.S] fought with Waleed and soon finished him. Ubaida and Utbah struggled for some time and caused injuries to each other. Ubaida got an injury in his leg and fell down. Hamza and Ali[A.S], now free, came to his rescue and killed Utbah. They then carried Ubaida to the Prophet[S.A] in injured condition. He was sorry for having remained alive and asked the Prophet[S.A] that would he be not counted among the martyrs. The Prophet[S.A] assured him of the rewards of a martyr. [36] After a few days Ubaida succumbed to his injuries.

Help of Angels

Every muslim believes that the regiments of angels were present in this battle. This is mentioned in Quran and some historical evidence is also there in support of it. The Quranic verse reads as follows: "God had helped you at Badr, when ye were a contemptible little force; then fear God; thus may ye show your gratitude." [37]

Tabari says that Abbas son of Abdul Muttalib was brought before the Prophet[S.A] by an *Ansari* claiming to have arrested him. Abbas informed the Prophet[S.A] that a fair complexioned man riding a white horse had arrested him and not the man who had brought him. That *Ansari* insisted that he had arrested him. The Prophet[S.A] said, "Both of you are correct. You tried to arrest him and God assisted you through one of his angels."[38]

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[36] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p 279.
[37] Quran 3:123
[38] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p 270

Ibne Abbas says that a man of the tribe of Ghifar, who later on embraced Islam, told him that he and his cousin were on a hillock waiting for an opportunity to plunder the Muslims after their defeat. Suddenly they heard the stamping of horses and someone shouting to his horse, "Move forward, O quick-spirited one, move forward." His companion was so terrified that he immediately passed away and he himself was on the verge of death but somehow he managed to overcome the shock.

A muslim named Abu Daud Manzil says that he was chasing an infidel in order to kill him. Suddenly his head got separated from his body and fell down though his (Abu Daud's) sword had not even touched him. He was obviously killed by some one who was not visible.[39]

One more incident narrated by Abu Rafe, formerly a slave of Abbas, is that Islam was already there in the house of his master but he (Abbas), on the grounds of discretion, had not openly professed it. All of them were under *Taqayya* (Dissimulation). When Abu Sufyan bin Haris bin Abdul Muttalib returned from Badr, Abu Lahab wanted to know from him the details of the war. While narrating the same, Abu Sufyan said he would not blame the Meccans for any cowardice because they had to confront a host of new, unfamiliar kind of fair complexioned persons riding upon piebald horses and moving in between the sky and the earth. Nobody could face them. Hearing this Abu Rafe spontaneously blurted out that they were angels. For this. Abu Lahab hit him on his mouth.

These incidents show that the angels were not visible to the muslims but many among their adversaries were seeing

[39] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p 283.

them with their naked eyes. For Muslims this was in a way a test of their faith in the unseen.

Bravery of the Prophet ﷺ

It was the first battle of Islam. Muslims in general were nervous. Prophet's ﷺ confidence, perseverance, bravery and courage on that crucial occasion have been described by no less brave a person than Ali ؓ. He says, "the entire army at Badr was under the shelter of the Prophet ﷺ of God and his boldness and courage were most conspicuous. He was nearer to the enemy in comparison to all of us".[40] This shows that he was not taking shelter in a hut nor was he being guarded by any particular person as some writers have stated.

This demonstration of steadfastness and determination by the Prophet ﷺ was for his people but before his Creator he was humbly expresing his helplessness. This we learn from another narration of Ali ؓ. He says, " every one of us slept for some time in the night of Badr but the Prophet ﷺ spent the whole night standing under a tree and offering prayers and making supplications to God." [41]

Some martyrs of Islam

Besides Ubaida bin Haris bin Abdul Muttalib and two others dying of arrow-shots in the initial stage, the fascinating account of two other martyrs of Islam is found in the books of history. One of them was Umair bin Humam of Bani Salma. He was eating palm dates when the Prophet ﷺ told his companions to be ready for the holy war and said:

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[40] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 2 p .287 & 288.
[41] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 2 p. 270.

> I swear by Him in whose hands is Muhammad's life, any one who dies fighting with them today with patience and perseverance with a view to securing divine pleasure, moving forward without turning his back, shall be admitted into heaven by God.

Hearing this Umair threw away the dates and said: "The time required for my entry into heaven is only that much that they take in killing me." Saying this, he fell upon the opponents, fought vigorously and eventually got killed.

The other martyr was Awf bin Haris bin Afra. He went to the Prophet[SAW] and asked him as to which action of a believer could make his Lord smile. The Prophet[SAW] replied: "If one engaged in a holy war removes even his coat of mail before the eyes of the enemy would, through this action, cause his Creator to smile." Awf immediately discarded his coat of mail, attacked the enemy with his sword and was ultimately killed.[42]

End of War

It could have been only through the assistance of invisible power that, though poorly equipped and very small in number, the Muslims got such a remarkable victory in the battle of Badr. A victory of such a nature was never to be achieved by them in later battles in spite of their comparatively larger number, high morale and sufficiency of war equipment.

The defeat of the infidels at Badr was significant not only in the sense that they were vanquished and their army was dispersed but also because several notable persons and

[42] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.281

almost all the chiefs of their army were killed. Besides Utbah, Sheba and Waleed, their top-most chief, Abu Jahl bin Hisham, Zamaa bin Aswad, Abul Bakhtari, Umayya bin Khalaf, Nabiya and Mamba, sons of Hajaj, were among those who lost their lives in this battle. A brief account of them is given below.

Abul Bakhtari

It is said that this man (Abul Bakhtari) used to dissuade the people from troubling the Prophet$^{s.a}$ whenever he was subjected to persecution at Mecca. He had also played a leading role in getting the agreement pertaining to the boycott of the Bani Hashim during the siege of Shebe Abu Talib annulled. The Prophet$^{s.a}$ had, on that account, directed his men not to kill Abu Bakhtari even if he appeared before them. He had come to the battle-field along with his maternal nephew, Junada, on one and the same camel. Abu Bakhtari happened to meet an *Ansari*, Majzar bin Zayad Bilwi, in the battlefield. Majzar told him to save his life and run away as Prophet's$^{s.a}$ instructions to Muslims were not to kill him. Abul Bakhtari asked about his companion. Majzar replied that he was responsible only for his safety and not for that of his companion. Abul Bakhtari retorted that he would prefer to die along with his companion otherwise the women of Quraish shall talk derisively about him at Mecca and say that he had abandoned his companion for his own safety. Saying this he started fighting with Majzar reciting a couplet as a battle-cry (*Rajaz*) which meant that no nobleman discards his companion until he himself dies with him. Ultimately Majzar killed Abul Bakhtari. He, then, went to the Prophet$^{s.a}$ and informed him in an apologetic manner that he tried his best not to kill Abul Bakhtari but he

was bent upon fighting and was killed.[43] The Prophet[ﷺ] was left with no alternative but to keep quiet. Had Majzar, instead of deciding the matter himself, advised Abul Bakhtari to go to the Prophet [ﷺ] along with Junada, he might have pardoned both of them in view of his past conduct.

Umayya bin Khalaf

He was a prominent figure among the Quraish and was extremely harsh in opposing Islam. It was he who used to torture Bilal to compel him to give up Islam. This Umayya was a great friend of Abdur Rahman bin Awf who is said to be of those ten companions who were assured of their place in heaven by the Prophet[ﷺ]. Ibne Awf himself has said that formerly his name was Abde Amr. He became Abdul Rahman after embracing Islam. Even then Umayya continued calling him as Abde Amr saying: "Will you give up the name given by your father?" His reply used to be: "Yes I do not like that name now." Umayya would then say: "I do not know Al-Rahman and therefore, tell me any name in between the two so that I call you by it because you will not respond when I call you Abde Amr and I will not call you as Abde Rahman." Ibne Awf told Umayya to suggest a name of his choice. Umayya suggested ' Abde Ilah'. Ibne Awf agreed to it. Since then Umayya used to call him as Abde Ilah and Ibne Awf would respond to it. Ibne Awf adds that in the battlefield of Badr he was holding some coats of mail which he had removed from the corpses of the infidels lying there. Umayya was standing at some distance holding the hand of his son, Ali. They were in search of shelter. Seeing Ibne Awf, Umayya called him by his early name. He gave no reply. Umayya then called him as Abde Ilah. Ibne Awf responded and asked him what did he want. He said,

[43] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.282

"Could you take me with you. I am better than the coats which are in your hands." Ibne Awf threw away those coats of mail and took Umayya and his son with him. They were now sure of their safety. In the way Umayya asked Abde Ilah about the identity of the man who had the emblem of the feather of an ostrich on his chest. Ibne Awf told him that he was Hamza bin Abdul Muttalib. Abdul Rahman adds that while he was taking the father and the son with him Bilal happened to see them. He was reminded of the cruelties perpetrated upon him by Umayya. Bilal shouted that he was the head of the idolaters, Umayya bin Khalaf, and he would not escape alive. Ibne Awf tried to dissuade him saying that they were his prisoners. Bilal paid no heed to him and exhorted other Muslims to kill them. They were surrounded by the Muslims while Ibne Awf did his best to protect them. Meanwhile, some one hit the son who fell down. On seeing this the father gave out a heart-piercing cry and soon both of them were put to death. Abdur Rahman was very much pained by that incident and lamented through out his life that because of Bilal he lost the coats of mail and his prisoners.[44]

Abu Jahl

Abu Jahl bin Hisham was the leader of the entire army of the infidels. For sometime it was not clearly known as to what had happened to him. The Prophet[ﷺ] desired that he should be searched among the dead. For the identification of his body the Prophet[ﷺ] gave a clue that there was a scar upon his knee. During a quarrel, long back, the Prophet[ﷺ] had pushed him down as a result of which he had received an injury upon his knee which had left a perpetual scar.

[44] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.283

After a vigorous search by the Muslims, Abdullah son of Masood succeeded in tracing his corpse.

Later on an Ansari youth, Maaz bin Amr, narrated that he was the first to face Abu Jahl. His men were surrounding him and shouting that nobody should be allowed to come near Abul Hakam. This was Abu Jahl's real name. It was the Muslims who had nicknamed him as Abu Jahl and in Islamic history he came to be known only by this name. Maaz added that he was determined to kill him and on finding an opportunity, he succeeded in striking a blow at his shin whereby he fell down. Meanwhile his son Ikrama gave a sword blow to Maaz on his shoulder which severed his hand, leaving it dangling by the skin. Maaz continued to fight with one hand but the other hand was hindering him. Pressing it with his foot, he separated it from his body and threw it away. Maaz was alive till the time of the third caliph. The injury received by Abu Jahl at the hands of Maaz was not fatal. Another Ansari named Maaz bin Afra gave a severe sword blow to Abu Jahl but even after this some life was left in him. Meanwhile Maaz himself was killed fighting others. Abu Jahl was lying among the dead breathing his last when Ibne Masood found him out. Ibne Masood himself had once been humiliated and even kicked by Abu Jahl in Mecca. He put an end to Abu Jahl's life and took his severed head to the Prophet. Ibne Ishaq says the Prophet[15] offered thanks to God.

Nazar bin Haris bin Kalda

His father was a renowned physician of Mecca and he himself enjoyed a prominent social status among the

[15] *Tareekh Tabari* (Egypt) Vol. 2, p. 206

polytheists. He was arrested alive. Ali[as] killed him on the orders of the Prophet[sa] .

Utbah bin Abi Moeet

He too was captured alive. The Prophet[sa] ordered him to be killed. An *Ansari*, Aasim bin Sabit, killed him.

After the war

The victory so clearly achieved by the Muslims was a matter for which they had to be grateful to their Lord. It was solely and definitely brought about by divine help. Among the warriors of Islam history mentions only three, all descendants of Abdul Muttalib and close relations of the Prophet[sa]; namely, Hamza, Ubaida (who attained martyrdom) and Ali[as] who played a prominent role in this war. Except these three, no other Muslim's performance was outstanding. But after the fighting was over there were serious dissensions among the Muslims over the sharing of the spoils. Among those who had plundered the booty, each one wanted to appropriate whatever he had seized. Those who were engaged in fighting the enemy claimed their share on the plea that had they not been there at the front, the others would never have got a chance to collect the booty. Those who claimed to have been protecting the Prophet [sa] (actually sheltering behind him) were urging that they could not take part in the fight as they were looking after the Prophet[sa] and hence were entitled to an equal share in the booty. The dispute became so serious that God had to promulgate a special ordinance which is incorporated in a chapter of the Quran entitled *Al-Anfal* (The spoils). It laid down that the spoils of the war belonged to the Prophet[sa].

Thereafter, the Prophet ﷺ equally divided the same among the Muslims.[46]

Every person can easily guess for himself that when such an elect band of Prophet's ﷺ companions, known in the history by the respectable name of Badrites, could show such a mentality in respect of the sharing of the spoils, what should have been the situation in the later eras when there were greater conquests, larger booties and vast increase in the number of the muslims of lesser order. Then the matter was confined not to the spoils alone; at stake were power, throne and crown. Who could then act solely for the pleasure of God, be sincere in dealings and recognize the rights of the genuine claimants?

News at Mecca

The news about the killing and captivity of prominent persons of the Quraish brought by those who had run away from the scene of the battle was not given credence by the Meccans. When one of them was naming those who were killed, one Safwan bin Umayya, who was sitting nearby at a place known as *Hajre Ismail*, jokingly remarked "Ask him about myself". What he meant was that the man was falsely naming the killed and may include even his (Safwan's) name in the list of the dead. When that man was questioned about Safwan bin Umayya he replied that he (Safwan) was sitting infront of *Hajre Ismail* but he had himself seen his father Umayya bin Khalaf and brother being killed.[47] A passing reference has already been made to the incident involving Abu Lahab and Abdul Muttalib's slave, Abu Rafe. When the latter had referred to the angels for causing

[46] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 2 p. 285-286
[47] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 2 p. 288

the defeat of the Meccans, Abu Lahab had hit him with his hand, thrown him upon the ground and sat on his chest. On this the wife of Abbas, Ummul Fazal, rushed out with a wooden stick and struck Abu Lahab on his head, saying that since his master was not there he had assumed that Abu Rafe was totally helpless. After this the injured Abu Lahab fled from the place in disgrace.

Death of Abu Lahab

Abu Lahab had himself not joined the battle at Badr. He had sent one Aas bin Hisham as his substitute. God now desired that along with the other notables of Mecca he too should die. He developed a violent type of small pox just a few days after Badr and soon died of it. Even his sons avoided going near his body as his disease was known to be extremely contagious. When foul smell started coming out of his decomposing body, people condemned his sons. Thereupon they carried it outside Mecca and threw it somewhere without bathing and covering it with cloth. From a distance stones were thrown at it till it was fully hidden from view.[48]

The Infidels' State of Mind: Mourning is Banned

It is reported that initially the infidels of Quraish mourned their relatives killed at Badr. Later on they gave it up, thinking that this will give a chance to Muhammad[sa] and his companions to ridicule them. One of them, Aswad bin Abde Yaghus, had lost his three sons, Zamaa, Aqeel and Haris, in this battle. He was feeling very restless as he wanted to mourn for his children but could not do so on account of the ban imposed by his people. One night he heard the wailings of a lady. He sent his slave to find out if

[48] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 2 p. 288

the Quraish were weeping for their dead so that he too could weep for his sons. The slave brought the news that the camel of the lady had disappeared and she was weeping for it. Aswad found an excuse in it for composing an elegy on those killed at Badr. Its gist was " you weep for the loss of a camel and not for the men of such and such distinction killed at Badr."[49]

Ransom for prisoners

Some prisoners, who had escaped death, were released on payment of ransom. One of them was the great ancestor of the caliphs of Bani Abbas, namely Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib. He tried his best to avoid payment of ransom by pleading that he was in fact a Muslim and was compelled by the Quraish to join them. The Prophet[sa] replied that about his Islam, concealed in his heart, God alone could know. If He found him worthy of a reward for that, He would surely reward him. But, since, apparently he was in the opposite camp and had come to confront the Muslims he could not be released without the payment of ransom. He further told him that he was aware of his financial condition and, therefore, he shall have to pay ransom not only for himself and for his other relations but also for his alter ego, Utbah bin Amr. He kept on bickering and wrangling but without any result and eventually he had to pay the ransom for himself and others as told by the Prophet[sa].

One son of Abu Sufyan, named Amr, was also among the prisoners. His brother Hanzala was killed in the battle. Some persons advised Abu Sufyan to secure Amr's release on payment of ransom. He refused, saying that he was not going to bear financial loss over and above the loss of life,

[49] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 2 p. 289

that is, of his son. He added that the Muslims were free to keep him for as long as they wished. Perchance, an aged Muslim of Bani Amr bin Awf, named Saad bin Noman, casually decided to visit Mecca for performing Umra.[50] There was no restriction on such visits, still Abu Sufyan got him arrested and made him a hostage against his captive son. People of Saad's tribe then requested the Prophet[SA] to set Amr free so that Saad's release could be secured. He acceded to their request and thus Amr was freed.[51]

Suhail son of Amr was also among the prisoners. His name, later on, became well known in connection with the treaty of Hudaibiya. He was also released on payment of ransom. He was a good orator. At the time of his release Umar bin Khattab came out with a strange suggestion. He

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[50] *Haj* and *Umra* both are pilgrimages to Mecca. They differ in performance of prescribed rituals. The rites of *Haj*, briefly speaking are: At the border of the sacred territory, around Mecca (known as *Meeqat*), one puts off the ordinary dress and puts on a religious uniform, called *Ahram*, comprising two sheets of cloth-a loin cloth and a shoulder cover. This is a dress required only of men, not of women. He is bareheaded and one tries to forget one's self during the several days of *Haj*. He has to utter the prescribed formula (*Talbeya*) for having responded to divine call for *Haj*. He goes to the plain of Arafat in the suburbs of Mecca to pass there the day in meditation. Towards evening, he returns, passes the night at Muzdalifa, and early next morning arrives at Mina, which is on the outskirts of Mecca. There he passes three days, during which he lapidates Satan every morning, sacrifices an animal, pays a short visit to Kaaba for performing sevenfold circumambulating (*Tawaf*) and running between the hills of Safa and Marwa (*Saee*) in front of the Kaaba. All the above rituals and places have their own historical significance.

In *Umra* it is not necessary to stay in Arafat, Muzdalifa and Mina. Only *Tawaf* and *Saee* are necessary, putting on *Ahram* is, of course,a pre-requisite.-*Tr.*

[51] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 2 p. 290

sought the Prophet's[saw] permission to extract two lower teeth of Suhail to disable him from making utterances against the Prophet[saw]. The Prophet[saw] told him that severing of any part of body was not permitted. His words were: "If, I being a Prophet[saw], mutilate any portion of his body God will likewise mutilate mine." He added that it was possible that in future his rhetorical skill might serve the cause of truth. Suhail was thus released unharmed.[52]

Number of the dead

The Muslims, though ill equipped, suffered very little loss of life at Badr. In all fourteen persons, six *Muhajireen* and eight *Ansar*[53] attained martyrdom while among the infidels seventy persons were killed and seventy were made prisoners.[54] Out of those killed, thirty-five were put to death by Ali[as] alone and the rest by others.[55] That is why Maulana Shibli says, "Ali [as] was the hero of the battle of Badr."[56]

Prominent among those killed by Ali[as] were: (1) Waleed bin Utbah bin Rabia, (2) Aas bin Saeed bin Aas bin Umayya, (3) Taeema bin Adi bin Nawfil, (4) Nawfil bin Khuwaylid (Nawfil was the uncle of the famous commander of the battle of Jamal, Zubair).[57] He was always very harsh towards the Muslims. The Prophet[saw] specially

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[52] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p. 286
[53] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p. 286
[54] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p. 270 and *Aalamul Wara*
[55] *Islam aur Musalmanon ki Tareekh* Vol.1 p 87-88
[56] *Seeratun-Nabi*,Vol. 1, p. 257
[57] This war was fought on 10th Rabiul Saani, 36 A.H. *Jamal* in Arabic language means camel. The war is known as war of *Jamal* because Ayesha widow of the Prophet[saw] was brought to the battlefield seated on a camel to fight against Ali[as]. - *Tr.*

enquired about him at the end of the war. When Ali[as] told him that he had killed him, the Prophet[saw] loudly uttered, "God is great." (5) Hanzala bin Abu Sufyan; Ali[as] has himself described that when Waleed was killed his sister's son, Hanzala came to the battlefield. Ali[as] struck him with his sword upon his head, which cut it upto his eyes and he fell dead. (6) Zamaa bin Aswad, (7) Haris bin Zamaa and (8) Umair bin Usman, the uncle of another commander of the war of Jamal, Talha.

Hamza killed Sheba bin Rabia bin Abd Shams and Aswad bin Abdul Aswad Makhzumi. Amr Jamuh caused injuries to Abu Jahl who was ultimately killed by Abdullah bin Masood. Ammar bin Yasir had killed Umayya bin Khalaf.[58]

Treatment of the Dead and the Prisoners

The Prophet[saw], who was an embodiment of courtesy and magnanimity and whose mission was to teach respect for human rights without any distinction of friend and foe, believer or non-believer, did not like to leave the corpses of his enemies exposed to vultures as their prey. He got their bodies dumped in a nearby well. But to draw attention of all towards their morally instructive sad end and also to make a comparison between their past and present condition, the Prophet[saw] stood by the side of the well and calling the dead chiefs of Meccans by names thus addressed them:

> O, Utbah bin Rabia; O, Sheba bin Rabia; O, Umayya bin Khalaf; O, Abu Jahl bin Hisham — have ye found true what God had foretold you (damnation). I have found what He had promised me (victory and divine help) absolutely true.

[58] *Aalamul Wara*

This address is derived from the Quranic passage referring to what the people of heaven shall be saying to the damned ones of the hell.

Some of the companions questioned the Prophet[s.a.] how it was that he was calling those who were dead. He replied: " Your sense of hearing is not sharper than theirs but they cannot speak back to me."[59] It is to be remembered that these were staunch disbelievers and evil-doers whose capability of hearing after death has been testified by the Prophet[s.a.]. After this, isn't it surprising to see a section of Muslims present its view that addressing the Prophet[s.a.] or other eminently pious persons is totally a fruitless and futile act?

Among the dead infidels Umayya bin Khalaf was the only one whose corpse could not be thrown into the well because it had swelled up so much within his coat of mail that when it was attempted to take it out of it, it started coming apart. It was, therefore, left where it was, under a heap of brickbats and pebbles.[60]

The prisoners of war, barring those put to death, were treated very well. They were handed over to different well-to-do Muslims who were made responsible for their up-keep.

These Muslims were strictly told by the Prophet[s.a.] to treat the prisoners with kindness. Those instructions were faithfully carried out. One of the prisoners, Abu Aziz, brother of Mus'ab bin Umair, has mentioned that owing to the Prophet's[s.a.] instructions the *Ansari* to whom he was assigned treated him so kindly that he fed him with bread

[59] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.285
[60] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 2 p. 285

while he and his family members took only dates. Abu Aziz used to press them to take the bread from him but they never agreed to it.[61]

The poor but literate prisoners who were unable to pay ransom were given an option to secure their release by teaching reading and writing to ten Muslim boys each. Those who were unable to do even this much were also eventually set free.[62]

The After-effects

The Battle of Badr being the first war of Islam it was but natural that it should have far-reaching consequences. With regard to some immediate effect, Abdul Bari says:

> Leaders of different tribes and prominent agitators against Islam were all dead. Their death broke the backbone of the Quraish and strengthened the roots of Islamic movement. The people of surrounding areas were over-awed by the Muslims and the Hypocrites and Jews of Medina were also vastly subdued.[63]

It was the immediate effect from general Islamic point of view. If we consider the consequences of this battle after focussing our attention on the list of those persons who had lost their lives at the hands of Ali[as], we shall find that most of them belonged to Bani Umayya and were very closely related to Abu Sufyan's branch. Utbah was the father of the "liver-devouring" Hinda and maternal grand father of Muawiya. Then there was Waleed son of Utbah, the brother of Hinda and real maternal uncle of Muawiya. Another one

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[61] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p. 287
[62] *Islam aur Musalmanon ki Tareekh* Vol.1 p. 88
[63] *Dawat* Delhi *Seerat Tayyaba* Supplement ,16thSept.1959

was Hanzla, son of Abu Sufyan and Hinda and real brother of Muawiya. Aas bin Saeed was also among those Umayyads who were killed by Ali[a.s]. Vindictiveness being the ruling passion of the Arabs, the loss of these near and dear ones left permanent scars upon the Umayyads, particularly upon Abu Sufyan's progeny. If, with this back ground, it is not considered as a calculated move to nurture and intensify the campaign of vilification against the Hashimites, particularly Ali[a.s] and his descendants, then it was a great political blunder to provide opportunities to the Umayyads to gain ascendancy after the demise of the Prophet[s.a]. As a consequence of this the pages of Islamic history got besmeared with the blood of the muslims themselves. It was this unfortunate development that made Yazid, grandson of Abu Sufyan and Hinda and now the ruler of the Islamic world, recite in a resounding voice verses in honour of his ancestors killed at Badr. When, after the massacre of Husain[a.s] and other relativesof the Prophet[s.a] at Karbala, the surviving members of his family, mostly women, were presented as prisoners before him, he remembered his relatives who had fallen in the Batttle of Badr and said that had they been alive they would have complimented him for taking such a wonderful revenge. If along with it we recollect the conduct of Nawfil bin Khuwaylid, uncle of Zubair, and Umair bin Usman, uncle of Talha, then the encounters of Jamal, Siffin[64]and Karbala shall appear to be the sections of that very chain of Islamic *Jehad* whose first link was the Battle of Badr.

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[64] Battle fought between Muawiya and Ali[a.s] at Siffin (a place in Iraq to the west of river Euphrates). It was a long drawn affair extending from Shawwal 36 A.H.to Safar 37 A.H.

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THE SECOND AND THIRD YEAR OF *HIJRAT*

War of Bani Qaynuqa

The agreement with the Jews of Medina enjoined upon them to help the Prophet[s.a] and the Muslims in the event of an attack upon Medina. The Jews should have at least kept themselves aloof at the time of the Battle of Badr if they were not prepared to help the muslims actively. But one of their tribes, Bani Qaynuqa, who were goldsmiths and had become rich through their craft and industry, had actually repudiated the covenant by offering assistance to the invading infidels. When the Prophet[s.a] came back from Badr he reprimanded them for their conduct. Instead of showing any repentance they insolently told him:

> O, Muhammad[s.a], do not think that we are like the Quraish. You fought with the people who were ignorant of the art of war. If you fight with us then you shall see the true character of mettlesome warriors."[1]

After this there was no question of going by the terms and conditions of the agreement. When it was decided to teach them a lesson, they confined themselves in their fortress. On Prophet's[s.a] orders a siege was laid that

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[1] Tabari gives the speech of the Qaynuqa with a slight variation but all the historians agree in its being defiant and offensive. I can not say whence Gibbon obtained the excessively meek reply he puts into the mouth of these people. S.Ameer Ali - *Tr.*

continued for fifteen days. Thereafter they surrendered and agreed to abide by the Prophet's[SA] verdict. The Prophet[SA] ordered them to move out of Medina and Ubbada bin Samit was deputed to conduct them out of the city bounds. The tribe migrated towards the borders of Syria and the citizens of Medina were relieved of danger from that quarter forever.[2]

Fatima's[AS] marriage

In the month of Ziqaad of this very year the Prophet[SA] performed the marriage of his sole daughter, the lady of Paradise, Fatima Zehra[AS] with Ali[AS]. [3] This event has been described in *Rahnumayane Islam* in the following words:

> Religious law (*shariat*) enjoins that marriage of a girl should not be delayed after she attains the age of puberty. Fatima[AS] was nine years old a year after *Hijrat*. It is the age of puberty of a girl according to *shariat*. Time for the Prophet[SA] to discharge his obligation had thus arrived. Several companions of the Prophet were keen to have the honour of marrying his daughter and had even made proposals to him in this respect. However, none of their requests was found entertainable. In Prophet's mind the only suitable match for

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[2] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.297-298

[3] "The Prophet[SA] had a daughter, Fatima[AS], whom he held in high esteem on account of her great qualities. He used to stand up as a token of his respect for her whenever she visited him. Many were the tributes that he paid to her, one being his remark that she was the leader of the women in paradise and of the wives of the believers. He also called her part of himself. It is obvious that for his daughter, who occupied such an exalted position in his eyes, the selection of the most eligible match must have seriously engaged his attention." *Shaheede Insaniyat*, Syedul Ulema Maulana Syed Ali Naqi, Lucknow. - *Tr.*

Fatima[as] was Ali[as], who had the distinction of having God's house (Kaaba) as his birthplace. He was brought up in the lap of the Prophet[saw], was the right hand of the Prophet[saw] since the beginning of his mission. had pledged allegiance to the Messenger of God when he was just a child, had slept in his bed in the night of *Hijrat* in the midst of the drawn swords of the enemies and had impressively fulfilled his commitment to the Prophet[saw] through his outstanding performance in the Battle of Badr. It is said that. upon the suggestion of some others. Ali[as] himself went to the Prophet[saw] and modestly expressed his desire to marry Fatima[as]. The Prophet's[saw] response was so spontaneous as to suggest that he was eagerly waiting for it. He asked Ali[as] about his material possessions. He told him that he had nothing but a horse, a sword and a coat of mail. The Prophet[saw] said that horse and sword were indispensable for a fighter like him but the coat of mail was dispensible and he could dispose it off. Ali[as], accordingly, sold it and from its sale proceeds he paid Fatima's[as] dower which was fixed at four hundred *misqals* of silver (about 113 *tolas*), costing about 500 dirhams (according to the then prevailing rate). The Prophet[saw] himself recited the prescribed formula of marriage. From the point of view of its specialities as well as simplicity it was, in the history of Islam, an exemplary marriage.[4]

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[4] *Rahnumayane Islam* p.53-54; Historical importance of this marriage according to the Shias (adherents of apostolical Imams) is that the spiritual heritage bequethed by the Prophet[saw] devolved upon Ali[as] and

Other events of the Year 2 A.H.

Changes of Qibla

In the early days of Islam *Baitul Muqaddas* was the *Qibla* of the Muslims.[5] This continued to be so for sometime after *Hijrat*. About the duration of this period

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his descendents from Fatima^s· in the following order: (1) Ali, usually styled *Murtaza*, *Asadullah al-Ghalib* (the chosen, the lion of God, the victorious); (2) Hasan, styled *Mujtaba* (the Approved One); (3) Husain, *Shaheed-e-Karbala* (the Martyr of Karbala); (4) Ali, surnamed for his piety as *Zainul Abideen* (the ornament of the worshippers); (5) Muhammad *al Baqir*, the explainer of Mysteries, or the profound, a man of great learning and ascetic austerity; (6) Jafar *as Sadiq*, the True one. As a scholar, a litterateur and a jurisconsultant, his reputation stands high among all the sects of Muslims. His learning and his virtues, the transcendental purity and truth of his character won him the veneration even of the enemies of his family; (7) Abul Hasan Musa *al Kazim*, surnamed *al Abd-us-Saleh* (the Pious servant of God) on account of piety and his efforts to please God; (8) Abul Hasan Ali, surnamed *ar Riza* (the Acceptable) for the purity of his character. He was a scholar, a poet, and a philosopher of the first rank; (9) Abu Jafar Muhammad, surnamed *al Jawwad* for his munificence and generosity, and *al Taqi* for his piety; (10) Ali, surnamed *al Naqi* (the pure); (11) Abu Muhammad *al Hasan* ibne Ali *al Askari*, surnamed *al Hadi* (the Guide) and called *Askari* from his long residence under the surveillance of Mutawakkil at Suraman-Raa, which also went by the name of *al Askar* (the Encampment). He was a man of eminent piety and great nobility of character, a distinguished poet and litterateur; (12) Muhammad *al Mahdi*, the last Imam who disappeared in a grotto at Surman Raa in the fifth year of his age. He is believed to be still alive, and his reappearance is eagerly and earnestly looked forward to for the re-establishment of genuine universal Caliphate, and restoration of peace and order and the purity of the human values. He is styled the ***'Imam Al-Ghaib'*** (the occult Imam), ***'Al Muntazar'*** (the Awaited) ***' Al Qaim'*** (the existing one). - *Tr.*

[5] *Qibla* is the direction to which Muslims turn for offering prayers and *Baitul Muqaddas* is a mosque at Jeruselam. - *Tr.*

there is a difference of opinion. In Shaikhul Taifa's book *Tahzeeb*, it is mentioned, upon the authority of Imam Jafar Sadiq[A.S], that the Prophet[S.A] offered prayers towards *Baitul Muqadas* till his return from Badr. The same is the view of Fazal bin Shazan. According to Ibne Abbas the Prophet[S.A] offered prayers facing Baitul Muqadas for seventeen months after migrating to Medina. Baraa bin Azib has given that period as 16 or 17 months. In *Qurbul Asnad* it is 19 months upon the authority of Imam Muhammad Baqar[A.S]. The same period is mentioned in Shaikh Saduq's book *Man-la-yahazar*. Shaikh Mufeed has, in *Masaarrul Shia*, specified 15th of Rajab of the second year of *Hijrat* as the date of the change of Qibla. Seoti has endorsed this view in *Durre Mansur*. This divergence among the authorities does not in any way affect the main event. Some verses of Quran indicate that though the Prophet[S.A] offered prayers facing *Baitul Muqaddas*, his heart yearned for Kaaba. *Kafi* mentions that while in Mecca, the Prophet's[S.A] practice was to offer prayers standing in front of Kaaba with his face towards *Baitul Muqaddas*. This was no longer possible after migration to Medina. He, therefore, waiting for divine command, continued to offer prayers facing *Baitul Muqaddas*.

Both in *Sehahe Sitta* [6]of Ahle Sunnat and *Kutube Arba* of the Shias it is mentioned that the people were offering

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[6] *Saheeh Bukhari* by Imam Muhammad bin Ismail Bukhari; *Saheeh Muslim* by Muslim bin Hajjaj Nishapuri; *Sunan Abu Dawood* by Suleman bin Ashas; *Saheeh Tirmizi* by Imam Tirmizi; *Sunan Ibne Maja* by Muhammad ibne Yazid Ibne Maja; *Sunan Nisai* by Ahmad bin Shoeb Nisai.-*Tr.*

[7] *Usule Kafi* by Abu Jafar Muhammad bin Yaqub Kulaini; *Tahzeeb* and *Istibsar* byAbu Jafar Muhammad bin Hasan Tusi; *Man la Yahzarul*

morning prayer at Quba mosque when somebody brought the news that the command for offering prayers towards Kaaba had been received. Those engaged in prayers immediately turned their face towards Mecca. Ali bin Ibrahim, upon the authority of Imam Jafar Sadiq[a.s], says that while the Prophet[s.a] was offering prayer in the mosque of Bani Salim and had completed two units facing towards *Baitul Muqaddas* the divine command of change of Qibla was received. He then completed the remaining two units turning his face towards Kaaba. Perhaps, this happened during the *Isha* prayers and information about it reached the mosque at Quba next day when Morning Prayer was being offered. The kind of (derogatory) comments made by the Jews and the hypocrites on this change and how the Quran dealt with them can all be seen in the Quran itself as well as in its translations and commentaries.

Death of a companion: Usman bin Mazoon

Among the companions of the Prophet[s.a], Usman bin Mazoon Qarshi occupied a position of great eminence. He was 14th in order of precedence among those who had embraced Islam in the very beginning. He was also among those who took part in the First Migration, that is, migration to Abyssinia. Subsequently, he also migrated to Medina and took part in the Battle of Badr. He died in the second year of *Hijrat*. The Prophet[s.a] was deeply hurt by his death. The high esteem in which he held him is evident from the fact that the Prophet[s.a], after bending over Usman's body, kissed it. When he raised his head tears were seen in his eyes. He himself led the prayer for the departed companion and

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Faqih by Abu Jafar Muhammad bin Ali bin Babuwayh Qummi (Shaikh Saduq).-*Tr.*

buried him at *Jannatul Baqi*.[8] To mark the site, a head-stone was placed. The Prophet[ﷺ] frequently visited his companion's grave.

This incident contains several features which can remove the blinkers from the eyes of the people having Najdi (that is Wahabi) views. The Prophet's[ﷺ] kissing of the dead body to show respect or love, weeping for the dead and placing of a stone to indicate the grave — every action of his shows that the act of keeping the graves of the eminent religious and spiritual persons prominent and well-marked is liked both by God and his Prophet[ﷺ]. The Prophet[ﷺ] took great care of Usman's grave and tried to enhance its position as a centre of reverential attachment. When, some years later, his son, Ibrahim[ﷺ], expired the Prophet[ﷺ] buried him near Usman's grave and thus established the practice and preferability of burying one's dead in the vicinity of the graves of pious persons.

Battle of Sawiq

Almost the last incident of this year (2A.H.) is the encounter of Sawiq[9], which took place on Sunday, the 23rd of Zilhij[10]. It has an amusing back-drop. Abu Sufyan, smarting under the disgrace of the defeat at Badr had, in a frantic mood, vaingloriously vowed not to take bath, no

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[8] A graveyard at Medina where lie buried a number of illustrious and saintly people highly venerated by the Muslims. - *Tr.*

[9] *Sawiq* is the Arabic name for a dish of green grain, toasted, pounded, mixed with dates or sugar, and eaten on journeys when it is found difficult to cook fresh meal. - *Tr.*

[10] The venue where the affair took place bears now the name of Sawiq, situated at a distance of a few hours journey in the south-west of Medina. - *Tr.*

matter how filthy he became, till he had fought with the Prophet[ﷺ] again.

After the discomfiture at Badr the Quraish, obviously, could not hurriedly muster up sufficient courage to face the Muslims. At the same time the oath was pressing for its fulfilment, at least in the form of a token. Three months (Ramzan to Zilhij) passed off in this state of perplexity. Ultimately, in order to honour his oath, Abu Sufyan collected two hundred horsemen from among the Quraish and left for Medina. They journeyed in the darkness of night and remained hidden in the day-time so that their movements were not disclosed. They were pinning hope upon the sympathy of the Jews who were with them since the beginning and were now expected to be in a more violent mood after the banishment of Bani Qaynuqa. They thought that if they could conspire with the Jews to the effect that they create internal turmoil while the Meccans attacked from outside, the Muslims could be easily defeated. Leaving his men at some unknown place, Abu Sufyan went, all alone, in the darkness of night to the locality of Bani Nazeer at Medina and knocked at the door of their leader, Huyee bin Akhtab. Huyee was so much afraid of the Muslims that he did not even open his door. Abu Sufyan then went to another leader, Salam bin Mashkam. He received Abu Sufyan kindly and treated him well but gave no encouraging reply. Abu Sufyan returned back disappointed. With a view to getting rid of his humiliation and also, in his own conceit, carrying out his pledge, he sent some of his men to an outlying part of Medina. They burnt some trees and finding by chance two Muslims working in their fields, killed them. After this, they beat a hasty retreat before the day-break. On their return, Abu Sufyan and his men left the place in great haste.

Their trepidation was so great that, to hasten their flight, they lightened their burden by throwing away the bags of powdered cereals all along the route. When the Prophet[S.A.] heard of this expedition he came out with his followers. In pursuit of them he went upto Qarqaratul-Kidr but there was no trace of them. The pursuing party, however, had the consolation of getting some sort of a booty in the form of the discarded bags of powdered cereal which in Arabic is called *Sawiq*. Hence this episode is called *Ghazwae Sawiq*.[11]

Minor military expeditions

Ghazwae Qarqaratul-Kidr

Shaikh Shah Abdul Haq has written only this much in *Madarijun Nubuwwa* that Qarqaratul-Kidr is the name of a place. Moshin Amli has, however, given a reason for that nomenclature, saying that *Qarqara* means a plain and levelled piece of land. Bani Salim had settled at such a place. *Kidr* is a small, clay-coloured bird which was found in that area. Hence that place came to be known as Qarqaratul-Kidr.

Ghazwae Qarqaratu-Kidr took place on the 19th of Muharram, in the third year of *Hijrat*. Shaikh Shah Abdul Haq says: "the Prophet[S.A.] went towards them with *Muhajireen*, and *Ansar*, prepared a standard and handed it over to Ali[A.S.]."[12]

Tabari confirms, upon the authority of Waqidi, that Prophet's[S.A.] standard was entrusted to Ali[A.S.].[13]

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[11] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p. 299 and 300
[12] *Madarijun Nubuwwa*
[13] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.299

No further background of this *Ghazwa* is available in history. It has been remarked in connection with Ghazwae Sawiq that the Prophet[S.A.] went upto Qarqaratul-Kidr in pursuit of Abu Sufyan's men and then came back. His second expedition to that place in the very next month indicates that he had, perhaps, learnt during the first visit that the people of Qarqaratul-Kidr had helped Abu Sufyan in the killing and arson committed by his men earlier and, therefore, had gone to admonish them.

Ghazwae Zi-Amr

Zi-Amr was the name of a spring belonging to the tribe of Ghatfan. This place was on the side of Najd. A palm grove of Ghatfanis was at that place.[14] It is said that while returning from Ghazwa Sawiq the Prophet[S.A.] received the information that people of Ghatfan were preparing to attack Medina under the leadership of Dasaur bin Haris bin Maharib. He went out with four hundred and fifty men to face them but they ran away to nearby hills. The Prophet[S.A.] stayed at Najd for almost the entire month of Safar but the enemy did not have courage to face him.[15]

It was during this expedition that an astonishing incident took place which exhibited both the firmness of Prophet's[S.A.] faith in his Lord and the awe-inspiring quality of righteousness. One day the Prophet's[S.A.] clothes got drenched with rainwater. He retired to a secluded place, tied a piece of cloth around his waist and spread his clothes on a tree for drying. Lying down under this tree, he waited for his clothes to dry up. Some desert-dwelling Arabs were watching him. One of them went to Dasaur and informed

[14] *Ayanul Shia* Vol.2 p.178
[15] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p.2

him that Muhammad was lying all alone at a particular place. Dasaur picked up a heavy sharp sword and on reaching that place stood by the head-side of the Prophet[S.A.] and shouted, "O, Muhammad who is there now to protect thee"? The Prophet[S.A.], without changing his position, said, "***ALLAH***". This word uttered in a calm and composed but determined tone unnerved Dasaur and his sword fell from his hand. The Prophet[S.A.] picked it up and brandishing it said, "Who is there now to save thee?" "No one", was his reply. Thereafter he immediately recited *Kalma* (formula of faith in Islam) and swore by God that he shall never fight against him. The Prophet[S.A.] returned the sword back to him. Dasaur went back to his people and started preaching Islam to his tribe.[16]

Ghazwae Behran

Behran is also pronounced as Bohran. It was inhabited by the tribe of Bani Salim. For that reason Ibne Saad calls it "Ghazwae Bani Salim". It took place in the twenty-seventh month of *Hijrat*.[17]

The Quraish of Mecca had prevailed upon the people of Bani Salim to join them in war against the Muslims. That is why it is recorded in history books that: "The Prophet[S.A.] left for fighting with Quraish and Bani Salim." He went up to Behran in the area of Fara and stayed there throughout the months of Rabiul Sani and Jamadul Awwal but no confrontation took place.[18]

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[16] *Aalamul Wara*
[17] *Ayanul Shia* Vol 3 p. 2
[18] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol 3 p. 2

Birth of the elder grandson

On the 15th of Ramzan of the third year of *Hijrat*, Prophet's[S.A.] sole daughter, Fatima[A.S.], gave birth to a son who, on divine direction, was named Hasan[A.S.] by the Prophet[S.A.]. It gave not just that happiness to the Prophet[S.A.] which a maternal grand-father naturally feels on the birth of a grand-son. He was all the more happy because with this birth the palpable evidence of his truthfulness had started coming forth.

The disbelievers and idolaters used to scoff at the Prophet[S.A.] saying that he shall have no progeny; that he was *sine prole*. The people who said this, all of them had children. To refute it *Sura Al Kausar* of the Quran was revealed which proclaimed that God had blessed His Prophet[S.A.] with children in abundance whereas his enemies' progeny shall soon become extinct.[19] This Quranic statement was just the reverse of the then prevailing situation. Hence, the veracity of this statement became the touchstone of his prophethood. Now, today, the world can see for itself that there is no trace of the issues of his scoffers who had children in abundance whereas, by the grace of God, the Prophet's[S.A.] descendants are present almost in every part of the world. This is a factual and physical explication of *Al Kausar* which can be seen in its active living form in the Syeds. The first link of this chain or, the opening (explicatory) sentence of the Luminous Book, presented itself in human form with the birth of Imam Hasan[A.S.]. In this way, *Al* Hasan, apart from being the Prophet's[S.A.] grand-son, was also a visible miracle that established the truthfulness of his prophethood.

[19] Quran 108:1-3

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BATTLE OF UHUD

The Cause of war

The cause of this war was undisputedly the keen desire of the infidels to avenge the earlier defeat. K.A.Hameed writes:

> The defeat at Badr aroused the passions of the Quraish for vengeance. They started making preparations for war on a large scale to get rid of the stigma of defeat. In Mecca lists were prepared for raising the funds. Inflammatory speeches were made to enthuse the people. They were made to swear by Lat and Uzza that they shall protect the honour of their gods. A renowned poet, Abu Uzza, motivated the people to help the Quraish.[1]

Abu Sufyan was more particularly keen for revenge than anyone else as it was he who had acted as the sole instigator for the Battle of Badr. The Meccans held him responsible for the loss of life and property. Moreover, his own son, Hanzala, was killed in the battle. His wife, Hinda, was much more vindictive as beside her son she had also lost her father, Utbah, uncle, Sheba, and brother, Waleed. She would have never let Abu Sufyan remain quiet in this matter even if he had wished so. The ridiculous oath of Abu Sufyan, not to take bath till he had fought with the Prophet[s.a.], and its equally ridiculous mode of fulfilment

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[1] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e- Alam* Vol.1 p. 75

have already been noted. There was, however, no abatement in his desire for revenge.

The Arabs believed that if mourning for those killed was done the urge for revenge would cool down. For this reason the people were forbidden from weeping for those killed at Badr.That forced calmness was the proverbial lull before the storm.

Preparation for War

For procuring war material the question of raising the funds holds primary importance. To solve that problem, Abdullah bin Abi Rabia, Akrama bin Abi Jahl, Safwan bin Umayya and other aggrieved persons who had lost their kith and kin at Badr suggested to Abu Sufyan and others whose merchandise were with him in the trade caravan to forego their profits so that the same could be utilized for fighting against the Prophet[ﷺ]. All of them agreed to do so and thus the financial problem was solved. To recruit the fighters several influential persons and skilled orators were sent out to propagate the cause among the tribes inhabiting the adjoining regions. Abu Uzza was a renowned poet. He was under an obligation to the Prophet[ﷺ] because, as a prisoner at Badr, he was freed by the Prophet[ﷺ] without ransom on the plea that he was a poor man having several daughters. This favour of the Prophet[ﷺ] was pricking his conscience and initially he was reluctant to co-operate with the Meccans. Eventually they succeeded in persuading him to help them with his eloquence without taking part in the military operations. He accepted this proposal and went to the region of Tahma to instigate the people of the tribe of Kinanah to join the force. Similarly, other persons went to other places. Jubair bin Mutim, whose uncle, Taeema bin Adi, was killed at Badr, had an Abyssinian slave named

Wahshi. He was an expert in hitting the target with a particular kind of weapon. Jubair promised to free him if he could kill Muhammad's[sa] uncle Hamza. Some writers mention the Prophet's[sa] and Ali's[as] also as the proposed targets. By killing anyone of them Wahshi could gain his freedom from bondage. A few ladies of prominent families were picked up to accompany the army so that, for their sake, the men did not run away from the battlefield. Prominent among them was Hinda, who accompanied Abu Sufyan. Among others, Uumme Hakim, daughter of Haris, was with her husband, Akrama bin Abu Jahl. Haris bin Hisham himself had taken with him his wife Fatima daughter of Waleed. Safwan bin Umayya was accompanied by his wife Barza or Barra, daughter of Masood. Amr bin Aas had his wife Rita, daughter of Mamba bin Hajjaj and with Talha bin Abi Talha was his wife, Salafa, daughter of Saad. One lady, Khannas binte Malik, was with her son, Abu Uzair bin Umair. Among them, Hinda was most conspicuous in boosting the morale of the warriors, specially that of Wahshi. [2]

Attack on Medina

After preparations of full one year, the Meccan army marched out under the command of Abu Sufyan and took position in the foothills of a mountain called Uhud, quite adjacent to Medina.[3] Some writers say that the Prophet's[sa] and some *Ansar* were inclined to fight the enemy from within the city. Even Abdullah bin Ubayy, the chief of the hypocrites, was believed to be of that view. He maintained that whosoever had earlier entered Medina as an invader had to face defeat. He suggested that if male warriors took

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[2] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p. 10

[3] It is about five km. to the North of Medina. - *Tr*

position at the city gates and women, children and elderly persons pelted stones from the house-tops, the enemy would never dare to enter into the city and conquer it. According to another report, this very Abdullah bin Ubayy had advised that they should go out of the city and face "the dogs" there. Some simple-minded Muslims, in their zeal to attain martyrdom, insisted upon moving out. After consultations the majority decided that they should face the enemy outside Medina. Out of regard for the decision of these people the Prophet[s.a] prepared himself to move out. But at this stage the same section of the people which had made that suggestion regretted its stand and requested the Prophet[s.a] to act according to his own discretion. He refused to do so, saying that once a messenger of God puts on armour he should not retrace his steps.[4] We believe that every act of the Prophet[s.a] was governed by divine command. It is just possible that when he decided to go out of Medina, God in His wisdom had wished it to be so. Looking at the ultimate result of the war it appears quite probable that it was the will of God that the Muslims should have no exuse for their subsequent conduct. Since the decision to fight outside Medina was theirs, they could be directly held accountable for their cowardly flight from the battlefield. This event, in any case, carries a lesson for those who believe in the infallibility of consensus and majority opinion. If a majority decision could be found erroneous in the presence of the Prophet[s.a], how a similarly taken decision after him can be regarded as above such a possibility.

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[4] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p. 11

Departure of the Prophet ﷺ

The polytheists arrived at the foothills of the mountain of Uhud on Wednesday and took up their positions. The Prophet ﷺ delayed his departure by three days. He led the usual Friday prayers at Medina and also the funeral prayer of an *Ansari*, Malik bin Amr of Bani Najjar. Thereafter, he left to face the infidels. According to Mohsin Ameen the confrontation took place on 7th of Shawwal whereas some others maintain that it was Saturday, the 15th of Shawwal in the third year of *Hijrat*.[5]

Strength of the army

There is a difference of opinion in respect of the strength of the infidels' army. Some say it had three thousand soldiers some, two thousand.[6]

The Prophet ﷺ had one thousand warriors with him when he moved out of Medina. When the war was about to start, Abdullah bin Ubayy withdrew from the battlefield along with his three hundered men, saying that since his suggestion of fighting from inside Medina was ignored, he would not put his and his people's life in danger.[7] The number of Muslim fighters was thus reduced to seven hundered. It was the first blow to the morale of the Muslims. It adversely affected their steadfastness and determination. The tribes of Bani Salma and Bani Harisa also started contemplating withdrawl but after some deliberations they gave up the idea. There is a reference to this in the Quran also: "Remember two of your parties

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[5] *Ayanul Shia* Vol.2 p. 177
[6] *Aalamul Wara*
[7] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p. 12

meditated cowardice: but God was their protector, and in God should the faithful ever put their trust."[8]

In the army of the infidels seven hundred soldiers had coats of mail whereas among the Muslims only one hundred had this armour. They had two hundred horses and Muslims, only two.[9]

Respective age groups of the soldiers and the enthusiasm of the children

Many children had initially joined the Muslim army. The Prophet[s.a.] sent back those who were of tender age. Zaid bin Sabit, Abdullah bin Umair, Usayd bin Zohair, Baraa bin Aazib, Araba bin Aus and Abu Saeed Khadri were amongst them. However, their enthusiasm for particpating in the holy war was highly appreciated. Some children were so eager to get enlisted that they stood upon tiptoes to show that they were tall enough to fight. One such boy, Rafe bin Khudaij was allowed by the Prophet[s.a.] to stay on. When Samra bin Jundab, who was sent back on account of his age, learnt that Rafe was permitted to stay he conveyed to the Prophet[s.a.] through his guardian that though Rafe was selected he could easily get better of him in a wrestling bout. The Prophet[s.a.] was pleased by this childish way of arguing and asked Rafe and Samra to wrestle with each other in his presence. In the bout Samra overpowered Rafe and thus got permission to accompany the army. This episode was meant to serve an important purpose: to implant in the minds of the Muslims right from their childhood days a thinking that killing or getting killed for a

[8] Quran 3:122
[9] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p 12

noble and righteous cause is to be treated as a sport. They should never let any sense of fear or dread enter their hearts.

Mustering of troops and other arrangements

The infidels positioned their army with Khalid bin Waleed as commander of the right wing *(Maimana)*, and Akrama bin Abu Jahl of the left *(Maisara)*. The standard of the army was given to Talha bin Abi Talha. The Prophet[s.a.] posted his army with the mountain of Uhud on the back so that the enemy could not attack them from that side. A company of fifty archers under the command of Ubaidullah bin Jubair of the tribe of Amr bin Awf was positioned at the entry of the mountain pass. They were strictly told not to abandon their position without specific instructions from him irrespective of victory or defeat[10]

The Prophet[s.a.] gave the standard of *Muhajirs* to Ali[a.s.] and that of *Ansar* to Saad bin Ubbada. According to Tabari the Prophet[s.a.] himself took position under the standard of *Ansar* in order to raise their spirits.[11] Shaikh Shah Abdul Haq has written that the Prophet[s.a.] had prepared three standards for this battle. He specifically states: "He (the Prophet[s.a.]) handed over the standard of the *Muhajireen* to Ali ibne Abi Talib[a.s.]."[12]

Fifteen ladies, some of whom have already been named, accompanied by their maids sang songs to enthuse the Meccan soldiers. Hinda, mother of Muawiya, recited some stirring verses which are recorded by the historians and are well-known. Their gist is as follows:

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[10] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p. 13
[11] *Aalamul Wara*
[12] *Madarijun Nubuwwa*

> We are daughters of the stars of the heaven. We have been brought up on silken cushions and pillows. If you march forward boldly we shall embrace you. But if you turn your back we shall shun you. In this avoidance there shall be no trace of love and attachment.[13]

Abu Sufyan, the chief commander of the army, held in his hands the idols of Laat and Uzza in order to make their worshippers stake their lives to protect them. [14]

Hand to hand fight

Talha bin Usman, standard bearer of the polytheists, came out of the army formation and shouted:

> O companions of Muhammad^{s}, you believe that those killed by your sword shall go to hell and yours killed by us to heaven. Is there anyone among you willing to enter heaven instantly through my sword or send me quickly to hell through his?

Hearing this, Ali^{as} immediately got up and said:

> I swear by Him who has my life in His control that I shall not get disengaged from you till I send you quickly to hell by my sword or you send me quickly to heaven by your sword.

Ali^{as} gave him a severe sword blow severing his leg. While falling down he got disrobed. Then he entreated Ali^{as}, "I beseech you in the name of our past relations to spare me."

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[13] *Isteaab* .Vol.2, p 286
[14] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p. 14

Ali[as] moved aside and did not strike him again. However, the first blow was so severe that there was no possibility of his surviving it. On Ali's[as] triumph, the Prophet[saw] raised the slogan of *Takbeer*. When Ali[as] came back some people asked him why he did not give a second blow to Talha. He replied that he felt ashamed to attack again when he became naked and appealed on oath to spare him.[15]

The students of Islamic history should keep this episode in mind since the opposite party never forgot to use this stratagem. During the war of Siffin two Syrian 'gallants' intentionally became naked, one after the other, when they came within the range of Ali's[as] sword and, for that reason, were spared by him. At that time it was thought that the first one had set an example for the other but after going through the account of the Battle of Uhud one gathers that both these warriors had learnt this strategy from Talha. However, Talha's conduct was not so disgraceful as that of these two. After all he was fatally wounded and when he fell down his body was accidently bared. The Syrians had removed their clothes deliberately and intentionally. On their part it was a tactical move to save their lives at the cost of their honour.

Shah Abdul Haq is of the view that Ali[as] had struck upon Talha's head and the sword had penetrated upto the brain. He writes:

> Talha bin Abi Talha, who was the standard bearer of the Quraish, came out, shouted and defiantly threw the challenge. From this side Ali[as], the lion of the forest of war and panther of the battlefield, came out and gave a sword blow to

[15] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p. 15

> Talha whereby his head was cut upto the brain. Thereafter Ali[AS] withdrew to his rank. When his companions asked him as to why he had not finished Talha, Ali[AS] replied that while falling down he had become naked and had also placed an oath upon him to spare him. He added that he felt ashamed to take any further step after that and, also, he was sure that Talha would soon die.[16]

Talha has been described as 'Ibne Abi Talha' in the above version. It is because Abu Talha (father of Talha) was the second name of his father. His real name according to Tabari was Usman. Regarding the blow inflicted upon Talha, the version of Shah Abdul Haq is preferable because leg, if cut, can only make the victim fall down. Normally such an injury is not fatal. Ali's[AS] own impression that Talha would die soon indicates that, most propably, his blow had cut Talha's head upto the brain. It was also the normal practice of Ali[AS] to strike at the head or the waist of his opponent. He rarely aimed at legs.

Fierce Fighting

When their standard bearer was killed, the back of the polytheists was broken. They were so demoralized after this that no one came out to challenge the opponents to a single combat. There was now a mass attack from both sides in which besides the distinguished fighters like Ali[AS] and Hamza, some other Muslims courageously faced the enemy. The names of Miqdad bin Aswad and Zubair bin Awam are specifically mentioned in history books in this respect.[17]

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[16] *Madarijun Nubuwwa*

[17] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p. 15

Another fighter who played a very prominent role in the fighting was Abu Dajana Ansari. Zobair himself has said that on the day of Uhud the Prophet[s.a.] lifted a sword in his hand and called out that who would take it on the condition that he would do full justice to it. Zobair offered to take it. The Prophet[s.a.] turned his face away from him. This happened twice. For the third time the Prophet[s.a.] said the same thing. This time Abu Dajana stood up and said he was prepared to fulfil its obligation but he would first like to know what it was. The Prophet[s.a.] said that it was neither to kill any Muslim with it nor to run away from a disbeliever. He then handed over the sword to Abu Dajana. It was Abu Dajana's normal practice to tie a band (*Asaba*) on his forehead while going to fight. Zobair has said that he was keenly observing him to find out how he performed that day. While doing this, he noticed that whoever came before Abu Dajana was cut by him into two pieces. Ultimately he reached near the ladies who, to rouse the fighters, were chanting songs and beating their timbrels at the foot of the mountain. One of them was singing the same verses which, with a little variance, are attributed to Hinda. Zobair, for some reason, has not given her name although Tabari has again mentioned Hinda's name in connection with these verses.[18]

Abu Dajana raised his sword to attack that lady but then withdrew it. When Zobair questioned Abu Dajana about this his reply was that he considered it below the dignity of the Prophet's[s.a.] sword to kill a woman with it.[19] There is yet another version according to which Abu Dajana is reported to have said that the lady concerned was fighting bravely

[18] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p. 16
[19] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p. 15

like a man. When he went near and noticed that the fighter was a woman he held up his hand.[20]

At this satge Abu Sufyan attempted to play a trick on the Muslims but it did not succeed. Addressing the group of the *Ansar*, he called out: "O people of Aus and Khazraj we do not want to fight with you. Leave us to fight with our brethren and you go away. We shall not hinder you if you withdraw."

The *Ansar* spurned his offer using very unsavoury words. Abu Amir was an influential Medinite. After the Prophet`s$^{s\wedge}$ migration to Medina he felt displeased and shifted to Mecca along with fifteen or, as some say, fifty slaves of the tribe of Aus. He had misled the Quraish into believing that *Ansar* shall defect from the Prophet's$^{s\wedge}$ side on seeing him. In the past this man had earned a reputation in Medina for his piety and religiosity and was respected as an anchorite. After his open hostility to the Prophet$^{s\wedge}$, he was generally treated as a reprobate. He came to the battlefield of Uhud with a swagger and called out, "O my people of Aus, I am Abu Amir". They replied,"God's curse be on you, O wicked one." Getting a reply contrary to his expectations, he started fighting desperately and ultimately got killed.

Early success of the Muslims

There was a fierce encounter between the Muslims and the polytheists. The historical accounts mention only three names prominently from among the Muslims while referring to this stage of the battle. Tabari says:

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[20] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p. 27

> Abu Dajana fought till all his opponents were killed. Along with him were Hamza, Ali[as] and a few others. God sent his help to them and, thus, fulfilled His promise. These fighters hit their enemies with their swords so severely that they had to retreat. They were routed thoroughly and beyond any doubt. [21]

An Indian historian of the recent past, Allama Shibli, says:

> After the killing of the standard bearers and relentless attacks of Ali[as] and Abu Dajana, the army of the opponents soon began to totter on its feet. The fairy-faced damsels, who were cheering up the soldiers with their melodious war songs, withdrew in a flutter and the horizon was cleared."[22]

Muslims' Scramble for the booty and turning of the tide

The battle had reached a decisive stage. The opponents were totally crushed and their army was put to flight. At this stage the collection of booty became the chief objective of the Muslim warriors. Venerable companions got engaged in this activity. Seeing that, the archers positioned at the mountain pass with the injunction not to leave the post at any cost, felt that they shall be deprived of their share if they stayed on. They, therefore, got ready to abandon their positions. Their commander Abdullah bin Jubair tried to dissuade them and reminded them of the Prophet's[saw] order

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[21] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p. 16
[22] *Seeratun Nabi* p. 276

but, for the 'lust for the world',[23] most of them refused to listen to him. Only a few soldiers remained with Abdullah. Their greed and disobedience to the Prophet[ﷺ] were surely reprehensible but they alone are not to be blamed. The conduct of the main body of the Muslim army was also responsible for their dereliction of duty. They should have considered that some of their brethren were stationed at the mountain pass and till the enemy was driven so far away as to make it safe for them to leave their post to join them, they should have desisted from collecting the booty. But the stormy winds of cupidity were raging in their hearts; there was no time to reflect on such matters. If they could be so impatient then why not others who also had the hearts of the same cast. Consequently the force left at the mountain pass was not sufficiently strong to resist the enemy. Khalid bin Waleed, a valiant fighter of the Quraish, had fixed his eyes on the mountain pass. As soon as he noticed that the archers guarding it had dispersed and just three or four of them were left, he got a detachment of the Meccan soldiers with him and attacked the Muslims from that side. Abdullah and his few companions sacrificed their lives fighting them but could not withhold the onslaught. Emboldened by Khalid's success the entire army of the infidels turned back and attacked the Muslims who were engaged in collecting the booty. Taken by surprise, they ran away in great disarray. Only those who were near the Prophet[ﷺ] continued to fight desperately and valiantly from wherever they happened to

[23] This phrase is derived from Quran's admonitory words: "Some of you turned out to be desirous of the world". Tabari has clarified that: "They were the people who scrambled for the booty. Ibne Masood used to say that before that day he had never thought that even a single companion of the Prophet[ﷺ] was captivated by the lust for worldly gains. At Uhud he found it out." *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p. 14

be. They had no time to organize themselves nor knew who was where. Hamza was fighting at one place, Abu Dajana at another, Ali[a.s.] somewhere else; and likewise a few more courageous Muslims. Most of them were killed or seriously wounded. At this stage the Meccans made the Prophet[s.a.] their sole target and caused so severe injuries to him that he fell down in a nearby ditch. Somebody mistakenly or mischievously cried out that Muhammad[s.a.] was killed. This totally demoralised those Muslims who were thinking of moving to the battleline to fight the enemy. Saying that there was no point in fighting, as the Messenger of God was no more, they started running to safe and distanct places. While doing so they instigated others to follow suit and save their lives.

Tabari thus describes the situation:

> Prophet's companions left him and dispersed in different directions. Some went to Medina and others climbed to the tops of the nearby mountains, while the Messenger was loudly calling after them, "Come back to me; O, subjects of God."[24]

The Quran also refers to their conduct: "And the Apostle in your rear was calling you back."[25]

The Muslims were so confused and upset that Huzaifa's father, Yaman (also named as Haseel bin Jabir), was killed by their own swords.[26]

Obviously when the entire army was in disarray and almost everybody was running away, who could have had the time and patience to compile a complete list of the

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[24] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p.25-26
[25] Quran 3:153
[26] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p.25-26

fugitives. The historians have recorded only the names of those persons whose flight from the battlefield appeared odd in the context of their known distinctive qualities. Others whose names could be remembered by them were those few men of determination who by remaining rooted to the ground when others were running away, showed the extraordinary quality of their character. The writers of different schools of thought are at one in reporting the names of the men of both the groups. One of those who stayed on and fought courageously was Anas bin Nazar. About him Hafiz Ibne Jarir says:

> Anas bin Nazar, uncle of Anas bin Malik, most probably had not gone to the battle-field of Uhud at first. He hastened towards it after hearing of the rout of the Muslims and Prophet's[ﷺ] demise. On his way, at one place, he found Umar bin Khattab and Talha bin Abdullah sitting with a group of *Muhajireen* and *Ansar*. They were in a state of frustration and hopelessness. He asked them the reason for their sitting there. They said that it was because God's messenger was killed. Anas asked them what was the use of their being alive after him. He exhorted them to rise and die for the cause for which the Messenger gave his life. Anas himself rushed to the battle-field, fought bravely till he met with martyrdom.[27]

Tabari has given in detail the astonishing conversation of those whom Anas had seen sitting on a rock of the mountain. He writes:

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[27] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p. 20

It was rumoured that the Messenger of God was killed. At this some of those sitting on the hilltop wished they had some one who could be sent to Abdullah bin Ubbay with a request to obtain protection for them from Abu Sufyan. They said to one another that since Muhammad[s.a.] was killed, they should go back to their people (the non-believers of Quraish) before they came and killed them. Hearing this Anas bin Nazar told them that if Muhammad[s.a.] was killed his God was not killed and they should continue to follow his path and fight for the cause for which Muhammad[s.a.] had been fighting. After this he prayed to God thus: "O, God I seek pardon from Thee for what they are saying and disassociate myself from what they have done." Thereafter he attacked the enemy with sword and fought till he was killed.[28]

According to Anas bin Malik seventy wounds caused by swords and spears were found on the body of Anas bin Nazar. The body was so badly disfigured that it could not be recognised. Only his sister was able to identify it through some peculiar beauty of the digits of his fingers.[29]

Some Prominent Fugitives

Among the notable persons who had left the battleground two names have already been mentioned. From the fact that they were sitting idly in a state of inaction one can gather that they were at a safe distance from the battlefield. Prior to it their main concern must have been to run headlong and get out of the enemy's reach.

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[28] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p. 20
[29] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p. 19

Umar himself has thus described his condition: "When we faced defeat at Uhud I fled to a hill-top. I was leaping and capering as a mountain goat does."[30]

But, in *Tafseere Kabeer* Fakhruddin Razi mentions: "Umar was one of those who had retreated but was not among those who had run away first. Nor he had gone far off. He was staying on a mountain."

Tabari's version is:

> Usman bin Affan and two other *Ansar*, namely Aqba bin Usman and Saad bin Usman, ran away to Jalab which is in the vicinity of Aawas, a mountain near Medina. They stayed there for three days and then came back to the Messenger who remarked with a touch of sarcasm ' You people had, indeed, gone very far off!'[31]

Ahmad Husain Khan (of Paryawan) has quoted the following extract from *Mustadrek* of Hakim and *Qurratul-Ainain* of Shah Wali Ullah:

> It is narrated from Ayesha [32] that Abu Bakr used to say that when they had dispersed on the day of Uhud and left God's Messenger there alone, he was the first to come back to him. He saw the Prophet[S.A.] from a distance. At this stage some one embraced him from behind. He was Abu Ubaida Jarrah, who too was returing to the Messenger.[33]

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[30] *Tafseer Durre Mansur*
[31] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p. 21
[32] Prophet's[S.A.] wife and daughter of Abu Bakr. - *Tr*
[33] *Tareekh e Ahmadi* p. 42

Shah Abdul Haq has given a detailed and eye-opening account of the flight of Muslims from Uhud. He writes:

> There was a commotion in the ranks of the Muslims. The entire army was scattered. Owing to their confusion, they started killing one another. They could no longer recognize their common mark of distinction. It is said that Usayd bin Huzayr received two wounds at the hands of the Muslims; and so did Abu Barda. Yaman, father of Huzaifa, was killed by the Muslims themselves. Prophet's[s^a] companions were, at this satge, divided into four groups. One group was of those who continued to fight and were eventually killed. Another was of those who ran away and took shelter in various nooks and corners and valleys. Some others fled to the city. Usman bin Affan was among them. When the war ended and everything was calm and quiet they returned to the Messenger. Barring fourteen persons, seven *Muhajireen* and seven *Ansar*, no one else had stayed with the Prophet[s^a]. It is astonishing that Umar is not named among them.[34]

Of the fourteen who had stayed with the Prophet[s^a] it cannot be said how many of them had remained diligently steadfast and how many of them were such who had run away upto some distance and then come back for some reason. Abu Bakr's name is also in the list of these fourteen but he himself has admitted that he had gone away from the battle-field and was the first to return. He has also mentioned the name of another respectable person, that of, Abu Ubaida Jarrah. Talha bin Abdullah is said to have

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[34] *Madarijun Nubuwwa*

played a prominent role in the war but Anas bin Nazar names him as one of those who were sitting upon the rock of the mountain with Umar. Even when the fighting was over, for a long time no one was seen with the Prophet[saw]. This shows that those who had fled and had later come back did not have the courage to face the enemy for long and, therefore, had left the battlefield again. It is, therefore, difficult to maintain that all these fourteen persons had firmly stood by the Prophet[saw] till the end. Ali[as] alone was an exception.

The Feats of the loyalists

Martydom of Abu Dajana Ansari

Abu Dajana had already shown his manly courage in the first stage of the war. Later, at that critical stage when all others had dispersed, Abu Dajana stood like a shield infront of the Prophet[saw]. He bent himself over him so that he received no harm and took on his back all the coming arrows many of which pierced into his body and caused his death.[35]

Mus'ab bin Umair

The Arabs in major wars customarily used two types of flags, a bigger one known as *'Rayat'* (banner or standard) and a smaller one called *'Liwa'* (pennant). The Prophet[saw] always entrusted *Rayat* to Ali[as] and *Liwa* to others. At Uhud also *Rayat* was with Ali[as] but *Liwa* was with Mus'ab. When the war was at its peak, Mus'ab fought fiercely and was killed. Tabari writes:

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[35] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p. 18

> Mus'ab bin Umair fought in front of the Prophet$^{s\wedge}$. He was holding *Liwa* and was ultimately killed by Ibne Qamiya 'Laisi. He mistook Mus'ab for the Prophet$^{s\wedge}$ and went back towards his men claiming that he had killed Muhammad$^{s\wedge}$. After Mus'ab's death *Liwa* was also given to Ali^{as}.[36]

It thus appears that the rumour of Prophet's$^{s\wedge}$ assassination originated from Ibne Qamiya's misunderstanding and others spread it either taking it to be true or through mischief. It is also possible that this rumour was widely blazoned about by the enemy to further unnerve the Muslims and the hypocrites in the Prophet's$^{s\wedge}$ camp acted as their tools in this matter.

Ziyad bin Sakan

A writer has named him as Ammara bin Ziyad bin Sakan in one account owing to which it has become disputable whether the reference is to the father or to the son. In any case the person fought in front of the Prophet$^{s\wedge}$ along with some *Ansar* who were killed one by one. Ziyad was the last to fall injured. The Prophet$^{s\wedge}$ asked those who had by that time reached near him or were still with him, to bring Ziyad to him. He was brought and laid in such a position that his cheeks were on the feet of the Prophet$^{s\wedge}$. He died in that very condition.

Hanzala *'Ghaseelul-Malaika'* [37]

He was a young and recently married man and, perhaps for that reason, was not with the Muslim army from the

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[36] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p. 18

[37] Bathed by the angels. - *Tr*

start. When he heard the disturbing news at Medina that the war had taken an ugly turn and the Prophet[ﷺ] was killed he, impelled by religious zeal and demands of loyalty, rushed towards Uhud without taking the obligatory bath. He fell upon the army of the opponents. While fighting he happened to see Abu Sufyan. He grappled with him, threw him down, sat upon his chest and was about to kill him when Shaddad bin Aswad came rushing and gave a severe sword blow to him, which proved fatal. The Prophet[ﷺ], later on, revealed that Hanzala was given a bath by the angels of the heaven.[38] He thus came to be known as *Ghaseelul Malaika*. His descendants continued to flourish after him and this word became an adjunct of their names. When the people of Medina severed allegiance with Yazid on account of his misdeeds they chose Hanzala's son, Abdullah, as their leader. He was killed on the day of Harra.[39]

Umme Ammara Ansaria

The sacrifice made by a lady, Umme Ammara Ansaria, in this battle is memorable. She had come to the battlefield to give first aid to the injured. When she noticed that the enemies were attacking the Prophet[ﷺ], she stood in front of him and took the raining arrows upon her chest. When the enemies attacked with spears and swords she also took up a sword, fought with them and received serious injuries.[40] The valiant defence of the Prophet[ﷺ] by this lady and the cowardly flight of a large number of Muslim warriors are

[38] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p. 21

[39] The day when Medina was desecrated and Yazid's army indulged in a general massacre.

[40] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol. 2 p 84; *Islam aur Musalmanon ki Tareekh* Vol. 1 p.s 99

both eye-opening events that are preserved in the pages of history.

Hamza's martydom

Hamza was one of those who had won laurels in bringing the first phase of the war to a successful conclusion. When, later on, the war took an unexpected turn, Hamza again fought valiantly. He got actively engaged in the campaign directed against the standard-bearers of the enemy camp. He killed one of them, named Artat bin Abde Sharjil. Thereafter he gave a severe sword blow to Saba bin Abdul Uzza Ghabsani (alias, Abu Niyar)[41] who happened to pass before him.[42]

Wahshi's involvement in this war has been mentioned earlier. He was a slave of Jubair bin Mutim. Jubair's uncle, Taeema, was killed by Ali[as] at Badr. Jubair was keen to avenge his death. He promised Wahshi that he shall be set free if he succeeded in killing Muhammad[saw], Hamza or Ali[as] with his unique Abyssinian weapon. He had gone to Uhud tempted by that offer. He himself admitted later that he had no hope of doing any harm to the Prophet[saw] but in respect of Hamza and Ali[as] he thought he might get a chance to deceitfully kill one of them.

Hamza was engaged in a fierce fight with Saba bin Abdul Uzza. He had concentrated all his attention on it. This gave an opportunity to Wahshi to forcefully throw his weapon at him that pierced into his chest and also lacerated his abdomen. Even in this condition, Hamza rushed towards Wahshi but fell down exhausted. For some time Wahshi did not dare to come near Hamza. Only when he was sure that

[41] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p. 18
[42] *Aalamul Wara*

Hamza was dead he came upto his body to retrieve his weapon. After this he left the camp as his purpose was served.[43]

Saad bin Rabi

He belonged to *Ansar*'s tribe of Bani al Haris bin Khazraj and was killed in this war. When the war ended the Messenger of God desired to find out if Saad was alive or dead. An *Ansari* went in search of him and found him lying injured and in throes of death. He informed Saad that the Prophet[S.A] was anxious to know about him. His reply was: "I am with the dead. Convey to him my greetings and my wish that God may give him the best of the rewards ever conferred upon any Prophet[S.A]." Saad also sent a message to his men to see to it that as long as a single person among them was alive no harm was caused to the Prophet[S.A] otherwise they shall be hard put to explain their conduct to God on the day of judgment. With these words on his lips he breathed his last.[44]

Intensity of attacks upon the Prophet [S.A]

The historians of the early times did not follow the method of recording the events sequentially. Whatever scattered bits and pieces of information they got from different sources were recorded by them in the same fashion. The narrators also were not accustomed to reporting an event fully. They used to describe a part of the event according to the need of the moment. For this reason it has been difficult for the later historians to establish any chronological sequence between these dispersed reports. At times one finds in them some contradiction as well. Hence

[43] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p. 18
[44] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p. 24 & 25

it is that the various accounts of the battle of Uhud produce contrary impressions. At one stage one gets the impression that there were some people with the Prophet[s.a.], at another, that there was none. Similarly, sometime the people with him appear quite considerable in number, sometime negligible. It seems that these apparent 'contradictions', which do not affect the main event in anyway, were due to the rapidly changing complexion of the battle after the tide had turned against the Muslims. This had made it impossible to keep the track of the things that were happening in different parts of the battlefield. The facts gathered from different sources relate to different phases of the later stage of the war. The first phase was when the majority of the Muslims had dispersed and only Ali[a.s.], Abu Dajana, Hamza with about hundred and fifty other Muslims were left to fight. This is evident from the number of the martyrs, which is unanimously stated to be seventy. If it is assumed that all had fled then from where did these martyrs come? It has to be admitted that a considerable number of valiant Muslims had stayed on and continued to fight with the enemy. There were also some others who had lingered on and were awaiting the result of the encounter in a state of hesitancy and indecision. During this phase no direct attack was made on the Prophet[s.a.] nor any injury inflicted. After this came the stage when, owing to casualties, the number of Muslims was reduced to such an extent that the Prophet[s.a.] was virtually left unprotected. On noticing this, Abu Dajana had to leave the battlefield and act as a cover for the Prophet[s.a.]. After his death, a pious and spirited lady, Umme Ammara, came forward and drove the enemy away from the Prophet[s.a.]. But a single woman could not withstand the vast horde of the Meccans for long. Finally that stage arrived when, in the battlefield, Ali[a.s.] was the lone fighter and, here,

the Prophet[s.a] was standing all alone exposed to the attacks of the enemy.

In everyday life it was not the Prophet's[s.a] practice to resort to the use of super-natural power nor was he ever enjoined to do so. Had it been so, he would not have continued to be hit by brickbats for full thirteen years at Mecca nor recceived any injury at Uhud. Moreover, such a procedure would not have been in keeping with the divine scheme or practice. Also, the Prophet[s.a] was not preaching a creed that forbade use of weaponry in self-defence. On the contrary, in Islam it is obligatory for a Muslim to take all possible measures to protect himself. It has, therefore, to be assumed that when the enemy attacked him the Prophet[s.a] did defend himself. In spite of dearth of historical evidence there still is a reference to the Prophet's[s.a] use of the bow and arrows at Uhud in self-defence. A prominent Meccan, Ubi bin Khalaf Jamhi, actually died at his hand. When Ubi was advancing towards the Prophet[s.a] with the intention of killing him, the latter took the spear of Haris bin Sama who was standing near him and pierced it in Ubi's neck. Ubi fell from his horse and rolled down for some distance. Getting up, he ran towards his men shouting that he was killed by Muhammad[s.a]. People tried to console him by telling him that the injury was superficial and not at all fatal. He, however, kept on saying that he would not survive. In support of his conviction he referred to an incident that when once in Mecca he had told Muhammad[s.a] that he was rearing up his horse so that one day he may kill him sitting on its back, the Prophet[s.a] had retorted that it shall be otherwise. God willing, he himself would kill him. Ubi insisted that what the Prophet[s.a] had said was bound to

happen; and happen it did. While returning to Mecca from Uhud he died at a place called Sarf.[45]

After this it seems no single combatant had sufficient amount of courage to face the Prophet[S.A.]. Hence, a large group of infidels started pelting stones at him whereby his head was lacerated and blood flowed down his face. His lip was cut and forehead and cheeks were badly wounded. Ibne Qamiya struck him with his sword on the right side of his waist.[46] It is also said that it was this very Ibne Qamiya who had hit him with stones and caused injuries on his face and mouth.[47]

Certain other weapons were also used against the Prophet[S.A.] and ultimately he was so weakened that he fell down in a nearby pit. Thereafter, the enemy, perhaps believing him to be dead, paid no further attention to him. Thus, the rumour that the Prophet[S.A.] was dead became the means of his safety and preservation. The chief target of the Meccan army now was Ali[A.S.] who was engaged, elsewhere, in his mission of bringing down the standards of the opponents.

Shiite scholars maintain that in this battle only the face of the Prophet[S.A.] had received injuries and no tooth of his was damaged. According to their belief the Messenger of God was protected by Divine Power against the mutilation of any part of his body as it was unbecoming for his position and prestige.

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[45] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p. 19
[46] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p. 17
[47] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p. 20

Extraordinary Chivalric Feats of Ali [as]

Like the accounts of the various episodes of the Battle of Uhud, the reported feats of bravery and loyalty of Ali[as] also relate to different stages of the battle. There was a time when about a hundred or hundred and fifty loyalists were engaged in fighting with the infidels along with him. Then came the stage when those resolute fighters were killed or were incapacitated by injuries. Those who were putting up a brave show under inspiration from these men now saw wisdom in slipping away from the scene. Eventually it was only Ali[as] who was left to fight in defence of Islam. By looking at the various fragmentary accounts of the incidents pertaining to this battle from a logical point of view, the following sequence of events can be established. Thus, it seems that when the enemy attacked the Muslims suddenly from behind, most of them ran away in utter confusion. Those few who stayed on to fight had no time to organize themselves and face the enemy as a team. Each one of them was fighting alone at different places. At this stage, Ali[as], by virtue of his God-given perceptivity or, in materialistic terms, his superb martial skill, could see at once the impossibility of resisting the pressure of the enemy, much less of repulsing or vanquishing it. He was aware of the fact that a crowd, no matter how large, has its psychological peculiarities. The most important of them being the dependence of its morale on the presence of prominent personalities. If they are killed the entire horde is unnerved and, in spite of its numerical superiority, becomes dispirited and crestfallen. In an army the standard-bearers hold most significant position. It may be recalled that at Badr the infidels had held the weakness of their standard-bearers responsible for their defeat. Till that time the tribe of Abdud Dar had enjoyed the privilege of holding the standards of

Quraish. For this reason Abu Sufyan, before the start of the Battle of Uhud, had addressed their standard-bearers in the following words:

> O people of Abdud Dar you were our standard-bearers at Badr. You have, therefore, witnessed the catastrophe that befell us there. The morale of the army depends upon the standard-bearers. If the standards leave their place, the people also leave their positions. Therefore, either you should hold the standards properly or vacate your position and hand over the standards to us. We shall ourselves be responsible for their protection.

Hearing this they got plucky and vehemently refused to surrender their office to others. They assured him that when the occasion arose their performance shall be worth seeing.[48]

Their chief standard bearer, Talha. had been killed by Ali[as] in the initial stage of the battle. However, quite a few standard-bearers were still present.

Ali's[as] sole objective in the second and more critical stage of the battle was to bring down by any means the standards of the enemy. He knew that once they fell and no one capable of holding them was left, the army, irrespective of its size or strength, was bound to be defeated. In all probability he had made his uncle, Hamza, privy to this plan. As mentioned earlier, one of the standard-bearers of the Meccan army had already been put to death by Hamza. The leading figures in the enemy camp were also aware of the fact that once the standards fell the army would disperse. Hence, the responsible persons among the Quraish

[48] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p. 16

had warned their standard-bearers and no effort was spared to protect the standards and to keep them aloft. Abu Sufyan's wife, Hinda, in particular, was foremost in exhorting the standard-bearers. She addressed them thus:

> "Bravo! Bravo! O you descendants of Abdud Dar; Bravo! Our supporters and defenders. Strike and strike again with your sharp-edged swords."[49]

The result was that when Ali^as struck at one standard-bearer others took hold of the standard so that it did not fall. Ali^as had, thus, to combat not with just one standard-bearer but with several groups of enemy soldiers who came forward to protect the standard. This kind of fighting continued for long with Ali^as slaying one standard-bearer after another. Ultimately a stage arrived when the last standard too fell on the ground and no one dared to pick it up. After sometime a woman, named Amra binte Alqama Harisia, moved forward and lifted it up. The Quraish then gained fresh courage and entrusted the standard to a slave of the family of Abu Talha, named Sawab. He fought bravely with the standard in his hand. It is said that when his hands were severed he sat down on his knees and held the standard with his chest and neck till he was killed. He was the last to hold the standard of the Quraish as there was none left to pick it up after him. [50]

The object that Ali^as had set for himself was so important that had he not concentrated on it the enemy could not have been beaten. He was so pre-occupied with dealing with the standard-bearers that it was not possible for him to pay attention to any thing else. That is why that, in

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[49] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p. 13
[50] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p. 70

spite of his presence in the battlefield, the Prophet[s.a] was attacked and severely injured.

It seems probable that when the Quraish felt that their men were getting disheartened owing to the killing of their standard-bearers they, as a counter measure, thought of killing the Prophet[s.a] and, thus, take away from the Muslims the focal point of their holy strife. Through this they also hoped to break the spirit of Ali[a.s] and make him quit fighting as he would find it, so they thought, totally purposeless after the death of the Prophet[s.a]. But Ali[a.s] was not like others. When Ali[a.s] heard that the Prophet[s.a] was dead he fought more vigorously as he thought it futile to be alive after the Prophet[s.a]. This determination changed the complexion of the war and, with the last standard out of sight, the army of the Quraish began to retreat. Ali[a.s] now found an opportunity to look for the Prophet[s.a]. In the meantime the Prophet[s.a] had come out of the place he had fallen in. Some scattered detachments of the infidels again attacked him but Ali[a.s], by now, was with him. Ibne Jarir thus describes the scene:

> When Ali ibne Abi Talib[a.s] had killed all the standard-bearers, the Prophet[s.a], seeing a group of Quraish infidels, told Ali[a.s] to attack them. He attacked and dispersed them, killing Amr bin Abdullah Jamhi. Prophet[s.a] then saw another group of the Quraish and told Ali[a.s] to attack them. He attacked and dispersed them, killing Shaiba bin Malik of the tribe of Amir bin Loay. Overwhelmed by Ali's performance, Gabriel said, " O Prophet[s.a] this, indeed, is genuine sympathy and solicitude." The Prophet[s.a] replied, "Certainly it is. And why not should it be? After all he is from me and I am

from him." Gabriel said, "I am from both of you." A voice was then heard pronouncing that there was no sword but *Zulfiqar* (Ali's[AS] sword) and there was no valorous man but Ali[AS]."

It is this very pronouncement that has becomes so well-known in its original Arabic version:

"La Fata Illa Ali[AS] La Saif Illa Zulfiqar."

Referring to this critical encounter, Shah Abdul Haq has described Ali's[AS] feelings, feats and their effect in a very detailed and impressive manner. He says:

> Hazrat Ali[AS] is reported to have said that when the infidels had over-powered the Muslims, the Prophet[SA] was no longer visible to him. He searched among the dead but did not find him. He felt that perhaps God, to show His displeasure with the conduct of the Muslims, had withdrawn him to heaven. Reflecting on this, he felt that there was nothing better for him to do than to keep on fighting till death. He drew his sword, attacked the infidels and dispersed them and then he noticed that the Prophet[SA] was alive.

Shah Abdul Haq further writes:

> There is a report that the Muslims had fled leaving the Prophet[SA] alone. He became so angry that drops of sweat began to drop like pearls from his forehead. When he lifted his eyes upward, he found Ali[AS] standing by his side. The Prophet[SA] asked him as to why he too had not kept company with his brethren. Ali's[AS] reply was how could he become an apostate after having been a believer. He further added that for him the Prophet's[SA]

conduct was an exemplary model and his concern was with him only. He had nothing to do with those who had run after booty and then fled away. While they were talking to each other a band of the infidels turned towards the Prophet[saw]. He told Ali to repel them and fulfil the demands of loyalty and assistance, as that was the moment of rendering assistance. Ali[as] killed some of them and the rest ran away. It is said that witnessing Ali's[as] courageous performance Gabriel told the Prophet[saw] that it was the height of affectionate concern and bravery that Ali[as] had exhibited. The Prophet[saw] replied that Ali[as] was from him and he was from Ali[as]. This statement points towards that extreme closeness, sincerity and oneness that subsisted between him and Ali[as]. Gabriel, thereupon, said that he was from both of them. It is said that at that very moment a strange voice was heard saying "there was no valorous man but Ali[as] and no sword but *Zulfiqar*." Most probably the episode of *'Nade Ali'un Mazharul Ajaib'* (call Ali[as] who manifests wonders) also relates to this very year and this very battle but it is not mentioned in the books of traditions. In short, in this war, Ali[as] showed that kind of resistance, defiance, courage and bravery that it is impossible to imagine a performance superior to his."[51]

All the above details are also present in the version attributed to Imam Jafar Sadiq[as] by our scholars.[52]

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[51] *Madarijun Nubuwwa*
[52] *Aalamul Wara*

Having fought all alone with an army of thousands, Ali[as] had received some injuries as well. The following is Shah Abdul Haq's description of this:

> Qais bin Saad bin Ubbada narrates through his father that he had heard from Ali[as] himself that he had received sixteen wounds in the battle of Uhud out of which four had caused him to fall down.[53]

Keeping the pace of above events in mind it is difficult to fix with exactitude the time of the return of those who had made good their escape from the battle-field. One of the escapees had said later that he was the first to return. At what stage had he and others come back, who can tell? The above sequence of events shows that the Prophet[saw] was all alone when the army of infidels took to flight after the killing of their standard-bearers. He was again alone for a long time when Ali[as] came to him, fetched water in his shield and washed his head and face. This shows that when the attacks made by different batches of the scattered army of the enemy had been unsuccessful and the fighting had finally come to an end the Muslims, who had not run far away and were hiding in nearby shelters waiting for the ultimate result of the war, came back to the Prophet[saw]. It is also possible that some of them might have come earlier but finding the going tough had again left the scene of war.

Savage Revenge by Hinda

When the tumult of war was over the battle-field was cleared and Ali[as] was looking after the Prophet[saw], Hinda, along with other women of Quraish, rushed to the battle-ground and mutilated the corpses of the Muslims. Tabari

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[53] *Madarijun Nubuwwa*

says that barring the corpse of Hanzala bin Amir[54] which was spared because Hanzala's father was with the infidels, corpses of all the Muslims were mutilated. The main target of savage vengeance was the corpse of Hamza. Hinda showed extreme ferocity in getting his liver extracted. She put it in her mouth and tried to munch it but failing in this, she spat it out. She got a necklace made of the ears and noses of the dead and put it around her neck. She gave away her own necklace and earrings etc. to Wahshi, the killer of Hamza, as a reward. She then climbed up a big rock and started reciting loudly and with pride some verses composed by herself.[55]

Maulana Shibli writes:

> The women of Quraish, in their zeal to avenge Badr, took revenge from the corpses of the Muslims. They cut off their noses and ears. Hinda made a garland thereof and wore it in her neck. She went to the dead body of Hamza, dissected its abdomen, took out the liver, chewed it, and being unable to swallow it, threw it out. She is, on that account, named as *"Hinda-e-jigar khwara"* that is, "Hinda, the eater of liver".[56]

Ibne Abdul Bar has gone to the extent of writing that Hinda had actually roasted Hamza's liver on embers and then consumed it.[57]

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[54] *Aalamul Wara*
[55] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p. 22 & 23
[56] *Seeratun Nabi* Vol. 1 p. 273
[57] *Isteaab* Vol. 2 p. 286

After The War

The end of the war left the two parties so exhausted that none of them had the stamina to disturb the other. Both of them were at ease on this score. Eventually the victory was of Islam *but it was exclusively Islam's victory, not of the Muslims*. The Muslims on their part had collectively runaway from the battle-field in such a fashion that made heaven and earth witness to their shameful conduct. And then the Prophet^{SA} receiving serious injuries, the death of seventy Muslim soldiers, including that of a redoubtable warrior like Hamza, the lion of God and of the Prophet^{SA}, the presence of just one single helper near the Prophet^{SA} who, exhausted by relentless fighting would fall down again and again and only through his spirirtual power would get up and fight again. About this astounding event, according to Shah Abdul Haq, the Prophet^{SA} is reported to have declared that it was Gabriel who everytime helped Ali^{AS} to be on his feet again.[58] The state of affairs being such, how could Ali^{AS} pursue the enemy or attack those who had given up fighting?

The situation prevailing in the enemy camp was like this. They had suffered lesser loss of life but all of their standard-bearers were killed. Actually all their prominent persons had already been eliminated at Badr. The remaining ones, like Talha bin Abi Talha, were killed in this battle. Their army was now just a crowd with Abu Sufyan as the only leader of note. But he too was now chary of his life. He had seen that his entire army had failed to prevail against Ali^{AS} who single handedly had finished all the standard-bearers. He knew that now it shall be his turn if the fighting commenced again. He, therefore, had no courage or

[58] *Madarijun Nubuwwa*

inclination to restart the hostilities. Hence it was that at that moment such activities were seen that are possible only in a calm and peaceful atmosphere. On one side Ali^s was seen bringing water in his shield and washing the wounds of the Prophet^s. On the other, Abu Sufyan was strolling non-chalantly in the field and looking at the corpses, including the mutilated ones of the slain Muslims and that of Hamza in particular. One does not know whether he felt any contrition or not but after this he ascended a hillock and addressed the Prophet^s. The historians of the Sunnite school are of the view that at that stage some other muslims were also present near the Prophet^s. The non-believers were still uncertain whether the Prophet^s was dead or alive. Hence, Abu Sufyan shouted from the top of the hillock: "Uzza is our helper and he is not available to you." Thereupon the Prophet^s asked Umar to say: "God is our guardian, whereas you have none." Abu Sufyan then querried, "Is Muhammad^s among you?" He added: "You should know that the bodies of some of your dead have been mutilated. I had not ordered it but at the same time I did not prevent others from doing so. Even now I feel neither pleased by it nor distressed." [59]

According to another version Abu Sufyan, from the top of a hillock, asked the Muslims standing near the Prophet^s, whether the Prophet^s was with them. He repeated the question. The Prophet^s told his companions not to reply. Abu Sufyan then enquired if Ibne Abi Qahafa (Abu Bakr) and Ibne Khattab (Umar) were among them. He put his question thrice about each of them but the Prophet^s again directed his companions to keep quiet. Abu Sufyan then spoke to his companions and told them that they were dead

[59] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p. 21

otherwise they should have spoken back. Umar could not restrain himself now. He said, " O God's enemy, thou art a liar. We are alive." Abu Sufyan then shouted: " Long live Hubal."

The Prophet[saw] now told his companions to reply back. They asked him what they should say. The Prophet[saw] told them to say that God is Great and Superior. Hearing it, Abu Sufyan shouted that Uzza was with them and not with the Muslims. Now the Prophet[saw] advised his men to say, " God is their Guardian whereas the infidels have none." Abu Sufyan then said that Badr had been avenged. He further added that a war reputedly has two heads (that is two possibilities, victory or defeat). He also said that some corpses of their men had been multilated for which he had not given any order but, at the same time, he was not sorry for it.[60] This last sentence was either the voice of his guilty conscience or an attempt to add insult to the injury.

What Tabarsi has said about this episode is substantially different from the above version. According to him there is no evidence regarding the presence of anyone except that of Ali[as] at this stage. Hence, when Abu Sufyan went up the hillock, he shouted, "Is Ibne Abi Kabsha (the name by which the infidels of Quraish called the Prophet[saw]) also alive? We have seen Ibne Abi Talib[as] with our own eyes and he is, of course, present." Ali[as] replied: "I swear by Him who has sent him with truth that he is alive and rest assured that he is hearing you." Abu Sufyan then said:

All right, then listen, some of your dead have been mutilated. I swear by my god that I did not order it nor did I do anything to prevent it. We and you shall fight again at

[60] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p. 23-24

Badr next year in this very month. Ibne Qamiya had told me that he had killed Muhammad[s^] but for me you are more truthful than Ibne Qamiya."[61]

Sister at brother's corpse

When news about Hamza's death reached Medina his sister, Safiya, left for Uhud. Learning about it, the Prophet[s^] tried to stop her and sent her son to her for this purpose. The Prophet[s^] felt that the condition of Hamza's mutilated body was such that it would be impossible for her to endure the sight. But she refused, saying that as she already was aware of the horrible condition of her brother's body it shall serve no purpose to stop her from looking at it.[62]

The Prophet[s^] still took the precaution of getting a sheet of cloth spread over Hamza's corpse and grass and leaves spread over his feet as they could not be covered by the sheet. When Safiya was returning after praying for the salvation of her brother she broke down and started weeping profusely. The Prophet[s^] joined her in her grief and also wept with her.[63]

Religious Zeal of a lady

A somewhat elderly woman of Bani Najjar had lost her father, husband and brother in the war of Uhud. She came to the Prophet[s^] when some Muslims had come back and were crowding around him. She anxiously enquired: "Is the Prophet[s^] alive?" When she got a reply in the affirmative, she desired to have a glimpse of the Prophet[s^]. People moved aside and made a passage for her. She went near the

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[61] *Aalamul Wara*
[62] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p. 25
[63] *Tareekh* Khamees

Prophet[SAW] and said, "With you being alive, all hardships are easily endurable."[64]

Eye Opening Incidents

The physical eyes of a person only observe the presence of an individual in the company of the Prophet[SAW] and make that a standard indicator of his loyalty and devotion to him. Much more significant is his participation in a holy war which has only two possibilities. If one survives one attains the distinguished status of a *Ghazi* (crusader, holy warrior) and if one dies fighting, one becomes a martyr about whose beatitude there can be no doubt. But the fact that behind dazzling curtains pitch darkness may also be found lurking is conveyed to us by this war through two examples. One unmasks a so-called *Ghazi* and the other, an apparent 'martyr'. The first example is that of Hatib bin Umayya bin Rafey, an elderly person. Since the Battle of Uhud took place in the third year of *Hijrat*, every muslim who took part in it, is to be counted to some degree as belonging to the respectable group of the 'Early Believers'. So did Hatib. His young son, Yazid, was seriously injured in this battle. His condition worsened while being carried to his house. The muslims accompanying him started assuring him of his entry into heaven. Hatib retorted that he did not know if such glad tidings had any truth in them. What he knew was that they had deceitfully led his simple-minded young son to death for nothing and made him (Hatib) suffer his loss in old age.

The other man, named Qazman, was in the Muslim army. He fought courageously and after killing eight or nine non-believers he fell down severely wounded. While being

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[64] *Aalamul Wara*

taken from the battle-field, people congratulated him for being on his way to heaven. He asked them what for they were saying that. He had fought solely for his people. Had it not been so, he would never have taken part in the war. After this when the pain of his wounds became unbearable, he took-out an arrow from his quiver and cut away his artery which bled profusely. In this way he ended his life by committing suicide.[65]

Along with these muslims the conduct of a jew, named Mukhaireeq, is also worth mentioning. When the war at Uhud went against the Muslims he told the fellow jews that they must help Muhammad[s^]. They pleaded that it being a Saturday (their Sabbath) thay could do nothing that day. Putting on his arms, he said, "Saturday or no Saturday, I am going to fight." While leaving for the battlefield, he told his companions that in the event of his death all his assets shall be Muhammad's[s^], who shall be free to use them as he wished. He fought bravely and with zeal in support of the Prophet[s^] and was ultimately killed.[66]

Burial of the dead

Ibnul Wardi writes that the Prophet[s^] offered funeral prayers first for Hamza saying *Takbeer* seven times. This shows that the number of *Takbeer* and solicitations for salvation can be increased according to the rank of the deceased. Thereafter the bodies of other muslims were brought in batches and placed by the side of Hamza and joint prayers were offered for them and Hamza. In this way seventy two funeral prayers were offered and Hamza was included in all of them. He got Hamza buried in a separate

[65] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt). Vol. 3 p. 26
[66] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p. 21

grave. Two others, namely Amr bin Jamoh and Abdullah bin Amr were buried in one grave as, according to the Prophet[saw], in their life-time there was perfect mutual understanding between them.[67] The remaining martyrs were buried in one common grave. It is said that some persons had taken their dead to Medina for burial. The Prophet[saw] forbade it and said that their burial place should be there where they were killed.

Return to Medina

The war had ended in such a manner that none of the two sides had any strength left for another encounter. Abu Sufyan, coming close to the place where the Prophet[saw] was staying, declared that they would now fight next year at Badr. The Prophet[saw] told one of his companions to convey his consent. After this Abu Sufyan went back. Though the chances were very remote but still not ruling out the possibility of its being a kind of military tactics to cover a surprise attack, the Prophet[saw] told Ali[as] to follow the Meccans and observe their activities, especially their mode of travelling. If they were on camel-backs and not on horses then it should be inferred that they were really going back to Mecca. If it was otherwise, then it should mean that they were intending to attack Medina. In that case, the Prophet[saw] said that he would have to go to Medina to face them. Ali[as] brought the news that they were really going back. Thereafter, the Prophet[saw] returned to Medina.[68]

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[67] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p.21
[68] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p.24

Mourning for the martyrs

Ibne Jarir says that when the Prophet[s.a.] passed by the houses of Bani Abdul Ash-hal and Bani Zafar (the two tribes of *Ansar*) at Medina he heard the women crying for their relations killed at Uhud. The Prophet[s.a.] was touched by their wailing and tears gathered in his eyes. After a while he said: " But there is no one to weep for Hamza." Hearing this two of the *Ansar*, Saad bin Maaz and Usayd bin Huzayr, went to their houses and asked their women-folk to mourn for Prophet's[s.a.] uncle also.[69]

Tabari writes that these women of the *Ansar* went to Fatima[a.s.] and offered condolence to her on the death of Hamza. While going to the mosque the Prophet[s.a.] heard the sound of the wailing of the women coming from Fatima's[a.s.] house. He wished them well and said they had honoured the demands of sympathy and sorrow sharing.[70] Ibne Saad Katib Waqidi writes that after this it had become a custom with the women of *Ansar* that whenever any member of their family died, they would first mourn for Hamza and then for their relative.[71]

Swords of the Prophet[s.a.] and Ali[a.s.] in Fatima's[a.s.] hands

It is generally understood that the Prophet[s.a.] himself never participated personally in a war. This is true in respect of other wars but Uhud is an exception. When there was no one near him and Ali[a.s.] was engaged in fighting in the heart of the enemy forces, the Prophet[s.a.] actually fought with the enemy and injured and killed one of them. Further proof of this is found in history. After returning home the

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[69] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p.27
[70] *Aalamul Wara*
[71] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad as referred in *Tareekh-e-Ahmadi* p.45-46

Prophet[S.A.] gave his bloodstained sword to his daughter, Fatima[A.S.], to cleanse it. Ali[A.S.] also gave his sword to her and while handing it over to her he said that it had shown true loyalty to him that day. Some verses of Ali[A.S.] contained in his poetical collection relate to this event and are quoted by Ibne Jarir with a comment that "people believe" that when Ali[A.S.] gave his sword to Fatima[A.S.], he said:

> O Fatima take this sword which can not be condemned at all for I am not the one who gets perturbed and feels uneasy. I swear that I have fought purely for my love for the Prophet[S.A.] and in obedience to God. My sword was in my hand like a shooting star. I was killing brave fighters by wielding it and continued to fight till God scattered their formations and gave solace to (our) hearts.[72]

Battle of Hamrul Asad

The historians report that on the very next day of his return to Medina, that is, on Sunday the 16th Shawwal, the Prophet[S.A.] announced that he would go in pursuit of the enemy along with only those persons who had participated in the Battle of Uhud. Accordingly, all these people, many of whom were wounded and did not have horses, accompanied the Prophet[S.A.]. He went with them upto Hamrul Asad, eight miles away from Medina, and stayed there for three days. The enemy had already moved towards Mecca and the Prophet[S.A.] returned to Medina with his men.

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[72] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p.27 The historian's phrase, 'people believe(*zaamu)*' suggests certain element of doubt. Obviously, Ibne Jarir was not convinced of their authenticity. But his statement does show that in the fourth century Hijra, that is, in the time of Tabari these verses were well-known and, therefore, their antiqueness is beyond doubt.

It is said that it was only a move to show to the opponents that the Muslims had not lost courage and were feeling sufficiently strong to fight again.[73] These very historians have reported the condition of the two sides at the end of the fighting. Both parties had agreed to fight the next year. Therefore, from rational point of view, this report is unacceptable. Moreover, this show of strength appears strange after the weakness demonstrated by the Muslims just one day back. Also, after the Prophet[saw] had sent Ali[as] to observe the movements of the non-believers and was convinced that they had left for Mecca this kind of vacuous exhibitionism appears incompatible with his dignified status. Hence, one finds it difficult to give credence to this narration. It appears that the story of proceeding to Hamrul Asad has been invented by sympathetic and kindly disposed historians to serve two purposes: one, to cover up the actually demonstrated weakness of the muslims and second, to establish and authenticate their otherwise questionable loyalty to the utmost.

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[73] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3 p.28

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TRAGEDIES OF RAJEI AND BIR MAUNA

The sequence of mistakes that started from Uhud continued after it. The tragic event of Rajei happened after it and it was followed by a similar but more calamitous one of Bir Mauna. Some writers are of the view that both these events resulted from a conspiracy hatched by the Quraish of Mecca.[1]

It is to be remembered that the knowledge of the unseen or the unknown things was a God-given gift to Prophets and Imams that could be used only according to His will. In their everyday life they acted normally according to the received information and believed in the words and promises of the people. It was what they were enjoined to do by God, although sometimes this trust in others caused them some set back. The tragic occurrences at Rajei and Bir Mauna were of this nature. That first incident, that of Rajei, related to certain tribes named variously by the historians. Tabarsi calls them 'Azal' and 'Reesh', Ibne Khaldun as 'Azal' and 'Qara'[2], and, the author of *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* perhaps erroneously, as 'Aqal' and 'Farad'. Anyway these two tribes informed the Prophet[S] that they desired to embrace Islam and some persons be sent to teach them Quran and other religious matters. They knew that the Prophet[S] had earlier sent Musab to Medina on receiving a similar request from the people of that town.

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[1] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam*, Vol.1 p.77
[2] *Tareekh* Ibne Khaldun, Vol.1. p.768.

Hence they felt that as a matter of principle the Prophet[s.a] would do the same in respect of their request. The Prophet[s.a] had no reason to doubt their bonafides. He sent six persons under the leadership of Mursid, son of Abi Mursid Ghinwi. When they reached Batne Rajei, a brook belonging to the tribe of Huzail and situated near Asfan, the hosts acted treacherously and incited the people of Huzail to kill them and thus got all those six persons put to death.[3]

Another report about this incident mentions that the team from Medina got ready to fight when it was attacked. At this the people of Bani Huzail promised safety to them and declared their intention of taking them to Meccans and handing them over to them for money. Three of them, including Mursid, refused to go and died fighting. The remaining three were made captives and escorted to Mecca. One of them fought with the escort on the way to Mecca and lost his life. The remaining two, named Khabeeb and Zaid, were taken to Mecca and sold to the Quraish.[4] According to K.A.Hameed, Sufyan Hazali took them to Mecca. They were severely tortured and ultimately hanged to death.[5]

The martyrdom of Khabeeb at the hands of infidels is unforgettable. When the noose was put around his neck he uttered some extempore verses each word of which showed of what cast people like them were. Their hearts were replete with righteousness. They were the devoted moths o' that candle that was lit up to dispel forever the darkness tha pervaded the world. K.A.Hameed has translated thos verses as follows:

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[3] *Aalamul Wara*
[4] *Tareekh* Ibne Khaldun Vol. 2 p. 228 - 229
[5] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam-Tr.*

'Groups after groups of the non-believers have gathered all around me. I am standing at this place of destruction fettered in chains. They have called their women and children and have made me to stand near a strong wooden beam. They say that I can save my life if I choose to become a disbeliever. I prefer death to infidelity. I shall neither cringe nor weep nor wail before my enemies. I am sure I am going to face my Lord. I am not afraid of death but I do dread the fire of hell. O, Lord of the heaven give me patience to face this great ordeal. These infidels have cut my flesh to pieces and I have lost all hope of survival. I swear by God that when I am sacrificing myself for Islam, I do not care by which side of my body I fall, or in what manner I lose my life.'[6]

The incident of Bir Mauna took place upon the soil of Najd four months after the battle of Uhud. Some writers have specified that this happened in the month of Safar in the fourth year of *Hijrat*.[7]

The details of this event are as follows. A person called Abul Baraa Amir son of Malik, called *Mulaibul Asinna* that is player of (expert in use of) spears, came to the Prophet[sa] and requested him to send some persons to the people of Najd to motivate them to embrace Islam. He told him that he had no doubt that the people of Najd would respond favourably. When the Prophet[sa] said that he had no faith in the people of Najd, Abul Baraa took full responsibility upon himself. The Prophet[sa] then sent Manzar son of Amr with twenty to forty others who had learnt Quran by heart and

[6] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* p. 77- 78
[7] *Miratul Jinan* Vol.1 p. 9

were men of character. According to one report their number was seventy but Waqidi maintains that they were forty in all.[8]

They left for Najd and stayed near a well called Bir Mauna. One of them, named Hazam son of Malhan, was sent to the head of the Najdis, named Amir son of Tufail, with a letter from the Prophet[ﷺ]. Seeing that letter, he flared up and did not even read it. Contrary to well-recognized inter-tribal custom of the Arabs, he himself rushed towards the emissary and killed him. He also exhorted the people of Bani Amir to kill those sent by the Prophet[ﷺ] but they refused to act in contravention of Abu Baraa's undertaking. He then approached Asiyya, Raal and other neighbouring tribes. They surrounded the Muslims at the place where they were staying. The Muslims drew their swords and fought bravely till they all were killed. There would have been no one to convey this news to Medina had they not deputed two of their men, Amr son of Umayya Zamri and Haris son of Samma, to look after their animals in a grazing field at some distance from the scene of carnage. These men noticed vultures hovering over the place where the Muslims were staying. When they saw their companions lying butchered. Amr proposed to rush to the Prophet[ﷺ] to inform him about the happenings but Haris refused to go saying that he shall not miss the oppurtunity of securing for himself the bliss offered by the occasion and would prefer to die fighting at that very sacrificial spot. He fought with the infidels, killed two of them and ultimately made the supreme sacrifice. Amr was arrested by Amir's men.[9] This event took place in 4 A.H.

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[8] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi*, Vol. I p. 347
[9] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi*, Vol. I p. 348

Tabarsi says that it was Amr bin Umayya himself who delivered this information to the Prophet[saw] who was greatly saddened by this event.[10] All other Muslims were also deeply distressed by this tragedy. It is a very significant fact that the Prophet[saw], an embodiment of patience and forbearance, who never wished bad for his enemies who used to shower stones on him, was so much hurt by the unjustified killing of these innocent Muslims that, for a long time, during his routine prayers, he cursed those tribes by name who had perpetrated that dastardly crime.[11]

Confrontation with the Jews

It may be recalled that after the Prophet's[saw] arrival at Medina the Jews had entered into a formal agreement with him according to which they had pledged their loyalty to the Islamic state that had been established on behalf of God under the leadership of the Prophet[saw]. From legal point they had, by recogizing this state, tacitly agreed to be deemed as its bonafide subjects.[12] Hence, their position was not of a hostile nation with which any physical encounter could be apprehended. They had properly acknowledged their citizenship of that State.[13] If they committed breach of faith

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[10] *Aalamul Wara*

[11] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi*, Vol. 1, p.349, 350

[12] The Jewish tribes of Bani Nazeer, Bani Qurayzah and, Bani Qaynuqa were initially not included in the charter of friendship between the Prophet[saw] and the Jews but after a short time they too gratefully accepted its term. Syed Ameer Ali.-*Tr.*

[13] No kindness or generosity, however, on the part of the Prophet[saw] would satisfy the Jews, nothing could conciliate the bitter feelings with which they were animated. Enraged that they could not use him as their instrument for the conversion of Arabia to Judaism and that his belief was so much simpler than their Talmudic legends, they soon broke off and ranged themselves on the side of the enemies of the new faith. And when asked which they preferred, idolatry or Islam, they like many

or indulged in any seditious activity, the State had a right to admonish them. The action taken by the Prophet[SAW] against the Jews of Medina from the first one against Bani Nazeer to the last one against the Jews of Khaibar, can, therefore, not be termed as wars in the modern sense. Hence, the need to determine whether these actions were offensive or defensive in nature does not arise. These were strictly disciplinary and punitive steps, which in modern terminology are called 'Police Action'. Such steps are taken by a state to punish the unruly or rebellious section of the society. There was perhaps no proper term for such actions in those days. The earlier writers have, therefore, used the word *Ghazwa* or war for the expeditions against Bani Nazeer, Bani Qurayzah, Bani Al Mustaliq and the Jews of Khaibar in the sense in which they have used it for Badr, Uhud and Khandaq. We are using the same term for those events with a clarification that the same were not at all like

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Christian controversialists, declared they preferred idolatry; with all its attendant evils, to the creed of Muhammad[SAW]. They reviled him, they 'twisted their tongues' and mispronounced the Quranic words and the daily prayers and formulae of Islam, rendering them meaningless, absurd, or blasphemous, and the Jewish poets and poetesses, of whom their existed many at the time, outraged all common decency and the recognised code of Arab honour and chivalry by lampooning in obscene verse the Muslim women. But these were minor offences. Not satisfied with insulting the women of the Believers and reviling the Prophet[SAW], they sent out emissaries to the enemies of the State, the protection of which they had formally accepted. The Quraish who had sworn Muhammad's[SAW] death, were well acquainted, thanks to the party of Abdullah ibn Ubbay and the faithless Israilites, with the exact strength of the Muslims. They also knew that the Jews had accepted Muhammad's[SAW] alliance only from motives of temporary expediency, and that the moment they showed themselves in the vicinity of Medina the worshippers of Jehovah would break away from him and join the idolaters. S.Ameer Ali - *Tr.*

the wars of Badr and Uhud which have been proved to be always defensive as the Prophet[SAW] had never taken any initiative in respect of these engagements.

Ghazwa Bani Nazeer

Bani Nazeer was one of the powerful tribes of the Jews.[14] Their chief was Kaab son of Ashraf. Since till this moment their relations with the Muslims had been apparently quite cordial, the Prophet[SAW] went to Kaab to borrow some money needed for an Islamic expedition. Kaab outwardly accorded a warm welcome and engaged the Prophet[SAW] in conversation while other Jews, taking advantage of the situation, planned to put an end to Prophet's[SAW] life. A man was deputed to hurl a stone from the top of the wall against which the Prophet[SAW] was sitting. This man moved from his place to do the job but, in the meantime, Gabriel apprised the Prophet[SAW] of the plan hatched against him.[15] Ibne Khaldun also says: "God informed His Prophet (about it) through revelation."[16]

Some recent writers have also said the same thing.[17] Some companions are also reported to have been with the Prophet[SAW]. Without saying any thing to any one the Prophet[SAW] abruptly stood up, giving an impression that he shall soon come back after attending to some need. After waiting for sometime the companions of the Prophet[SAW], who were still there, felt worried and went in search of him. They made enquiries and were informed that he was seen

[14] It was a tribe of Ismaelite origin but naturalised as Arabs from very ancient times. Their most important colony was Khaibar, at a distance of four or five days' journey to the northwest of Medina.-*Tr.*

[15] *Aalamul Wara*

[16] *Tareekh* Ibne Khaldun Vol.2 p.271

[17] *Muhammad wa Banu Israil* p.84

going towards Medina. When they reached Medina, the Prophet[S.A.] disclosed the sinister plan of the Jews to them.

Some writers say that the Jews had actually put their plan into action and a heavy stone was hurled down at the Prophet[S.A.] from which he narrowly escaped.[18] This report would turn out to be very weighty if only its source could be found in ancient records. As a punishment for this treacherous action the Prophet[S.A.] asked the concerned Jews to leave Medina. At first they agreed but later on, egged on by the chief of the hypocrites, Abdullah bin Ubayy and others, they resiled and asserted that they shall not leave their fort, come what may.[19]

To punish them the Prophet[S.A.], taking a group of Muslims with him and giving the standard to Ali[A.S.], besieged the fort of the Jews. The Jews entrenched themselves inside the fort and started shooting arrows at the Muslims. One arrow landed inside the Prophet's[S.A.] tent, which was at once shifted to another place. Ali[A.S.] was on the lookout for their archers. Suddenly a renowned archer, Azura, along with two wrestlers come out from behind a secluded place with swords in their hands. Ali[A.S.] attacked them at once and killed Azura whose severed head he brought to the Prophet[S.A.]. Abu Dajana and others killed Azura's companions. Thereafter nobody came out of the fort. Seeing their defiant attitude the Prophet[S.A.] informed them, through Muhammad bin Muslema, that they had only three days time to leave Medina.[20] They had now realized that they could not face the Muslims and, therefore, they humbly submitted to the command. They soon left Medina

[18] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Vol.1 p.78
[19] *Madarijun Nubuwwa* Vol.2 p.203
[20] *Aalamul Wara*

and settled down at Khaibar. This happened in the month of Rabiul Awwal in the fourth year of *Hijrat*.[21]

Birth of Husain [A.S]

On the third of Shaban of this very year (the fourth year of *Hijrat*) Fatima[A.S] gave birth to the second grandson of the Prophet[S.A]. He was named Husain[A.S] Events of the future would show that this child was not just the son of Ali[A.S] and Fatima[A.S] and grandson of the Prophet[S.A] but also the saviour of his grandfather's religion and the cause of its perpetuation till doomsday. His birth was, so to say, the heading of that significant chapter of Islamic history which was to be written with his blood on the sandy plains of Karbala in the sixty-first year of *Hijrat*.

The Covenanted Encounter at Badr:Ghazwa Badrul Maoid.

The infidels had announced at Uhud that they should again have a confrontation with the Muslims at Badr in the following year. The Prophet[S.A] had accepted the proposal and, accordingly, left Medina on the first of Ziqad forty-five months after *Hijrat* [22] , after handing over the standard to Ali[A.S].[23] He stayed at Badr for one week. Abu Sufyan also came out with an army of Meccans. He was under the impression that after the frightening experience of Uhud the Muslims shall not have the courage to face his men and thus he would secure a victory without any effort. When he came to know from his intelligencers that the Prophet[S.A] had

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[21] *Ayanul Shia* Vol. 2 p. 211

[22] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi* p. 384. According to the author of *Aalamul Wara* it was in the month of Shaban.

[23] *Madarijun Nubuwwa* Vol.2 p. 208

already come out with full preparations, he changed his mind and went back to Mecca from Tehran.[24]

A bazaar (market) used to be held near Badr in those days. The Prophet[saw] and his companions did some profitable business there.[25] After staying for sixteen days they returned to Medina triumphantly.[26]

Ghazwa-e-Muraysi or Bani Mustaliq

This *ghazwa* took place on second Shaban in the fifth year of *Hijrat*.[27] A branch of the tribe of Khuzaa had come to attack Medina under the leadership of Haris bin Abi Zarar. The Prophet[saw] faced them near a well called Muraysi.[28] The people from other places, who had joined them in large number, ran away and only Haris and his tribesmen were left to fight the Muslims. The Prophet[saw] asked his companions to attack them collectively. As a result of this ten of them were killed and the rest were made captives.

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[24] Not the present day Capital of Iran.
[25] *Aalamul Wara.*
[26] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi.* p. 384.
[27] *Madarijun Nubuwwa* Vol.2 p. 211
[28] *Ayanul Shia* Vol.2 p. 219

11

GHAZWAE AHZAB (*KHANDAQ*)

The Meccans were by now convinced that their own strength was not sufficient to challenge the Prophet[SAW]. This realization was due to the reverses they had met at Badr and Uhud. At Badr, the Muslims without war equipment had thoroughly beaten an army three times larger than their own and killed almost every prominent figure of the enemy camp. At Uhud, too, despite putting the majority of the Muslims to fight the Meccans had failed to achieve victory and had even lost all their standard-bearers. The only course now open to them was to combine all those who could join hands against Islam and to attack with that combined strength. They could naturally count upon those Jews who were still at Medina and were feeling sore on account of the exile of Bani Nazeer. Over and above all this, some of the Jewish chiefs, like Huyee bin Akhtab, Salam bin Abi Haqiq, Kinana bin Rabi and Salam bin Mushkan had themselves approached the leaders of Quraish at Mecca and persuaded them to mount a joint attack against the Muslims at Medina.[1]

Abdul Bari is definite that this Ghazwa took place on 28th day of Ziqad in the fifth year of *Hijrat*.[2] Some others

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[1] *Tareekh* Ibne Khaldun p.774; *Aalamul Wara*

[2] *Dawat*, Delhi, *Seerat Tayyaba* Edition dated 12th Rabiul Awwal, 1379 Hijra, p. 183

say it was in Shawwal and not in Ziqad.[3] Khwaja Latif Ansari has also stated Ziqad and has added that it was March or April of 627 A.D.[4]

The difference of opinion about the months has been extended by Ibne Khaldun to years. He has stated that this Ghazwa took place not in the fourth but fifth year of *Hijrat*. To support this view he has referred to Abdullah bin Umar who had once stated that since he was fourteen years old at the time of Uhud, the Prophet(S.A.W.) sent him back on the ground of minority. He was permitted to join the battle of *Khandaq*, as he was then fifteen years old. It means that the interval between Uhud and Khandaq was just of one year.[5] This reasoning does not carry much weight. The view that this Ghazwa took place in the fifth year of *Hijrat* appears to be more sound.[6]

Tabarsi says that the Jewish chiefs named above had also approached the leaders of the tribes of Ghatfan and Kinana and succeeded in persuading them to join the Meccan-Jewish confederacy.[7]

The army of Meccans started under the command of Abu Sufyan. People of Ghatfan were led by Ainia bin Haseen along with Bani Fazara. Haris bin Awf was leading Bani Murra. Dubra bin Tareef was with the tribe of Ashja. No tribe of the Jews was with them because it was planned that they shall attack the Muslims from inside Medina so that they were sandwiched between the two armies.

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[3] *Ayanul Shia* Vol. 2 p.222
[4] *Islam aur Musalmanon ki Tareekh* Vol.1 p. 109
[5] *Tareekh* Ibne Khaldun Vol.2 p. 773
[6] *Murawwajuz Zahab* Vol. 2 p.183
[7] *Aalamul W'ara*

The Prophet[ﷺ] got timely information of the entire plan. Historians are unanimous that it was Salman Farsi who suggested to the Prophet[ﷺ] to get a trench dug out[8] to obstruct the enemy's entry into Medina. The town was then surrounded by mountains on three sides and, therefore, the enemy could enter only from one side. Salman's proposal for digging a trench obviously was about that side. Accordingly, a wide and deep trench was dug that could not be crossed easily either by men or by horses. Long stretches of that trench are still visible and people coming for *Haj* make it a point to view these preserved portions reverently while visiting Medina. Waqidi says that the trench ran from Mazad to Zabab and then upto Ratej. Mazad was a mound belonging to a branch of Banu Salma. It was situated to the west of the 'Victory Mosque'.[9] Ratej was a hillock by the side of Mount Bani Ubaid and to the west of Bathan.[10] This description also shows that the trench was only on one side of Medina. K. A. Hameed says:

> Salman Farsi placed a proposal before the Prophet[ﷺ] that in Persia trenches are dug around the city on such critical occasions to prevent the entry of the enemy. The Prophet[ﷺ] liked the proposal and a deep trench was dug around Medina.[11]

The specification 'around Medina' does not appear to be correct because digging in hilly areas on all sides was the work of several months that should have statrted before the setting out of the Meccans. They surely would have learnt

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[8] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi* p.445
[9] *Wafaul Wafa*. Vol.2 p.370
[10] *Wafaul Wafa* Vol. 2 p. 310
[11] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Vol.1 p.79

about it during that long period. Facts, however, show that only after reaching near it they saw the trench and had to stop there. It means that the trench was hurriedly dug in a few days after the non-believers had marched out of Mecca.

Most probably this war took place in the month of Shawwal and not Ziqad and the digging of the trench must have been done in the later days of Ramzan. Commentators of the Quran state that the following verse of *Sura 'Al-Baqar'* was revealed when the trench was being dug:

> Permitted to you, on the night of the fasts, is the approach to your wives. They are your garments and ye are their garments. God knoweth what ye used to do secretly among yourselves; but He turned to you and forgave you; so now associate with them, and seek what God hath ordained for you, and eat and drink, until the white thread of dawn appear to you distinct from its black thread; then complete your fast till the night appears .[12]

In the beginning there was a religious injunction prohibiting cohabitation with spouses during the fasting month of Ramzan even in the night time. People often flouted it stealthily and God repealed that injunction through this verse with an admonition for the past transgressions and a pardon for the future. Repeal of this injunction is clearly mentioned in the above verse of the Quran. The later part of the verse refers to the eating hours during Ramzan but there is no clear indication that any prevailing command about this was being withdrawn. According to a narration there was an ordinance that if any body fell asleep before breaking his fast he could not eat or

[12] Quran, 2: 187

drink anything thereafter.[13] If there was any such ordinance it stood repealed after this revelation. There is, however, no admonition as nobody had violated it. As a matter of fact a companion of the Prophet ﷺ, named by some as Khawat bin Jubair and by others as Mutim bin Jubair, had fallen asleep while digging the trench. He fasted again on the following day without eating or drinking anything and engaged himself in digging the trench. As a result of this he fainted and fell down. This verse was then revealed setting aside the earlier command.

Like other Muslims the Prophet ﷺ also participated in digging the trench. He had tied a stone on his abdomen to suppress hunger.[14]

According to a report there was also a special reason for the excessive weakness of the Muslims during this time. It was starvation caused by a famine in and around Medina. Khawja Muhammad Latif writes:

> There was famine in Medina for several months prior to this event. The entire date crop was destroyed. There was shortage of foodstuffs. Import of food articles was disrupted owing to the attack by the non-believers. Muslims were subjected to indigency and starvation. Added to this, there were strong stormy winds accompanied by clouds and drizzling. Day-long digging in the hilly track was a nerve-shattering task even for the most stout and courageous persons.[15]

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[13] *Tafseer Majmaul Bayan*, Chap.(*Para*) 2
[14] *Madarijun Nubuwwa* Vol. 2 p. 228
[15] *Islam aur Musalmanon ki Tareekh* Vol.1 p. 111 & 112

It was during this trench-digging that the Prophet[S.A.], according to some narrators, conferred that distinction upon Salman which no other companion could acquire. Salman was not like those people who after offering a suggestion refrain from taking any part in its execution. He had not only suggested digging of the trench but also actively associated himself with it. The Prophet[S.A.] allotted forty yards of land in length to each batch of ten Muslims for digging. Salman was then very old. His age, at that time, was counted in terms of centuries instead of years but still he was quite stout and a man of strong will and determination. More than that he had such a tremendous spiritual power that he alone dug that much of trench which a batch of ten Muslims could dig. There was a tussle among *Muhajireen* and *Ansar* over owning Salman. *Muhajireen* claimed that he was one of them as he too had come from outside. *Ansar* asserted that he was like them as *Muhajireen* were those who had come from Mecca and Salman had not come from there. Hearing their respective claims the Prophet[S.A.] said:

" Salman is from among us, the *Ahle-Bait*."[16]

Tabarsi[17] has referred to it while discussing the following verse of the Quran.

> Say: "O God! Lord of Power (and Rule), Thou givest Power to whom Thou pleasest, and Thou strippest off Power from whom Thou pleasest: Thou enduest with honour whom Thou pleasest, and Thou bringest low whom Thou pleasest: in

[16] *Madarijun Nubuwwa* Vol. 2 p. 230
[17] *Majmaul Bayan*

Thy hand is all Good. Verily, over all things Thou hast power."[18]

Allama Nuri has also referred to it in his account of the affairs of Salman.[19]

When the infidels reached near Medina they saw the trench and took positions along it. The Muslim army was on the other side. For more than twenty days the two armies faced each other and, barring exchange of arrows and pelting of stones, no fighting took place.[20]

Breach of faith by Bani Qurayzah

The motivators of this war were the Jews who had been exiled from Medina. It was through their effort that different elements opposed to Islam were brought together. The tribe of Bani Qurayzah was still at Medina. They were apparently still adhering to the terms of the treaty of friendship and the Muslims had no reason to apprehend any trouble from within Medina. The Jews, who were outside Medina, now attempted to exhort them to rise in revolt against the Prophet[s.a.]. That external element had even assured the infidels of Mecca that if they attacked Medina its Jewish residents shall help them with their seven hundred and fifty experienced warriors. When the Meccan army reached near Medina, Abu Sufyan reminded Huyee bin Akhtab, chief of Bani Nazeer, about his assurance and asked him to go to Medina and prevail upon the people of Bani Qurayzah to repudiate their agreement with the Prophet[s.a.] about fighting the invaders of Medina along with

[18] Quran, 3:26
[19] *Nafsur Rahman*, p. 31
[20] *Aalamul Wara*

the muslims.[21] Huyee entered Medina quietly and went to Kaab bin Asad, the chief of Bani Qurayzah, to make him renounce the agreement. Kaab sensing the purpose of his visit, refused to see him. However, Huyee was not put off by this and eventually he succeeded in meeting Kaab. He gave such an exaggerated account of the strength of the Quraish and certainty of their success that Kaab was won over. He sent for the deed of covenant made with the Prophet$^{s^{\wedge}}$, tore it into pieces and proclaimed its repudiation to his people.[22]

There are certain people who have, by nature an extraordinary fondness for delivering frightening news. This tendency actually is reflective of their own peculiar inner condition. Accordingly, Waqidi writes:

> When the Prophet$^{s^{\wedge}}$ of God and other Muslims were at the trench, Umar bin Khattab came to the Prophet's$^{s^{\wedge}}$ tent and told him: "O Prophet$^{s^{\wedge}}$ I have learnt that people of Bani Qurayzah have repudiated the covenant and are ready to fight against us." This news caused great distress to the Prophet$^{s^{\wedge}}$.

When he wished to send someone to ascertain the facts, Umar suggested the name of Zubair. Zubair went there and brought the news that they (Bani Qurayzah) were buttressing their fort for its protection and preparing for war.

The Prophet$^{s^{\wedge}}$ called Saad bin Maaz, Saad bin Ubbada and Asad bin Huzayr who, being very prominent and respectable citizens of Medina, had an equation with the

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[21] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi* p. 454
[22] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi* p. 456

Jewish chiefs since old days. Saad bin Maaz, in particular, had very deep and cordial relations with them. They were asked to go to the Jews and find out their intentions. They were also told that if they found the information about their hostility incorrect they should deliver it to him clearly and openly. If it happened to be otherwise then they should express it in such words which the generality of the Muslims could not understand. When these peope went to speak with the Jews they were greeted with filthy abuses. They came back disappointed and informed the Prophet[ﷺ] in guarded words so that the Muslims did not know the actual situation and get dispirited. But a fact known to several persons cannot remain a secret for long. From the very next day the entire Muslim camp became aware of the designs of the Jews of Medina whereby they felt extremely disturbed. For anyone it would have been almost impossible to give an exact account of their disquietude and, for others, to believe that the heroes of Islam could ever behave like that had the Quran not portrayed their condition in the following verses:

> Behold! They came on you from above you and from below you, and behold, the eyes became dim and the hearts gaped up to the throats, and ye imagined various (vain) thoughts about God! In that situation were Believers tried: they were shaken as by a tremendous shaking.[23]

It is obvious that the Quran would not have referred to it had it not been (barring a few exceptions) the condition of the Muslims in general. Waqidi has quoted Abu Bakr as saying:

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[23] Quran. 33: 10 & 11

> More than the enemy in front of us, we were worried about our families at Medina because of Bani Qurayzah. I climbed up the hill of Sala again and again to look at the houses at Medina and thanked God when I found everything peaceful there.[24]

The Prophet[S.A] and his companions could themselves not leave the trench on account of the enemy who was facing them from the other side. He, however, deputed Salman bin Aslam Ashbali with two hundred persons and Zaid bin Harisa with three hundred persons to enter Medina from different directions, raising slogan of *Takbeer*, so that the Muslims staying inside the houses felt re-assured and the enemy also realised that they were not defenceless. As a result of this strategy Bani Qurayzah did not have the courage to launch any attack from inside.[25]

Details of the war.

In the light of the authentic accounts of authoritative historians it can be said that the war of Khandaq was, in fact, the achievement of only one person, namely Ali[A.S].

K.A. Hameed, who appears to have written his book with a design to suppress the achievements of Ali[A.S] has, perhaps under the pressure of his conscience, mentioned Ali's[A.S] name while writing about Khandaq. However, by severely condensing its account, he has drawn a veil over Ali's[A.S] feats.

His words are:

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[24] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi* p. 460
[25] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi* p.460

> The enemies besieged Medina for twenty days but, despite their great efforts, could not enter into the city. Sporadic clashes were taking place at individual level wherein sometimes the infidels succeeded and sometimes the Muslims. Ali[a.s] performed extraordinary feats of bravery which left the Quraish wonder-struck."[26]

He was perhaps inspired by the following observations of Shah Abdul Haq:

> Infidels came and attempted to reach the Prophet's[s.a] tent but it was not possible for them to cross the trench. Ultimately the two armies clashed. Bravery and courage shown by Ali[a.s] therein were such that even one's imagination cannot fully comprehend them. The Prophet[s.a] has been quoted as saying that Ali's[a.s] fighting on the day of Khandaq excelled all the good actions collectively done by the Muslim community till the day of resurrection. A similar narration is found in *Rauzatul Ahbab.*[27]

One fails to understand that when the two hostile armies were on the two opposite sides of the trench and none of them was able to cross it, then how could they fight either individually or collectively. The ancient sources mention that fighting on the two sides was limited to shooting of arrows and pelting of stones like the present day exchange of fire between Egypt and Israil from the two sides of the Suez Canal. There is no hint at all about any individual or collective encounter. The historians have

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[26] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e Alam* Vol. I p. 79
[27] *Madarijun Nubuwwa* Vol. 2 p. 233 -234

rather plainly stated that on account of the trench no fighting took place. Ibnul Wardi writes:

> The infidels were there for more than twenty days and nights. The Prophet[ﷺ] positioned himself firmly against them. There was no fight during this period barring some shooting of arrows. It was then that Amr bin Abdwud came to the battle-field.[28]

Ibne Khaldun says:

> Muslims were besieged for about a month but there was no fighting. This situation dragged on for long till some horsemen of the Quraish crossed over to the other side of the trench. Akrama bin Abu Jahl and Amr bin Abdwud were among them.[29]

Ismail Abul Fida has used somewhat similar words to describe the situation.[30]

Tabari writes:

> The Prophet[ﷺ] took up his position and so did the infidels. The two sides were there for more than twenty days and nights, almost for a month, but there was no fighting except the shooting of arrows and pelting of stones.[31]

He states further:

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[28] *Tareekh* Ibnul Wardi Vol. 1 p.122
[29] *Tareekh* Ibne Khaldun Vol.2 p.775
[30] *Tareekh* Abul Fida Vol.1 p.142
[31] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p. 572

"God's Prophet[ﷺ] positioned himself and the enemy kept them under siege. Beside this, there was no fighting between them."[32]

Hafiz Zehbi says:

"In this encounter there was only exchange of arrows and trial of patience for more than twenty days. It was then that Amr bin Abdwud came out to fight."[33]

As a matter of fact there was only one engagement in the course of this battle and it has been reported by each and every historian. That engagement comprised just one event and that was Ali's[ع] exclusive achievement.

Challenge by Amr and Ali's superb performances

After suffering casualties at Badr and Uhud the Meccans were left with only one warrior from whom they could expect something. He was Amr bin Abdwud bin Ali Qais, from the line of Amr bin Loay bin Ghalib, known as Bani Amir. For that reason the word Amiri was also suffixed to his name. He was present at Badr where he was so seriously wounded that he could not take part in the battle of Uhud. He had come to Khandaq with great fervour and had placed an insignia on his head to highlight his distiguished position.[34]

Amr's name is also found among those who used to shoot at the Muslim army from near the trench at night. The purpose of his visit to the site of the trench was to demonstrate his zeal for fighting. His presence even on the

[32] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p.573
[33] *Al Ibr* Vol.1 p. 7
[34] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 2 p. 7

other side of the trench created panic among the Muslims. Often the Prophet ﷺ was disturbed in his sleep. To brace them up, he had to take the trouble of going upto the trench in the darkness of the night.[35]

This shows that there was a constant apprehension in the mind of the Muslims that Amr bin Abdwud and others might cross the trench and come to their side at any moment. There was no other reason for their being so upset. It appears that night after night Amr used to move along the entire length of the trench to find a spot from where a master horseman could conveniently cross over to the opposite side. Eventually he found such a spot and after that persuaded some top ranking warriors to accompany him. They were:

1. Akrama bin Abi Jahl Makhzumi, 2. Zarar bin Khattab of Bani Maharib, 3. Habira bin Ali Wahab Makhzumi, 4. Nawfil son of Abdullah and, 5. Mardas.[36]

Amr was obviously fed up with prolonged siege and ineffective archery. He was eager to have a final and decisive encounter. He and his companions were determined to bring the war to an end this way or the other. On the morning of the day fixed for the crucial engagement, they put on their armour. While they were riding out of their camp, they happened to pass by the ranks of the tribe of Kinanah. They exhorted them to join them, saying:

"O brave men of Kinanah get ready. You will learn today who are true horsemen."[37]

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[35] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi*

[36] In some histories 'Mardas' is shown as a part of Zarar bin Khattab's name. Khattab is described as a son of Mardas.

[37] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 2 p.272

Hearing this the contingent of the Kinanah soldiers also got ready to accompany them. All these warriors moved along the trench to cross it from its narrowest section but finding most of it impassable they expressed, indirectly, their anger against Salman, uttering:

"It is a device which the Arabs did not know."[38]

Ultimately they found the place they were looking for and from there their horses of Arab breed jumped to the other side.[39] Apparently it was a foolish act, a product of excessive enthusiasm. By crossing over to the other side of the trench they had cut themselves off from the rest of their army. There were no planks to provide a bridge and thus make it possible for their army to cross over. The Muslim army could have easily crushed these few persons who had come to their side. But the awe of one single person, Amr bin Abdwud, significantly enhanced by his astonishingly daring act, had totally unnerved it. The bewilderment of the Muslims at this moment has been portrayed thus:

> "All the companions were so motionless as if the birds were sitting on their heads."[40]

However brave Amr might have been it is obvious that his reckless move was a big gamble wherein he had staked his life as well as his hard-earned life-long reputation. He ought to have apprehended the consequence of a massive muslim attack from all sides on him and his handful companions. Noticing absolute passivity and inactivity in the Muslim camp, Amr was emboldened to challenge them

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[38] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 2 p. 273
[39] *Aalamul Wara*
[40] *Tareekh-e-Khamees* Vol.1 p.486

rudely. Ali[as] was then with the Prophet[saw]. Hearing Amr's challenge he said:

"O, Prophet of God, I shall face him."

The Prophet[saw] wanted others to have a chance. He was aware of the feelings and views of his 'seasoned' and well experienced 'companions' about Amr and also witnessed the kind of things that had been publicly done to make a bug bear for the muslim army. He, therefore, told Ali[as] meaningfully :

"Sit down.(Don't you know?) He is Amr!"

In the meantime, Amr felt further emboldened. He began to speak tauntingly about the muslims' faith in the after-world and their concept of heaven and hell. He addressed the muslim host thus:

> "Where is your paradise wherein you believe to enter after being killed? Why, then, are you not sending any body towards me?"

Ali[as] stood up impatiently and the Prophet[saw] repeated his earlier words. When Amr challenged for the third time. Ali[as] stood up again and on Prophet's[saw] repetition of the earlier statement, he said:

"If he is Amr, let him be so.(What does it matter?)"

Now that the purpose of the Prophet[saw] in delaying the matter was served he permitted him to proceed. [41]

The special kind of insight that the Prophets and Imams are known to have been endowed with was quite a different thing. Normally the effect produced on them by a situation was perfectly in keeping with its natural demands and

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[41] *Tareekh-e-Khamees* Vol. I p. 286

prevailing conditions. Their response to it was like that of other human beings. There was, therefore, nothing wrong or unusual if they felt disturbed in the face of a calamity. But, for high objectives such calamities are always welcome. This courting of danger, which involves putting one's own life, or that of a dear one, in peril for a noble cause is 'sacrifice' in its truest sense.

It would, therefore, be simply inane to say that when every single muslim was unnerved by the appearance of Amr, the Prophet[S.A.] had no apprehension at all. Perturbed he was; especially when, in defence of the honour of the true faith, he sent for fighting Amr someone whom he had brought up in his lap as his own child. This is borne out by the special preparation that he made and the ardent prayers that he offered to God when Ali[A.S.] was getting ready to meet Amr. The Prophet's[S.A.] action at this stage was that of a devout person fully conscious of the hazards of the situation.

The situation is thus described in *Tareekh-e-Khamees*:

> When God's Prophet[S.A.] permitted Ali[A.S.] he gave him his own sword *(Zulfiqar)*, put on him his own coat of mail, wound his turban around his head and prayed to God to help him against Amr. It is stated in another narration that the Prophet[S.A.] raised his turban and said: 'O God, you took Ubaida from me at Badr and Hamza at Uhud. Now only this Ali[A.S.] is with me. He is my brother and my uncle's son. *Do not make me companionless. Surely, Thou art the most enduring one.*[42]

[42] *Tareekh-e-Khamees* Vol. 1 p. 487

The Quranic verse at the end shows that the Prophet[saw] considered Ali[as] as his child and his only helper in the world. Regarding actual fight between Ali[as] and Amr, Tabarsi[43] has been extremely economical in describing it. He just says:

"Ali[as] came out to face him (Amr) and killed him."

Ibne Khaldun[44] and Hafiz Zehbi's[45] accounts are , more or less, of the same nature and equally brief.

But, obviously, for such a veteran warrior to get killed could not have been such a brief or insignificant event. Some other historians of the Sunnite sect have given a detailed but somewhat jumbled description of the encounter.

It is mentioned that when Ali[as] moved forward a few other Muslim soldiers also followed him. He positioned them at that narrow stretch of the trench from where Amr and his companions had crossed over. Meanwhile, Amr and his companions came towards Ali[as] on their galloping horses.[46]

When Ali[as] went upto Amr he asked him who he was. Ali[as] told him that he was Ali [as]. At this Amr asked whether he was a descendent of Abde Munaf. Ali[as] affirmed that he was and then gave his full name, Ali ibne Abi Talib. Hearing this, Amr addressed Ali[as] as his nephew and enquired as to why none of his uncles, who were older than him, had come to face him. He added that he did not like

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[43] *Aalamul Wara*
[44] *Tareekh* Ibne Khaldun Vol.2 p. 775
[45] *Al Ibr* Vol.1 p.7
[46] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 2 p. 567

shedding his blood. Swearing by God, Ali[as] bluntly told him that he for one had no qualms in shedding his blood.

Enraged by that reply Amr drew his sword which looked like a blazing flame[47] and ferociously struck his own horse with it whereby all its four legs were cut off. He then moved towards Ali[as].[48]

At this stage, according to Tabari, Ali[as] said to Amr, that he, Ali[as], had heard that he (Amr) had pledged before his god that if a Quraish made two wishes, he would grant one of them. He confirmed it. Ali[as] told him that first, he would invite him towards God, His Prophet[saw] and Islam. Amr's reply was that he had no need for them and asked him about the other wish. Ali[as] told him that his second wish was that he should get to fighting. Amr told him that he did not relish killing him but Ali[as] retorted that he was eager to put an end to his life. This made Amr furious. He abruptly jumped down from his horse, gave it a sword blow which severed its legs or wounded its face. After that he confronted Ali[as].[49]

Dayar Bakri's account is slightly different. According to him the first demand made by Ali[as] was the same as given by Tabari, namely, acceptance of Islam with faith in God and His Prophet[saw]. The second one, after Amr's rejecting the first, was that he should go back and rest at his home. His reply was that it was not possible because the Arab women folk shall taunt him saying that he had gone to the battlefield and then ran away from there. Ali[as] then said that after that the only possible course was to move forward

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[47] *Tareekh-e-Khamees* Vol.1 p. 487
[48] *Tareekh* Ibnul Wardi Vol. 1 p. 122; *Tareekh* Abdul Fida Vol.1 p.180
[49] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p. 567

and start fighting. He then said that he was reluctant to kill him but Ali^as replied that he was quite willing to kill him. Amr then jumped down from the horse, cut its legs with his sword, struck it on its face and moved towards Ali^as.[50]

Other wars fought by Ali^as show that no warrior could stay before him for long. He generally finished his opponent with the very first stroke. It is said about him that:

> "His strokes were unique in nature. If the sword hit the opponent on his head it cut him length-wise and, if it hit him on his side, it cut him into two parts sideways."

Amr was the only veteran fighter who stayed for long before Ali^as. Several blows were exchanged between him and Ali^as. All the details of this fight have not been recorded since the two warriors were hidden from the view by the cloud of dust raised by their movements. But, still, whatever brief account is found in historical records it sufficiently bears out the above fact. The briefest account is that of Tabari who says:

> "The two gallants entered the battle-field, showed their adroitness as a result of which Ali^as killed him."[51]

This only shows that he was not killed instantaneously and the encounter that involved exchange of blows lasted for some time. Ibnul Wardi and Shaikh Husain bin Muhammad Dayar Bakri give more details. Ibnul Wardi says:

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[50] *Tareekh*-e-Khamees Vol.1 p. 487.
[51] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt), 1961 Edn.Vol. 2 p. 574.

> These two fought each other and dexterously they moved from one position to another and were covered up by dust. When Muslims heard the shout, "God is great", only then they learnt that Ali[AS] had killed Amr. When the dust subsided they saw Ali[AS] sitting on his chest and severing his (Amr's) head.[52]

Shaikh Husain bin Muhammad bin Hasan Dayar Bakri's account is:

> At the end of the earlier dialogue he (Amr) turned towards him (Ali) and the latter moved forward with a shield in his hand to face him. Amr struck him with his sword and it cut Ali's[AS] shield and reached upto his head and wounded him. When Ali[AS] attacked him, his sword hit Amr's shoulder whereby he fell down. A lot of dust was raised. The Prophet[SA] heard the slogan of *Takbeer* and from that he knew Ali[AS] had killed Amr.[53]

It should not be understood that the entire fighting was just confined to two blows. Rising of a cloud of dust indicates that the fight continued for long and the two blows referred to above were the two most crucial and effective strokes, one injured Ali[AS] and the other killed Amr. It is, however, strange that an important event like receiving of injury by Ali[AS] should be bypassed by historians when it has been definitely proved to be true. Equally surprising is the omission of the fierce exchange of blows which also was an authentic fact.

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[52] *Tareekh* Ibnul Wardi Vol. 1 p.122 ; *Tareekh* Abul Fida Vol. 1 p.192.
[53] *Tareekh-e-Khamees* Vol.1 p.79.

Other companions of Amr

It has been stated earlier that some intrepid persons of the enemy camp had crossed the trench along with Amr . The names of some of them as they are found in historical records are also known. These fighters had no standing of their own as they had come depending solely on Amr's support. Now when they saw him lying besmeared with blood and dust, they took to their heels. Riding on horsebacks they crossed over to their side of the trench by the same route whereby they had come.[54] Perhaps the Muslims who were guarding that route were unable to stop them and Ali^as, as a matter of principle, did not chase the fugitives.

Tabari says that two companions of Amr had lost their lives. One of them, Manabba bin Usman, was struck by an arrow as a result of which he died on reaching Mecca. The other one, Nawfil bin Abdullah, got hurt when he jumped into the trench and the Muslim soldiers started pelting stones at him. He shouted:

"O, worthy sons of Arabs, if you wish to kill me use some better method."

Ali^as then stepped into the trench and killed him. Muslims acquired possession of his corpse. The infidels desired to have it returned on payment of money. The Prophet^saw handed it over to them saying he had no need either for the corpse or for the payment.[55]

Dayar Bakri relates that after the killing of Amr, two persons, Zarar bin Khattab and Habeera bin Wahab, jointly

[54] *Tareekh* Ibne Khaldun Vol. 1 p. 575
[55] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) 1961 Edn. Vol. 2 p. 574

attacked Ali[as]. He turned towards them. Zarar looked into the face of Ali[as] and ran away. Later on he described that he had seen the image of his death in Ali's[as] face and that was the reason of his flight. Habeera stayed for some time. When Ali's sword touched his body he took off his coat of mail, threw it aside and ran away. Ali[as], as per his practice, did not chase him.

At this stage the historian, Dayar Bakri, reports a strange scene described by an unnamed narrator. He writes :

> Zarar bin Khattab was running away. Umar chased him. He at first ran fast. After a while, perhaps on realising that the pursuer could not be Ali[as] because Ali[as] never chased a fugitive, he turned back and attacked Umar with a spear. But he soon drewback his hand and said: "O, Umar, I am doing this favour (sparing your life) to you on this occasion. Do not forget it. This is a favour for which there can be no recompense. Just don't forget it."[56]

A Paragon of Magnanimity

In Arabia, normally, a person after killing his adversary used to take off from the body of his victim his clothes and armour. In Islam also this custom was retained for the benefit of its fighters. It was their legal right. There is a well known saying of the Prophet[saw] about this :

> "The victor (in a holy war) has a right on the dress and other articles on his victim's body."

But the Prophet[saw] and members of his family in practice mostly refused to draw any personal benefit from

[56] *Tareekh-e-Khamees* Vol. 1 p. 487.

such legal provisions. More than the use of sword, it was this aspect of their conduct that contributed to the spread of Islam. Hence, when Ali[as] killed Amr he did not take his precious mailcoat into his possession as this would have also exposed his corpse. This magnanimity was appreciated by Amr's sister. When she came by the side of her brother's dead body and saw his dress and mailcoat intact, she said:

"He was not killed but by a noble man of equal status."

When she learnt that Ali[as] had killed her brother she composed some verses to convey her feelings:

> Had Amr's murderer been some one else, I would have wept for him forever, but his murderer is one getting slain at whose hands is not at all blameworthy. He is one who has ever been regarded as a distinguished person of the city.

Most of the writers have attributed these lines to Amr's sister but Allama Ibne Sabagh Maliki has added three more verses and said: "Amr's mother composed these lines as an elegy on him."

He has also given a different version of the fourth line of the above verses. This line refers to Ali's father: "He is one whose father was said to be the most distinguished person of this city."

The above rendering of the line seems more appropriate but still there is no reason for not attributing these verses to Amr's sister.

Saad bin Maaz on the verge of Martyrdom

Saad was a prominent person among the *Ansar* of Medina and a highly respected companion of the Prophet[saw].

He had played a prominent role in spreading Islam at Medina.

He was chief of the tribe of Aus, which was an ally of Bani Qurayzah. On that account he had old associations with that tribe. When the Prophet[saw] knew that Bani Qurayzah had revolted, he sent Saad and others to find out the real state of affairs. He attempted to reason with them but they hurled abuses at him. Saad was very much pained by it and it was his desire that they be punished for it.

While Ali[as] and Amr were engaged in fighting, the Muslims, like their opponents, had, most probably, come closer to the trench to watch the combat. When Ali[as] vanquished Amr and said *Takbeer* loudly the infidels, either to attenuate their humiliation or out of revenge, or to prevent the Muslims from crossing the trench to attack them, started raining arrows upon them. An arrow released by one Habban bin Qais pierced into Saad's *Ak-hal* (the Brachial artery) near the elbow. The bleeding of this artery does not stop till the entire blood of the victim's body is drained out. It was therefore, presumed that Saad shall not survive. Saad also knew it and he prayed to God that if there was still any chance for him to fight with the infidels he be kept alive till then. But if war with them had ended, then he be granted the status of a martyr by virtue of his injury. He further prayed that he be kept alive till he had seen the end of Bani Qurayzah with his own eyes. Almighty God granted his prayer and the bleeding of the artery miraculously stopped.[57] The economic condition of the Muslims was then so bad that no bed was available for Saad

[57] *Madarijun Nubuwwa* Vol. 2 p. 224

to be laid upon. The Prophet[S.A.] offered his own bed to him and he himself slept upon the ground[58].

End of the War

As stated earlier there was really only one fight in this entire war and it was between Ali[A.S.] and Amr. Thereafter, the war ended. Regarding its close K.A.Hameed writes: "When the besiegers despaired of entering the city they themselves lifted the blockade and went away".[59] However, all other historians have stated that there was a strong sandstorm, which frightened and perplexed the infidels. There is a reference to this unusual storm in the Quran also:

> O ye who believe! Remember the Grace of God, (bestowed) on you, when there came down on you hosts (to overwhelm you): but We sent against them a hurricane and forces that ye saw not: but God sees (clearly) all that ye do. And enough is God for the believers in their fight. And God is full of Strength, Able to enforce His Will.[60]

Tabarsi writes that the night was dark and it was extremely cold. The Prophet[S.A.] stood upon the mound where, later on, the Mosque of Victory *(Masjide Fatah)* was built and said: "Who can bring information about the enemy? Whoever does it, I assure him a place in heaven." No one responded. The Prophet[S.A.] repeated his words and again there was complete silence. When he spoke for the third time, Huzaifa stood up. The Prophet[S.A.] told him to go, hear their conversation and inform him about the situation. Raising his hands towards the sky the Prophet[S.A.] prayed for,

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[58] *Aalamul Wara*
[59] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Vol.I p. 79
[60] Quran, 33: 9, 25

Huzaifa's safety. Thereafter, he offered prayers and fervently prayed to God for victory and help. Huzaifa went near the enemy camp and found fires extinguished. The entire army was encircled by a severe sandstorm with pebbles flying on all sides. The tents and pavilions were razed to the ground. People held their shields in front of their faces for protection from the flying pebbles. Abu Sufyan came near his men and repeatedly shouted: "Run away, run away! Save yourselves." Ainia bin Haseen and Haris bin Awf also gave similar calls and the troops retreated. Huzaifa came back and apprised the Prophet ﷺ about it.[61]

There is no doubt that the enemy ranks were already shaken and demoralised by the killing of Amr. After this there was also a rift among them the details of which are recorded in histories.[62] They were now trying to find an excuse to retreat. The sandstorm provided them a strong reason for withdrawl. After this they never dared to attack Medina again.

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[61] *Aalamul Wara*

[62] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p. 578-79.

12

ADMONITION OF BANI QURAYZAH

After the defeat and departure of the infidels, the Prophet[s.a] returned to Medina with his men. On the same day he proceeded towards the fortress of Bani Qurayzah on receiving a divine command. The perfidious conduct of the Jews of Bani Qurayzah has been described earlier. It had created a serious problem for the Muslims and Saad bin Maaz was particularly hurt by their behaviour. Hence, he had prayed to God to keep him alive till their punishment. The time for the punitive action against them had now arrived.

Abdul Bari having given the date of the battle of Khandaq as 28th Ziqad, 5 A.H. says that the battle with Bani Qurayzah took place in Zil Hij 5 A.H.[1] More reliable authorities maintain that it took place in the month of Ziqad itself. [2]

All the historians again say that the standard of the Muslim army was given to Ali[a.s.] [3] and the army was asked to offer Asr prayers in the vicinity of Bani Qurayzah. Ali[a.s] accompanied by *Muhajireen* and men of Bani Abdul Ashhal and Bani Najjar, arrived near the fort of Bani Qurayzah. Seeing them coming, the people of Bani Qurayzah started hurling abuses at them from their fort and also uttered all

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[1] *Dawat* Delhi, 12th Rabiul Awwal 1379 A.H., p. 183.
[2] *Tareekh* Abul Fida Vol. 1 p. 143, *Ayanul Shia* Vol. 2 p. 239.
[3] *Tareekh* Ibnul Wardi Vol. 1 p. 122; *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 2 p. 582
Tareekh Abul Fida Vol. 1 p. 142; *Madarijun Nubuwwa* Vol. 2 p. 239

sorts of derogatory epithets about the Prophet[saw]. Ali[as] endured all this silently and went back to the Prophet[saw] to request him to stay where he was. He expressed his conviction that, God willing, they themselves shall meet with disgrace. From this the Prophet[saw] understood that the Jews had stooped to the use of vituperative language and did not move forward.[4] Other historians say that the Prophet[saw], unmindful of their insulting behaviour, came right upto their fort and Muslims surrounded it from all sides. That siege continued for full twenty-five days.

Huyee bin Akhtab, chief of Bani Nazeer, while earlier canvassing for repudiation of pact with Muslims had told Bani Qurayzah that, if his calculations went wrong and the Meccans failed to enter Medina, he would shift to their fort and share their fate. He kept his promise. When the infidels were defeated at Khandaq he, instead of going to his own tribe, went to the fort of Bani Qurayzah and remained closeted with them during the siege. When during these twenty five days they could not find any way out, they surrendered their arms. After this whatever happened to Bani Qurayzah was undisputedly according to the verdict of Saad bin Maaz .

That verdict was undoubtedly a very harsh one but it was in keeping with the severity of their crime and was given by a person of their own choice.

The appointment of Saad bin Maaz as arbitrator was related to an earlier event. When Bani Qaynuqa, another Jewish tribe of Medina, had acted seditiously against the Muslims and the punitive measures against it were being contemplated, Abdullah bin Ubayy had pleaded for

[4] *Aalamul Wara*

leniency. Abdullah was an important member of Bani Khazraj who were on good terms with Bani Qaynuqa. His request was granted and Bani Qaynuqa were simply told to leave Medina. Similarly, Bani Qurayzah and Bani Aus had friendly ties. When Bani Qurayzah surrendered, the people of Aus requested the Prophet[sa] to show the same generosity to them that was shown to Bani Qaynuqa. The Prophet[sa] asked them if they wee willing to let their leader Saad bin Maaz decide the matter. They willingly agreed to the suggestion. Saad was called in to deal with the matter.

Ibne Wardi has described the whole affair as follows:

> The Prophet[sa] continued the siege of Bani Qurayzah for twenty-five days and nights. God created so much terror in their heart that they, depending upon the Prophet's decision, surrendered. They were on friendly terms with the tribe of Aus. People of that tribe requested the Prophet[sa] to deal with them as he had dealt with Bani Qaynuqa, on the request of Abdullah bin Abi Salul. The Prophet[sa] asked them if they would agree that the matter be left to the decision of Saad. They, perhaps under the impression that Saad might exonerate them, willingly agreed to the Prophet's proposal. Saad was then sent for. [5]

This account of the Bani Qurayzah affair, though corroborated by most of the historians of the past, does not appear fully satisfactory. One looks for something more

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[5] *Tareekh* Ibnul Wardi Vol. 1 p. 122
Similar accounts are found in old histories such as, *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi* Vol.2 p. 509, *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) (New Edn.) Vol.2 p. 586, *Tareekh* Ibne Khaldun (Beirut), 1956 Edn. Vol.2 p. 788. *Tareekh* Abul Fida Vol.1 p. 143

convincing and more acceptable. Luckily, Allama Tabarsi, who mainly relied on traditions attributed to the pious descendants of the Prophet[saw] has made a reference to this episode which, though very brief, is still very valuable as it provides a crucial piece of information. He writes:

> The Prophet[saw] kept them (Bani Qurayzah) besieged for twenty-five days. Ultimately they, placing reliance on the decision of Saad bin Maaz, laid down their arms.[6]

This makes it quite clear that the name of Saad was suggested by Bani Qurayzah themselves, not by the Prophet[saw]. This stands to reason as well since before this incident Saad had very deep and cordial relations with them. They were, on that account, quite sure that Saad, though a true and staunch believer would still be indulgent towards them. But Saad was not the one to pay any heed to personal bonds against the demands of his faith. He had some trust in the loyalty of these people before this event. Hence it was that when they acted treacherously Saad, after receiving a mortal wound at Khandaq, had prayed to God to keep him alive till he had seen them suffer the consequences of their conduct. Now what else can it be called but a demonstration of God's almightiness that his wish was being fulfilled through the agency of the enemies themselves. One, however, feels that had they left themselves at the mercy of God and His Prophet[saw], they might have not met that disastrous end that they eventually did. Distrusting the Prophet's supreme graciousness, they relied upon their personal associations and got Saad made as the arbitrator. After this the Prophet[saw] was not at all responsible for what eventually happened to them. Some

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[6] *Aalamul Wara*

recent writers, though unaware of Tabarsi's statement have, at the behest of their own conscience and judgement, unanimously expressed a similar view. The foremost among them, to my knowledge, is the most outstanding history writer (in Urdu) of modern times, Maulana Shibli. He writes:

> The siege continued for about a month. Ultimately they requested that they shall abide by the decision of Saad bin Maaz, whatever it might be. The tribe of Saad, viz. Aus was an ally of Qurayzah. Among the Arabs such associations were stronger than the ties of common pedigree. The Prophet ﷺ acceded to their request.[7]

After Shibli not a single writer has presented a different view. Qazi Muhammad Sulaiman, Naim Siddiqi, Muhammad Ajmal Khan and Dr.Abdul Aleem have all said the same thing.[8]

Maulvi Aulad Haider Fauq has given a more detailed account but without specifying the source. He says:

> Feeling disappointed and constrained from all sides they desired the Prophet ﷺ to settle the matter. He fully knew the mischievous nature of those perfidious people and had ample experience of their misdeeds. He, therefore, refused to impose a decision of his own. He conveyed to them that he was willing for a settlement but he himself will not give a decision. They may appoint an arbitrator and both the parties should accept his verdict. Bani

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[7] *Seeratun Nabi* Vol. I p. 435.

[8] *Rahmatul-lil-Aalamin* p. 238 ; *Mohsine Insaniyat* Vol. 2 p.112; *Rasule Arabi* p. 399; *Seerat Nabwi and Mustashreqeen* p. 75

Qurayzah accepted the proposal and because of their old association with Saad bin Maaz appointed him as the arbirator. The Prophet[s.a] agreed to it.[9]

When Saad returned to Medina in injured condition, the Prophet[s.a], out of his genuine concern for him did not allow him to go to his house, which was at some distance. He was accommodated in a tent within the compound of *Masjide Nabawi* so that he remained close to the Prophet[s.a] and he, the Prophet[s.a], could conveniently visit him from time to time.

After Saad had been made the sole arbitrator, he was sent for. When the Prophet[s.a] saw him coming, he said to the people of Aus: "Rise for your chief", that is, they should go and help him dismount the horse and bring him comfortably.[10] Accordingly, they rushed towards Saad.

Saad immediately asked the people of Bani Qurayzah whether they shall abide by his decision. All of them said they would. Showing due regard, Saad refrained from mentioning the Prophet's[s.a] name as also from addressing him directly, he just pointed towards the Prophet[s.a] and his men and asked if they would also accept his verdict? Saad knowing full well the Prophet's[s.a] inherent and natural kind-heartedness had a feeling that his harsh verdict may not appear worthy of being carried out. Hence he had sought this assurance. The Prophet[s.a] assured him regarding its acceptance. When he moved forward people of his own tribe (Aus) entreated him to be lenient towards Bani Qurayzah. He gave no reply. When they further pressed him, he said that he was now at that stage of life where he

[9] *Uswatul Rasool* Vol. 2 p. 549.
[10] *Tareekh* Ibne Khaldun Vol. 2 p. 778

would not bother about what the people said about him. From this some people at once realized that he would make no concession in respect of Bani Qurayzah.[11]

Having fully satisfied himself that his decision shall be taken as final and be duly acted upon, he gave the verdict that all the male members of Bani Qurayzah be put to death, children and women be imprisoned and their belongings be distributed as plunder of war. Their immovable property was to be divided among the *Muhajireen* alone as they were outsiders and owned no property. No share from this was to be given to the *Ansar*.

This verdict of Saad was in accordance with the principles of law, justice and equity. It was also in keeping with the injunctions of Torah as pointed out by Maulana Shibli. He says:

> In the second volume of Torah Tansia 20 clause 10, it is laid down: "When you go to attack any city, first tell them to come to terms. If they agree to it and open their doors for you, all those who are there shall be your slaves. If they refuse then, you besiege them and when your God helps you in overpowering them then kill all the males. Children, women, animals and other articles in the city shall be yours as booty."[12]

Dr. Abdul Aleem writes:

> In fact the treatment meted out to Bani Qaynuqa and Bani Nazeer was not justice. There was a good measure of, kind-heartedness in it since a merciful

[11] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 2 p. 587
[12] *Seeratun Nabi* Part-I, pp.435 -436

person like the Prophet[SAW] himself was directly responsible for it. Justice was, of course, done with Bani Qurayzah. They were strictly awarded the punishment that they deserved. If it appears harsh to anybody, he should lay its resposibility upon Saad bin Maaz, who was a friend and nominee of Bani Qurayzah and not upon the Prophet[SAW].

Lane Pole's comments are:

> Punishment was severe but it should not be forgotten that their crime was open sedition against the state and that too at a time when there was a siege. Those who have read that the route of the army of Willington could be known by the dead bodies of the traitors and dacoits hanging from the trees here and there, should not feel astonished at the killing of the males of a tribe guilty of sedition.[13]

It is also a fact that the nature of punishment varies according to the stage of criminality. The first offender gets light punishment. If the crime is committed for the second or third time, the offender gets more and still more severe punishment. The quantum of punishment also varies according to the situation, circumstances and consequences of the crime. It is wrong to maintain that every criminal should get the same kind of punishment that was earlier awarded to some other person for a similar crime. This is totally against the spirit and principle of retributive justice.

Among the jews settled at Medina the crime of Bani Qaynuqa was the first. They were punished through exile. Other tribes ought to have taken a lesson from it but Bani

[13] *Seerat Nabwi and Mustashrequeen* p. 76

Nazeer again committed the same crime. On the third occasion it was the tribe of Bani Qurayzah that acted seditiously at a very critical moment when the nation was facing the problem of life and death. Their treachery in that situation did deserve a severer punishment. It was just a sentimental view that was stated earlier that had the decision been left to the Prophet[ﷺ] alone, he might have awarded a lighter punishment. But in Islamic law there is no place for sentimentalism. It is never in accord with our tender-heartedness. Hence the mere severity of this punishment should not disturb us. Even those punishments which are exclusively for Muslims — such as cutting of the hand of a thief or stoning of the people guilty of adultery — are not easily acceptable to our hearts. We cannot even stand the sight of infliction of these punishments to the offenders. But it is a fact that society derives benefit only from such deterrent modes of punishment. In countries where lighter punishments are awarded getting in and out of prison has almost become a recreational activity for the criminals. There is no check or control on the crimes. Whereas in Hijaz where punishments prescribed by Shariat are awarded thefts and other crimes are a rare occurrence. While prescribing punishment for an adulterer or adultress the Quran warns us not to be led by sentiments:

> The woman and the man guilty of adultery or fornication,— flog each of them with a hundred stripes: let not compassion move you in their case, in a matter prescribed by God, if ye believe in God and the Last Day; and let a party of the believers witness their punishment.[14]

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[14] Quran 24:2

The wisdom that sees justice and appropriateness in the severity of these punishments also approves of the punishment awarded by Saad to the perfidious people who had rebelled against the Islamic state. When the Prophet[sa] not only accepted it but also appreciated and acted upon it, we are not to be governed by our sentiments for, here, they count for nothing. Nor, as a matter of principle, it is correct to try to absolve the Prophet[sa] of his responsibility in respect of this verdict. It does not matter who suggested the name of Saad as arbitrator; whether the Prophet[sa] himself, as the historians have written, or as Tabarsi and later historians, particularly of the sub-continent, maintain, Bani Qurayzah themselves. It makes no difference at all. In any case the verdict was approved by the Prophet[sa] This means that God and His Prophet[sa] also agreed that the party concerned deserved the punishment that was meted out to it. If Saad had not been there and the Prophet[sa] himself had awarded that punishment to Bani Qurayzah what would it have mattered? Had he not awarded similarly severe punishments to those guilty of creating anarchy on earth or indulging in obstruction and manslaughter? Has Quran not clearly pronounced severe punishment for those who fight against God and His Prophet[sa] and attempt to create disturbances?

It decrees:

> The punishment of those who wage war against God and His Apostle, and strive with might and main for mischief through the land is: execution, or crucifixion, or the cutting of hands and feet from opposite sides, or exile from the land: that is their

disgrace in this world, and a heavy punishment is theirs in the Hereafter. [15]

Two significant events

In this connection two other events are also noteworthy. First, when Bani Qurayzah were fed-up with the rigours of the blockade of their fort, they stoppped their warlike activities and offered to hold talks. They were allowed to do so. They sent an emissary, Nabash ibne Qais, to convey to the Prophet[sa] that they were prepared to surrender their arms on the condition that the same treatment be meted out to them that was accorded to Bani Nazeer. All their possessions shall pass on to the Prophet[sa] if safety of life was guaranteed to them. He further clarified that they would depart with their women and children, leaving all weapons in the fort. They would take only that much luggage with them that could be carried on camel-backs. The Prophet[sa] did not agree to this. Thereafter they sought permission to leave only with their women and children and nothing else. The Prophet[sa] again did not agree to it and demanded unconditional surrender leaving their fate to be decided by the Prophet[sa]. At this Nabash lost all hopes of a settlement. He went back and conveyed the Prophet's view to his men.[16]

The other event, more significant than this, is that of Abu Lababa which is mentioned in all the books of Islamic history without any variation.

Abu Lababa bin Abdul Manzar was a respectable person of the tribe of Aus. He was quite close to the people of Bani Qurayzah. When they learnt about the Prophet's[sa]

[15] Quran 5:36
[16] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi* Vol.2 p. 501

uncompromising attitude through Nabash they requested that Abu Lababa be sent to them. The Prophet[sa] called Abu Lababa and told him that his (ex-) cohorts had invited him by name from amongst the entire tribe of Aus. He ordered him to go and listen to them. On Abu Lababa's arrival they asked him to advise them whether or not they should surrender unconditionally and leave their fate in the Prophet's[sa] hand. He said, "Yes" and moving his hand across his throat gave a hint that the result shall be their massacre. Soon after this, he realised his mistake and felt guilty of having committed an act of improbity in respect of the Prophet[sa]. Stricken with remorse, he, instead of going to the Prophet[sa] or other muslims, went straight to the Prophet's[sa] mosque, got himself bound to one of its pillars and, through weaping and wailing expressed his repentence and contrition. When the Prophet[sa] learnt about it he remarked that had Abu Lababa come straight to him, he would have prayed to God for his forgiveness. Since he had not done so, God Himself would decide about him according to His will. Abu Lababa remained tied to the pillar for fifteen days and as tradition relates became so weak that he could hardly speak and whatever he managed to utter was mostly unintelligible. The Prophet[sa] then announced that God had revealed to him that Abu Lababa's penitence was accepted. People rushed to untie him, but he refused to be released until the Prophet[sa] himself set him free. The Prophet[sa] then went to him, conveyed the tidings of God's pardon and with his own hands untied him.[17]

Commentary

From close examination of these incidents the following points emerge:

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[17] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi* Vol.2 p. 505-507

1. The wish of Bani Qurayzah that they should be treated like Bani Nazeer, that is, their lives be spared and they be allowed to leave with their women and children, having been rejected by the Prophet[s^], how can it be said that had the Prophet[s^] himself decided their fate the verdict might have been different from that of Saad?

2. The disinclination of the Prophet[s^] to grant security to Bani Qurayzah was known to his companions. That is why when Bani Qurayzah sought the advice of Abu Lababa he, by the movement of his hand, informed them about what was in store for them. The view of the modern historians that the early writers had by mistake mentioned "Yes" in place of Abu Lababa's prohibitory verbal advice ("No") as their friend does not appear to be correct. In writing , only the words uttered by a person are reproduced, not his pitch and tone. Abu Lababa's placing of his hand on his neck while saying "Yes" was meant to indicate that his "Yes" was actually "No". This action of Abu Lababa was on account of the ties of friendship with the Bani Qurayzah people. For this he repented soon after although he had done no harm either to Islam or to the Prophet[s^]. The Prophet[s^] also did not consider it a serious crime. That is why he was prepared to pray for his pardon. However, Abu Lababa's advice to the Bani Qurayzah makes it abundantly clear that the Prophet's[s^] companions knew that his intentions in respect of Bani Qurayzah were not different from the subsequent verdict of Saad.

3. After Abu Lababa had clearly indicated to them the consequences of depending upon the Prophet's[S.A.] verdict, how could they have, acting against his advice, banked upon the Prophet's[S.A.] decision and surrendered their arms at once?

It is, thus, more credible, as suggested by Tabarsi, that Bani Qurayzah had themselves agreed to abide by the verdict of Saad. They, in fact, had full faith in the tribe of Aus on account of their old associations with it. The proof of this is found in their invitation to Abu Lababa for consultation. It is possible that by inviting Abu Lababa the Bani Qurayzah people wanted to find out if Bani Aus was still harbouring friendly sentiments towards them. They must have felt encouraged and re-assured when Abu Lababa revealed to them the actual intentions of the Prophet[S.A.]. After this, they, instead of depending upon the Prophet's[S.A.] clemency, should have sought some other way of saving their lives. And this they did. They knew well that Saad bin Maaz was a more important person than Abu Lababa and had greater influence with the Prophet[S.A.]. Hence, after satisfying themselves about Bani Aus' softness for them, they proposed the name of Saad. They were confident that Saad shall be lenient towards them and the Prophet[S.A.] in all probability, would not turn down his recommendation. The Prophet[S.A.] agreed to it because he also had full confidence in Saad's sincerety in respect of his faith. But the verdict of Saad was against their expectations. It was what God had destined them to and also what they fully deserved. There is, therefore, no reason to believe that Bani Qurayzah would have fared better if Prophet[S.A.] himself had dealt with their case. Now it was binding upon them to submit to Saad's verdict as it was given by a referee they themselves had selected. After this, as early historians, like Tabarsi and

present-day Urdu writers of Islamic history say, no room was left for Bani Qurayzah to grumble or murmur.

The result

The end of the ill-fated Bani Qurayzah was undoubtedly exemplary. When they had surrendered their arms and opened the gates of their fort, hands of all the males were tied by their back and they were gathered at one place. Women and children were sent to another place. After this all their possessions and weapons were collected. The historians have given a detailed account of their arms and weapons. These details clearly show how well they had prepared themselves for an engagement with the muslims. They had stocked 1500 swords, 300 coats of mail, 2000 spears and 500 shields of diverse kinds. There was also a huge stock of liquor that was destroyed by the order of the Prophet[ﷺ].[18] All their personal belongings were taken out. After this, the verdict of Saad was to be carried out.

On that particular day the men were sent to the house of Usama bin Zaid and children to the house of a lady called Binte Haris. On the Prophet's[ﷺ] directions hampers full of dates were sent to both the places of internment where they were ravenously devoured by the hungry prisoners.[19] Recovered weapons and other articles were also kept at the house of Binte Haris. Camels and animals were left to graze in the open.

The following morning the Prophet[ﷺ] went to the market site and ordered that pits be dug at different spots. Several companions got busy in digging the pits and Bani Qurayzah were brought in batches and were executed one

[18] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi* Vol. 2 p. 509
[19] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi* Vol. 2 p. 512

by one by Ali[AS] and Zubair. Huyee bin Akhtab, chief of Bani Nazeer was also brought before the Prophet[SA]. In fact it was he who had landed Bani Qurayzah into this trouble. After some exchange of words he also was be-headed. This process continued till noon.

The Prophet's[SA] conduct on this occasion clearly showed that what was happening was, for him, an unpleasant duty necessitated by the seriousness of the crime of Bani Qurayzah. There was no element of enmity or vindictiveness in it. Hence it is that the condemned prisoners were also the objects of the Prophet's[SA] compassion. When it became very hot, he stopped their decapitation and ordered them to be taken to shady places for rest and served with cold water. They were not to bear the heat of the sun and of the weapons simultaneously. The companions took the prisoners to comfortable places and offered food and water to them. In the afternoon, when it was relatively cooler, the Prophet[SA] came out and the remaining male members of the tribe were put to death.[20]

Upto seven hundered and fifty persons are reported to have been executed.[21] The women and children numbering one thousand were sold as slaves.[22] The Prophet[SA] had given instructions that no child should be separated from his mother before attaining the stage of majority.[23]

Death of Saad bin Maaz

The evidence of the astonishing fulfilment of Saad bin Maaz's wish is found in the fact that the Providence delayed

[20] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi* Vol. 2 p. 514
[21] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi* Vol. 2 p. 518
[22] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi* Vol. 2 p. 523
[23] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi* Vol. 2 p. 524

the action till he had seen the execution of the Bani Qurayzah with his own eyes. After it was done his wound. which had earlier stopped bleeding, suddenly bursted and the blood flowed out of it that resulted in his death. The Prophet[ﷺ] attached so much importance to his death that he removed his cloak and went bare-footed with his body upto the place of burial.[24] He said that Saad's death was an event that had shaken the Empyrean.[25]

Some minor skirmishes

After the end of Bani Qurayzah some minor skirmishes continued for a short while.

Battle of Zi Qarad

This battle, according to Abdul Bari, took place in Zilhij 6 A.H. or Muharram 7 A.H. He has also given the same date for the battle of Khaibar[26] which actually occurred after the treaty of Hudaibiya. Other historians maintain that the battle of Ziqarad took place in Rabiul Awwal 6 A.H.[27] The treaty of Hudaibiya was signed in the same year in the month of Ziqad and the battle of Khaibar took place in the beginning of the seventh year of *Hijrat*. Ziqarad was the name of a spring lying at a distance of a day's journey from Medina on the road going to Syria. This battle took place near that spring [28].

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[24] *Aalamul Wara*
[25] *Shazratuz Zahab* Vol. 1 p. 11
[26] *Dawat* Delhi-*Seerat Tayyaba* Supplement, dated 16th. Sept. 1959 p.183
[27] *Ayanul Shia* Vol. 2 p. 245
[28] *Ayanul Shia* Vol. 2 p. 245

Battle of Dumatul Jandal

Dumatuljandal is the name of a mountain lying between Kufa and Damascus. The Prophet^{SA} came to know that a large number of people had gathered there on account of which it had become hazardous for the caravans to pass by that way. He left with a party of about one thousand muslims to remove them from there. The entire group dispersed the moment it came to know about the Prophet's^{SA} arrival. The Prophet^{SA} stayed there for a few days to make some necessary arrangements and then came back to Medina after spending a little more than a month in this expedition.[29]

Battle of Bani Lihyan[30]

Shah Abdul Haq says that this battle took place in the month of Rabiul Awwal or Jamadul Awwal in the 6th year of *Hijrat*. Some other writers are of the view that it was in the 5th year of *Hijrat*. Here too the opponents ran away without any confrontation and the Prophet^{SA} returned to Medina after 14 days.[31]

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[29] *Madarijun Nubuwwa* Vol. 2 pp. 250-251

[30] The Bani Lihyan had requested Muhammad^{SA} to send a few of his disciples to teach them the precepts of Islam. When the missionaries arrived, they killed some of them and sold the rest to Meccans. Time had now come when their crime had to be avenged. The Prophet^{SA} marched against them with a body of troops- S. Ameer Ali.-*Tr.*

[31] *Madarijun Nubuwwa* Vol. 2 pp. 255-256

Battle of Bani Mustaliq[32]

The Prophet[sa] stayed at Medina till Shaban 6 A.H. After that the battle of Bani Mustaliq took place.[33]

In all these expeditions the Prophet[sa] had himself participated and, therefore, technically they are called *Ghazwa*. There were some *Saraya* as well in which some one from the companions was in command. These engagements, however, were not of any significance.

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[32] These people had upto this time been on friendly terms with the Muslims. But recently, instigated by their chief, Harish son of Abu Zirar, they had thrown off their allegiance and committed forays on the suburbs of Medina. Syed Ameer Ali. -*Tr.*

[33] *Tareekh* Ibne Khaldun Vol. 2 p.281

13

ENCOUNTER AT HUDAIBIYA

People having just a superficial knowledge of this event might feel surprised on finding it termed as an 'encounter'. But encounter it was. Indeed a very serious and crucial encounter as in no other bloody confrontation, where lives were at stake, there was such a severe trial of the believers' patience, determination and devotion to Faith as at Hudaibiya. The details of this momentous event shall be briefly discussed in the following pages.

K.A.Hameed has described the background of this event in the following words:

> Though the general condition of the Muslims had improved, still they could not easily visit Mecca. Every year they would long to perform the *Haj* and feel distressed by their inability to do that. The Prophet$^{s\wedge}$, one day, said that he had a dream that he and all his companions were circumambulating the holy Kaaba. Hearing this they became all the more eager to go for *Haj*.[1]

It is to be kept in mind at the very outset that from the Prophet's$^{s\wedge}$ dream it in no way followed that the envisioned scene (performance of *Haj*) was to occur that very year. If, therefore, for some unavoidable circumstances the journey

[1] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Vol.I pp.79-80

to Mecca had to be cut short that year, faith in the prophethood of Muhammad[s^] demanded a conviction that the event shall happen some time or the other. But most of the Muslims failed to understand this and thus, the event became the cause of a great catastrophe.

It was, probably, divine policy to test the faith of the Muslims and, hence, instead of the usual means of communication with the Prophet[s^], the revelations through angels, the weaker medium of a dream was used to intensify their long-suppressed urge for pilgrimage. It was God's will that after this dream the Muslims should press the Prophet[s^], to proceed to Mecca and, also, that through this journey the Prophet[s^] should get an opportunity to demonstrate his accommodating and peace-loving nature. This journey was also designed to lead to the execution of a long-standing agreement of non-interference with the Meccans that would create a peaceful atmosphere for propagating Islam. The hazy dream was to serve all these purposes. The impatience of the Muslims did not allow them to wait for the usual time of *Haj* and, at their insistence, the Prophet[s^] left for Mecca to perform *Umra*.[2] The Prophet[s^], probably, also wished to show to others that he had no political motives and hence, instead of the season of *Haj* when there is a concourse of people at Mecca, he had decided to visit Mecca at a time when it would be barren of people. He simply wanted to perform the rituals of *Umra* quietly along with his companions and then return to Medina. He left Medina on the first of Ziqad 6 A.H. with fourteen hundred Muslims.[3] Khwaja Muhammad Latif

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[2] *Umra* can be performed at any time in the year whereas *Haj* can be performed only during the prescribed days. -*Tr.*

[3] *Tareekhe Khamees* Vol.2 p.66; *Tareekh* Ibnul Wardi p.124

writes: "Muslims had no weapons with them other than swords and sword was a weapon which the Arabs never kept away from their bodies."[4]

They had also seventy sacrificial camels (*Budnay*) with them.[5] This clearly indicated that there was no aggressive intention on the part of the Muslims. But, still, when the Quraish learnt about the Prophet's[SA] approach they sent an army under the command of Khalid bin Waleed to intercept the Muslims at a place called Karael Ghamim. It was quite easy for the Prophet[SA] to face them and enter Mecca triumphantly as the morale of the Muslims was very high owing to the successive victories of the recent past. But the Prophet[SA] wanted to show his love for peace, and therefore, he told his companions to take some other route as soon as he noticed the dust raised by the forces of the opposite party. The Prophet[SA] and his companions turned to the right and followed the route that, passing by the backside of Humz and through Sainatul Marar, led to Hudaibiya.[6] What happened after this is described thus by K.A.Hameed:

> Accordng to laws of Arabia every person had a right to freely perform *Haj* during the days of *Haj*. The Prophet's[SA] caravan stayed at Hudaibiya, nine miles away from Mecca. Usman was sent to Mecca as an emissary to negotiate with the Meccans the terms for performing *Haj* pilgrimage.[7]

This, however, appears improbable. Since everyone was entitled to freely perform *Haj* or *Umra*, no one had the right to impose conditions nor was there any need to send

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[4] *Islam aur Musalmanon ki Tareekh* Vol.1 pp.120-121
[5] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p.73
[6] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p.73
[7] *Islam aur Musalmanon ki Tareekh* Vol.1 pp.120-121

any one to settle the terms for *Haj*. The account of Ibnul Wardi appears more convincing. According to him, Usman was sent to inform the Meccans that the Muslims had come to visit the shrine of Kaaba and not for war. He adds that the Prophet[s^] had at first told Umar to go to Mecca but he wished to be excused as he apprehended harm to his life at the hands of the infidels. The Prophet[s^] then called Usman, who being himself an Umayyad, straightaway went to his kinsmen and conveyed the Prophet's[s^] message to Abu Sufyan. He was told that if he wished, he himself could perform the religious rites. Usman refused to do so without the Prophet[s^]. Thereupon the Meccans imprisoned him.[8] Shah Abdul Haq narrates this event in the following words:

> The Prophet[s^] turned towards Umar and told him to go to Meccans to tell them that he had no desire to fight and had come only to perform *Umra*. He said, "O Prophet, you know how bitterly inimical the Quraish are towards me and, also, how harsh I have been to them. If they get hold of me it is certain that they shall not spare me. Moreover, in Mecca there is no member of my tribe (Adi) to come to my rescue and protect me. It would be better if you send Usman bin Affan because he is liked by the Quraish and many of his tribesmen are also there."[9]

Usman was not sent for negotiating any terms. He was told only to inform the Meccans about the nature and purpose of the Prophet's visit. K.A.Hameed refers to Usman's visit thus:

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[8] *Tareekh* Ibnul Wardi Vol.1 p.105
[9] *Madarijun Nubuwwa* Vol.2 p.281

> He (Usman) went to Mecca under the protection of Aban bin Saeed and delivered the Prophet's message to the Quraish. They imprisoned him. A rumour somehow spread that Usman had been killed whereby there was much commotion among the muslims. Though they had come without arms yet they got ready to kill and be killed. [10]

This writer has often deviated from the path of truth but in respect of this event he has given a correct account. What some earlier writers have mentioned — that the Prophet[SA], felt that fighting with the Meccans had become necessary when he heard of Usman's killing—is not correct.[11]

The pledge later on taken by the Prophet[SA] from the Muslims also indicates that it were they who insisted upon fighting. They were fervently demanding that the attack against the Meccans should be launched at once. But in the light of the bitter experience of Uhud it was felt necessary to make them solemnly pledge that they shall not run away from the battlefield. Normally a pledge with such a degrading condition should be a cause of dismay and distress to the bold and daring fighters. But most of the Muslims were aware of their weaknesses. Hence, partly on account of this awareness and partly because of their zest for fighting the Meccans, they all committed themselves to honouring the condition without any demur. Certain writers, to give a flourish to their style of interpretation have said that the pledge taken by the Muslims was for sacrificing life. K.A.Hameed has described this in the following way: "Under a tree, fourteen hundred persons made a pledge that

[10] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Vol.1 p.80
[11] *Tareekh* Ibnul Wardi Vol.1 p.125

if a necessity arose, they were ready to sacrifice their lives for the sake of Islam."[12]

It appears from historical books that some earlier narrators, in order to avoid the unsavoury word 'flight', had also given this interpretation. But a prominent companion of the Prophet[SA], Jabir bin Abdullah Ansari, has fully exposed the fact. Ibnul Wardi writes:

> It was said that the Prophet[SA] had obtained a pledge from them for death but Jabir used to say that the Prophet[SA] had not taken pledge from them for anything but their not running away (from the battlefield).[13]

It is for this reason that the oldest historian, Waqidi, has reported this as a fact and attributed the other narration to some unknown person. He says: "The Prophet[SA] took pledge from them for not running away. Someone has said that the pledge was about death (that is, they would fight till death)."[14]

Shah Abdul Haq has totally ignored the second version and has reported the first one in elegant terms. He writes:

> The Prophet[SA] reclined against a tree and guided the companions to pledge that they would remain steadfast and, if war broke out, they would not turn their backs.[15]

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[12] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Vol.1 p.80

[13] *Tareekh* Ibnul Wardi Vol.1 p.125. This version is also given by *Tareekh* Abul Fida.

[14] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi* Vol.2 p.603

[15] *Madarijun Nubuwwa* Vol.2 p.282

A close examination shall make it obvious that the phrase 'took pledge for death' actually meant that they would not run away from death. The risk of losing one's life arises the moment one enters the battleground. Hence, being ready to sacrifice life implies that after coming to the battlefield one will not try to protect one's life by running away. It does not mean that in the event of being struck by sword, he will neither raise his shield nor parry the thrust.

Tabarsi says: "All of them pledged under a tree that they would never desert the Prophet[SA] and run away."[16]

The word 'Never' carries great significance. It clearly shows that the pledge — that they would never runaway — was not just for the present occasion, where no fighting took place, but also for all the future wars. Unfortunately, on turning the pages of history we find that the disgraceful scene witnessed at Uhud was repeated at Hunain. Those who had pledged to be steadfast for all time to come failed to do so at Hunain. God's intentions in respect of those who failed to stick to this pledge and what their ultimate end, as a result of this failure, was going to be, have been clearly defined. In the context of the above situation, viz. Usman's visit to the Meccans and its purpose, his internment, the resulting resentment of the muslims and their resolve to fight, the following statement of K.A.Hameed appears conspicuously incongruous. He writes: "Ultimately through the mediation of Usman a treaty was affected between the Meccans and the Muslims."[17]

When Usman was already under arrest how could he possibly come to the Prophet[SA] to discuss the terms of

[16] *Aalamul Wara*
[17] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Vol.1 p.81

agreement? There was no possibility of his playing the role of a mediator after this. The fact is what other writers have reported; it was the Quraish of Mecca who had sent an emissary, Suhail bin Amr, to settle the terms of the treaty.[18]

While dealing with an important event the historians often pass over the incidents that precede it. This happened in respect of Hudaibiya also. After mentioning the arrival of Suhail bin Amr, they straightaway start referring to the drafting of the agreement. They do not mention the parleys that must have taken place before this. Suhail must have brought a message from the Meccans to the effect that since the Prophet[sa] did not wish to fight they too were unwilling to fight for nothing. Further, that at that moment they could not overcome their feelings to such an extent as to watch the Muslims enter Mecca and pray before Kaaba and remain unmoved. Suhail might also have said what Meccans are reported to have said to Usman, namely, that in the eyes of the Arabs it would be a loss of face for them as they would think that the Muslims had forced their way into Mecca by show of strength. They must also have requested him through Suhail to go back to Medina without visiting Kaaba with an undertaking that in the following year they (the Meccans) would move out of the city for three days to enable him and his followers to perform the rites of *Umra* without any let or hindrance. Their motive behind this proposal was that it would gradually come to the knowledge of everybody that full one year back the Meccans themselves had given permission to the Muslims to perform their religious rites in Mecca. Thus, the visit of the Muslims to Kaaba would not be taken as a proof of their weakness. The Prophet[sa] must have reacted favourably to

[18] *Tareekh* Ibnul Wardi Vol.I p.125; *Tareekh* Abul Fida Vol.I p.146

this proposal and only after that the stage of formally drafting the agreement must have arrived.

In all probability, in the course of these discussions, the Meccans had come to realize that, for some reason, the Prophet[ﷺ] did not want a physical encounter at that stage. They jumped to the conclusion that his disinclination for that must be due to some apprehension on his part that it would be injurious to his cause. The point that most of the muslims failed to understand at that moment and for a long time to come was to some extent, if not fully, grasped by Suhail. It was a matter of principle for the Prophet[ﷺ] never to initiate any aggression. All the wars that he had to fight were thrust upon him. This sacred principle would have been violated if he had fought his way into Mecca. Everyone would have started saying that once he became powerful he had no scruples in mounting attacks against his opponents. Hence it was that instead of entering Mecca and performing *Umra*, which he could do with some use of force, he withdrew after agreeing to a treaty the terms of which appeared unbearably humiliating to most of the Muslims accompanying him. To them it was nothing less than a shameful defeat. It was this 'defeat', which was to be described as a 'clear and manifest victory' by God.

It is usually seen that a mean and shallow-minded person starts behaving insolently when he comes to realize that his opponent, on account of his lofty principles, shall not draw his sword against him. This was the case with Suhail. If he had come to negotiate under the fear generated by the Muslims' fervour for fighting, his behaviour should have been meek and submissive. He should have demonstrated his willingness to step-back and compromise whenever there was any controversy. But here the situation

was just the reverse. When the terms of agreement were being written down, it was he who raised objections at every step and on each such occasion the Prophet[sa] yielded to him in order to keep the peace-process going. K.A.Hameed, who, without any justification has crowned Usman with laurels for effecting this treaty, writes in a way as if he was aware of the terms of the treaty before they were actually written down. Accordingly, he says:

> Eventually, through Usman's mediation a treaty between the Muslims and the Meccans was drawn. It contained the following terms of agreement:
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> 1. This treaty between the two parties shall remain in force for one year. During this period the people from the two sides shall be free to visit Mecca and Medina without any fear or risk;
>
> 2. The tribes of Arabia who wish to align with the Quraish shall have liberty to do so and those who wished to align with the Muslims shall have the same freedom. The tribes joining the Muslims shall have the same rights as enjoyed by the Muslims;
>
> 3. The Muslims shall have permisssion to perform *Haj* next year but they shall not be allowed to enter Mecca with their arms;
>
> 4. If any one from among the Quraish went to Medina after embracing Islam, it shall be obligatory for the Muslims to send him back at once. However, if any Muslim became an apostate and joined the Quraish they shall in no case return him to the Muslims.

> On hearing the last item, Umar flared up but the Prophet[saw] somehow managed to pacify him. All the conditions of the Quraish were accepted. Ali[as] sat down to write the draft of the agreement.[19]

Now, the last statement of the writer raises a question. If, as he has mentioned earlier, the treaty had already been drafted through the mediation of Usman, then what was it that "Ali[as] sat down to write"? Moreover, the later events show that Umar was enraged not only by the last term of the treaty but also by the entire process, particularly by the stipulated withdrawl without performing the *Umra*. He had very clearly expressed his disagreement with all that was being done. It is also not correct that he was convinced by the Prophet's[saw] explanation. He continued to be opposed to the treaty even after it was drawn and agreed upon. His resentment remained unabated and continued to show itself with all its intensity from time to time. And it was not only he but the majority of the Muslims was displeased with it. Those who believe that *Shura* (arriving at a decision through consultations) is an inseparable part of Islamic faith and consider the Prophet[saw] and Islam totally committed to democratic processes, have to explain as to why the Prophet[saw] did not convene a consultative meeting of the Muslims before striking a deal with the non-believers. They also have to provide an explanation for the Prophet's[saw] refusal to act according to the views of the majority once he became aware of them.

The happenings at Hudaibiya clearly speak out that the Prophet[saw] considered himself fully authorized to stick to his own decision against the advice of his followers. Obviously, he was ordained by his Lord to do so. He not only stood by

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[19] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Vol.1 p.81

his own decision but also, for the sake of Islam, prevailed upon the Muslims to accept it. He neither associated others with him in his negotiations with the Meccans nor consulted anybody in respect of the terms of the treaty. He also did not pay any attention to his followers' resentment after it had become evident.

At every step he acted according to his own discretion backed by a determination to accomplish God's will. Although there is no reference to it in the Quran, God's wishes might have been conveyed to him through a revelation or through that inner communion that persisted perpetually between the Prophet[sa] and the Central Authority, the Supreme Being. In this mode of communication even the angels had no role to play, what to say of the human beings.

The most remarkable feature of Hudaibiya is that throughout the proceedings it is just Suhail bin Amr from the side of the infidels and only two persons, namely the Prophet[sa] and Ali[as], from the other side, who are found on the scene of action. Ali[as] was engaged in writing down the terms of the treaty. Others including those capable of giving advice were standing aloof as mere spectators greatly distressed by what was happening and why it was happening. The Prophet[sa] remained totally indifferent to the changing colours of their faces, their whispered comments and their gestures. No greater instance than this can be found of the total disregard of public opinion in crucial religious affairs. On the other side, Suhail gradually came to realize that the Prophet[sa] was inclined to accept every condition of his. He, therefore, decided to take full advantage of it. It is also possible that this shrewd and experienced tactician detected the germs of rebellion among

the Muslims and decided to further incite them in the hope of creating a division between them that could possibly flare up into a civil war and, thus, seal the fate of their mission. Such must have been his consideration, else the unpreparedness of his side for war, the presence of a consistently victorious adversary with a numerical strength never seen before and the determination of this party to fight to the finish — all these factors should have deterred him from creating obstacles in settling the terms of agreement. The historians unanimously report the fact that throughout these negotiations Suhail's role was that of an obstructionist.

First of all the Prophet[sa] wanted to introduce in the beginning of the treaty:

"In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful."

Suhail objected to it and said that he knew nothing about this and only the phrase used by them should be there. It was just 'In the name of Allah'.

Had he insisted upon introducing the names of idols like Laat and Uzza, the Prophet[sa] would never have agreed to it because it was a matter of principle. In that case there would have been no agreement at all. But it was just a wrangling over words. It would have been an act befitting the sentimental and low-minded people to make an issue of it and reject the word proposed by the opposite party. But the Prophet[sa] was far above this and said, "Write what Suhail wants". It was in fact the first strategic defeat of Suhail as the Prophet[sa] refused to be distracted by this issue and did not allow it to affect the agreement. But the emotional Muslims were enraged as they felt that the Prophet[sa] had surrendered. Still they hoped that he would

make a bold stand after this. But the next stage turned out to be more trying. K.A.Hameed describes this in the following manner:

> Ali[as] got ready to write down the draft of the treaty. Following the usual practice of the Muslims, he started to write "In the name of God, the most Beneficent and Merciful". Suhail said, they did not believe God to be Beneficent and that word should be expunged. The Prophet[sa] got that word deleted. Ali[as] then wrote that the agreement was between Muhammad[sa], the Messenger of God, and the Quraish. Suhail again objected that they did not consider Muhammad[sa] to be God's Messenger. The Muslims got agitated upon that objection but the Prophet[sa] said that it did not matter and got the phrase, "Messenger of God" erased.

It does not appear to be correct that according to the Islamic custom Ali[as] himself had started writing "In the name of God, the most Beneficent, and Merciful". The fact is that the Prophet[sa] was dictating the details of the agreement and Ali[as] was simply writing them down. The Prophet[sa] himself had told Ali[as] to write "In the name of God, the most Beneficent and Merciful" and Suhail objected to it. Ibnul Wardi says:

> The Prophet[sa] called Ali[as] and told him to write "In the name of God, the most Beneficent and Merciful". Suhail said he was not familiar with it and only " In the name of God" should be written.

The Prophet[S.A.] agreed to it and said, "write only 'in the name of God' ".[20]

The terms of the agreement appeared to indicate that the Meccans had the upper hand and the Prophet[S.A.] had persistently yielded the ground. Returning back without visiting Kaaba, visiting next year only for three days, returning a member of the Quraish if he joins the Muslim camp, and the Quraish not obliged to return those coming to them— each one of these was a conspicuously disadvantageous condition.[21] The Prophet[S.A.] accepted those terms because divine wisdom wanted it to be so. This submission of the Prophet[S.A.] to the insolent demands of the infidels was described by God as a 'manifest victory', whereas the victories at Badr, Uhud and Khandaq were not described as such. When the Prophet[S.A.] was returning to Medina after finishing the agreement on those terms, God revealed to him:

"Verily we have granted thee (Muhammed) a manifest victory."[22]

It is really very painful to note that most of the Muslims failed to understand the reason behind the Prophet's[S.A.] unwillingness to fight though the representative of the opposite party had correctly grasped it. Still, even though they had not understood it, their faith should have obliged them to be fully convinced about the correctness of the Prophet's[S.A.] decision. If it had been so they could, at the most, have shown their concern or bewilderment. Logically it should have been impossible for the believers to raise

[20] *Tareekh* Ibnul Wardi Vol. 1 p. 135 and *Tareekh* Abul Fida Vol. 1 p. 146
[21] *Tareekh* Ibne Khaldun Vol.2 p. 785
[22] Quran 48:1

objection or express their doubts and differences. It is a matter of great pity that the call of the faith was allowed to be suppressed by violent passions.

Referring to the situation Ibne Aseer says: "It created such a serious condition in the hearts of the people that they were brought to the verge of destruction."[23]

In the *Al-Jehad* chapter of *Saheeh Bukhari*[24] it is mentioned:

> Umar bin Khattab came to the Prophet$^{s\wedge}$ and said, "Are we not on the right path and they on the wrong?" The Prophet$^{s\wedge}$ replied, "Why not." Umar then queried, "Shall our dead not be in the heaven and their in the hell? " The Prophet$^{s\wedge}$ again said, "Why not." Thereupon Umar said, "Why then should we bear humiliation in respect of our faith and go back when God has not produced any decisive situation between us?" The Prophet$^{s\wedge}$ said, "O son of Khattab, I am messenger of God and He shall never desert me." Umar then went to Abu Bakr and said to him what he had said to the Prophet$^{s\wedge}$. Abu Bakr told him, "He is God's Prophet$^{s\wedge}$ and God shall never desert him." Thereafter the Quranic chapter of *Al Fatah* was revealed which the Prophet$^{s\wedge}$ recited in its entirety to Umar. After listening to it. Umar sceptically asked, "Really! Is *this* a victory." The Prophet$^{s\wedge}$ said, "Yes."

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[23] *Tareekh Al Kamil* Vol. 2 p. 84
[24] *Saheeh Bukhari* Vol.2 p.14

The historian, Dayar Bakari, gives the following account of the scene :

> Umar said that, by God, I had never entertained any doubt since I embraced Islam except on that day. I then went to the Prophet[SAW] and asked him "are you not a true messenger of God?" He said, "why not?" I then enquired, "are we not on the right path and our enemies on the wrong?" The Prophet[SAW] said, "why not?" I further asked, "Is it not a fact that our dead shall be in the heaven and their in the hell?" The Prophet[SAW] replied in the affirmative. Thereupon, I asked "were you not telling us that we shall soon enter the house of God and perform *tawaf* (circumbulation)?" The Prophet said, "Why not? But had I told you that it shall happen this very year?" I said, "No". Then the Prophet[SAW] said: "I again tell you that you shall be there and perform *tawaf*." Umar says that then he went to Abu Bakr and asked him "was he (Muhammad) not a real Prophet[SAW]?" Abu Bakr replied, "why not". On this he said, "then why should we bear humiliation regarding our faith." Abu Bakr replied, "O you wretched fellow! He indeed is God's messenger and shall never disobey Him. You keep on holding his apron firmly. He is manifestly on the path of truth."[25]

Shah Abdul Haq has also narrated the entire incident in Persian.[26] The above sentiments were not of Umar alone. The Muslims in general had similar feelings. Beside Ibne

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[25] *Tareekhe Khamees* Vol. 2 p. 32
[26] *Madarijun Nubuwwa* Vol. 2 pp.286 - 287

Aseer, whose statement has been quoted earlier [27], other writers too have attributed sentiments of this kind to most of the other companions. For example, Waqidi writes:

> The companions of the Prophet[SAW] did not like the treaty because when they had set out they had not the least doubt about their success. Its reason was Prophet's[SAW] dream that he had got his head shaved, entered into Kaaba, obtained its key and had gone to Arafat along with others. When they saw the treaty being made, grave doubts of such a serious nature arose in their hearts that they were brought almost to the point of destruction.[28]

This makes it quite plain that the majority of the muslims shared Umar's views. The Prophet[SAW], however, paid no attention to that. The fact that the Prophet[SAW] never felt himself bound to the views or advice of the majority was most forcefully and indubitably demonstrated on this occasion.

The later events, however, proved that the stand of the majority was wrong and the action taken by the Prophet[SAW] was not only perfectly correct but was also in the best interest of Islam. Others subsequently realized this and Umar too, at the fag end of his life, admitted it. Shah Abdul Haq has described Umar's feelings in the following words:

> For a long time I have been longing to atone for the doubts created by Satan and my deceptive self on that day (at Hudaibiya). Since then I have been doing penance and performing good actions, like

[27] *Tareekh Al Kamil* Vol. 2 p.84
[28] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi* Vol. 2 p. 607

prayers, fasting and giving of alms in order to get myself absolved of that sin."[29] [30]

This event establishes for once and all that 'Truth' is not subservient to the 'Majority'. It is the 'Majority' that has to be governed by 'Truth'.

The feelings of the Muslims were already ruffled by the phrasing of the Treaty. Now their patience was soon put to a severe trial through the enforcement of its terms. The ink of the treaty had not yet dried up when a serious situation developed. Abu Jandal, son of the same Suhail bin Amr who had represented the infidels in negotiating the treaty, had already embraced Islam. His father and other relatives had fettered him and put him under captivity. Full of hopes, he threw himself at the Prophet's[sa] feet feeling that he has found his haven. But the Prophet[sa] had already covenanted with this very Suhail to return to the Meccans anyone running away from them. On this basis Suhail followed his son and insisted on taking him back with him. Tabarsi has used very mild language in describing this situation but still it sufficiently explains the feelings of the muslims and the Prophet's[sa] stand. He writes:

> Abu Jandal came to the Prophet[sa] and sat by his side. His father, Suhail, asked the Prophet[sa] to return him back. The Muslims said they shall not let him go. The Prophet[sa] gave some indication by the movement of his hand upon which Suhail caught hold of his son's hand. The Prophet[sa] prayed to God to help Abu Jandal if he was

[29] *Madarijun Nubuwwa* Vol. 2 p. 287

[30] This statement is reported by other historians. See, for example, *Tareekhe Khamees* Vol. 2 p. 22

truthful. Turning towards his men, the Prophet[S.A] said "there is no danger for him as he was going to his own parents." He added, "I want to abide by the terms settled with the Quraish."[31]

Ibne Aseer has more emphatically described the situation in the context of the prevailing mood of the Muslims. He says:

During that point of time when the Prophet[S.A] had just got the agreement written down, Abu Jandal, son of Suhail bin Amr, found an opportunity and all of a sudden came to the Prophet[S.A], all fettered in chains, to seek his protection. When Suhail saw his son, he caught hold of him and said to Prophet[S.A] "O Muhammad! we had already entered into an agreement on this point before his arrival." The Prophet[S.A] said, "you are right." Thereupon, Suhail got hold of his son and started taking him back to the Quraish. At this, Abu Jandal cried, "O, Muslims I am being taken towards the infidels so that I renounce my faith." This further distressed the Muslims. The Prophet[S.A] said, "Be patient. God will assuredly provide you and other helpless Muslims like you some way of deliverance. We have concluded a treaty with these people and will not do anything against it."[32]

Umar, who was still unable to grasp the appropriateness of the treaty and was keen to see it totally wrecked, found the occasion very opportune for that. Dayar Bakri says:

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[31] *Aalamul Wara*
[32] *Tareekh Al Kamil* Vol. 2 p. 84

Umar jumped up from his place and started walking by the side of Abu Jandal. All the time he kept telling him to be stead-fast as those people were infidels and their blood was like that of a dog. At the same time he was bringing the hilt of his sword closer to Abu Jandal. Later on, he himself used to say that he had hoped that Abu Jandal would catch hold of his sword and hit his father with it. But he valued his father's life. According to another narrator, Abu Jandal reacted to Umar's implied suggestion thus: "O Umar my right to obey the messenger of God is not lesser than yours."[33]

K.A.Hameed writes:

> The Prophet[SA] was staying at Hudaibiya after finalizing the agreement. One night eighty Meccans entered into the Muslim camp to kill them. They were all captured but the Prophet[SA], a perfect embodiment of clemency, pardoned them and set them free. He then returned back to Medina along with his companions."[34]

This incident appears to relate to a period when the Prophet[SA] had just arrived near Mecca. It was much before the signing of the treaty. Khwaja Muhammad Lateef Ansari refers to this event thus: "Some misguided Quraish youth came to attack the Prophet[SA]. They were all taken into custody and brought before him. He declined to take any action and set them free."[35]

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[33] *Tareekhe Khamees* Vol. 2 p. 22
[34] *Tareekh-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Vol.1 p. 82
[35] *Islam aur Musalmanon ki Tareekh* Vol.1 p. 150

The resentment of the Muslims against the treaty became conspicuously evident when, after its completion, the Prophet$^{s.a.}$ told his followers to offer sacrifices, get their heads shaved and then return to Medina. There was no response from their side. The Prophet$^{s.a.}$ repeated his words three times but to no effect. Showing indifference, the Prophet$^{s.a.}$ himself stood up and got his head shaved. At this some of the Muslims also stood up and reluctantly got their head shaved or just a lock trimmed. The intensity of their sadness was so severe that it appeared as if they were killing one another.[36]

According to Ibnul Wardi, after his return to Medina, the Prophet$^{s.a.}$ stayed there till the end of the year.[37]

Effect of the Treaty of Hudaibiya

Within a short period of time the Muslims, who, out of ignorance, were saddened by the treaty of Hudaibiya, started witnessing its evidently pleasant effects. The stressful environment of war often acts as an obstruction in the assessment of facts in a cool and dispassionate manner. Likewise, the intensity of hatred also erects daunting barriers in the path of fact-finding. Now, the peaceful atmosphere created by the treaty enabled many to observe the good nature and manners of the Prophet$^{s.a.}$ from close quarters. They also were led to ponder over the causes of the spread of Islam. Moreover, as Khwaja Muhammad Lateef says:

> The Muslims who happened to go to the infidels and, under the fourth condition of treaty, were not returned, had become a permanent source

[36] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.2 p. 637
[37] *Tareekh* Ibnul Wardi Vol.1 p. 126

> of propagating Islam through their words, behaviour and manners. Similarly, the Meccans, who, under the terms of the treaty, returned after a short stay with the muslims, conveyed to others their favourable impressions about the behaviour, manners and other qualities of the muslims. In this way also the message of Islam was being spread.[38]

The result was that within this particular year there was such an increase in the number of muslims as was witnessed never before. According to Imam Jafar Sadiq[as], "before the expiry of the period (the stipulated one year) it was being felt that Islam shall prevail over all the Meccans."[39]

K.A.Hameed writes: "It was the time when groups after groups of important leaders were joining the ranks of Islam. The renowned general of the world fame, Khalid bin Waleed, also embraced Islam."[40]

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[38] *Islam aur Musalmanon ki Tareekh* Vol. 1 p. 129
[39] *Aalamul Wara*
[40] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Part 1 p. 82

14

BATTLE OF KHAIBAR

This glorious Islamic expedition took place in the very beginning of 7 A.H. With this the power of the jews in the entire peninsula of Arabia ended for ever. [1]

From certain historical accounts it appears that the Prophet[SA] marched out in the middle of Muharram for this expedition.[2] Some other accounts mention Jamadul Awwal of 7 A.H.[3] and also Zilhij 6 A.H.[4]

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[1] The Jewish tribes, in spite of the reverses they had already suffered, were still formidable—still busy with their machinations to work the destruction of the Muslims. They possessed at a distance of three or four days' journey to the north-east of Medina, a strongly fortified territory studded with castles, the principal of which, called al-Qamus, was situated on an almost inaccessible hill. This group of fortresses was called Khaibar, a word signifying a fortified place. The population of Khaibar included several branches of the Bani Nazeer and the Qurayzah, who had taken refuge there.

The Jews of Khaibar had shown an active and implacable hatred towards Muhammad and his followers, and since the arrival of their brethren among them, this feeling had acquired greater force. The Jews of Khaibar united by an ancient alliance with the bodouni horde of the Bani Ghatafan, and other cognate tribes, worked incessantly for the formation of another coalition against the muslims. These latter were alive to the power possessed by the desert races to injure them and prompt measures were needed to avert the evils of another league against Medina. Accordingly, early in the month of Muharram (7 A.H.) an expedition, consisting of 1400 men was despatched against Khaibar. Syed Ameer Ali -*Tr.*

[2] *Tareekh* Abul Fida Vol. 1 p. 147

[3] *Ayanul Shia* Vol. 2 p. 256

[4] *Aalamul Wara*

Syed Mohsin Amin Aamli writes that Khaibar was at a distance of 7 *Bareed* from Medina, a distance that could then be covered in 48 hours. Khaibar was named after one Amalekite who had once stayed there. His brother was Yesrib after whom Medina was named. The other version is that in Jewish language Khaibar meant a fort. Khaibar was a big city with several strong forts, arable land and palm groves.[5]

On the basis of this latter view Khwaja Muhammad Lateef Ansari writes:

> Khaibar is a Hebraic word. It is derived from "Khabar", which means a fort. It was a Jewish settlement at a distance of eight stages, that is, 92 miles, to the north of Medina. It had several forts. The entire colony of the Jews around this settlement was known by this name, Khaibar. It was a newly populated area with palm groves. Downey, a European traveller, who toured Arabia in 1877 A.D., stayed at Khaibar for several months. In his travelogue he has written, " the land of Khaibar is very fertile. There were several strong forts of the Jews here and traces of some of those are still present."[6]

Background and nature of attack upon Khaibar

About the Khaibar episode K.A.Hameed writes:

> Khaibar lies on the route to Syria from Medina at a distance of three stages from Medina. There were several colonies of Jews at that place. They

[5] *Ayanul Shia* Vol. 2 p. 256
[6] *Islam aur Musalmanon ki Tareekh* Vol.I p. 150-151

were proud of their lofty forts and felt fully assured that their territory was very strong and well-protected. However, they were ashamed of their defeat at Khandaq and were looking for an opportunity to get rid of the stigma of that defeat. They entered into a secret agreement with other tribes that if they succeeded in conquering Medina, they shall for ever continue to give half of the produce of Khaibar to their allies. When the Muslims learnt about their preparations they held consultations and decided to face the enemy outside Medina.[7]

This account has very faint traces of truth. The reference to their being ashamed of their defeat at Khandaq suggests that they had actually helped the infidels against the Muslims at Khandaq and had suffered defeat. They were the same Jews who had suffered defeat. But the Jews who had helped the infidels were none other than the Jews of Medina itself who had accepted the suzerainty of the Prophet's[sa] government and had agreed to live under it as its subjects. Some of these tribes, who at one stage or another were found conspiring with the infidels, were banished from Medina and they had migrated to Khaibar. From this it emerges that it was not any external party against which an action was being taken that, in the modern international parlance, could be termed as a war. The action was directed against those subjects of the Islamic government who had failed in honouring the pledge of loyalty and were conspiring with its opponents. They had won the support of several tribes with whom they had secret understanding regarding the sharing of the produce of

[7] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Vol.I p. 83

Medina. Any action taken against them would strictly be, as mentioned earlier in some other context, a disciplinary action. This aspect of the expedition often remains unnoticed and for that reason whenever it is stressed that all the battles fought by the Prophet ﷺ were defensive in nature, the case of Khaibar is presented to contradict it. But the Khaibar expedition was not an act of aggression. It was purely an exercise to preserve law and order within the Islamic domain. Every disciplined administrator is duty-bound to take such steps.

Departure of Muslim army and the battle front.

Accordng to K.A.Hameed :

> 1400 Muslims, including 20 women, marched out of Medina for the sake of protecting their homes and hearth. Covering one stage after another, they arrived near Khaibar and pitched their tents. One solid gain from this was that when the people of Bani Ghatfan came out to help the Jews and saw the Muslims they went back. The Prophet ﷺ chose the same place for fighting where the tents had been pitched. Around those tents were ten big forts of the jews wherein an army of 10,000 soldiers was always kept on alert.[8]

Tabarsi says that 14,000 Jews had fortified themselves inside Khaibar.[9]

Illness of the Prophet ﷺ and Ali رضی اللہ عنہ

The Muslims were put to a severe trial by their Creator when after overcoming all the earlier stages they came close

[8] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Vol.1 p. 83-84
[9] *Aalamul Wara*

to the enemy positions and besieged the most important fort of the jews. At this stage the Prophet[S.A.] fell ill and developed migraine.[10]

Ali[A.S.], who was the Prophet's[S.A.] right hand and was in the forefront in earlier wars, had not joined this expedition on account of sore eyes.[11]

In the initial encounters the muslims were successful but when they attacked the most formidable fort of the jews. it turned out to be a very hard task. It seems probable that had the Prophet[S.A.] himself been supervising the compaign, he might have postponed this attack till Ali's[A.S.] recovery and arrival. But owing to his migraine he, for the time being, refrained himself from directing the affairs. Some enterprizing 'crusaders', hopeful of success and secretly having a grouse against the Prophet[S.A.] for denying them a chance to show their mettle and thus outshine others not only arrogated to themselves the control of the arrangements for the war but also took steps to initiate the assault. The unpleasant situation arising out of this received such a blaze of publicity that it got prominently mentioned in historical writings and in collections of *Ahadees* ('Narrations'). The chief of them being the *Sehahe Sitta* (the Six authentic ones), which include the highly esteemed *Saheeh Bukhari*. A modern writer whose intention in writing history of Islam apparently was to cover up certain known facts has reported this situation in his typical way. Suppressing the events of established authenticity, he writes:

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[10] *Tareekhe Khamees* Vol.2 p. 48
[11] *Tareekhe Khamees* Vol. 2 p. 43

> Muhammad bin Muslema was appointed the chief commander of the attacking force. He attacked the fort of Natat but even after repeated assaults of five days there was no positive outcome. On the 6th day the Prophet[S.A.] entrusted supervision of the army to Umar. He arrested a spy of the Jews who divulged several secrets that proved extremely useful for the campaign. Thereafter, the Prophet[S.A.] sent for Ali[A.S.] and instructed him to attack the fort of Naem."[12]

Anyone fully acquainted with the facts can easily notice with what haste the author has side-tracked the actual events.

Suppressing the events repeatedly mentioned by the well known historians and compilers of "Narrations" (*Ahadees*), the author has introduced the incidents that are not traceable in standard histories. To meet the necessity of providing some sort of matter (about Khaibar) he may have tapped some otherwise obscure source. However, the moot point is that when repeated assaults on the fort of Natat had failed to produce any result, why did the Prophet[S.A.], before a final conclusion of this operation, directed Ali[A.S.] to attack another fort, the fort of Naem? Another point to be considered is, if Muhammad bin Muslema was appointed as the chief commander then what was the post that was given to Umar? Some more matter invites attention. After Umar's appointment, what was the Prophet's motive in sending for Ali[A.S.] and, also, where actually Ali[A.S.] was from where he was to be summoned? Was he at that moment in the camp but had not been invited at first? Or, was he somewhere else? If he was not in the camp, then why was he not there? If he

[12] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Vol. 1 p. 84

was elsewhere, what was the reason for that? All these points have been ignored or made enigmatic by the author probably because he was not large-hearted enough to give a factual description of the events.

Against his version we have to see how the Khaibar episode has been narrated in standard and authentic Islamic historical writings.

A well-known historian, Abul Fida, mentions the Prophet's illness and relates all the subsequent happenings to this illness. He writes;

> Then (on account of the Prophet's[SA] illness) Abu Bakr took the standard, fought fiercely and then came back. Thereafter the standard was taken over by Umar, who fought still more fiercely but he too had to come back. Now the Prophet[SA] was informed about all this."[13]

It appears from this account that the standard of the army was not given to these gentlemen by the Prophet[SA]. Since the Prophet[SA] was unwell they got a chance and themselves taking up the standard one after the other, fought fiercely but without any result. After they had failed to achieve any success and the fort still remained unconquered, it was felt necessary to report the matter to the Prophet[SA]. On being informed of the state of affairs, the Prophet[SA] made the famous statement regarding his determination to give the standard himself the following day to one having such and such attributes. From the words of the Prophet[SA] it emerges that those who had tried their luck earlier had done so on their own; the task was not assigned to them by the Prophet[SA]. Further, the description

[13] *Tareekh* Abul Fida Vol.I p. 187

of the attributes of the would-be standard-bearer, that is, the commander, reveals another fact, that till then no one having those qualities had led the assault on Khaibar. The refrain, "then he came back", "then he came back" used in respect of the earlier commanders also points out the significance of the phrase used by the Prophet[saw] about the commander that he was going to appoint: "He shall NOT come back till God grants the conquest of the fort through his hands."

Hafiza Nisai writes in his *Khasais*:

> Abu Bakr took the standard but could not conquer the fort. The next day it was taken over by Umar but he too came back without achieving success. The people had to face much hardship and inconvenience. The Prophet[saw] then said "I shall, tomorrow give the standard to such a person who holds God and His messenger dear and who himself is held dear by God and His messenger. He shall not come back till he gains victory."

One of the historians of later era, Shah Abdul Haq, writes:

> Because the fort of Ghamus was stronger than other forts, it could not be easily conquered. They (the historians) state that one day Umar took the standard and, along with a group of the defenders of Islam, went towards the fort and tried his best but failed to achieve success. The next day Abu Bakr took the standard and went along with a party of brave and courageous fighters and had several fierce engagements but could not achieve his object. On the third occasion Umar again went along with a group of companions, surrounded the

fort, fought with the enemy but returned without achieving success."[14]

The fort of Qamus, which has been mentioned in the above version as Ghamus, was the strongest of all forts and, therefore, had a central position. It was situated upon a mountain known as Qamus and hence, it also was named as such.[15]

About this fort Syed Sibtul Hasan Hanswi says:

> Since this fort (Qamus) was in a way the protective gate of the entire Jewish territory, the word 'Khaibar' was used for it alone as Allama Zarqani (deceased in 1122 A.H.) has written. The Allama's words are " The fort named Qamus was the strongest and greatest of all the forts as mentioned in *Fathul Bari*. This fort was known as Khaibar because of its grandeur, antiquity and strength."[16]

Prophet's pronouncement and the expectant companions

The earlier quoted accounts of Khaibar, no matter how thoughtfully worded out of regard for the personalities involved, reveal the same unpalatable fact, namely, that whatever attempts to conquer the fort were hitherto made had all failed and had resulted in a kind of humiliation for the Muslims. For all this the Prophet[SA] cannot be held responsible as he was lying ill and the concerned persons took all the steps themselves. But, still, the painful effect of these setbacks was bound to be felt by him. On coming out

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[14] *Madarijun Nubuwwa* Vol.2 p.322
[15] *Mujamul Buldan* Vol. 7 p. 169 and *Tareekhe Khamees* Vol.2 p.48
[16] *Faathe Khaibar* p. 9-10

of his tent for the first time after feeling some relief, he himself might have inquired about what had happened during the last few days. After getting the report he made the historic declaration, contained in all the books of traditions and Islamic history, that:

> Most definitely I will tomorrow give the standard to one who loves God and His messenger and who too is loved by God and His messenger.

Even if this unanimously reported version of the Prophet's[s^] declaration contained no more words than what have been quoted, it has all those features which illuminate certain important facts. The phrase, "will tomorrow give", while giving tidings of a brighter day is also a historic comment on the events of the yesterdays. The other part of the statement, "loves God and His messenger" reveals the real source of the qualities of steadfastness and success. It declares loudly and clearly that these are attained only through pure and sincere love for God and His messenger; in other words, for the true faith, the propagation of which was the sole objective of God and His messenger's mission. As long as a person has not acquired this virtue, despite his loud claims, he neither develops the power of facing the dangers, nor perseverance; nor does he qualify for divine help.

When a pious soul attains the stage of intense absorption only then he is rewarded with the love of God and the Prophet[s^]. In a general sense it may be regarded as a personal virtue but it can also be treated as a special feature related to a particular situation. The inference that can be drawn from this is that the earlier assignments of the charge of the standard were based on people's choice, which did not accord with that of God and His messenger's. The

calamitous consequences of this were there for all to see. Now, when in a matter of secondary nature people had already met with disgrace for acting wilfully they should have desisted from pursuing their own wish against that of God and the Prophet[s.a] in respect of a future issue of far greater magnitude.

In some traditions and books of history the Prophet's statement is shown to have some additional words. Abul Fida writes that the Prophet[s.a] had said:

> Be it known to all and sundry that I swear by God that I will most definitely give the standard tomorrow to a person who loves God and His messenger and is also loved by them. One who always ventures forward to attack and does not run away. He shall conquer the fort with his prowess and might.[17]

Tabarsi, Ibne Hisham and Nisai have, more or less, given a similar version with some variation in the wording and placement of certain phrases. [18] These differences in no way affect the meaning and significance of the Prophet's[s.a] announcement. They all have reported it in their own words. The phrases, "I will give" and "who loves God and His Prophet[s.a] and is loved by them", occur in most of the versions and hence their authenticity is most certain. Similar is the case with another phrase, "who ventures forward to attack and does not run away". Some narrators, owing to lapse of memory, have omitted it but others have

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[17] *Tareekh* Abul Fida Vol.I p. 147

[18] *Aalamul Wara*, *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol. 2 p. 187, *Khasais Ameerul Momineen*, p. 7

reported it. There is no doubt that it was certainly a part of the Prophet's[s.a.] utterance.

It was but natural that the above declaration by the Prophet[s.a.] should make the people wait eagerly for the morning to see who received the standard. From the point of logic and ethics and diction, those who had already been the bearers of the standard should not have been among the aspirants. But conflict between mind and heart is a peculiar feature of human nature and more often than not the dictates of the mind are overruled by the impulses of the heart. Moreover, historical accounts refer to a dispute between the commanders of the earlier expeditions and their soldiers regarding the responsibility for the repulses. The commanders laid the blame on the cowardice of the soldiers and the soldiers on that of their commanders. This could have made the concerned commanders hope that the Prophet[s.a.], giving credence to their statement, might still consider them eligible for the proposed honour. It is said that the entire muslim army spent a sleepless night out of its anxiety to know what was to happen in the morning. In respect of one point the aspirants were fully at ease. They knew that only someone from among them was to get the standard as he who used to be in the forefront in every expedition was not there and could not be asked to come on account of his sore eyes. Tabarsi has described the situation as follows:

> The Quraish were saying to one another that there was no danger of having Ali[a.s.] in the field because the soreness of his eyes was so severe that he could not even see where he was putting his foot. When the Prophet's[s.a.] words were communicated to Ali[a.s.], he prayed to God saying,

"Oh Lord, Nobody can give anything to one whom Thou deprive nor can he be deprived whom Thou provide."[19]

Within this short supplication the irrepressible yearnings of heart, a deep sense of despair caused by incapacitation and expectation of God's grace are all so finely stated that they cannot be easily expressed in a long speech.

The atmosphere prevailing in the Muslim camp is thus described by Abul Fida :

Muhajireen and *Ansar* were stretching their necks to observe the scene. There was none among those who had any standing with the Prophet[SA] who was not hoping to be the standard bearer.[20]

The morning scene and summoning of Ali [AS]

While the night was passed in such restlessness, the scene in the morning was beyond description. It can be assumed with certainty that before the Prophet[SA] had come out of his tent, the Muslims had already assembled near its entrance in hordes. It is mentioned that the aspirants scrambled through the crowd to occupy places in the front row to catch the Prophet's[SA] eye. Tabarsi describes the situation thus:

As the morning dawned all the people gathered near the Prophet[SA]. Saad bin Waqas says that he was sitting just infront of the Prophet[SA]. After sometime he raised himself upon his knees and then stood up, hoping that the Prophet[SA] might call

[19] *Aalamul Wara*
[20] *Tareekh* Abul Fida Vol I p. 147

him. But the Prophet[S.A.] said, "Bring Ali[A.S.] to me". Hearing this people started shouting from every side that his eyes were so sore that he could not even see the ground beneath his feet. The Prophet[S.A.] retorted, "Whatever be the case, send one to bring him to me."[21]

Hafiz Nisai, quoting Bareeda Aslami, says:

When it was the time of dawn, the Prophet[S.A.] offered morning prayers. He then came out and sent for the standard. There was no one among us, who had some position in the eyes of the Prophet[S.A.] and was not expecting to be the standard-bearer but the Prophet[S.A.] sent for Ali[A.S.]."[22]

Dayar Bakri's account is as follows:

It is said that with the dawn people started moving towards the Prophet's[S.A.] tent and assembled near its door. It is mentioned in *Kitab Mantiqi* that when the next day began Abu Bakr, Umar and all the Quraish stretched their necks and each one of them was hoping to be found fit with regard to the Prophet's[S.A.] declaration. Saad Bin Waqas says that he sat upon his knees before him. Umar bin Khattab used to say that: "Prior to that day he never aspired for commandership". The Prophet[S.A.] then came out of his tent and asked where Ali[A.S.] was. He was informed that he had sore eyes. The Prophet[S.A.] told them to send some body to bring him.[23]

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[21] *Aalamul Wara*
[22] *Khasais Ameerul Momineen* p. 7
[23] *Tareekh-e-Khamees* Vol. 2 p. 48

Leaving others aside, only two persons have been mentioned in the narration of Bareeda Aslami. He says: "When it dawned, Abu Bakr and Umar became eager, with stretched necks, but the Prophet[SA] called for Ali[AS]."[24]

The version of the earliest historian, Waqidi, is distinctly unique. He says:

> People came and sat near the Prophet[SA]. When all the people had assembled along with their banners, the Prophet[SA] took the standard in his hand and moved it. Then he prayed to his God and handed it over to Ali[AS].[25]

The arrival of Ali [AS] and thereafter

Tabarsi writes:

Ali[AS] was brought in with some one holding him by his hand. The Prophet[SA] placed Ali's head upon his thigh, applied his saliva to his eyes whereby they were instantly cured. The Prophet[SA] then handed over the standard to him.[26]

The physical scientists may come out with any kind of explanation for this phenomenon but its factuality is beyond doubt as it has been reported by every single historian.

Ibne Hisham writes:

> The Prophet[SA] sent for Ali[SA] in the condition that he had sore eye. He put his saliva into Ali's

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[24] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p.93
[25] *Kitabul Maghazi lil Waqidi* Vol. 1 p. 391
[26] *Aalamul Wara*

eyes and said, "Now go with this standard so that God may grant us victory at your hands".[27]

Tabari, Abul Fida and Nisai give more or less a similar account.[28]

The task of history is to report an event. Any discussion as to how the saliva acquired curative property is beyond its range. In religious parlance it has to be described as a miracle as it was God who had given that astonishing efficacy to Prophet's saliva.

According to Dayar Bakari:

> When Ali[A.S] was cured the Prophet[S.A] made him to put on his (Prophet's) own steel coat of mail, hung his sword *(Zulfiqar)* by his waist and thereafter handed over the standard to him.[29]

Allama Ibnul Qeem writes that Ali[A.S] then asked the Prophet[S.A], "O, Messenger of God, should I fight with them till they embraced Islam"? The Prophet[S.A] replied, "First you go and station yourself peacefully in their area. Thereafter, convey to them the message of Islam and explain to them what they have been enjoined to do by their Lord. By God, if even a single person gets guided to the right path through you it shall be of greater value to you than every precious object".[30]

The Prophet's[S.A] advice presents the Islamic criterion of victory. The objective is not to conquer any country but to

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[27] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.2 p. 187
[28] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p. 93, *Tareekh* Abul Fida Vol. I p. 147, *Khasais Ameerul Momineen* p. 7
[29] *Tareekh-e-Khamees* Vol.2 p. 40
[30] *Zadul Maad*, First Half, p.384

peacefully invite the people to follow the correct path. If they themselves do not resort to fighting, there shall be no question of a war breaking out. Here (at Khaibar) there was a war because against a reformative proposal the opposite party decided to resort to the use of arms. To counter this move the Muslims also had to take up their arms.

Ali's[AS] advance and fight with Marhab

Ali's[AS] sense of helplessness owing to his disability, his ardent prayers after hearing about the Prophet's[SA] announcement and, then, being unexpectedly called by the Prophet[SA], the miraculous cure of his ailment and, finally, the bestowal of the standard — all these factors led to a quite natural display of exultation, exuberance and chivalric fervour by him. Tabarsi has written that after getting the standard Ali[AS] went running towards the battlefield.[31]

In *Seerat* Ibne Hisham, Vol.2, p.187 and *Tareekh-e-Khamees*, Vol.2 p.49 also there is a reference to this style of Ali's[AS] advance towards the battlefield.

The Muslim soldiers were busy watching the scene and waiting excitedly for the result (award of the standard). Not one of them had yet thought of getting ready for the battlefield. But now the commander was a person who never felt the need of any special preparation for such errands. Now when he was moving forward so rapidly who was there to accompany him? Jabir says that Ali[AS] went so fast that he and others found it difficult to put on their weapons. Saad bin Waqas even cried:

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[31] *Aalamul Wara*

"O, Abul Hasan (Ali) please stay so that others may also arrive."[32]

Salma says that they were following Ali[as] by watching his foot prints.[33] Jabir has mentioned at one place that people were pleading to Ali[as] to show pity to them by not making that much haste.

It is found in all the sources that Ali[as], on reaching in front of the fort, fixed his spear in the ground. Most probably this was meant to indicate that he who had arrived that day was not the one who would go back before the fort was conquered. This gesture was sufficient to create panic among the people inside the fort.

The people of Khaibar had a redoubtable warrior, Marhab, of whom they were mighty proud. In all probability he was the governor of the fort. His younger brother, Haris, was also deemed to be a brave soldier and till then was considered quite capable of confronting the Muslims. Naturally, therefore, he was the first to come to the field. Besides him, names of Antar and a few others are also mentioned among the warriors who came out to face Ali[as]. All of them fought with Ali[as] and were finished by his sword. Thereafter, willy nilly, Marhab alone could enter the battlefield and it was he who came out next., Since Marhab was of greater importance than others, historical writings provide a somewhat detailed account of his fight with Ali[as]. Tabarsi writes:

Marhab came to the battlefield with a strong contingent of the jews. Ali[as] faced him, and struck

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[32] *Aalamul Wara*

[33] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.2 p. 187 and *Tareekh-e-Khamees* Vol. 2 p. 49

him at his leg with his sword whereby it was severed and Marhab fell down.[34]

Against this other versions mention that Ali[as] had struck at Marhab's head. Shah Abdul Haq says:

> Marhab attempted to take the initiative and strike Ali[as] on his head but Ali[as] forestalled him and hit him on his head with *Zulfiqar* so forcefully that it cut his helmet and turban and reached upto his throat. Some say it reached upto his thighs and some others that it even cut the saddle of his horse into two pieces.[35]

This shows that Shah Abdul Haq had before him several versions all of which were unanimous in reporting that Ali[as] had hit Marhab on his head. The Shia community popularly accepts this version and Mullah Rafi Bazil has verified it in a forceful manner in his well-known poem *"Hamlai Haideri."*

Other authoritative writers are also of the same view.

Dayar Bakari, relying upon *Maalimul Tanzeel* has written:

> Marhab intended to strike at Ali[as] but he (Ali) took the lead in striking with his *Zulfiqar* which Marhab tried to fend off with his shield. But Ali's sword went through the shield, helmet, turban and head of Marhab and reached upto his teeth.[36]

In view of these accounts it is difficult to give credence to Tabarsi's statement that Ali[as] had hit at the leg of

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[34] *Aalamul Wara*
[35] *Madarijun Nubuwwa* Vol 2, p. 325
[36] *Tareekh-e-Khamees* Vol. 2 p. 80

Marhab. It appears that the venerable writer did not have any source before him while writing about this event. For this he relied on his memory and un-intentionally mixed it up with the Khandaq engagement in which Ali^as had struck at Amr ibne Abdwud's legs. This error is to be dismissed as just a "slip of the seniors".

Astonishing demonstration of bravery and conquest of Khaibar

After the killing of Marhab, Tabarsi, for reasons not known, has just written very briefly that Ali^as and the muslims attacked them (the jews) and they were defeated.

However, other writers have gone into greater details. Some of the things mentioned by them may not appear intelligible to the modern mind but the historians without any sectarian distinction have unanimously reported them. For example, the reference to the falling of Ali's^as shield on the ground by the stroke of a jew, its being taken away by another jew and, Ali's^as leaping to the other side of the trench in rage, his wrenching out of the iron door of the fort, and, using it as a shield, getting engaged in fighting again.[37]

According to another version Ali ^as had pulled out the door which was near the fort and used it as a shield. He kept it with him till the end of the war and threw it away when the fighting was over. Thereafter, eight persons attempted to turn it but were unsuccessful.[38] It is also said by some that even seventy persons could not move that door.[39]

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[37] *Madarijun Nubuwwa* Vol.1 p. 325

[38] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol. 2 p. 187, *Tareekh Al Kamil* Vol.2 p. 91 and *Tareekh* Abul Fida Vol. 1 p. 147

[39] *Tareekh-e-Khamees* Vol. 2 p. 51

There is yet another version according to which the said door was made of stone. It was four yards long and two yards wide and was fixed at a height of one yard. Ali[as] wrenched it out from its place, threw it behind him and thereafter entered into the fort.[40]

These events have been reported by the Islamic historians of all sects and of all times right from the early days of Islam till the present day.

Now, if any person following the analytical and deductive method of Ibne Khaldun sets aside all the reported accounts and attempts to draw a conclusion purely on the basis of rational principles shall, in any case, have to admit that, at Khaibar, Ali[as] must surely have performed extraordinary chivalric feats of such a nature as to make them so universally known. Otherwise, how is it that accounts of similar type about Ali's[as] other compaigns are not there? Or, why such heroic achievements have not been attributed to other personalities by their admiring narrators? The historical works which describe Ali's[as] role at Khaibar were not the products of the time of the Dalmites, the Egyptian Fatmides, the Safavids or the Qacharis. All these writings belong to the period extending from the closing phase of the Umayyad rule to that of the Abbasides. Some of them were even written in the Umayyad domain that was established later in Western Europe (the Moorish Empire) where there was no question of the existence of any kind of Shiite influence. This shows that the bare facts pertaining to Ali's[as] heroic exploits at Khaibar were so weighty that no pressure of time or clime could ever suppress or weaken them. K.A.Hameed, who is unduly brief in describing the event of Khaibar, still had to write this much:

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[40] *Tareekhe Yaqubi* Vol. 2 p. 46

> The Prophet[saw] sent for Ali[as] and instructed him to attack the fort of Naim. Ali showed wonderful feats in the battlefield that would require a large volume to be described. After Naim, Ali[as] conquered the fort of Qamus. In this way the Muslims conquered several other forts one after the other.[41]

Tabarsi says that a messenger conveyed to the Prophet[saw] the good news that Ali[as] had entered the fort. The Prophet[saw] then went towards the fort. Ali[as] came out to receive him. The Prophet[saw] said to him that he had learnt about his achievements and added: "God is satisfied with you and I am happy with you." Hearing this Ali[as] began to weep. The Prophet[saw] asked him why he was weeping. He replied that he was weeping with joy that God and His Prophet[saw] were pleased with him.[42]

Arrest of Safiya and Her Mollification by God's Prophet[saw]

Among the persons arrested after the conclusion of fighting was Safiya, the daughter of jewish chief, Huyee bin Akhtab. Ali[as] told Bilal to take her to the Prophet[saw] so that he may mete out to her the treatment that he considered proper. This shows that Ali[as] also held the view that the ladies of the chiefs of a nation or community were not to be treated like ordinary prisoners. Bilal happened to take Safiya through a path that passed by the place where the bodies of her relations were lying. This caused much agony to her. When the Prophet[saw] came to know about it he was

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[41] *Tareekh-e-Muslmanan-e-Alam* Vol. I p. 84
[42] *Aalamul Wara*

very angry with Bilal and said to him, "O, Bilal has your heart become totally devoid of mercy?"

Thereafter the Prophet[SA] thought it proper that he himself should marry her. Tabarsi says that the Prophet[SA] first set her free and then married her.[43] It indicates that the Prophet[SA] treated her like a princess and not as a slave girl who is used as property by her master. She was set free and married as a free woman on the basis of mutual consent, which is obligatory in Islam.

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[43] *Aalamul Wara*

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FADAK

As a result of the victory at Khaibar the jews of the vicinity were overawed by the glory and power of Islam and of its Prophet[S.A.]. The people of Fadak, therefore, entered into an agreement with the Prophet[S.A.] and without any conflict or clash surrendered their properties to him. Syed Muhammad Gopalpuri has written a very useful and informative treatise on Fadak. He has quoted the following words of Yaqut Samadi on Fadak:

> Fadak is a settlement in Hijaz, at a distance of two or three days journey from Medina. It was given by God to His Prophet[S.A.] in 7 A.H. through an agreement (with the Jews)."[1]

Ibne Shahab Zahri narrates that Fadak was owned by a jew named Mukhaireeq. It comprised seven tracts, named Barqa, Aawaf, Safiya, Musaiyab, Hasani, Mashriba Umme Ibrahim and Dalal. Those tracts had many palm groves and till 7 A.H. they belonged to the jews of Khaibar. After the battle of Khaibar this area was handed over to the Prophet[S.A.] on the basis of certain terms and conditions. Since it was acquired without any fighting it was the exclusive property of the Prophet[S.A.]. He utilised its produce for his personal needs and also to help the poor.

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[1] *Mujamul Buldan* Vol. 6 p. 342

In *Furue Kaafi* [2] also the seven names given above are mentioned upon the authority of Imam Musa Kazim[A.S]. Ibne Abil Hadid Motazali writes in *Sharah Nahjul Balagha.*[3]

> Zahri narrates that the surviving people of Khaibar, who had locked themselves within the fort, sought security of life from the Prophet[S.A] with the promise to leave the town. He agreed to it. When the people of Fadak learnt about it, they also made a similar request to the Prophet[S.A]. He agreed to it also. Since Fadak was acquired without any war, it became the exclusive property of the Prophet[S.A].

Tabari says: "Fadak was the Prophet's personal property because the Muslims had not invaded it with their cavalry or infantry.[4]

Ibne Hisham also refers to it in *'Seerat'*:

> Khaibar was the booty of war hence it was the common property of the Muslims but Fadak belonged exclusively to the Prophet[S.A] because the Muslims had not acquired it through an attack by their horsemen or infantry.[5]

The Quran also says that:

> What God has bestowed on His Apostle (and taken away) from the people of the townships,—belongs to God,— to His Apostle and to kindred and orphans, the needy and the wayfarer; in order that it may not (merely) make a

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[2] *Furue Kafi.* p. 247
[3] *Sharah Nahjul Balagha* Vol. 4 p.78
[4] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol. 3. p. 98
[5] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham (Beirut) p. 337

circuit between the wealthy among you. So take what the Apostle assigns to you, and deny yourselves that which he withholds from you. And fear God; for God is strict in Punishment.[6]

About this verse Allama Fakhruddin Razi says:

God distinguishes between booty and acquisition. Booty is that which is obtained through labour done and pains suffered in attack by cavalry and infantry in the battle. Whereas acquisition is that which is obtained without any such effort. The Prophet[S.A.] has his absolute discretion in respect of its disposal.[7]

When the following verse of the Quran was revealed, "So give what is due to kindred"[8], the Prophet[S.A.] called his daughter, Fatima[A.S.], and transferred the ownership of Fadak to her through a written document. This fact finds place in the books of Ahle Sunnat [9] and is unanimously accepted by the Shia scholars. Allama Tusi writes:

When the Messenger of God became free after the battle of Khaibar, he arranged a standard and asked (his men) who would rise to take it in his hand upon the strength of his claim. He intended to send an expedition towards Fadak. Some persons stood up to take it but the Prophet[S.A.] told them to keep away. Then Saad stood up. His claim was also brushed aside. The Prophet[S.A.] then himself said to Ali[A.S.] to stand up and take the standard. Ali[A.S.]

[6] Quran 59:7
[7] *Tafseer Kabeer* Vol. 8 p. 125
[8] Quran 30:38
[9] *Tafseer Durre Mansoor* Vol. 3, p. 777

took it. Then he was sent towards Fadak. Ali[as] had a settlement with the people guaranteeing safety of life to them. In this way the entire territory of Fadak became the personal property of the Prophet[sa]. Thereafter Gabriel came and conveyed God's order to the Prophet[sa] to give to his near ones their rights. The Prophet[sa] asked him who were they and what were their rights? Gabriel replied that Fatima[as] was his near one and the areas of Fadak and all that belongs to God and to His Prophet[sa] therein be transferred to her. The Prophet[sa] then called Fatima[as], wrote a document and gave it to her.[10]

Return of the Immigrants of Abyssina

Some of those who had migrated to Abyssinia from Mecca under the leadership of Jafar bin Abu Talib had come back from time to time but Jafar and some of his companions had continued to stay there. The Prophet[sa] sent a letter to king Negus through Umar bin Umayya Zari after which Jafar and his companions, numbering sixteen, returned to Medina along with their women and children.[11]

It was a happy coincidence that they reached Medina the same day that Khaibar was conquered. This doubled the Prophet's[sa] joy over the victory of Khaibar. He hugged Jafar and, kissing his forehead, said it was difficult for him to tell if he was more happy at Khaibar's victory or at the return of Jafar.[12]

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[10] *Aalamul Wara* p. 108-109
[11] *Muhazarat Tareekh ul Umamul Islamia* Vol.1 p. 82-83
[12] *Maqatilut-Talibeen* p. 6; *Tareekh* Abul Fida Vol.1 p.128

Some authors tend to get delirious in the course of their work and lose track of the events. One prominent example of this situation is that of Dr. K.A. Hameed, who after placing the battle of Mutah (wherein Jafar was killed) after the treaty of Hudaibiya and before the battle of Khaibar,[13] goes on to write:

> The Prophet[SA] was still staying at Khaibar when Jafar arrived from Abyssinia. He had several immigrants with him. An emissary of the king of Abyssiniya was also with them. He came to the Prophet[SA], on behalf of his king, and pledged allegiance to him.In this way the king of Abyssinia also became a muslim.[14]

The statement that the Prophet[SA] was still staying at Khaibar is also not correct. Abul Fida clearly mentions: "Thereafter the Prophet[SA] left for Medina. After he had reached Medina the remaining immigrants, including Jafar, arrived from Abyssinia."[15]

Prophet's [SA] pulpit

In the opinion of certain historians a distinguishing feature of this year is that the Prophet[SA] got a pulpit erected in *Masjide Nabawi* for delivering sermons. Prior to this he used to address the audience reclining against the trunk of a tree that stood inside the mosque. The Pulpit had only two steps leading to the uppermost deck called *Arsha*. This shape of the pulpit continued till the caliphate of Bani Umayya when the number of steps was increased to six. [16]

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[13] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Vol. 1, p. 82-83.
[14] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Vol. 1 p. 82
[15] *Tareekh Abdul Fida* Vol. 1 p. 148
[16] *Tareekhe Amir Haider* Vol. 1 p. 13

Another version is that the Prophet's[SA] pulpit was prepared in 8 A.H. Ibne Jarir gives preference to this view.[17]

Umratul Qaza

The *Umra* that had to be postponed owing to the opposition of the infidels on the occasion of the Treaty of Hudaibiya was performed by the Prophet[SA] along with his adherents in the month of Ziqad (6 A.H.) as stipulated in the treaty. According to the agreement the Quraish vacated Mecca for three days. The Prophet[SA] entered Mecca along with other Muslims, made customary rounds of Kaaba, performed other rites of *Umra* and then, after three days, left Mecca. This *Umra* is known as *Umratul Qaza*. The happy scene that was revealed to the Prophet[SA] through a dream thus became an actual historical event. The Quran had referred to this dream in the following verses:

> Truly did God fulfil the vision for His Apostle: Ye shall enter the Sacred Mosque, if God wills, with minds secure, heads shaved, hair cut short, and without fear. For He knew what ye knew not, and He granted, besides this, a speedy victory.[18]

Sir William Muir's vivid description of this occasion in the *Life of Muhammad* has been reproduced by Khwaja Muhammad Lateef Ansari as follows:

> The valley of Mecca was presenting a wonderful and strange scene at that time. It was a scene that had no parallel in the history of the world. Its inhabitants, high and low, all had vacated the town for three days. Each and every

[17] *Tareekh* Tabari (Egypt) Vol.3 p. 99
[18] Quran 48:27

house was deserted. Those who had been in exile for a long time were joyously moving fast along with their friends, towards the vacant houses of their childhood days and, within a short time, were performing *Umra*. Those who had moved out looked at the movements of the new comers from elevated places and saw them making rounds of Kaaba and performing *Sai* between Safa and Marwa.

Muslims of later times may be unaware of it but the infidels knew it well that the gate of access to the Prophet[S.A.] was Ali[A.S.] alone. Maulana Shibli writes:

> After three days people came to Ali[A.S.] and told him to convey to Muhammad[S.A.] to leave Mecca as the stipulated conditions had been fulfilled. Ali[A.S.] informed the Prophet[S.A.] and he immediately left (Mecca).[19]

Letters of the Prophet[S.A.] to various rulers. Effects and results therof

According to Tabari these letters were sent towards the end of 6 A.H. But Khwaja Muhammad Lateef Ansari, in his book *Islam and History of Muslims*, has given the year of these letters as 7 A.H., corresponding to 628 A.D. While dealing with the background of the letters he says :

> The Prophet[S.A.] was sent to reform the whole world and not only the region of Arabia. He, therefore, presented Islam as the only religion for the world. After the treaty of Hudaibiya (i.e. upto 6 A.H.) a major part of Arabia had come within the

[19] *Seeratun Nabi* Vol. 1, IV Edn., p. 504

folds of Islam. The Prophet[S.A.] now decided to send message of Islam to the rulers of the areas adjoining Arabia and through them to their people. Accordingly, personal letters were sent to the rulers of Persia, Rome, Abyssinia, Bahrain, Oman, Egypt, Yemama, Syria and Nazra."

He further says:

The letter sent by the Prophet[S.A.] to Maquqas of Egypt is still preserved there in the Royal Library and the one sent to Heraclius is in the library of Constantinople. [20]

Tabari has stated that six messengers were sent in the month of Zilhij. Three of them were sent together to the rulers of Persia, Syria and Rome. The fourth was sent to the king of Yemama, the fifth to the king of Iran, the sixth to Negus, king of Abyssiniya, the seventh to the king of Bahrain and the eighth one to Jaifar and Abd, the two brothers, who jointly ruled over Oman.

The full text of these letters has not yet been found in authentic ancient sources but Tabari has given the contents of some of them.

Prophet's[S.A.] letter to Heraclius, Emperor of Rome.

"In the name of God the most Gracious and Merciful.

This letter is from God's Messenger, Muhammad, to Heraclius, the ruler of Rome.

Blessings to one who follows the guidance. If you embrace Islam you shall gain lasting security. By embracing Islam you shall be doubly rewarded. But if you

[20] *Islam aur Musalmanon ki Tareekh* Vol. I p. 140

decline to do so you shall have the sins of all others upon you." [21]

The brief Arabic phrase "*Aslim Taslam*" (If you embrace Islam you shall be eternally secure) is evidence of that God gifted miraculous quality of the Prophet's[SA] speech about which he himself has said:

"God has given me compact and comprehensive expressions."

Letter to Manzar binul Haris, ruler of Damascus (Syria)

"Greetings to him who is keen to attain guidance and sticks to it. I invite you to believe in God who is one and who has no other associate. In that event your country shall continue to be yours."[22]

Letter to the king of Iran

This letter is from Muhammad, the messenger of God, to Chosroes (Khusro) the potentate of Persia. Greetings to him who follows true guidance, has faith in God and His Messenger, testifies that there is no true God but He and that I have been sent by God towards all human beings as His Messenger to instil fear of God's wrath in those who have any life in them. Embrace Islam and you will have divine protection. If you desist, you shall have on you the sins of all the fire-worshippers.[23]

Contentwise this letter is more or less like the one addressed to Heraclius.

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[21] *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p.1565
[22] *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p.1568
[23] *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p.1570

The striking feature of all these letters that is to be specially noted is that nowhere in the available sources of these letters there is any hint of a threat that if they did not embrace Islam they shall be attacked and their country shall be annexed. Such threats are usually found in the letters of the materialistic-minded worldly rulers. The Prophet(s) conveyed to them only this message in his letters that if they embraced Islam it shall ensure safety for them in this world and also in the hereafter. If they did not, they shall have to bear the sins of their people also because people generally follow the religion of their rulers. Sometime, in the style of the Prophets, he has warned them of the perdition that God has decreed for the tyrants.

Those distinctive features of these letters that I have deduced from their texts and found particularly noteworthy, have also been grasped by certain modern Egyptian scholars. One of them is Doctor Jamaluddin Ramawi who in his book, *Al Islam fil Mashariq wal Magharib,* has written:

> One thing that deserves to be mentioned is that Islam is a religion of liberty, fraternity and equality. Persecution has no place in its teachings; nor any kind of transgression. It is a religion of tolerance, mildness of behaviour, cleanliness of heart and purity of motives. Sharp blades of swords and piercing heads of spears were never the basis of its expansion. That is why in all letters written by God's Messenger to different kings, rulers and heads of states only invitation to accept Islam was extended.

Later on after producing the text of the letters, he writes:

> Thus the Messenger of God used to send the letters to the kings, heads of states and rulers only for their guidance and introduction of Islam and not to coerce or frighten them nor as a pretext to attack and warfare.

If the Muslims of subsequent ages had pondered over it they could have understood that in Islam the concept of conquering countries through territorial acquisitions has no place. Conquest, from Islamic point of view, means winning over the hearts of the citizens of other lands. In this way those countries shall automatically come within the fold of Islam. There shall be no question of any kind of compulsion. The purpose will be served just by demonstrating the virtues of Islam.

Reaction

The rulers concerned reacted differently to the Prophet's[sa] letters. The king of Iran, Chosroes' attitude was very insulting. He got so much flared up that he tore away the letter. The Prophet[sa] learnt about it through the knowledge gifted to him by his Lord and said, "He has torn my letter. God shall dismember his kingdom."

The king of Egypt, Qais, received the letter and the messenger with respect and sent presents to the Prophet[sa]. The most favourable response was from Negus, king of Abyssinia. He had clearly acknowledged the righteousness of the Prophet's[sa] mission after his talks with Jafar. He had also allegedly declared in the end that he had embraced Islam. Hence, when the Prophet[sa] learnt about his death he prayed for his redemption. It is also mentioned in Sunni traditions that the Prophet[sa] had also offered his funeral prayer in absentia.

Manzar bin Salva, ruler of Bahrain, and the two rulers of Oman, namely Jaifar and Abd, also embraced Islam. The Prophet[S.A.] neither interfered in the affairs of those who had accepted Islam nor attacked those who had refused to do so or had refrained from responding.

Only the ruler of Basra, Shrajeel Ghassani, against all the canons of international law and demands of humanity, got the bearer of the Prophet's letter, Haris Bin Umar, killed at a place known as Mutah. As a consequence thereof the battle of Mutah took place.

It is said that Heraclius, Caesar of Rome, was inclined towards Islam. Hamid Abdul Qadir has written: "Arab historians are almost unanimous that Heraclius had leanings towards Islam and he had also a talk with Abu Sufyan about Prophet[S.A.] which is a lengthy story." [24]

After giving this account the writer has stated that the later historians were reluctant to accept it because Heraclius had subsequently opposed the Muslims vehemently and had collected armies at Syria, Palestine and Egypt to fight them. When he learnt about the leanings of Maquqas of Egypt towards Islam he became furious. He called him to Constantinople and ultimately banished him from his territory. This was followed by the battle of Mutah. Giving his final view, the author has said that there is truth in both these views. Personally Heraclius was impressed by the truth of Islam but noticing the general opinion of Romans to be against it and finding his own authority in peril, he arrayed himself firmly against the Muslims.[25]

Battle of Mutah

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[24] *Al Islam Zaharahu wa Intisharahu Fil Alam* Egypt, p.414
[25] *Al Islam Zahurehu wa Intisharehu Fil Alam* p. 218

This battle took place in Jamadul Awwal 8 A.H.[26] According to Mohsin Amin Aamli the word 'Mutah' should be pronounced as Mu' tah [27]. This place was one of the settlements of Balqa which now forms part of Eastern Jordan.[28]

This battle is popularly known as *Ghazwae Mutah* but infact it was a *Sariya* because the Prophet[S.A.] himself had not participated in it.

The Far-reaching Political Significance of this Battle

On the basis of Quranic injunctions and life-long conduct of the Prophet[S.A.] it can be said with confidence that God and His Messenger's concept of conquests was not what the others as also the later Muslim rulers had wrongly assumed. Hence, in our view, the invasions of Iran and other countries that took place later were purely the doings of muslims and Islam is not to be held responsible for them. But the causes of the conflict with the Roman Empire had developed in the life-time of the Prophet[S.A.]. That these events, perforce, led to more serious encounters that eventually brought about the conquest of the Roman territory in Asia Minor, was not entirely unexpected in the context of the natural compulsions of cause and effect. It was a sad historical turn of events that soon after the conflicts had started the Prophet[S.A.] expired and the base of governance shifted from the centre that could protect and pursue his policies and line of action. After the conquest of Syria (Asia Minor) such forces came to power that totally transformed the Islamic government and made it virtually a

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[26] *Maqatilut- Talibeen* p.7, *Al Ibar*, Vol. 1 p. 9, & *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p. 1610

[27] *Ayanul Shia* Vol. 2 p-270

[28] Marginal note of Doctor Salahuddin on the book *Al Ibar* Vol. 1. p.9

counterpart of the Roman set up. For this reason the world was denied the chance of seeing the emergence of that kind of Government that, refulgent with truth and righteousness, would surely have been formed in Syria if the Prophet[ﷺ] himself or the true inheritors of his teachings had fought the battles and conquered the land. If there had been such a government in Syria, the neighbouring Christian power, the Roman Empire, which definitely possessed the quality of recognizing and accepting the Truth, would have, like Yemen, voluntarily submitted with heart and soul, not to the physical force of Islam but to its message. Then there would have been no crusades, no brutal varied forms of extraction of reparations from the muslims by the European powers for their earlier conquests of their lands. But now, alas, we can by no means present that blessed and truly Islamic form of government to the world. Willy nilly a historian has to record the actual events. The Battle of Mutah, which took place in Jamadul Awwal of 8 A.H., was first in the series of encounters between the Muslim and Christian forces.

Background of the war

Khwaja Muhammad Lateef writes:

> In those days the Eastern Roman Empire had extended upto the North of Arabia. Its capital was Constantinople. The Romans and Iranians had established smaller states in between their Empires and Arabian territories, which paid tribute to them and acted as buffer states between their territories and that of the Arabs. The Arabs who inhabited the northern region of the peninsula bordering the Roman territory, belonged to the tribe of Ghassan. They had got converted to Christianity and had adopted the alien Roman culture and were proud of

it. The Arabs, who inhabited the Eastern region were impressed by the Iran's Sassanid government and admired the religiosity of its people. They had adopted their religion and culture. [29]

It has been earlier mentioned that the ruler of Basra, Shrajeel Ghassani had got killed the messenger who had brought the Prophet's[SA] letter. This had happened at Mutah. Doctor Hasan Ibrahim Hasan, without stating the name of the ruler, simply remarked: "When the Prophet[SA] sent a messenger to Ghassanides with a letter inviting them to adopt Islam, they killed him."[30]

As against the versions of a majority of the historians, Muhammad Khizri Beck, who was a Professor of History at the University of Egypt, has observed that the messenger, Haris bin Umair Azdi, was not sent to Shrajeel at all. The Prophet's letter that he had with him was for Heraclius but Shrajeel arrested him on his way and killed him.[31]

We can say with certainty that if this incident had not taken place the Prophet[SA] would not have launched any attack against this territory. The proof of this lies in the fact that he had sent letters to several prominent rulers but with the exception of one or two none of them embraced Islam. When the Prophet[SA] took no military action against the king of Persia, who had humiliated him by tearing off his letter, how could he wage a war against Rome, specially when from the history, traditions and also from the Quran it is proved that both mentally and emotionally Muslims were closer to the Romans than to the Persians. Hence when the

[29] *Islam aur Musalmanon ki Tareekh* Vol. I p. 182-183
[30] *Tareekh ul Islamul Siyasee* Vol. I p. 176
[31] *Muhazarat Tareekul Umamul-Islamia* p.28

Persians had gained victory against the Romans, the Muslims were profoundly saddened and, for their consolation, a complete *Sura* of Quran, *Al-Rum* was revealed.

Its introductory part is:

> A.L.M. The Roman Empire has been defeated — in a land close by; but they, (even) after (this) defeat of theirs, will soon be victorious — within a few years. With God is the Decision, in the Past and in the Future: on that Day shall the Believers rejoice —with the help of God. He helps whom He will, and He is Exalted in Might, most Merciful.[32]

The murder of the messenger was such a dastardly and barbaric act that keeping silence over it would have been an evidence of total insensitivity of the entire community. The Prophet[S.A.], therefore, arranged an army of three thousand soldiers to be sent towards the Roman territory. Zaid bin Harisa was appointed its first commander. Though, apparently he was a freed man he was given this honour for being one of the early muslims. This, however, was resented by the so called pedigreed Arabs. But the Prophet[S.A.], giving a practical proof of his concern for the protection of Islamic values of real honour and respectability, refused to encourage their hostile feelings and stuck to his decision. In the event of Zaid being killed, Jafar was named as the second commander. If he, too, was killed then Abdullah bin Rawaha was to be the third commander. Aban bin Usman has said, upon the authority of Imam Jafar Sadiq[A.S.], that Jafar was made the first commander and Zaid and Abdullah were named as the next

[32] Quran 30:1-5

two successive commanders.[33] Some writers have even assigned the third position to Jafar.[34]

Shrajeel himself did not count for much. The muslim contingent was more than sufficient to deal with him. But on his back was the might of the entire Roman Empire as he was its tributary. On learning about the intentions of the Muslims, he sought help from the Romans. Upon his request an army of one million soldiers was sent to crush the Muslims.

A western orientalist, John Bajot Ghulub has written a book which has been translated into Arabic by an Iraqi writer, Free Hamad, and published in Baghdad under the title: *Al-Futuhat-ul-Arabiatul Kubra*. On page 146 of that book it is mentioned:

> (The Muslims) who were hitherto mostly depending upon divine help, had not set up any intelligence system to report the movements of the enemy. Hence, they had no information about the grand military preparations they were making at Balqa till the enemy force had come upto Maan. The Muslim Commander ordered the army to halt and two days were spent in discussion on how to face this new situation.

War or Sacrifice

The encounter between a force of three thousand and an army of hundred thousand was an extraordinarily unique event in the context of the then existing scales. Moreover, it was quite an unexpected development. The Muslims were

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[33] *Aalamul Wara*
[34] *Tareekh-ul-Islam* Vol. 1 p 44

mentally prepared only for the military power of Shrajeel Ghassani. For that their three thousand soldiers were quite sufficient. They never expected that they will have to face the Roman Emperor himself. According to one report Heraclius was with his army, which comprised one hundred thousand Romans and also hundred thousand of his Arab subjects of various tribes who had got converted to Christianity. In this way they had to face an army of two hundred thousand soldiers.[35]

When the Muslims learnt about it, they halted at Maan for two days to hold discussions about their line of action. It is reported that Zaid bin Harisa, or someone else, to sound the feelings of the companions, proposed that for the time being they should take no action but inform the Prophet[sa] of the situation and then act according to his directions. But Abdullah bin Rawaha made an emotional speech emphasising that they had never faced an enemy upon their military strength. Instead, they had always depended upon that faith that God had honoured them with. He added that even if they were unsuccessful they would still attain the status of martyrs, which was their ultimate goal. The whole army supported him. It was upon his exhortation that a small army of 3000 soldiers decided to face the martial flood of two hundred thousand soldiers.

Even those writers who have not given a detailed account of this battle mention the name of Abdullah bin Rawaha as the person who exhorted three thousand muslims to face an army of two hundred thousand.[36]

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[35] *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p 1611; *Ad durar fi Ikhtisaril Maghazi was Siar* p. 222

[36] *Wafee-atul Aslaf* p 138

They ultimately positioned themselves in the battlefield of Mutah which may well be described as the valley of death.

According to the popularly known arrangement [37] Zaid was the first to take over the standard of the army. He fought bravely and sacrificed his life. Jafar was the next to come forward. He fought hard and vigorously. Jumping down from his red-coloured horse he severed its legs. He is said to be the first Muslim to do such an act of valour.[38] Thus, unmounted, he thrust himself into the enemy ranks and lost his right hand while fighting. He took the standard in his left hand. When it too was cut off he continued to support the standard by pressing it with his chest till he died. He was then only 33 or 34 years of age.[39] Imam Muhammad Baqar[A.S] said that Jafar had received as many as fifty wounds out of which thirty were on his face.[40] According to Ahle Sunnat, Abdullah bin Umar narrates that Jafar had received more than ninety wounds from swords and arrows and none of them was on his back.[41]

Ibne Saad says that a Roman gave such a severe sword blow to Jafar that he was cut into two pieces. There were more than thirty wounds on one of those pieces. According to yet another account Jafar had received seventy-two wounds from spears and swords.[42]

Now only Abdullah bin Rawaha was left from among the successive leaders nominated by the Prophet[S.A].

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[37] *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p.1614
[38] *Tareekh* Ibne Khaldun Vol. 2 p 800
[39] *Ad durar* p 233.
[40] *Aalamul Wara*
[41] *Wafee atul Aslaf* p. 139
[42] *Tabaqate Kubra* Vol. 2 p.129

Following his predecessors, he also proceeded to fight and attained martyrdom. Some other Muslims were also killed and their names have been recorded by Ibne Abdul Bar.[43] Zehbi says that they numbered eight.[44]

Achieventment of Khalid bin Waleed

When no nominee of the Prophet[s.a] remained to hold the standard an unknown person took it in his hand and asked the Muslims to name some body to shoulder the responsibility of the standard-bearer. At this. Khalid ibne Waleed, either at his own initiative or on being directed by others, took over the command of the army. He made a plan for protecting the remaining soldiers of the Muslim army and, hence, fought a retreating battle. Stepping back gradually, he successfully disengaged his army and on finding an oppurtunity, he withdrew it totally from the front.

Tabari says:

> "He fought with the army of the opponents, kept them engaged and, gradually moving back safely took away his companions." [45]

Ibne Khaldun [46] and Abdul Bar [47] have briefly stated that Khalid got the Muslims separated away from the army of the opponents. This shows that the Muslims who had rejected the advice of Zaid bin Harisa and were determined to die fighting, were now convinced by Khalid about the futility of it. They, therefore, at once started moving in the

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[43] *Ad durar* p. 222
[44] *Al Ibr* Vol.1 p.9
[45] *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p. 1616
[46] *Tareekh* Ibne Khaldun Vol. 2 p. 801
[47] *Ad durar* p. 233

direction of Medina. It was their good luck that the Romans did not chase them. However, the most ancient historian, has given the following account of a narrator who had himself witnessed the whole scene: "When Khalid took the standard of the army, the Muslims left the battlefield. In this way the defeat was inflicted. The infidels pursued them and killed several of them." [48]

A European orientalist, John Bajoot Ghulub, under the influence of his materialistic approach, has referred to Khalid's achievement as follows:

> Khalid bin Waleed, who had lately embraced Islam, was fighting along with the Muslims. He was more competent as a military commander than Zaid and Jafar. It may also be said that he was lesser keen than them to reach the heavens. When he took over the command of the army, which was on the verge of defeat, he succeeded in influencing the Muslims by his strong and imposing personality. One of the *Ansar* fixed the standard in the ground and all the Muslims gathered around it. Khalid in a disciplined and orderly manner, slowly and gradually retreated till they all got out of the battlefield. The other side, tired by the fighting, made no attempt to pursue them.

The same author has added on the margin of the book:

> According to an Arab report the Romans desisted from chasing the Muslim army because they were under the impression that Khalid was

[48] *Al Tabaqatul Kubra* Vol. 2 p.129

intending to take them away deceitfully in order to land them in a desert.[49]

It will be in the fitness of things to examine how this "grand achievement" of Khalid was looked at by the other muslims. This can be seen in a historical development. When the defeated army arrived near Medina, the muslims came out of the city and, instead of welcoming the army, greeted it with hostile slogans, as if telling it to "go back". Not only this, they insulted them by throwing dust upon their faces, saying:

"O, fleers! You ran away from God's path." [50]

The display of resentment by the people was not a passing event. As Tabari says, its intensity continued to persist for long. Owing to this the members of that army stopped stepping out of their houses. A wife of one of them once went to the Prophet's wife, Umme Salma, who asked her as to why her husband did not visit the mosque to offer the congregational prayers with the Prophet[saw]. The lady replied:

By God, he cannot come out of his house. Whenever he comes out, people start shouting that you people have run away from God's path. He, therefore, remains confined to his house.[51]

It can be termed as nothing but sheer vagary of time that whereas the rank and file was obliged to stay within the doors, the leader who was solely responsible for this humiliating episode was gratuitously rewarded with the honorific of *Saif-ullah* (the Lord's Sword) by the efforts of

[49] *Al Futuhatul Arabiul Kubra* p. 98
[50] *Tabaqat* ibne Saad Vol. 2 p 129
[51] *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p. 1618

his admirers. Certain narrators, expert in inventing 'historical' facts, have gone to the extent of attributing these words to the Prophet[ﷺ] himself. They assert that it was during the engagement itself that the Prophet[ﷺ] prayed for Khalid and honoured him with this title. If there was any truth in this narration then how it was that the muslims in general had at that very moment such unpleasant feelings about the entire party? Their indignant outbursts are permanently and prominently recorded in historical works.

However, some historians, throwing dust into the eyes of factuality, consider the event as a victory and a meritorious achievement of Khalid. Zehbi has said:

> Khalid bin Waleed, without being formally invested with the command, took up the standard, waved it and overpowered the infidels. He got the muslims disengaged and took them out of the battlefield. This was his first achievement for Islam.[52]

K.A.Hameed, who has sculpted history instead of narrating it and has wondrously placed the battle of Mutah before Khaibar, gives the following account:

> The governor of Mutah came out with an army of one lakh against the muslims. Zaid bin Harisa who was the commander of the muslims, died fighting. Then Abdulla bin Rawaha was made the commander. He also got martyred. Three commanders were martyred one after the other.

Here the author has just omitted the name of Jafar. But later on he mentions his return from Abyssinia after the

[52] *Al Ibr* p. 9

battle of Khaibar. In his opinion Jafar had not taken any part in the battle of Mutah. After this when he comes to deal with the role of Khalid, he again becomes eloquent:

> No other person was in sight to shoulder the responsibility except Khalid bin Waleed. After his appointment he divided his army into different contingents, each under a separate leader. After giving suitable instructions to the army, he attacked so brilliantly that the enemy ranks took to their heels. The Christians suffered a humiliating defeat. Nine swords of Khalid were broken in the course of fighting. Expressing joy over this victory the Prophet[S.A.] gave the title of Saifullah to Khalid.[53]

Now it is upto one's regard for veracity either to laugh at this mendacious account or to bemoan it.

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[53] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Vol.1 p 83

16

INFIDELS' BREACH OF FAITH AND CAUSE OF THE RENEWAL OF HOSTILITIES

It was stipulated in the treaty of Hudaibiya that any tribe of Arabia could side with the Prophet^{SA} or the infidels of Quraish according to its choice. The tribe of Khuzaa chose to become an ally of the Prophet^{SA} and the tribe of Bani Bakr of the Quraish. There was long-standing hostility between these tribes and for that reason they kept themselves armed all the time. Now, there were two central powe

rs, the Muslims and the infidels of Quraish. Between these two sides there was a "no-war" pact, as per the terms of the treaty of Hudaibiya. On the basis of this, Bani Khuzaa disarmed themselves. One whole year passed peacefully. It was because of this agreement that the Prophet^{SA} and his followers, as already mentioned, could perform *Umra* a year later, without any let or hindrance from the other side. This had further reassured the Bani Khuzaa. Taking advantage of their unwariness, a section of Bani Bakr attacked them when they were staying near a spring. They slaughtered them ruthlessly, making an unavenged murder of pre-Islamic period a pretext. This was done despite a well-known Islamic principle that condoned the offences

antecedent to the acceptance of Islam by a person. This event took place in 8 A.H., two months after Mutah.[1]

K.A.Hameed, however, gives a different but unauthenticated account. He writes:

> Some time after the Prophet's[S^A] return from the *Haj*, Bani Khuzaa were making rounds of the house of God when Bani Bakr attacked them. The Quraish, helping them with men and arms, committed a breach of the contract. Bani Khuzza could not get shelter in God's house and were mercilessly killed."[2]

Other historians have stated that, when attacked, the people of Bani Khuzaa had entered Mecca and taken shelter in the house of God to save themselves. The invaders were told by other people not to destroy the sanctity of Kaaba and to stop killing. Even then they killed a man of Bani Khuzaa, named Mamba. Thereafter they (Bani Khuzaa) hid themselves in different houses of the town and thus managed to save their lives.[3] Some of them fled to Medina for safety. There they expressed their woes to the Prophet[S^A] and sought his help according to the agreement.

Tabarsi has given a different background of this conflict. He says that the tribe of Khuzaa was with the Prophet[S^A] and that of Bani Kinana with the Quraish. A person of Kinana was reciting some satirical verses against the Prophet[S^A]. The people of Khuzaa forbade him from doing that but he paid no heed to their words. This led to a

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[1] *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p.1618; *Tareekh Al Kamil* Vol. 2 p. 239
[2] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Vol.1 p 85
[3] *Tareekh Al Kamil* Vol.2 p 239; *Ad durar* p. 224

fight between the two tribes.[4] Some persons of Bani Khuzaa managed to escape the slaughter. Forty of them went to the Prophet[SA] as petitioners under the leadership of Amr bin Salim.[5] The Prophet[SA] was still in the mosque after having offered the morning prayers. He had not returned to his house and was engaged in making post-prayer supplications.

Entering the mosque, Amr at once recited some verses before the Prophet[SA] describing the high-handedness of the other side and their own devastation. Their substance was:

> O, God, I appeal to the Prophet[SA] on the basis of the old treaty between him and we people. The fact is that the Quraish have broken their pledge to you (the Prophet[SA]) and, repudiating the firm agreement, have killed us when we were offering prayers (that is, were not in the least thinking of a war).[6]

The Prophet[SA] was deeply moved by this and said: 'O, Amr, that is enough.'[7] The other version is that the Prophet[SA] said, 'O Amr bin Salim you have been helped.'[8]

In spite of it the Prophet[SA] did not immediately attack the Quraish. He sent an emissary to them to accept any of the following conditions:

> 1. To pay the blood-money for the dead of Bani Khuzza,

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[4] *Aalamul Wara* p. 112
[5] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.2, p. 134
[6] *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p. 1621-23
[7] *Aalamul Wara* p.112
[8] *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p. 1622

2. To stop helping Banu Bakr, or

3. To proclaim that the treaty of Hudaibiya has ceased to be operative.

The Quraish accepted the third condition but soon began to regret it. They, therefore, sent Abu Sufyan to the Prophet[s^] to get the treaty of Hudaibiya renewed.[9]

Tabari's book and other historical accounts examined by me do not refer to the sending of any emissary with these conditions and their acceptance of the third one. The Quraish themselves, by helping Bani Bakr in their onslaught on Bani Khuzaa, had come to feel that they had broken the agreement and were now regretting it. Hence it was that they sent Abu Sufyan to try for the renewal of the Treaty.[10]

Since Umme Habiba, daughter of Abu Sufyan had, b now, entered into wedlock with the Prophet[s^], Abu Sufyar on arriving at Medina went straight to his daughter hoping that she might be of help in his mission. But what happened there was quite unexpected. To his utter despair, when he wanted to sit on a bed, Umme Habiba removed it, telling him that it was the Prophet's[s^] bed and he could not sit on it as he was an infidel and, hence, impure.[11] After this, he could see that it was futile to hope for any help from his daughter. He had no option but to leave in dismay. This event shows that the concept of the impurity of the polytheists which is now considered as a matter of concern only for a minor section of the muslims, was initially

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[9] *Islam aur Musalmanon ki Tareekh* Volume 1 p. 165

[10] *Ad durar* p. 117: *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p. 1623: *Tareekh* Abul Fida p. 143

[11] *Tareekh* Abul Fida Vol I. p.143: *Ad durar* p.225-226

known to all those who were familiar with the religious tenets of Islam. Even the women of the Prophet's[SAW] household were aware of it.. Abu Sufyan after this setback tried to enlist the support of the companions and the Prophet's family members but they held out no hope for any help from their sides. Having failed ignominiously in his mission, he returned to Mecca crest- fallen.

The planned departure and its leakage

The Prophet[SAW] decided to proceed to Mecca but he wanted to reach there suddenly without giving any hint to the infidels. This plan was, however, frustrated by no less a venerable person than one of the select band of Badr veterans, Hatib bin Balqa. He sent a letter to the Quraish through Abu Lahab's slave girl, Sara, conveying to them all the vital information about the Prophet's[SAW] plan, such as the day and the time of departure and the route to be taken. She left for Mecca taking a route other than the usual one. God apprised the Prophet[SAW] about it. He sent Ali[AS] and Miqdad [12] or Ali[AS] and Zubair [13] or all these three [14] to recover that letter from the girl concerned. They took the route that they were directed to by the Prophet[SAW]. At the check point Noman bin Haris, posted there by the Prophet[SAW], was on guard along with some others. But the slave girl was cunning enough to slip by unnoticed. So, when questioned by the party sent by the Prophet[SAW], he and his men denied having seen any one going that way. But a person, who was collecting wood in the vicinity, informed Ali[AS] and his companions that he had seen a dark-complexioned woman going by that route. They moved fast and overtook the girl.

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[12] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol . 1 p. 134
[13] *Tareekh* Abul Fida Vol.1 p. 143
[14] *Ad durar* p. 227

She flatly denied having any letter with her. Thereupon, her person was searched but with no result. But when she noticed the harsh looks of Ali[A.S] she took out the letter from the bum of her hair and handed it over to Ali[A.S]. Ali[A.S] took it to the Prophet[S.A] and placed it before him.[15] The Prophet[S.A] at once sent for Hatib and asked him to explain his conduct. Hatib told him that he had full faith in God and his Prophet[S.A] but he had conveyed that information to the Meccans as a favour to them. Since he had no clan or tribe in Mecca and all his family members were there, by doing this favour he had hoped to secure their protection. If the Prophet[S.A] had followed the military code then the severity of punishment for such an offence can be easily surmised. Hatib's reply offered no reasonable excuse. All the hypocrites practised this kind of diplomacy for the worldly gains. It is said that Umar was bent upon beheading him as, according to him, Hatib had turned a hypocrite.[16] The Prophet[S.A] did not allow it. He punished him just by ordering his removal from the mosque. Some over-enthusiastic muslims started pushing him out. At this, Hatib again looked at the Prophet[S.A] with imploring eyes. The Prophet[S.A] ordered him to be brought back. He told him that he was being excused for once but he should never do such a thing again.[17]

Departure for Mecca

The attempt of Hatib to inform the people of Mecca about the Prophet's[S.A] movements having been foiled, the Prophet[S.A] left Medina without any further delay on the 10th

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[15] *Ad durar* p. 227
[16] *Tareekh* Abul Fida Vol.I p. 143, *Ad durar* p 227
[17] *Aalamul Wara* p. 113

of Ramzan 8 A.H.,[18] corresponding to first January 630 A.D.[19] However, Abdul Bari gives the date of the conquest of Mecca as 8th Ramzan 8 A.H.[20]

Tabarsi says:

> "The Prophet[SAW] left Medina on Friday after offering the prayer of Asr. Two dates of the month of Ramzan had then passed." [21]

The historian, Ibne Kaseer, has also cited certain reports in support of this view.[22] It is, therefore, quite probable that 8th Ramzan be the correct date of the conquest of Mecca. Ten thousand Muslims had accompanied the Prophet[SAW] in this expedition.[23]

Obligatory discontinuation of fasting during a journey

Imam Muhammad Baqar[AS] says that the Prophet[SAW] was fasting when he started from Medina. When he reached Karaul-Ghamim he ordered that every body should break the fast. He himself broke it and many of his companions did so but some others did not do so. At this the Prophet[SAW] remarked that they were offenders.[24] Among the writers of Ahle Sunnat, Ibne Kaseer has, at first, said this much: "When the Prophet[SAW] reached Kadeeh, in between Asfan and Abakh, he broke fast."

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[18] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.2 p. 135. *Albadaya wal Nahaya* Vol.3 p.285
[19] *Islam aur Musalmanon ki Tareekh* Vol.1 p. 165
[20] *Dawat* Delhi *Seerat Tayyaba* Edn. p.184 1379 A.H. "Prophet's Scheme of Battle".
[21] *Aalamul Wara* p. 114
[22] *Albadaya wal Nahaya* Ibne Kaseer Vol.3 p. 258
[23] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.2 p. 135
[24] *Aalamul Wara* p. 114.

Later on he adds, with reference to *Saheeh Muslim*, that: "When the Prophet[S.A.] learnt that some persons had not broken the fast he said that they were sinners."[25]

The Ahle Sunnat still hold the view that the breaking of fast in journey is optional and not obligatory. That is perhaps why Ibne Saad, in the *Tabaqat*,[26] makes the Prophet[S.A.] proclaim that the people were free to keep or to break the fast. But the narration of the Prophet[S.A.] quoted in *Sehahe Sitta* regarding the sinfulness of those not breaking the fast makes the veracity of Ibne Saad's assertion untenable.

Islam or Istislam (capitulation or surrender) of Abu Sufyan

Let us first see what K.A.Hameed has to say on this:

> The people of Mecca were still engaged in making preparations when the Prophet[S.A.] arrived with an army of ten thousand and camped near Mecca. Abu Sufyan was coming to meet the Prophet[S.A.]. The Prophet's[S.A.] uncle, Abbas, met him in the way. On being asked by Abu Sufyan, Abbas informed him that the Prophet[S.A.] had come to attack them with an army of 10,000 people. Abu Sufyan sought advice of Abbas about what to do. He told him that in his opinion he should lay down his arms otherwise there was no hope for him. Abu Sufyan then went to the Prophet[S.A.] with Abbas and embraced Islam. Thereafter, Abu Sufyan returned

[25] *Albadaya wal Nahaya* Vol.2 p 286-287
[26] *Tabaqat* Vol.2.p.135

to Mecca and convinced the Quraish that resisting the conqueror of Arabia was not an easy thing.[27]

It is to be kept in mind that in Arabic language surrender of arms or capitulation is called *Istislam.* Acceptance of Islam by Abu Sufyan, upon the advice of Abbas, was nothing but an act of surrendering before the might of Islam. It was, therefore, capitulation *(Istislam)* and not genuine acceptance of Islam. Ali[A.S] had revealed the real position of Abu Sufyan and his progeny in these words: "They had not accepted Islam. They had simply capitulated before it (done *Istislam*), keeping their infidelity in their heart."[28]

Other historians have also described Abu Sufyan's acceptance of Islam not as a voluntary act but as a result of Abbas's exhortation who had taken him to the Prophet[S.A] and had pleaded for him.[29]

It emerges from Bukhari's account that when Abu Sufyan and his companions had gone out to collect information about the Prophet[S.A] then, by chance, they got arrested by some watchmen and were taken to the Prophet[S.A]. It was then that Abu Sufyan adopted Islam. [30] Ibne Aseer has stated that at first Abu Sufyan was not inclined to testify to the prophethood of Muhammad[S.A] but he did so reluctantly only when Abbas warned him of the impending peril to his life.[31]

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[27] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Vol.1 p. 87
[28] *Nahjul Balagha* Vol.2 p. 17
[29] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.2 p. 13
[30] *Saheeh Bukhari* Vol.3 p. 39
[31] *Tareekh Al Kamil* Vol.2 p. 245

After this when the muslim army was moving forward, Abbas took him to an elevated place. As the numerous contingents passed one after the other, Abu Sufyan, despite his recently declared belief in the Oneness of God and Muhammad's prophethood, said to Abbas that his nephew's suzerainty had indeed extended vastly. Abbas admonishingly told him that it was prophethood and not kingship. On this, Abu Sufyan commented, "Okay, let it be as you say". This incident also indicates that Abu Sufyan had not accepted Islam by heart. He had only outwardly become a muslim under the pressure of the circumstances.

Allama Shibli has given the following account of Abu Sufyan's arrival before the Prophet[ﷺ] in the company of Abbas:

> All the past 'deeds' were before every body. Each one of them was demanding his decapitation. His hostility towards Islam, successive attacks upon Medina, instigation of Arab tribes by him, conspiracy to secretly kill the Prophet[ﷺ] were all crimes for which killing of Abu Sufyan was fully justified. But over and above all these, there was one thing (the Prophet's clemency) that whispered into Abu Sufyan's ear that there was no need to feel afraid. On the strength of this conviction Abbas also pleaded his case and eventually Abu Sufyan embraced Islam."[32]

The foregoing event obliges one to reflect that while the awe of an army can make one bow his head, halt the movement of his hand and persuade him to hold his tongue and even cut his own throat, it cannot make him change his

[32] *Seeratun Nabi* Vol.I p. 272

heart. Neither can it generate the firmness of belief nor convert his deep-seated hatred to love. Could that hatred and enmity, the extreme severity of which was shown in the earlier events, ever be transformed into love and regard by the sight of martial prowess? From the point of view of human nature how else can this sudden change of heart be interpreted except as a crafty move of an enemy who, till yesterday, was confronting the Prophet[s.a.] like a hissing viper but now had become a reptile in the sleeve to carry on his nefarious designs occultly and, hence, more freely. Such a foe is surely more dangerous than the one ready to strike the blow openly. All those who had become muslims after having been over-powered, had the same psychological trait as is found in any subdued and defeated nation. They were harbouring in their hearts feelings of hatred, enmity, anger, and also a keen desire for vengeance along with a certain amount of fear. As a result of this, though they could not show their hostility openly, they were all the while anxiously looking for opportunities to cause harm to Islam as and when possible. Their aim was that if they could not finish Islam totally, they should at least try to change its distinctive qualities that had harmed their status. In this way they wanted to re-establish under the garb of Islam those parameters of honour and distinction that had flourished among the Arabs before the advent of Islam. For them it was difficult to accomplish their plan in Prophet's[s.a.] lifetime as they were being carefully watched. They were not to mix freely with the Muslims nor were they given any superior position over them. Often gifts and presents were handed out to them to mollify them and make them abandon their criminal intentions. It was hoped that, if not they, their progeny may learn to live peacefully in the fold of Islam and become good Muslims. But this was not to be. Their

hearts never changed. Their faces would brighten up with glee whenever Islam met with even an ordinary setback. Often they would express their joy verbally too but in undertones.[33, 34]

General amnesty and triumphant advance towards Mecca

During his one night's stay in Islamic camp Abu Sufyan had seen with his own eyes the discipline of the Muslims, and also the kind of attachment and devotion they had towards the Prophet[s^]. He had seen that when the Prophet[s^] sat for ablution *(wuzu)* for the morning prayers the Muslims, falling one upon another, crowded around him in order to collect every single drop of water used by him. Whoever managed to get it rubbed it on his face for obtaining benefaction. All this was happening before the Prophet[s^] who had raised the standard of Oneness of God. One fails to understand from where a section of muslims got the idea that treats any form of demonstration of respect to the Prophet[s^] as a kind of polytheism?

Abu Sufyan, overawed by what he saw, observed that he had seen the courts of Caesar and Chosroes but nowhere he had witnessed such majesty and grandiosity.[35]

After the prayers he sought the Prophet's[s^] permission to return to Mecca so that he may convey his impressions to its citizens. According to certain historians, at the time of his departure, the Prophet[s^] himself said to Abbas to show to him the splendour of the Muslim army.

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[33] *Islam and Musalmanon ki Tareekh* Vol.1, p. 167-170
[34] *Shaheed-e-Insaniyat* p. 59.60.93
[35] *Albadaya wal Nahaya* Vol.3 p. 291

On this, Abbas said to the Prophet[SAW] that this man hankers after distinction. He suggested to him to say something about him (Abu Sufyan) that might enable him to parade his superiority before the Meccans. The Prophet[SAW] then declared: "Whosoever takes refuge in Abu Sufyan's house (at Mecca) shall be granted safety."

Exhibiting mixed feelings of elation and astonishment, Abu Sufyan asked the Prophet[SAW]: "In *my* house ?"

The Prophet[SAW] replied: "Yes, that is right; in your house." But after a short pause he added: "Whosover enters the house of Hakeem bin Hazam shall also be granted safety."

The house of Abu Sufyan was at one end of Mecca whereas that of Hakeem was at the other. The Prophet[SAW] thus indicated that the inhabitants of the two parts could gain safety by taking refuge in those two houses. But he did not stop at this. He further remarked: "Whosoever entered the mosque at Kaaba *(Masjid-e-Haram)* shall also be safe."

After this he added: "He too shall be safe who keeps himself behind the closed doors of his house."[36]

It is obvious that general amnesty was granted to the Meccans. But the fact that his name had precedence in this proclamation was sufficient to let Abu Sufyan talk pompously about himself before others. In this way his ego was satisfied After this, Abbas stepped forward and told him to stay and have a view of the Islamic Army so that he could give a description of it to the Meccans. He took Abu Sufyan out to a hillock near a bend in the path through which the contingents were to pass.

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[36] *Tareekh Al Kamil* Vol.2 p. 24

Allama Ibne Abil Hadid Motazil has composed a very forceful panegyric *(Qaseeda)* on the conquest of Mecca. It is considered as one of the masterpieces of Arabic literature. Maulana Syed Ali Muhammad,[37] a divine *(Mujtahid)* and an Arabic litterateur, has not only translated it but also in fact written its commentary in Urdu in the literary style of the period. Some extracts pertaining to this event (Abu Sufyan viewing the Islamic army) are produced here:

> Abu Sufyan came to satisfy his curiosity and with Abbas went to the Prophet[S.A.] and embraced Islam to gain security. But God was the master of his heart (i.e. only God knew what was in his heart). Motazil writes: "Thereafter Abu Sufyan flew to the sky. Finding no way of escape there, he came down and settled on the earth.
>
> In short he was struck with fear on seeing the sharpened double-edged sword. At first he acted evasively when he heard the name of Islam but later on he bowed to it.
>
> He extended his hand to pledge allegiance but it was not in his heart. Likewise, he avowed loyalty but without any intention to be loyal.
>
> Since the Prophet[S.A.] had an eminently merciful and forgiving nature. he let his (Abu Sufyan's) real nature remain under cover.
>
> How sad O. Abu Sufyan that outwardly you showed respect and veneration to the Prophet[S.A.] but inwardly nurtured malice towards him.

[37] He was the son of Sultanul Ulema and grandson of Ghufran Maab.

Is it not a sufficient proof of your despicability that your outward and inward be dissimilar and you be counted amongst the hypocrites?"

When the Prophet[s.a] let him depart he wished that he should see the splendour and grandeur of the all-conquering army so that intimidated by the sight, he may never indulge in rebellious activities. He, therefore, asked Abbas to take (the blackguard) to a mound to show the strength of the Islamic army.

When the faithful *Muhajireen* and *Ansar* had assembled at his door, the Prophet[s.a] ordered for his camel. A camel of impressive build, named Qaswa, was brought to him and he mounted it in all splendour. Innumerable men of cavalry and infantry were marching in his front. Nothing could be heard in the din made by the shouts of the youth and neighing of horses. The Prophet[s.a] was in the centre and *Muhajireen* and *Ansar* formed a halo around him. Everyone was eager to make the supreme sacrifice for the cause of Allah. Like a sparkling star before the moon, Ali[a.s] was in front of the Prophet[s.a]. The blazing standard of the army was in his hand and the gleaming sword, *Zulfiqar*, in the sheath. The army marched forward in this majestic fashion. It passed by the spot where Abu Sufyan was standing. In the vanguard was Khalid ibne Waleed with one thousand warriors armed with swords, spears and quivers of arrows. He had a big banner in his hand. On seeing Abu Sufyan the soldiers shouted 'Allah is Great'. Abu Sufyan inquired of Abbas whether it was the Prophet's

army. Abbas told him that it was Khalid's, the son of his pal, Waleed. Abu Sufyan expressed surprise on the youngster's elevation to the rank of an officer in such a short time.

Khalid's contingent was followed by the one led by Zubair bin Awam. Wearing the coat of arms, helmet and other articles of armour and holding aloft a huge spear, he was marching majestically at the head of his contingent. In front of him was the silken banner of his company. Behind him were his fully armed cavalrymen on mail-covered horses. When they came near Abu Sufyan they also shouted, 'Allah is Great'. Abu Sufyan again asked Abbas if that was the Prophet's army. Abbas informed him that it was just the regiment under the command of Zubair.

After this was the regiment led by the experienced, pious and elderly veteran, Abu Zar Ghifari. He had a refulgent steel cap on his head and a long coat of the same metal covered his body. A red-coloured sword was hanging from his neck and the glow of faith could be seen on his forehead. In his righteous hand was a banner, shining like the galaxy in the dust-created darkness. Behind him were five hundred horsemen of his tribe, Bani Ghifar. They were no doubt elderly persons but they all appeared as robustly straight as the shaft of a drawn bow. 'Allah is Great' was on their lips as they passed in front of Abu Sufyan. On seeing Abu Zar, Abu Sufyan asked Abbas as to who that venerable person was.

Abbas told him that he was Abu Zar, a very special companion of the Prophet[S.A.].

Abu Zar's contingent was followed by Bani Kaab, Mazeena and locust-horde of Jaheena warriors. Ultimately, and after a long passage of time, the main body of the Prophet's[S.A.] army arrived. Words fail to describe its grandeur. The Prophet[S.A.] was in the front and his army behind him. God's protection was hovering over him. Everything was exhibiting divine omnipotence—the suavity of the hour, the luminous face, and the milk-white dress. It seemed as if a shimmering screen of brilliance was stretched between the earth and the heaven.

What history has recorded pertaining to this occasion is of immense significance. On seeing the grandeur of the Islamic army, Abu Sufyan said to Abbas, that the realm of his nephew had become a vast kingdom. He at once corrected him, saying that it was not kingship but prophethood. Abu Sufyan then murmured, "Alright, be it so as you say." [38]

It is to be kept in mind that the distinction between 'kingship' and 'prophethood' continued to persist after that. Muslims by conviction believed in prophethood whereas those who had embraced Islam under political compulsions, or were the progeny of such muslims, they always considered it as kingship.

Historians, in general, have written that Prophet[S.A.] came after the contingents of the *Ansar*.[39] Tabarsi, a Shiite

[38] *Albadaya wal Nahaya* Vol.3 p. 290; *Tareekh* -e-Yaqubi, Vol.3 p.59; *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p.1633; *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.2 p.135,444
[39] *Albadaya wal Nahaya* Vol.3 p. 292

scholar, however, says that he was with the *Ansar* of Medina.[40]

If that was so then this showing of regard for the rights of the people who had given him shelter was a marvellous gesture emanating from his extraordinarily courteous nature. He wanted them to note that even when he was entering his hometown he had forgotten neither their loyalty nor their kindness. They should not think that on returning to Mecca he had become a Meccan again. He was now a Medinite and shall continue to be a Medinite. Since it was the contingent of the *Ansar*, the Prophet's[SA] standard was in the hands of Saad bin Ubbada, the standard-bearer of the *Ansar*. Saad had not correctly understood the Prophet's[SA] intentions on that occasion of victory and, therefore, on seeing Abu Sufyan, he challenged him in combative words: "O, Abu Sufyan, it is a day of great turmoil. Many a respectable person's prestige shall meet with disgrace today."

It is mentioned in certain historical works that on hearing this Abu Sufyan rushed through the ranks to the place where the Prophet[SA] was, kissed his stirrup and said, "Have you heard what Saad is saying." and then repeated Saad's words. Other historians do not mention Abu Sufyan's name but do say that when the Prophet[SA] heard about it he said that Saad's words had no significance. What he said was wrong. He added that it was the day of restoring respect to objects worthy of respect and to Kaaba shall return its earlier grandeur."[41] He then took away the standard from Saad and handed it over to Ali[AS].[42] Ali[AS] held it in his hands. According to Tabari the Prophet[SA] told Ali[AS]

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[40] *Aalamul Wara* p. 116
[41] *Albadaya wal Nahaya* Vol.3 p. 392
[42] *Tareekh* Ibne Khaldun Vol.2 p. 806

to go to Saad and take the standard from him. He further added that he alone should enter Mecca holding the standard. [43]

Ibne Khaldun also has stated that the Prophet[S.A.] told Ali[A.S.] to take the standard from Saad.[44]

Regarding entry into Mecca, K.A.Hameed says:

> At the time of entry into the town Ali[A.S.] was in front of the Prophet[S.A.], holding aloft the standard of Islam. The procession proceeded straight to the precints of Kaaba. The Prophet[S.A.] stood in the courtyard and recited the following verse:
>
> "In the name of God, who is most Benevolent and Merciful."
>
> After this he added, "Allah alone is the Lord of the heaven and the earth. Allah has promised you many things which shall all be accomplished. Allah has prevailed over your enemies. Allah is all-powerful." [45]

The Prophet[S.A.] was, at that time, putting on a black turban.[46] It has now become a mark of distinction of those Syeds of Bani Fatima who still wear a turban.

Other historians write that when the Prophet[S.A.] arrived at the door of Kaaba he placed his hands on its posts and said:

"There is no God, but the One God. He has fulfilled His promise, has helped His servant and has, all alone, defeated all the combined forces."[47]

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[43] *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p. 1936
[44] *Tareekh* Abul Fida Vol.1 p. 151
[45] *Tareekh-e-Muslmanan-e-Alam* Vol.1 p. 88
[46] *Tareekh Al Kamil* Vol.2 p. 252

Thereafter, he made the historical declaration of general amnesty. Some historians place it after the purgation of the Kaaba of the presence of the idols but a majority of them holds that it preceded the event. K.A.Hameed says:

> After offering prayers the Prophet[ﷺ] went upto the well of Zam Zam and quenched his thirst with its water. Thereafter he made the declaration that holds a distinct specialty in the history of the world. He said "O, people of Quraish, today there is no danger for you. God has destroyed your ignorance-based pride as well as your bragging. Remember, God has created you from dust and to it He shall again return you. Before God only that person is respectable who stands in awe of Him and behaves decently. O, nobles of the city, I set you free and you shall not be put to any questioning."[48]

It is surprising that Khwaja Muhammad Lateef Ansari has written only this much that the Prophet[ﷺ] offered thanks-giving prayers, delivered an eloquent speech before the people of the city exhorting them to believe in the Oneness of God, be wary of polytheism and keep human brotherhood in regard.[49] One does not understand as to why he has not referred to the grant of general amnesty, which presents a very significant aspect of the Prophet's[ﷺ] character revealed on the occasion of the conquest of Mecca. It is such a marvellous aspect that it can be proudly

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[47] *Aalamul Wara* p. 118
[48] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* Vol.1 p. 88
[49] *Islam aur Musalmanon ki Tareekh* Vol.1 p. 170

placed before the world community with a challenging invitation to show anything like that if it has one.

Tabarsi has given a detailed description of the event. He writes:

> Prominent persons of the Quraish came to Kaaba. They had a feeling that they shall not escape being put to sword. Afterwards, the Prophet[S] also came to Kaaba, caught hold of the two posts of its door and said, "There is no God but Allah. He has fulfilled His promise and helped His servant. He alone has prevailed over multifarious forces." He then asked them (the Meccans) as to what they expected from him. Suhail bin Amr said they expected nothing but good from him as he was a noble brother and a son of their uncle. The Prophet[S] then said that he would say to them what his brother (i.e. fellow prophet) Yusuf (Joseph) had said to his brothers, that is, he would not reproach them at that moment. He added that he would pray to God to forgive them. He is the most Merciful of the merciful. He also informed them that the claims of retribution for the blood (of the people killed by them unjustly) and of property, as also the positions of pride and honour of the days of ignorance (pre-Islamic period) were under his feet. He, however, added that the positions related to the guardianship of Kaaba and provision of drinking water to the pilgrims (*Hajis*) were being restored to those who held them before. He told them to be aware of the fact that God has made Mecca a sacred place. No bloodshed was ever permissible here before him. It had become permissible for *him*

only for a short while that day. Thenceforth its sanctity had become inviolable till Doomsday. No tree growing therein could be cut nor an animal hunted. No unclaimed property could be lifted except for being restored to its owner. He added how bad neighbours of his they were; they belied him, banished him from his home and made all kind of efforts to vanquish him. Not content with that they invaded him in his own city, bent upon warfare. He told them that in spite of all that he was letting them off.

After hearing this speech the Meccans left the place. feeling as if they had been resurrected and had come out of their graves. Thereafter, all of them embraced Islam.[50]

Two factors of historical importance emerge from this speech. Firstly, that the Prophet[sa] confronted the Meccans with a chargesheet of their misdeeds emphasizing that it were they who had attacked Medina as aggressors. This statement throws such an intense light on the background of the Islamic wars, particularly on the Battle of Badr, that after it no room is left for any doubt.

Secondly, the Meccans embraced Islam after the declaration of amnesty. This means that forgiveness and mercy had been shown to a party that was non-muslim.

Other historians have narrated the details of this event in a dispersed way. For example, Ibnul Wardi mentions the Prophet's[sa] question, "What do you think I shall do to you", and the reply of the Meccans, " a noble brother and a son of a noble brother", and immediately afterwards writes

[50] *Aalamul Wara* p. 118

Prophet's[SAW] words, "Go. I let off all of you." [51] Abul Fida has also followed the same line. After quoting the Prophet's[SAW] question and the Meccans' reply he goes straight to the Prophet's[SAW] pronouncement that he was setting them free.[52] Ibne Aseer has done the same thing. He has, however, after quoting the Prophet's[SAW] pronouncement regarding their freedom, has made the following addition:

> In this way he (the Prophet[SAW]) forgave them although Allah had given him full power over them. They were present before him as the booty of war. Hence, after this incident the Meccans came to be called as "the freed men", that is, such slaves (male and female) who had been set free.[53]

Masoodi's account of the conquest of Mecca is very brief. After mentioning the smashing of the idols as the most important event of the year, he only writes:

> The Prophet[SAW] said, "O Quraishite horde, what do you think my treatment of you shall be?" They said they were expecting a good treatment from a noble brother and the son of a noble brother. Thereupon he said "Alright. I am letting you off".[54]

Yaqubi has given both the question and the answer with the clarification that the answer came from the same Suhail bin Amr who was the representative of the Meccans in the peace negotiations at Hudaibiya. After this he has produced a long speech of the Prophet[SAW] dealing with the sanctity of *Haram-e-Muqaddas* (precincts of Holy Kaaba)

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[51] *Tareekh* Ibnul Wardi Vol.1 p. 130
[52] *Tareekh* Abul Fida Vol.1 p. 152
[53] *Tareekh Al Kamil* Vol.2 p.252
[54] *Murawwajuz Zahab* Vol.1 p. 418

and certain Islamic laws such as the one about the child to be treated as of the husband and stones for the adulterers. At the end he has written the following statement of the Prophet[S.A.], "How bad a neighbour you were! Well, I forgive you and let you off."[55]

The above extracts from different historical works have been produced here to highlight the significance of certain aspects. The most important phrase, which is present in all the versions is, "I forgive you and let you off". The word used is *Talaqa* which is the plural form of *Taleeq* which means to set free, out of compassion, a person who has been captured in a war and has, thus, become the captor's slave. The word though used to announce pardon is both contemptuous and admonitory. It became a permanently insulting smear on the reputation of the Meccans and soon came to be regarded as their byname. It was so universally known that Ameerul Momineen, Ali ibne Abu Talib[A.S.], used it, without over-stepping the bounds of decency, in different ways in his correspondence with Muawiya. On one occasion he wrote, "how can those who themselves are *Talaqa* and, also are the progeny of *Talaqa*, claim the right of disputing with the *Muhajir* about the question of superiority?" On another occasion, when Muawiya wrote to him claiming equality with him, Ali[A.S.] replied, "How can one who is a *Taleeq* be an equal to one who is faultless and straight forward?"

It seems but natural that when the Prophet[S.A.] asked the Meccans how they thought he was going to deal with them, he should be having in his mind all the cruelties they had inflicted upon him. Hence, it would be wrong to assume that he put that question to the Meccans in a mild and suave

[55] *Tareekh* Ibne Wazeh Vol.2 p. 60

tone. The question must have come out of a heart full of turbulent passions which should have affected both his facial and verbal expressions. The Meccans' reply—"We expect nothing but good from you as you are a noble brother and a son of a noble brother"— shows the typical fawning behaviour to which the cruel and tyrannical people stoop under the pressure of events.

Their reply must have further saddened and angered the Prophet[s^]. This must have made him reflect on how at that moment he was being addressed a brother and son of a brother whereas in the past he was nothing to them. How cruelly they had treated him and had eventually driven him out of his home! The Prophet's[s^] utterances on that occasion, as produced by Allama Tabarsi, are no doubt the natural outcome of such feelings. Surely, while mentioning the instances of their ill treatment, he must have spoken vehemently in stentorian tones. Every single word of his should have hurt them like the lash of a whip or a thunderbolt. It cannot be even imagined that these words were delivered in a soft and mild manner. "How bad a neighbour you were", is the most significant part of the statement and marks the starting point of the Prophet's[s^] arraignment of the Meccans that has been reproduced in *Aalamul Wara.*

With all this, how out of place look the phrases attributed to the Prophet[s^]. It is alleged by certain writers that on hearing the reply of the Meccans, the Prophet[s^] said to them that he would say to them what his 'brother' (fellow Prophet) Yusuf (Joseph) had said to his brothers, namely, that all blame was removed from them. It is also stated that after this the Prophet[s^] prayed to the most merciful and benevolent Allah to forgive the Meccans. These words, so soft and so full of affection go against the spirit of the

earlier part of his speech. If the later report is accepted as genuine then all his admonition, recounting of their misdeeds and that insulting word, *Talaqa*, shall have to be rejected. The irreconcilibility of the two parts of the Prophet's[sa] speech obliges one to assume that among the various narrators of the event there must have been a few who had some softness for the new converts and wanted to procure some kind of a guarantee for their ultimate salvation. Their efforts in this respect began with the statement that the Prophet[sa] said to them that there was no reproach for them and also prayed for their forgiveness. The final stage of these efforts was reached with the 'discovery' of another narration favouring a man like Yazid. According to this narration, the Prophet[sa] is stated to have invoked in anticipation God's blessings for the party that, years later was to go on a naval expedition to conquer Constantinopl and included Yazid. One of the narrators of the conquest o Mecca episode has also added an appendix to his narration. He goes on to say that on hearing the reply of the Meccans the Prophet[sa] became more fervently compassionate and equated them with the brothers of Yusuf. After this who can have any doubt about their salvation? It is the scholars of that very party to which the above narrators belonged who have made each one of the twelve brothers of Yusuf a prophet in spite of their cruel acts. As a natural corollary of the above-mentioned equation, the tyrants of Mecca have to be accorded the same respectable status as that of the brothers of Yusuf barring, of course, the prophethood.

Other narrators, who had no such regard for the Meccans that could make them lighten the severity of their crimes, have recorded every word of the Prophet's[sa] harsh speech. Later historians (like Tabarsi and others) had both the versions before them and have, therefore, amalgamated

them in their account of the conquest of Mecca without being particularly attentive to their contradictory nature. However, the modern writers have begun to take note of it. As already mentioned, there is a perfect agreement among all the sections of the historians regarding the Prophet's[sa] use of the word *Talaqa* while setting the Meccans free. Even those who have shown interest in the "brothers of Yusuf" part of the speech could not possibly ignore the earlier part. Accordingly, the most prominent predecessor of the writers of the Wahabite sect, Allama Ibnul Qeem Joziah, thus reports the episode:

> Addressing the Meccans the Prophet[sa] said, "O, Qurashite host what do you think I shall do to you?" They said, "We expect only good from you. You are a generous brother and the son of a generous brother." On this, the Prophet[sa] said, "Alright, I say to you what Yusuf had said to his brothers, that is, there is no charge against you today. I let off all of you." [56]

The incompatibility of one part of the Prophet's[sa] speech with the other is quite obvious. Since the part dealing with the Meccans being let off is mentioned in every account, it has to be accepted as genuine. There is no such unanimity about the other part ('brother of Yusuf') and, therefore, it has to be treated as an interpolation. Judged on the basis of Ibne Khuldun's criterion of assessing the authenticity of a historical report, this part of the narration appears not just weak but entirely incorrect. Ibne Khuldun, whose pro-Umayyad leanings are well known, while making no reference to the "brothers of Yusuf", has made the *Talaqa* part of the narration more prominent by

[56] *Zadul Maad* Vol.2 p. 165

using a word *Ataq,* that fully means to set a slave, male or female, free. Hence, according to Ibne Khaldun's comment the men and women of Mecca had legally become the slaves of the Prophet[S^A]. The Prophet[S^A] set them free on their becoming muslims. [57]

An Egyptian historian of the recent past, Shaikh Muhammad Khizri, who has been kind to Yazid in his account of Karbala, has also described the above event in similar terms, except the last phrase of Ibne Khaldun which, in fact, is not the part of the main account but a comment of the writer.[58]

Iconoclasm or Purgation of Kaaba

The most important event relating to the conquest of Mecca is the breaking of the idols in Kaaba. According to Allama Shibli, the most eminent historian of Islam, Masoodi, considers it, not the conquest of Mecca, as the most significant event of the year.[59] But K.A.Hameed has written, one does not know on what authority, that the first action of the Prophet[S^A] on entering Mecca was the removal of idols from Kaaba.[60] It is difficult to say why he has been so considerate in respect of the idols of Kaaba as to use the word "removal" when all other historians mention their "destruction". It is another matter that some of them see super-natural forces behind the event.

The fact is that the narrators of traditions and writers of books on the Prophet's[S^A] life and character have no doubt preserved several links of the chain of events as they got them from various sources. But, on account of their

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[57] *Mukhtasar Seerate Rasul ; Tareekh* Ibne Khaldun Vol.2 p. 45
[58] *Muhazarat Tareekh ul Umamul Islamia* Vol.1 p. 196
[59] *Murawwajuz Zahab* Vol.1, p.488
[60] *Tareekh-e-Musalmanan-e-Alam* p. 88

insufficiently developed historical approach, there is a marked deficiency in respect of correspondence between the events and their background. Moreover, some historians have deliberately suppressed certain events owing to the political compulsions of their period. Hence, it is necessary to effect an integration between them to the extent it is possible in order to have a correct perspective of the sequence of the events. This is what Shah Abdul Haq Dehlvi, an authority on traditions and also a historian, has done. Giving the details of the breaking of idols, he writes:

> Some big idols were kept at such a high place that they could not be reached with hand. It is said that the biggest among them was the one known as Hubal. Ali[A.S] suggested to the Prophet[S.A] to stand upon his shoulders and pull them down. The Prophet[S.A] replied, "O, Ali[A.S] you cannot bear the burden of prophethood. Place your feet upon my shoulders and finish the job!" Ali[A.S], in compliance with the Prophet's[S.A] directions, placed his feet on the Prophet's[S.A] shoulders and threw the idols down. At this stage the Prophet[S.A] asked Ali[A.S] in what condition did he find himself. Ali[A.S] replied that it appeared to him as if all the veils had been lifted and his head was touching the plinth of the Empyrean. Everything around appeared to be within his reach. The Prophet[S.A] then said, "O, Ali[A.S], how blessed you are that you are doing an act of righteousness and how blessed I am that I am lifting the burden of righteousness." It is said that after throwing down and, thus, smashing the idols, Ali[A.S] at once dropped himself down from the Prophet's[S.A] shoulders. There is a narration that

> Ali[A.S.] had made himself fall outside the Kaaba out of respect for the Prophet[S.A.] and also to avoid putting him to further trouble. He smiled when he fell down. When the Prophet[S.A.] asked what made him smile, he replied that he smiled because of the fact that he had thrown himself down from such a high place and yet felt no inconvenience. The Prophet[S.A.] then replied, "how could you face any trouble when the person who had lifted you up was Muhammad and he who got you down was Gabriel."

References to Ali[A.S.] in the above extract are also present in the writings of the ancient narrators of traditions. It is mentioned at two places in the *Musnad* of Imam Ahmad bin Hambal and in *Khasais Alviya* of Hafiz Abu Abdul Rahman Ahmad bin Shoeb Nisai, who is one of the authors of *Sehahe Sitta*. They have reproduced in identical words Ali's[A.S.] own version as follows:

> The Prophet[S.A.] told me to sit down. He then stood upon my shoulders and I attempted to get up. He felt that there was weakness in me and got down. Then he sat down and and told me to stand upon his shoulders. He stood up lifting me. I was feeling that if I so desired I could take anything from the sky.
>
> Standing on the Prophet's[S.A.] shoulders. I found myself above the height of Kaaba. There was a yellow coloured brazen idol and I shook it from all sides. When it became quite loose, the Prophet[S.A.]

told me to throw it down. I did so and it broke into fragments like a piece of glass.[61]

The connection between this event and the Conquest of Mecca is missing in historical works but logically there could not have been any other occasion for idol-breaking than this conquest.

The entire class of the people called historians has presented the event of idol-breaking as a miracle. They say that three hundred and sixty idols were fixed with lead to different walls of Kaaba. The Prophet[SA] moved along with a stick in his hand reciting:

"Truth came and evil disappeared, evil was definitely a thing which had to disappear." He pointed the stick at the idols and they started falling upon the ground without being touched by anything.[62]

Had God willed the Prophet[SA] to use his miraculous power to remove the idols then there would have been no need for him to come all the way to Mecca and enter the Kaaba. He could very conveniently have done so sitting at his own place in Medina and reciting the above verse. Even without reciting the above verse had he simply made a gesture towards them, the idols would have tumbled down and reduced to smithers.

These historians were more influenced by the Umayyad and Abbaside politics than the narrators of traditions. Still, the smashing of the idols by Ali[AS] has been so widely and generally talked about an event that it always continued to

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[61] *Musnad Ahmad* Vol.2 p. 58; *Khasais Alviya* p. 54

[62] *Tareekh* Ibne Khaldun Vol.2 p. 808; *Tareekh* Ibnul Wardi Vol.1. p. 120 ; *Kitabul Maghazi* p. 234

be on the tips of the un-fettered tongues. In his panegyric, quoted earlier, Ibne Abil Hadid Motazil gets ecstatic while describing this event. Addressing Ali[A.S] directly he says:

> "Your spear did not pierce into the idols but, so to say, fragmented their supporters. Your sword, *Zulfiqar*, did not spare the infidels and your wheatish brown lance broke the idols."
>
> "You rose high upon those magnificient shoulders which were surrounded by God's favourite angels reciting the Quran."
>
> "You were upon the holy shoulders of that Prophet[S.A.] who was superior to all the other Prophets and had no one like himself in the world."
>
> "Witnessing it Gabriel and Israfeel[63] were beside themselves with joy and rapturously and spontaneously raised slogans of *Takbeer*. The root of every single hair of theirs was expressing gratitude to God."
>
> "Good God , what a high stature you got and what a lofty position you attained. You could easily touch Saha (a dimstar in Ursa) from there if you wanted to."
>
> "O, blessed feet! How wonderful it was for you to rest at that luminous spot where the feathers of Gabriel would get burnt."
>
> "A spot where a cascade of light was flowing down from the Bounteous Source."

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[63] Angel who shall blow the trumpet on the resurrection day.-*Tr.*

"Since your breaking of the idols nobody worshipped Laat and Manat and Swam and Uzza lost their grace."[64]

Though Mecca was conquered without any war yet three innocent Muslims lost their lives. Tabarsi says that those three having lost their way had fallen into the hands of the infidels who killed them.[65] Besides, Khalid ibne Waleed was intercepted by another horde of infidels when he was entering Mecca by a different route. A fighting took place in which twenty-eight infidels and two muslims were killed.[66]

Preaching expeditions

After peace was restored in Mecca the Prophet[S.A] sent deputations to different places in the vicinity of Mecca to invite the people to accept the Oneness of God. They were not allowed to get involved in any fighting. It is clearly indicated in historical works that they were sent by the Prophet[S.A] "to invite people towards God. He had not permitted them to fight."[67]

All the leaders of those deputations followed the Prophet's instructions except Khalid bin Waleed. He was sent to a tribe that had earlier fought with his tribe, 'Bani Makhzum', and had killed his uncle. According to Islamic injunctions it was not permissible for a Muslim to take revenge for what had happened in the days of ignorance. Khalid, deviating from that principle, killed the male members of that tribe. Even those taken prisoners were not

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[64] *Irshadia* or *Chaudhween Rat ka Chand*
[65] *Aalamul Wara* p. 119.
[66] *Tareekh* Ibnul Wardi Vol.1 p. 130
[67] *Aalamul Wara* p. 119

spared by him. One of them, however, managed to escape. He went to the Prophet[S.A.] and informed him about the incident. The Prophet[S.A.] was so hurt by this that he began to weep. He raised his hands towards the sky and said: "Oh God, I make Thee witness that I am disgusted with what Khalid has done." He then called Ali[A.S.], gave him considerable amount of gold and told him to go to the breaved families and to pacify them by paying the blood-money.[68] One wishes that the muslims had kept in mind Khalid's conduct after embracing Islam and, after the demise of the Prophet[S.A.], had desisted from making him the commander of the Islamic forces. If it had been so, Islam would have been spared the infamy of being equated with tyranny in certain quarters.

After the conquest of Mecca the Prophet[S.A.] stayed there for a few days. Those few days have been estimated by different writers as ten, fifteen, seventeen or eighteen days. It is mentioned in all the narrations that during this period the Prophet[S.A.] offered *Qasar* prayers as there was uncertainty about the duration of his stay and he had not planned in advance to spend a minimum of ten days at Mecca.[69] This principle is in keeping with the Shiite creed and practice.

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[68] *Aalamul Wara* p. 119

[69] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad Vol.2 p. 139; *Risalah ilal Jundial Arabi* p.153

17

EVENT OF MUBAHELA

Battle of Hunain

Hunain lies between Mecca and Taif at a distance of about ten miles to the north-east of Mecca. Yet another place near about it is Autas. The Prophet[S^] had to fight against the people of Hawazin at these places. These battles are, therefore, known as the battle of Hunain, of Autas or of Hawazin.[1]

When the tribe of Hawazin learnt about the conquest of Mecca they, at their own initiative made preparations to fight with the Prophet[S^]. Learning about it, the Prophet[S^] left Mecca to face them.[2] The numerical strength of the muslims was very considerable. Besides those ten thousand men who had come with him from Medina, two thousand others had joined him from Mecca. Such a huge number made some companions of the Prophet[S^] to feel that they were invincible. Ibne Saad says: "Abu Bakr said that today we cannot be defeated on account of being less in number." Others say that it is controversial as to who said this, Abu Bakr or someone else.[3] Any way, this remark, whosoever made it, was not relished by the Prophet[S^]. Quran also refers to it after the result of the battle was known:

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[1] *Zadul Maad* p. 185
[2] *Aalamul Wara* p. 120
[3] *Tabaqat* Ibne Saad

> Assuredly God did help you in many battle-fields and on the day of Hunain: Behold! Your great numbers elated you, but they availed you naught: the land, for all that it is wide, did constrain you, and ye turned back in retreat.[4]

The details of the war are that Malik bin Awf came out along with the tribes of Qais and Saqeef. The Prophet[sa] sent Abdullah bin Abi Hadbard to collect information about them. He heard Malik saying to his companions, "O, brave men of Hawazin! you are the most powerful and most well-equipped among the Arabs. Your opponents have hitherto faced people who, in true sense, were not men of war at all. Your job now is that when you go out to face them, break away the sheaths of your swords and attack them at once." Ibne Abi Hadbard informed the Prophet[sa] about it. Since his report referred to the enthusiastic fervour of the opponents. it was feared that this might distress muslims. Umar habitual of looking at things from a political angle conceitedly thought of soothing the feelings of the Prophet[sa] and, hence, said to him not to pay any heed to what Ibne Abi Hadbard was saying. But the Prophet[sa] said that Abi Hadbard was correct in what he said.[5]

Salman moved forward with the Muslim army but the result was not favourable. Hafiz Zehbi says: "All the Muslims turned their back and only a few persons remained with the Prophet[sa]."[6]

Jabir ibne Abdullah Ansari has given the following account:

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[4] Quran 9:25
[5] *Aalamul Wara* p. 120
[6] *Al Ibr* p. 119

> We went on marching. When we reached the valley of Hunain there was a long steep route. All of a sudden large contingents of warrior with swords, clubs of iron and spears fell upon as all together, as they were told to. We were taken aback and started running away in such a manner that no body cared for the other. The Prophet(ﷺ) moved towards the right and only nine courageous people of Bani Hashim were around his horse.

Ibne Qeem Jauziya writes that from among the *Muhajireen* only Abu Bakr and Umar and some of the Prophet's relations like Ali(رضی اللہ عنہ), Abbas, Abu Sufyan bin Haris bin Abdul Muttalib and a few others remained with the Prophet(ﷺ).[7] Some writers say that Ali(رضی اللہ عنہ) was standing in front of the Prophet(ﷺ) with a drawn sword. Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib holding the reins of the Prophet's horse, Fazal bin Abbas was on the right side and Mughaira bin Haris bin Abdul Muttalib was on the left.[8] Regarding others, it is said: "Majority of the Muslims retreated in such a manner that one did not know about the other."[9]

Eventually the victory was achieved at the hands of one in whose destiny all the crucial victories were written. About this Imam al Hanaila Ibnul Qeem writes:

> A man of the Hawazin, sitting upon a red coloured camel, was in the front of his tribe. He had a long spear in his hand with a black flag on its top. The Hawazin army was behind him. He was raising and lowering his spear to guide the

[7] *Zadul Maad* p. 186
[8] *Al Imam Ali*(رضی اللہ عنہ) p. 123
[9] *Ad durar* p. 239

movements of the troops. Meanwhile Ali[as] and one brave person from among the *Ansar* turned their attention towards that person. Ali[as] gave a sword blow to his legs and he fell down on his bottom. The *Ansari* leapt at him and struck him with his sword. This severed his legs from the middle of his shins. He moved on dragging himself on the ground. Some persons lifted him up and took him away. (It led to the retreat of the enemy, many of whom were taken as prisoners). The Muslims who had run away, had not yet come back but (from a distance) they could see clearly the prisoners standing before the Prophet[saw].[10]

This episode provides an occasion for serious reflection. A large number of the people who had surrounded and had embraced Islam after the Conquest of Mecca had taken part in this battle. The hard blows of adversity brought out into the open their hidden feelings which show that their acceptance of Islam in a state o helplessness as also their showing of oneness of purpose had no truth in them. For this reason the muslims should never have considered them worthy of trust. Some historians have stated that the responsibility for that defeat lay upon these men since Abu Sufyan, along with his men was in the front. It was he and his men who were forced to run away when desperately attacked by the enemy. After this the rest of the army, like a flock of sheep, followed the fleers. Pleased by the defeat of the muslims, Abu Sufyan joyously shouted that their flight would not stop till they reached the sea.[11]

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[10] *Zadul Maad* pp. 186-187; *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p. 1662
[11] *Al Imam Ali*[as] p. 122

Commenting on this remark certain historians have clarified that Abu Sufyan still had with him several 'dices' of his polytheistic days. Another person, Kalda,[12] a step brother of Safwan bin Umayya, observed "This day their (Muslims) sorcery has come to an end." Hearing it Safwan did not reprimand Kalda for saying something that smacked of infidelity. Instead, kindling the tribal hostility, he remarked: "Keep quiet. May God smash your mouth. By God, it is better that a man of Quraish be my guardian instead of one from the Hawazin."[13] He meant that he would prefer to be dominated by a Quraishite, that is Muhammad^{s}, than by the tribe of Hawazin.

Shaiba bin Usman bin Abi Talha, who belonged to the tribe of Abduldar of which, several standard bearers, including his own father, were killed by Ali^{s}, had planned to kill the Prophet^{s} to avenge his father's blood.[14] It was a very critical moment when the Prophet^{s}, planting his feet firmly in the stirrups of his horse stood up and prayed to God for help and victory. According to one report he reminded his companions of the allegiance pledged at Hudaibiya. Another narration mentions that he reprimanded the *Ansar* of Medina, specially the people of Khazraj, for showing weakness. He asked Abbas, who had a loud voice, to call the Muslims back. As a result of this and in response to the Prophet's^{s} exhortation those who had taken to heels came back. The Prophet^{s} then recited a couplet in which he said: "I am the Prophet^{s} and not a liar, I am the son of Abdul Muttalib."[15]

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[12] *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p. 1660; *Tareekh Al Kamil* Vol.2 p. 263
[13] *Tareekh Al Kamil* Vol 2 p. 263
[14] *Tareekh Al Kamil* Vol.2 p. 263
[15] *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p. 1692; *Tareekh Al Kamil* Vol.2 p. 2640

Since the Prophet[SA] had never composed a single verse, the couplet has become a part of history. History and traditions may be silent but from the words of the Prophet[SA] one can reasonably deduce that as at Hudaibiya, after this defeat also doubts about his prophethood were again prevailing among the muslims. There could possibly have been no other reason for the Prophet[SA] to so emphatically assert that he was a Prophet[SA], not a liar.

Anger of a Lofty-minded Lady

How shameful the flight of the Muslims from the field of Hunain was can be gauged from the following incident. Just by chance, a lady named Umme Salim binte Malhan, had come to the battle-field with her husband, Abu Talha. She had brought a dagger with her for any exigent situation. While holding the camel of her husband, she was watching the scene with dismay. The Prophet[SA] happened to pass by that way. He asked her as to why she was standing there She replied, "Sir, you fight with the infidels and permit me to kill those wretched Muslims who have deserted you and are running away. Certainly, they deserve to be put to death." The Prophet[SA] did not contradict her. He simply said: "Let them be, Umme Salim. God shall deal with them."

Result and victory

Eventually, the defeat turned into victory. About this the Quran says: " But God did pour His calm on the Apostle and on the Believers, and sent down forces which ye saw not: He punished the Unbelievers: thus doth He reward those without Faith."[16]

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[16] Quran 9:26

It was the second occasion that God sent an army of angels to assist the Prophet[ﷺ]. However, a difference has been pointed out between the two occasions. In the battle of Badr the angels had fought for the Muslims whereas at Hunain they had come only to give moral support to lift up their spirits. The result was against the expectations of the polytheists as they suffered heavy loss of life. The loss of Muslims was almost negligible. Seventy infidels were killed in the war whereas only four Muslims met with martyrdom. This war took place on the 10th of Shawwal.[17] A large number of slaves, female as well as male, and a considerable amount of booty was acquired by the Muslims.[18] It is said that 4,000 persons were taken prisoners and 12,000 camels and a lot of cash and kind was obtained. According to some writers 24,000 camels, more than 40,000 sheep and goats and about a maund[19] of silver came to the hands of the Muslims.[20]

War of Autas and Taif

Those who suffered defeat at Hunain were divided into two groups. Bedouin Arabs and some others went to Autas whereas the people of Bani Saqeef and their allies camped at Taif. Both the groups positioned themselves for a war. The Prophet[ﷺ] sent Abu Amir Ashari with some army to Autas. He fought until he was killed. Then his cousin, Abu

[17] *Wafee-atul Aslaf* p. 174
[18] *Aalamul Wara* p. 133
[19] Maund is an old measure of weight. It is equal to about 37 kg.
[20] *Aalamul Wara* Vol.1 p. 133

Musa Ashari, took command and gained victory. The Prophet[S.A.] himself went to Taif and laid siege for 10 days.[21]

Ultimately there was a war. Ali[A.S.] killed their leader and they were defeated.[22]

Anger of some *Ansar* over the distribution of spoils and stirring speech of the Prophet [S.A.]

After the end of the expeditions to Autas and Taif the Prophet[S.A.] felt at ease. The booty obtained at Hunain far extended the booties got in earlier battles. He distributed all of it among those new converts who had embraced Islam after the Conquest of Mecca. The booty was so much that a large number of the beneficiaries got as many as hundred camels each. This was not to the liking of a section of *Ansar* who started grumbling. Some of them even said that now the Prophet[S.A.] had met his people, he had no thought of them although it would be they who would come to his help in hard times. When the Prophet[S.A.] learnt about it. He ordered all the *Ansar* to assemble at one place and ordered that no one else should be there. Seething with anger, he came out, followed only by Ali[A.S.]. He went straight to the centre of the assembled people and delivered a speech. He reminded them of their past condition and the revolutionary change that took place in them after his arrival. He referred to the inimical feelings that used to prevail among them and how God engendered in their hearts love for one another. They all said that it was indeed so. He then asked them if they were not in a minority before he had come to them and after that they became a majority. This continued for long and the *Ansar* admitted the truth of each and everything said by

[21] *Tareekh* Abul Fida Vol. p. 153
[22] *Tareekh* Ibnul Wardi Vol.1 p. 133

him by keeping silent. After this, there was a change in the tone of the Prophet[S.A.]. He asked them as to why they were not saying anything. They all spoke with one voice that they could say nothing, as his favours to them were innumerable. Contradicting them the Prophet[S.A.] told them that they could say, if they so desired, in reply to what he had said that he had come to them when his people had driven him out and all of them had belied him. He added that they could also say that they gave him shelter, testified to his prophethood, provided him a place of peace and security when he had arrived in a state of fright. The Prophet[S.A.] could say only that much when there was a spontaneous surge of wailing and crying all around. The venerable elderly *Ansar* rushed upto him and frantically started kissing his hands, feet and knees. They said how could they take any umbrage at what God and His Prophet[S.A.] had decided. Their own property was at his disposal and he could distribute that too among the Meccan converts. The Prophet[S.A.] then told that his motive in giving the entire booty to those people was to win their heart. As far as the *Ansar* were concerned, he left them to their sincerity and faith. He then asked them if they were not happy that while others were taking with them sheep, goats and camels, they were returning with the Prophet[S.A.] in their midst. These words sent a wave of jubilation and exaltation through the crowd. After that the Prophet[S.A.] provided them an everlasting source of pride when he said: "The *Ansar* enjoy my trust most especially. If the entire world went to one side and the *Ansar* to another, I would go to the side of the *Ansar*. O, God grant salvation to the *Ansar* and make rich the children of the *Ansar* and the children of the children of the *Ansar* with the boon of salvation."[23]

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[23] *Aalamul Wara* p.125-126.

It is explicitly recorded in historical records that at this stage again a noise of wailing rose among the *Ansar*. They cried and wept so profusely that their beards were drenched with tears. At the same time thy kept shouting that they were agreeable to and well-pleased with having the Prophet[S.A.] in their lot.[24]

Those historians who have not written a detailed account of this incident have, however, reported briefly its important aspects, especially the last few sentences of the Prophet's[S.A.] speech that had affected the *Ansar* so tremendously.[25]

Allama Ibne Kaseer has reported the event both in its short and detailed forms in various ways in full four pages of his book.[26]

War of Tabuk

Syria was a part of the Roman Empire. Since the murder of the Prophet's[S.A.] messenger there, which was followed by the war of Mutah, hostility between the Muslims and the Roman Empire had commenced. The Prophet[S.A.] came to know that the Caesar of Rome had collected troops with the intention of attacking Medina.

Since the confrontation was to be with the Roman Empire, the strength of which had been experienced at Mutah, extraordinary efforts were made to muster an army. It was expected to be a large-scale war and, therefore, the Prophet[S.A.] sent letters to all the Arab tribes that had come within the fold of Islam to persuade them to join the holy

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[24] *Tareekh Al Kamil* Vol.2 p. 272
[25] *Tareekh* Abdul Fida Vol.1 p. 155;
[26] *Albadaya wal Nahaya* Vol.2 pp. 355-359

war. He also wrote to Itab bin Usayd, governor of Meeca, to make people ready for war with the Romans. He got all the Muslims (of Medina) assembled at one place and appealed to them for funds. The well-off among them made liberal contribution and the required items were procured for the poor muslims who could not afford to make arrangements for the journey. Beside the faithful, the hypocrites and the new Meccan converts also contributed lavishly.

God knew that there was going to be no fighting in that compaign. For that reason, that person whose job was to win the fields was not included in this expedition. He was just left behind. The Prophet$^{s\wedge}$ had also said to him words of historic importance. " O, Ali$^{\wedge s}$, it is necessary for Medina that either I stay here or you."

The hypocrites and malicious people, always on the look out for an excuse to start irresponsible chattering, spread the rumour that the Prophet$^{s\wedge}$ had not taken his cousin with him as he was displeased with him. This was so much talked about that Ali$^{\wedge s}$ had to leave Medina and go to the Prophet$^{s\wedge}$ to get the actual facts announced by him. He explained to him the distress caused to him by that verbal onslaught. Hearing this the Prophet$^{s\wedge}$ uttered the second historic sentence, which is uniformly reported in histories and in collections of traditions. Addressing Ali$^{\wedge s}$, he said: "O Ali, Are you not content with the fact that you are to me what Aaron was to Moses, except that there shall be no prophet after me."[27]

This statement and the words uttered by the Prophet$^{s\wedge}$ while leaving Medina, make fully clear the Prophet's$^{s\wedge}$ intention regarding his successor and Vicegerent.

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[27] *Al Tanbiyah wal Ishraf* p. 236

The Prophet[S.A] stayed at Tabuk, within the territory of Syria, till the end of Shaban and also for a few days of Ramzan. Heraclius, Caesar of Rome was, in those days, staying either at Hams or at Damascus. The Prophet[S.A] did not keep him in the dark about his movements. Actually, he had some correspondence with him as well.[28] This physical demonstration of fearlessness in respect of the Roman Empire strengthened the morale of the muslims and also convinced the people of the neighbourhood about the stability of the Islamic power. This made the people all around stand in awe of Islam and the muslims. Prominent chieftains from here and there started coming to the Prophet[S.A] and voluntarily offered to pay *Jizya*. In other words they became tributaries of the Islamic State instead of the Roman Empire. From among these persons, Abla, Jarba, and Azrah's name are recorded in history.[29] This policy of the Prophet[S.A], which was obviously in pursuance of the divine will, had a big role in the successful conquests after his demise. God's objective in giving a special, commanding and awe-inspiring personality to His Prophet[S.A] was furthered by this event. It was this very quality of his personality that prepared the ground for his conquests and also helped those people who, after him, used the spell of his name to make territorial advances. The Prophet[S.A] himself referred to it in the following words: "God has been helping me in influencing others through my power and strength."

Plan to kill the Prophet [S.A]

The opponents of Islam were dazed by the successive triumphs of Islam. When the Prophet[S.A] himself went to face

[28] *Al Tanbiyah wal Ishraf* p. 236
[29] *Al Tanbiyah wal Ishraf* p. 236

the might of the Roman Empire, those who had seen the happenings at Mutah, were expecting that he would not return alive from that expedition. But they were bitterly disappointed when, even after a prolonged stay in the land under the Roman control, he remained unharmed and was now returning to his headquarters.

They now decided to finish him on his return journey to Medina. They devised a plan to make him fall into a deep pit in the dark hours of the night while passing through the steep valley. The Prophet[S.A] learnt about their plan through a divine revelation. He told all the Muslims to take the longer route that passed through a plain and hence could enable several people to move together. He himself followed the shorter route, the one that passed through the valley. All the muslims turned towards the path that they were told to follow but those who had planned to kill him stealthily followed him. The Prophet[S.A] directed Huzaifa Yamani and Ammar bin Yasir to accompany him on foot. Huzaifa Yamani was to drive his camel from behind and Ammar bin Yasir was told to hold the reins of the camel. Meanwhile, the sound of the stamping of the horses of the people who had disobeyed the Prophet[S.A] and had not gone with others was heard. These people were pursuing him according to their plan. The Prophet[S.A] was furious at this act of disobedience and he told Huzaifa to drive them back. Following the Prophet's[S.A] order, Huzaifa rushed with a special kind of staff and struck at the mouths of their horses with it and turned them backward. He noticed that those people had covered their faces with masks to conceal their identity. The thieves are known to be chicken-hearted as they get easily scared. This was the case with these evil-minded people too. From Huzaifa's sturdy strokes they gathered that their secret was out. They were so much

unnerved that they hastily fled from the spot and joined the army that had taken the other route. When Huzaifa returned, the Prophet[S.A.] told him to whip his camel and move fast. Ammar was to continue walking on foot. The Prophet[S.A.] hurriedly covered the passage and, coming out of the valley, awaited the arrival of the main body of the army that was directed to take the longer route. The Prophet[S.A.] asked Huzaifa whether he had recognised those masked persons. He replied that he could not look at them because of their masks but he could see the horses of such and such persons. He then asked him if he knew what their plan was. Huzaifa replied in the negative. The Prophet[S.A.] then disclosed that they had planned to follow him and, as he reached a narrow path, to push him down the pit. Huzaifa and Ammar then said that they deserved to be killed and he should order their decapitation. The Prophet[S.A.] did not agree with them on the ground that he did not want it to be said about him that he got his own companion killed. He further told them not to divulge the names of the conspirators.

All the books on the traditions and the Prophet's[S.A.] companions mention this event as the reason for Huzaifa being called as "the keeper of the Prophet's secret."

Throughout his life he followed the Prophet's direction and never revealed the names of the persons involved. Obviously these men did not belong to the group of 'the chief of the hypocrites', Abdullah bin Ubayy, as their hypocrisy was well-known. Among these plotters were certain respectable personalities whose identity has remained well-concealed. A well known narrator of traditions and historian, Aamash, has clearly stated that those who had planned to kill the Prophet[S.A.] were twelve in

number and seven of them were from Quraish.[30] Masoodi has briefly reported the incident as follows:

> While returning from this war (Tabuk) some hypocrites planned to clandestinely kill the Prophet[s^] by pushing him down into the ravines in the darkness of night. In historical writings this group is known as *Ashabe Aqba* (the people of the valley). God stood in their way. He conveyed their plan to the Prophet[s^]. I have mentioned the details of this event and the names of the conspirators in my book *Kitabul Astankar*.[31]

The said book being not available anywhere the list of names contained therein cannot be known. Moreover that list cannot be considered as authentic because knowing from so many sources that the secret of the names remained confined to Huzaifa's bosom, it could only have been a product of some narrator's guess-work. In certain books a very strange thing is mentioned. It is stated that Umar repeatedly asked Huzaifa if he was not in that group (of plotters). Huzaifa in spite of Umar's persistent insistence, strictly guarded the Prophet's secret and tactfully avoided answering to his queries.

The Prophet[s^] expressed his happiness on having returned to Medina. This exceptional feeling of joy could have been for various reasons. First of all it was the non-fulfilment of the expectations of the hypocrites that the Roman compaign might prove fatal for the Prophet[s^]. Then there was the foiling of the plot against his life. Moreover, he had returned after a long period. Never before he had

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[30] *Aalamul Wara* p. 116
[31] *Al Tanbiyah wal Ishraf* p. 336

been away from Medina for such a long duration. It might also have been his wish to please the *Ansar* by making them felt that he liked and loved only their city. Hence it was that on his arrival he had joyously remarked that the land of Taiba was reached and pointing out towards the mountain of Uhud, he said, "This mountain loves me and I love it."[32] All this can be considered as the culminating point of his speech related to the *Ansar's* displeasure over the distribution of the booty. Every action of the Prophet[SA] was showing that he did not have that kind of attachment for Mecca that he had for Medina.

Tabuk was the last military expedition of the Prophet's[SA] life. The generality of the muslims of those days did not realize the significance of that journey to a far-off place in the peak period of summer. But the historians of today now generally recognise that the Prophet's demonstration of courage and determination in entering the alien territory of the Romans and staying there for such a considerable time and also the subjugation of some important chiefs of the neighbourhood, removed the fear of an attack on the Arabian Peninsula and the Islamic state.[33] After the Prophet's return from Tabuk the chief of the hypocrites, Abdullah bin Ubayy, died and thus the Muslims got rid of a snake in their sleeves.

Preaching of the chapter of Baraat

Quran's chapter of Baraat was revealed in 9 A.H. whereby entry of the infidels into Mecca was banned for future. History as well as traditions are unanimous in reporting that at first the Prophet[SA] asked Abu Bakr to carry

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[32] *Aalamul Wara* p.131
[33] *Life of Muhammad, Muhammad* p. 146

and read out those verses at Mecca. Thereafter, he, on receiving God's message, called back Abu Bakr and entrusted the job to Ali[A.S]. According to one report the divine order explicitly stated that the verses should be conveyed either by the Prophet[S.A] himself or by Ali[A.S].[34] Another narration says that the divine message was worded thus: "The verses are to be conveyed only by you or by a person who is from you."[35]

If these were the actual words of God's message then the action of the Prophet[S.A] showed that the phrase, "one from you" was applicable only to Ali[A.S] and not to Abu Bakr. The nature of the job also required a person like Ali[A.S] who was not only a brave man but also an eloquent speaker. It also required a personality that could inspire awe. Fearlessly taking his position in the midst of the polytheists, he would not only recite the verses but, as a competent and responsible commentator, spell out in his own words the implications of the peremptory divine command. An Egyptian writer, Muhammad Husain Haykal, describes this situation in the following words:

> Ali[A.S] stood up in the crowd when they were performing *Haj* rites. He recited to them all the verses of the chapter of Tauba (Baraat). After finishing it he paused for a while and thereafter called the people and loudly told them that they should know it for a certainty that no unbeliever shall enter the heaven; no polytheist shall perform the *Haj* after this year, henceforth no one shall circumambulate the house of Kaaba in naked condition and any covenant that anyone has made

[34] *Aalamul Wara* p.131
[35] *Tareekh* Yaqubi p.76

with the Prophet[S.A.] shall expire after its stipulated time.

Ali[A.S.] loudly announced these four injunctions. Thereafter, he gave four months time to the people to return back to their places. Since then no polytheist has performed *Haj* nor anybody went round the shrine of Kaaba in naked condition. The foundation of the edifice of Islam was thus firmly laid that day. It is my (Haykal's) desire that all the Arabs should be aware of that foundation. Ali[A.S.] did not stop at reciting the verses. After that, as several narrations mention, he went from house to house and recited the said verses to the inmates.[36]

The effect of Islamic victories on the outlying Tribal Settlements

Victories successively attained by the Muslims influenced the tribes of the vicinity. Realising the rising strength of Islam, distinguished personalities of different tribes started joining its ranks. A prominent leader of Bani Saqeef, Urwa Bin Masood Saqafi, and ten other important persons of the tribe became muslims and this had its impact on the rest of the tribe. The stubborn people of Bani Tameem of Najd, including persons like Ata bin Hajib, Aqra, Zabarqan bin Badr, Qais bin Asim, Ainiya bin Hasan Fazari, Amr bin Aitam also embraced Islam. Thereafter, arrived a delegation of Bani Tai that included Zaidul Khail and Adi bin Hatim. It is narrated by Ibne Ishaq that at first the daughter of Hatim Tai was brought before Prophet[S.A.] as a prisoner. On account of the exemplary generosity of her father, the Prophet[S.A.] showed great respect to her and

[36] *Life of Muhammad,* p. 146, p. 457-458

granted her extraordinary favours. She was much impressed by the Prophet's[saw] magnanimity and, on returning to her tribe, she sent her brother, Adi, to the Prophet[saw] who honoured him to such an extent that he gave his own cushion to him to sit upon.[37] Some historians have said that the Prophet[saw] himself sat upon the ground and got Adi seated on the cushion.[38] Adi embraced Islam in all sincerity.

It is obvious that most of the people who were embracing Islam were doing so under the pressure of the circumstances. This by no means ensured a spontaneous change of heart. This is shown by an interesting case. Amr bin Maadi Karb was a renowned warrior of Arabia. He also came and became a muslim. Within a short while he came to the Prophet[saw] holding a Muslim by the scruff of his neck and complained that the 'rascal' had earlier killed his father and he should be made to pay his due. The Prophet[saw] replied that under Islamic law there was no retaliatory punishment for the crimes of the days of ignorance. Amr resented that reply and, defecting from Islam, started indulging in criminal activities. Ali[as] was sent to admonish him. Amr at first resisted arrogantly but after some of his companions were killed and women and children taken captive, he ran away. Later on he again became a muslim.[39]

The Event of Mubahela (Supplication)

Among the delegations that visited the Prophet[saw] was the important one of Bani Najran. The event of *Mubahela*

[37] *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p. 1710 and *Zadul Maad* Vol.2 p. 205
[38] *Ad durar* p. 272
[39] *Aalamul Wara* p. 134

was the consequence of the visit of this delegation. Najran was a town within the territory of Yemen.[40] It was then a centre of Christianity. The people of Najran had at first, correspondence with the Prophet[saw]. Thereafter, they sent a deputation comprising priests and monks. They had an impression that since they were going to meet a powerful ruler of Arabia, they should put on a dress suitable for the courts of the kings. They, therefore, put on costly silken clothes and went to the Prophet[saw]. Had they gone to him as representatives of a temporal power, or had silken clothes been their normal articles of dress, the Prophet[saw] would not have demurred in talking to them. But, according to their own criterion, they were members of a spiritual order having no concern with formal gorgeous dress. They had dressed themselves in such a finery only to meet the demands of court decorum as they had assumed that the Prophet[saw] was like any other worldly potentate. The Prophet's[saw] exhibition of his usual courtesy would not have removed this misconception. As a prophet it was incumbent upon him to set them right. For this reason when they came to see him in those garments he paid no attention to them. They had heard repeatedly about the Prophet's[saw] refined and courteous manners. They, therefore, wanted to find out the reason of the Prophet's[saw] coldness towards them. At first they approached the companions but they could not help him. On their advice they turned to Ali[as] or they themselves informed Ali[as] about their experience and asked him about

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[40] Yemen, popularly so called, is the country forming the south-western extremity of the Arabian peninsula, bounded on the west by the Red Sea, on the south by the Indian Ocean, on the north by Hijaz, and on the east by Hazramut (Hadramut). The name of Yemen is often applied to southern Arabia generally. It then included besides Yemen proper, Hazramut and the district of Mahra to the east of Hazramut.-*Tr.*

the reason behind the Prophet's[S] attitude. Ali[AS] enlightened them. He told them that the Prophet[S] was so cold towards them because they had put on such clothes.[41] Their conscience endorsed this view and they at once changed their clothes and went to the Prophet[S] in their ordinary hermitical dress. The Prophet[S] then received them warmly and talked pleasantly to them. They desired to know the Prophet's[S] views regarding some religious issues, in particular, about Jesus Christ.

Most of the *Ale-Imran* chapter of the Quran is on this topic. After a long discussion the people of Najran came to the last point, that of Christ's paternity. They maintained that since Jesus had no man as his father, he was the son of God. The following verse of the Quran was then revealed to the Prophet[S]: "The similitude of Jesus before God is as that of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him: 'Be'; And he was." [42]

The Prophet[S] narrated it to them. They had no reply to offer but they were also not prepared to accept it. Thereupon the following verse was revealed:

> "If any one disputes in this matter with thee, now after (full) knowledge hath come to thee, say: "Come! Let us gather together,— our sons and your sons, our women and your women, our 'selves' and your 'selves': Then let us earnestly pray, and invoke the curse of God on those who lie!" [43]

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[41] *Zadul Maad* Vol 4 p. 39
[42] Quran 3:59
[43] Quran 3:61

In pursuance thereof the Prophet[S.A.], on the following day, came to the place of *Mubahela*.[44] He brought with him four members of his family namely Ali[A.S.], Fatima[A.S.], Hasan[A.S.] and Husain[A.S.]. These four, along with the Prophet[S.A.], are known as the "holy five."

It is said that the leader of the delegation of Najran had instructed his companions that if the Prophet[S.A.] came with his kith and kin then they should not embark upon *Mubahela*. But if he came with his companions and followers then they could have *Mubahela* with them.

When the Prophet[S.A.] came along with the above four the deputationists made inquiries about them. They were told that they were his dear ones. One of them was his beloved daughter, the other one was his cousin and son-inlaw brought up by him and the other two were the sons of his daughter. They then decided not to have *Mubahela* an agreed to pay *Jizya* (poll-tax anciently paid in lieu c conversion to Islam). A deed of agreement was accordingly executed and the deputationists went back.

Conquest of Yemen

The Prophet's[S.A.] victory in the spiritual confrontation *(Mubahela)* made Ali[A.S.] still more prominent in various circles. It was inevitable that its impact should be felt all over Yemen. God and His Prophet[S.A.], considering the suitability of the moment and following the adage of striking the iron while hot, at once sent this very person, Ali[A.S.], to Yemen to preach Islam to its people.

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[44] *Mubahela* means spiritual confrontation in which the two parties invoke God's wrath upon the party whose contention is false.-*Tr.*

The person who had become a symbol of victory in armed encounters at Badr, Uhud, Khandaq and Khaibar, now, after *Mubahela*, appeared again as a symbol of victory in bloodless engagements. Ali[AS] did not go to Yemen with a drawn sword; nor he had an army with him. He was equipped with only the force of his eloquence and his appealing character. With the help of these only he conquered Yemen in a few days. On arriving at Yemen he read out the Prophet's[SA] letter to the people of Yemen. The powerful tribe of Hamdan embraced Islam that very day.[45] Through this event the Prophet[SA] provided an example of Islamic concept of territorial conquests for the future generations of muslims. In contrast to this, annexation of land through military power can be only regarded as a victorious achievement of the muslims but not of Islam. The tribe of Hamdan, which had embraced Islam upon Ali's invitation, always remained loyal to him and firmly helped him in his war against his opponents. Even at the time of embracing Islam this tribe had such a distinguished position that, as Bukhari reports, when the Prophet[SA] got Ali's[AS] letter concerning Yemen developments, he at once prostrated himself in thankfulness to God. Raising his head he said, "Greetings for the people of Hamdan."[46] Ali[AS] also paid tributes to the people of Hamdan for their loyalty on many occasions in his lifetime in prose as well as in verse.

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[45] *Tareekh Abdul Fida* Vol.1 p. 158

[46] *Tareekh* Tabari (Holland) p.1732; *Aalamul Wara* p. 137

18

THE LAST PILGRIMAGE

The last *Haj*

The tenth year of *Hijrat* proved to be the last year of the Prophet's[s^a] life. Towards the end of this year he went to Mecca for performing *Haj* after which the Prophet[s^a] lived in this transitory place only for a short while. For this reason this *Haj* is known as *Hujjatul Wida* (Farewell Pilgrimage). As Ibne Hisham has written, this pilgrimage is so called either because the Prophet[s^a] could not perform any *Haj* after this or because he bid adieu to the Muslims and informed them that he was about to leave the world.[1] In the month of Ziqad the Prophet[s^a] expressed his intention to perform the *Haj*. It was in fact the first *Haj* after *Hijrat*. Prior to *Hijrat* he was residing at Mecca itself and doubtlessly used to perform *Haj* regularly. After the *Hijrat* he did visit Mecca two or three times but it was not in the season of *Haj*. Technically speaking, therefore, those pilgrimages were *Umra* and not *Haj*. Proper *Haj* was being performed only this year. Muslims all around came to know about it. People from various places rushed to Medina to perform their *Haj* along with the Prophet[s^a]. On 24th or 25th of Ziqad the Prophet left Medina along with an immense concourse of Muslims.[2] Ali[a^s] had till then not returned from Yemen. He was still there when he came to know

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[1] *Ayanul Shia* Vol.2 p. 329

[2] *Irshad* p.79: *Aalamul Wara* p. 138; According to Syed Ameer Ali, it was 25th Ziqad, corresponding to 23rd February 632 A.D.-*Tr.*

about the Prophet's[S A] intentions regarding the *Haj*. From Yemen he went straight to Mecca along with animals of sacrifice. On arriving at Mecca the Prophet[S A] performed *Tawaf* and *Sai*, after which the following verse was revealed:

> And complete the *Haj* or *Umra* in the service of God. But if ye are prevented (from completing it), send an offering for sacrifice, such as ye may find.[3]

This verse laid down the law of *Haj* along with *Umra*, which is technically known as *Hajj-e-Tamatto*. The Prophet[S A] then declared that from that moment *Umra* had now become an integral part of *Haj*. When the people sought clarification whether it was for that year only or forever, the Prophet[S A] forcefully and repeatedly said that it would be like that till the day of resurrection.[4]

This requirement, as specified in Quran, is only for those who come to Mecca from distant places. Firstly, they have to perform *Umra*. After completing it they have to put off *Ahram* (the ritual uniform). They have again to put on *Ahram* on the prescribed dates to perform *Haj*. This is the procedure of *Hajj-e-Tamatto* which is obligatory in Shiite creed and is also considered as correct by Ahle-Sunnat, most of whom observe it.

Some of the companions did not like it and raised objections regarding the propriety of that command. The Prophet[S A] snubbed them by remarking, "you shall never have faith in it."[5]

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[3] Quran 2:196
[4] *Ad durar* p. 278
[5] *Irshad* p.81.

The Prophet[s^] emphasized a very significant peculiarity of this *Haj* with the following observation: "Note that after having completed its revolution, time has returned back to the point where it was when the sky and the earth were created."

While making that observation the Prophet[s^] had in his mind the following verse of the Quran which precedes the prohibition of *Nasi*.[6]

> "The number of months in the sight of God is twelve (in a year) — so ordained by Him the day He created the heavens and the earth; of them four are sacred."[7]

The observation of the Prophet[s^] has been explained in the context of the above verse by an Egyptian writer as below:

> Those who followed the principle of Nasi, that is, disturbed the positions of months, did so in two ways. In the first place, they moved the month of Muharram forward by a month, placing it in Safar. They did so when they found an opportunity to indulge in loot and plunder which they could not do during the prohibited days of Muharram proper.
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> Secondly, they extended the month of *Haj* by 11 days every year to make it correspond with the solar year. This way the round is completed in thirty three years and the dates return to their natural positions. Thus the 10th of Zilhij falls on

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[6] *Nasi* means arbitrary changing of the dates and even of months. The prohibition against *Nasi* is contained in V:37 of *Sura* Al Tawba.- *Tr.*

[7] Quran 9:36

the same day every thirty-third year. In the year of the Prophet's last *Haj* the date of *Haj* i.e. 10th Zilhij, had thus come back to its original position. The Prophet[s^], therefore, prohibited the practice of Nasi and declared that the day of *Haj* had returned back to the same stage where it was at the time of the creation of the sky and the earth.[8]

Details of the *Haj*

Since it was the first and the last *Haj* pilgrimage of the Prophet[s^], the narrators of this event have preserved every minute detail of it. Writers of traditions have also recordred every detail of it in their works. The description of this *Haj* as given by Allama Ibne Arabi in his book *Mahazaratul Abrar* is reproduced here:

On Thursday, the twenty second day of Ziqad, 10 A.H., the Prophet[s^] left for Mecca by the route of Shajra. It is the same route on which Bir Ali lies where at present pilgrims put on *Ahram*. It is the *Meeqat*[9] for the people of Medina. It is not permissible to move beyond it without putting on *Ahram*. When the Prophet[s^] reached that place he offered *Asr* prayer and spent the night (intervening night of Thursday and Friday) there. As he had put on *Ahram* at that place, he moved forward reciting the formula of *Talbiyah*, "*Labbaika Allahumma Labbaik*," which is a declaration of having responded to God's call for *Haj*. All the people

[8] *Seerat* Ibne Hisham Vol.1. Comment by Shaikh Mahmood Tantavi p.28

[9] Fixed place outside the limits of Mecca where pilgrims are bound to put off their normal dress and to put on the prescribed dress known as Ahram.- *Tr.*

who were with the Prophet[s^] were also repeating that phrase loudly in chorus. All the near and far off valleys, reverberated with the echoes of the response to Allah's call. The Prophet[s^] and other pilgrims continued their journey in this fashion till the moon of the month of Zilhij was sighted on the eighth day of leaving Medina. In the night of Sunday, the 4th Zil Hij, he reached the place known as Zi Tua. He stayed there for the night and on the following day after the morning prayers the journey was resumed. On the same day, that is, Sunday, after the day had advanced a bit he entered Mecca. He performed *Istilam*[10] of the black stone and made seven rounds of Kaaba, performing *Istilam* of the black stone and *Rukne Yamani* in every round. In the morning of Thursday, 8th of Zil Hij, which was the day of *Tarvia*, he went to Mina along with his companions and offered *Zuhar* prayer there. He stayed there for the night and after saying the morning prayer, next morning, he went to the plain of Arafat as it was 9th of Zil Hij i.e. the day of *Arafa*. The Prophet's tent was pitched at the place known as Namra. In the afternoon he mounted his camel, Qaswa, and went to the plain around which all the muslims were staying. There, sitting on the back of the camel, he addressed the entire gathering. The Prophet's[s^] aunt, Ummul Fazl, wife of Abbas, sent a cup of milk to him which he took while still on his mount. All the muslims thereby

[10] A reverential bowing: this was done in lieu of kissing the black stone which, probably, was not possible owing to the crowd of the pilgrims.- *Tr.*

learnt that he was not fasting that day. After delivering the sermon he got down from the camel and ordered Bilal to say the *Azan* and *Aqamat* and then the Prophet[S.A.] offered *Zuhar* prayer. Immediately thereafter Bilal was ordered to say the *Aqamat* again and the prayer for *Asr* was offered. There was no interval in between the prayers of *Zuhar* and *Asr*."

Allama Ibne Arabi's words are: "These two prayers were offered by the Prophet[S.A.] in congregation at the time of *Zuhar* with one *Azan* and two *Aqamats*, one for each prayer."[11]

This pattern of prayers is generally followed by the members of the Shia community.

Thereafter, the Prophet[S.A.] mounted his camel and came back to the place where he was staying till the sun of Friday set in. Now what Allama Arabi has written on this occasion is to be considered seriously. He has specifically mentioned that the Prophet[S.A.] did not wait just for the setting of the sun. He actually waited till the disappearance of yellowness from the sky which generally lasts for sometime after the sun-set. The word 'yellowness' was actually used to denote *Hamarate Mashriqia*, that is, the redness of the east, which is reckoned as the standard indicator of the sunset by the Shiites. Thereafter the Prophet[S.A.] got Usama bin Zaid seated upon the camel along with him and reached Muzdalifa which is also called Masharul Haram, when the time of Maghrib, as generally understood, had expired. He offered both the prayers of *Maghrib* and *Isha* at the time of *Isha* with one *Azan* and two *Aqamats* as before. In this way the

[11] *Muhazaratul Abrar* Vol.1, p.19-21

Prophet[saw] on the historic occasion of the last *Haj* showed through his practice that two prayers can be combined, that is, the *Zuhar* and *Asr* prayers and also the *Magrib* and *Isha* prayers can be offered together. Thus the correctness of the principle of combination of these two prayers was established. *Asr* prayers can be offered in the time of *Zuhar* and *Maghrib* in the time of *Isha*. Barring the starting time of the first and the last few minutes of the last prayers, the time of *Zuhar* and *Asr* and of *Magrib* and Isha continues throughout the period of these two prayers. However, a particular portion thereof specifically relates to *Zuhar* and another to *Asr*. Similarly a particular portion of the said time relates to *Maghrib* and another to *Isha*. This is in keeping with the pronouncement of the Imams of the Prophet's family.

Proclamation of Ali's[as] succession

While returning to Medina, after performing *Haj*, the Prophet[saw] reached a place known as 'Ghadeere Khum'. Shibli writes that:

> A place called 'Khum' lay on the way at a distance of about three miles from Hijfa. There was a tank there. A tank is called as *Ghadeer* in Arabic. This place was, therefore, generally known as Ghadeer-e-Khum.[12]

It is not known what the distance was between the tank and Khum. It is also not known whether at that time the tank had water or was dry. An Arabian scholar of the Fourth Century A.H. has said that generally caravans did not stop

[12] *Seeratun Nabi* Vol.2 1969 Edn. p.1675

there because it was a land without water or grass.[13] When the Prophet[SA] reached there the following command was received from the Almighty.

> O Apostle! proclaim the (Message) which hath been sent to thee from thy Lord. If thou didst not, thou wouldst not have fulfilled and proclaimed His Mission. And God will defend thee from men (who mean mischief). For God guideth not those who reject Faith.[14]

The words of the verse clearly indicate and it is also reported in narrations that this command had been received by the Prophet[SA] earlier but time for its compliance had not been specified. The Prophet[SA] had, therefore, delayed its proclamation, waiting for a favourable occasion when it would not raise much opposition. Now he had come to a place from where God knew — and it was realised by the world later — that if the Prophet[SA] and various caravans moved further, their paths would be different and the Prophet[SA] would never find people in that large number. For that reason the above peremptory divine command was sent to the Prophet[SA] so that as many muslims as possible could hear it and God's responsibility of providing continuous guidance thus be over. On receiving the above command the Prophet[SA] at once came down from his camel. Other muslims also had to dismount. It was very hot. He got the place cleaned of the shrubs and other vegetations. A pulpit of a sort was then prepared by placing the saddles of camels one upon the other. People were then asked to join the congregational prayer with the Prophet[SA]. The muslims,

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[13] *Irshad* p. 81
[14] Quran 5:70

perforce had to gather together. The desert sand was so intensely hot that the people had wrapped aprons or sheets of cloth around their feet. The Prophet[s.a.] went up the pulpit along with Ali[a.s.] and made him to stand on his right side. Thereafter, he delivered a long sermon. Some of its extracts, as reported by Shaikh Mufeed and, after him, by Tabarsi, are given below:

> The Prophet[s.a.] gave a sermon wherein God was praised. Along with some advice and guidance he told the people that the time of his death had arrived. He had received his Creator's call and he may have to respond to it any time. He further said that very soon he would not be in their midst but he was leaving with them something with which if they kept contact they shall not go astray. He mentioned God's book and his relatives that is, the members of his family. He assured them that those two shall not part company with each other till they met him at the spring of *Kausar* in the heaven. He then in a loud voice asked the people:
>
> "Do not I have authority on you more than you have?" They replied, "Why not." He then grasped both the shoulders of Ali[a.s.] and raised him to such a height that the whiteness of the Prophet's[s.a.] own armpits and also of Ali's became visible. While in this position he said, "Well, then. Whosoever's master I am, Ali[a.s.] is his master. Oh God, be a friend to his friends and a foe to his foes; help those who help him and abandon those who abandon him."
>
> The Prophet[s.a.] then stepped down from the puplit and offered two units of prayer. Meanwhile

the time for the prayer of *Zuhar* had arrived. His *Moazzin* gave *Azan* for that prayer. The Prophet[S.A] led the prayer and thereafter sat in his tent. He told Ali[A.S] to sit in the tent that was pitched in front of his tent. All the Muslims were directed to go in groups and offer congratulations to Ali[A.S] on his Imamat, and greet him as "*Ameerul Momineen*". People acted accordingly. The Prophet[S.A] then asked his wives and other Muslim women to greet Ali[A.S] as "*Ameerul Momineen*". They also acted accordingly. One person who was particularly very prolix and effusive in congratulating Ali[A.S] on his new status was Umar Bin Khattab. He showed his extreme happiness and, among other things, he repeatedly congratulated Ali[A.S] on becoming master of every male and female believer. Hassan Bin Sabit sought Prophet's[S.A] permission to say some thing that might please God. When permitted, he stood at a high place and all the muslims lifted their heads up to hear him. He recited some verses conveying the following matter:

On the day of Ghadeer their Prophet[S.A] was calling them at Khum. Who else could send his words to their ears better than the Prophet[S.A]? He asked them to tell who was their master and guardian. Everybody spoke at once with no sign of hostility that God was their master and His Prophet[S.A] was their guardian and he shall not find a single person disloyal to him. The Prophet[S.A] then told Ali[A.S] to stand up as he wanted him to be the Imam and leader after him. The Prophet[S.A] said to the people whosoever's master he was, Ali[A.S] was his master. He told them to ever be his helper and

supporter. The Prophet[S.A.] then prayed to God to be friend of Ali's[A.S.] friends and enemy of Ali's[A.S.] enemies. Then the Prophet[S.A.] said to Hassan, "You shall continue to be helped by *Ruhul Qudus* (Gabriel) so long as you assist us with your tongue." The Prophet[S.A.] had not yet moved from that place when the following verse was revealed:

"This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion."[15]

The Prophet[S.A.] then thanked God for perfecting the religion, completing His blessings and favours and for considering his prophethood and Ali's[A.S.] guardianship as being in conformity with His Will.[16]

The above account is a synthesis of the statements of Shaikh Mufid and Allama Tabarsi. Both of them were Shia scholars and historians. However, every part and every detail of this account is present in the standard and authentic works of Sunnite authors, though often in a somewhat dispersed and disorganized shape.

An important fact that was pointed out in the context of the Conquest of Mecca needs to be presented here more explicitly. On looking at the Sunnite sources one feels, and every knowledgeable person would feel too, that the influence of the politics of the Umayyad and Abbaside rulers on the narrators of historical events was more profound than on the narrators of the traditions *(Hadees)* and Quranic commentators Hence it is that several

[15] Quran 5:4
[16] *Aalamul Wara* p. 139-140 ; *Asbabul Tanzil* p. 150

important historical links that were against the interests and inclinations of the people in power are not found in the books formally called histories. These links, however, are traceable in the collections of traditions and in commentaries on the holy book. There is no reason that only those books should be considered as histories that have the word 'history' as a part of their titles. It is generally accepted that facts are not governed by words. If , therefore, a narrator of traditions *(Mohaddis)* has described a historical event he, while reporting that particular event, assumes the position of a historian. In the same way if a commentator, while explaining a verse of Quran, narrates an incident of Islamic history pertaining to its revelation, then to that extent that part of the commentary becomes history.

Moreover, as pointed out in this book in the section on Islamic concept of *Jehad*, Quran is a religious book for the muslims and is the greatest source of religious information for them. The non-mulsim writers engaged in describing the events of Islamic history, as a matter of principle, have to treat it (the Quran) as a historical document. They may not consider it as a word of God since they do not believe it to be a divine revelation. But by not treating it as a word of God they have to regard it, for that very reason, as a historical document dictated by the Prophet[S.A.] himself. As such, from logical point of view, it should be deemed to carry greater weight than all the later historical works of the muslim and non-muslim writers.

The significant parts of the sequence of the above reported event, that is, the event of Ghadeer-e-Khum, are being cited here from the works of the writers of the Sunnite sect. Any person curious for more details can easily

consult these sources and, with the help of his own unshackled intelligence and conscience, draw his own conclusions.

Reverberations of Ghadeer-e-Khum in Lexical Works

An Egyptian scholar of Jamia Azhar, Syed Muhammad Hasan, has listed the references to Ghadeer-e-Khum in well-known dictionaries and lexicons in his book, *Al-Hadaya fil Islam.*

Every sensible person is aware of the fact that a detailed account of a particular spot of earth out of numerous places of the globe shall not normally find a place of prominence in dictionaries and geographical works unless it is associated with some important incident. The intermingled and circumstantial account of 'Ghadeer' and 'Khum' shows how deeply the impact of this event of the Prophet's journey was felt in the scholarly circles. Some members of this fraternity have described this event at some length.

The following books and authors have been mentioned by the compiler of *Al-Hadaya fil Islam*:

1. *Qamus*: by Muhammad bin Yaqub Firozabadi
2. *Maajam ma Astajam*: by Abu Ubaidullah Albakri
3. *Subh-al-Aasha*:by Qalqashandi
4. *Tareekh-e-Yaqubi*

Shaikh Muhammad Tahir Fatani, , has also referred to both Ghadeer and Khum in *Majma Baharul Anwar*. The important aspects of the Ghadeer-e-Khum event as mentioned in the books of Sunni authors are indicated below.

The Revelation of the 'Al-Balligh' verse

Allama Wahidi Abdul Hasan Ali bin Ahmad Nishapuri, has referred to a narration of Abu Saeed Khadari, in his book *Asbabul Tanzeel*[17] which says:

> "The verse 'Oh Prophet convey that which has been revealed to you by your God' relates to the event of Ghadeer-e-Khum concerning Ali bin Abu Talib^a^s."

Jalaluddin Seoti in *Tafseer Durre Mansur*[18], Muhammad bin Ali bin Muhammad Shaukani in *Fathul Qadeer*[19] and Siddiq Hasan Khan Qannauji in *Fathul Bayan fi Maqasidul Quran*[20] have narrated the following in almost identical language:

> Ibne Abi Hatim, Ibne Marduya and Ibne Asakar have, upon the authority of Abu Sayeed Khadri, stated that the verse ("O Prophet, convey that which has been revealed") was revealed to the Prophet^s^a on the day of Ghadeer-e-Khum and it refers to Ali ibne Abi Talib^a^s. Ibne Marduya has, upon the authority of Ibne Masood, observed that they recited that verse in the lifetime of the Prophet^s^a with the following addition:
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> "(That has been revealed by God), namely, that Ali^a^s was master of all the faithfuls and if that message was not conveyed then nothing relating to

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[17] *Asbabul Tanzeel*. p.150. This book is a history of the revelation of Quranic verses.
[18] *Tafseer Durre Mansoor* Vol.2, p.298
[19] *Fathul Qadeer* (Egypt).Vol.2 p.60
[20] *Fathul Bayan fi Maqasidul Quran* p.19

prophethood was conveyed and God shall protect him (the Prophet[S.A.W.]) from the people".

Additions like this one used to be of the nature of a commentator's note based on the Prophet's[S.A.W.] verbal exposition.

The Prophet's [S.A.W.] Address and its Selected Extracts

The full text of the Prophet's[S.A.W.] address at Ghadeer-e-Khum is found neither in Shia sources nor in Sunni sources. Only important segments of it have been quoted. Because of this a wrong impression has been formed that the Prophet[S.A.W.] had "delivered a very brief speech".[21] As a matter of fact, if all the extracts of this speech that are present in various sources are collected together then it shall emerge that it was not so brief as Shibli has mentioned.

The account of the event as given by Imam Waliuddi Muhammad (d.743 A.H.) in his book *Mishkatul Masabee* generally known as *Mishkat Shareef*, is as follows:

> "Zaid bin Arqam has stated that the Prophet[S.A.W.] got down from his conveyance (at a place) between Mecca and Medina to give a sermon and he said words in praise of God."

After this he adds:

> Thereafter the Prophet[S.A.W.] said, "Oh people, I am just a human being. That day is very near when I will receive the call of my Creator and respond to it. I am leaving two weighty objects among you. The first one is God's book that contains guidance

[21] *Seeratun Nabi* Vol.2, p.168

and light. You hold it fast and be in contact with it. He laid great emphasis on following God's book.

Here again the narrator, for the sake of brevity, has omitted much matter from the speech. No doubt the Prophet[SA] must have said a lot on this. The narrator then proceeds to add that the Prophet[SA] said twice: "Regarding the members of my family, I tell you to remember God". This has been narrated by Muslim in his compilation of traditions.

Allama Shibli, with reference to Bukhari and Tirmizi, has written the following along with his translation (of the speech):

> O people I am also a human being. It is quite possible that God's angel may visit me soon and I may accept his call, that is, death. I am leaving two weighty things among you. The first is God's book that contains guidance and light. Hold God's book firmly. The other thing is my family. I remind you of God about them." He uttered the last sentence thrice. This is what Muslim says (in *'Manaqib-e-Hazrat Ali[AS]'*). Nisai, Imam Ahamd, Tirmizi, Tibrani, Tabari, Hakim and others have recorded a few more sentences (of the Prophet[SA]) in praise of Ali[AS].[22]

A celebrated student of Maulana Shibli, Shah Moinuddin Ahmad Nadvi, exercising utmost caution, has, on the basis of *Saheeh-e-Muslim*, observed:

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[22] *Seeratun Nabi* Vol.2 p.168

> He (the Prophet[S.A.W.A.] left for Medina and delivered a brief speech on the way, at Ghadeer-e-Khum, to the effect that:
>
> All praise be to God. O people, I am also a human being. God's angel may come to me any day and I may accept his invitation. I am leaving two weighty things among you. The first is God's book that contains guidance and light. Hold the book of God firmly. The other is my family. I remind you of God.[23]

The main phrase of the Prophet's[S.A.W.A.] speech, which should be regarded its quintessence and which, later on was interpreted in different ways, was, at that moment, given so much importance that people congratulated Ali[A.S.] on that. This phrase finds place in all the authentic collections of the traditions without any divergence. In *Mishkat* the tradition attributed to Zaid bin Arqam is thus quoted:

> The Prophet[S.A.W.A.] said three times whether they know that he had more authority over the faithfuls than what they themselves had. All the people replied in the affirmative. The Prophet[S.A.W.A.] then said "Ali[A.S.] is the master of all those whose master I am."[24]

In the Damascus edition of *Mishkat* it is stated: "Zaid bin Arqam narrated that the Prophet[S.A.W.A.] said, 'Ali[A.S.] is the master of all those whose master I am'."[25]

On page 597 of the Delhi edition of this book it is mentioned upon the authority of Abu Baraa bin Aazib and

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[23] *Tareekhe Islam* Part-I 1966 Edn., p.111
[24] *Mishkat* (Delhi) p.606
[25] *Mishkat* (Damascus) Vol.3, p.30

Zaid bin Arqam that when the Prophet[S.A.] got down at Ghadeer-e-Khum he caught hold of Ali's[A.S.] hand and asked the muslims whether they knew that he had more authority over them than what they themselves had. All of them replied in the affirmative. He then questioned them that did they know that he had more claims upon every faithful than what he himself had. All of them said, " why not". The Prophet[S.A.] then said, "O God, Ali[A.S.] is master of him whose master I am. Be friend to him who is Ali's[A.S.] friend and be enemy to him who is Ali's[A.S.] enemy."

This is also reported in *Musnad* of Imam Ahmad Hanbal at several places. It also mentions that at Rahba in Kufa where only a few companions of the Prophet[S.A.] were present, Ali[A.S.] asked the people that those of them who were eye witnesses of the event of Ghadeer-e-Khum should give their evidence in respect of it. Thereupon twelve companions of the Prophet[S.A.] who had participated in the battle of Badr, stood up and testified that they had heard with their own ears the words the Prophet[S.A.] had uttered on that occasion.[26]

At page 27 of Vol. V of the above book there is a reference to a narration of Ibne Abbas regarding the phrase: "Ali[A.S.] is master of him whose master I am". At page 202 of Vol. 12 of *Kanzul Ummal* by Mulla Ali Muttaqi, there are three similar narrations pertaining to the same topic: ("Ali is master of him whose master I am") attributed toAbu Baraa bin Aazib, Umme Salma and Ibne Abbas. Ibne Hajar Asqalani, at page 1212 of Vol. 2 of *Asaba* [27] and Ibne Aseer, at page 28 of Vol.4 of *Asadul Ghaba*, have also reported the above words of the Prophet[S.A.].

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[26] *Musnad Ahmad* (Egypt) Vol.2, p.20, 195-196
Calcutta edition, 1888

Shibli Nomani, referring to *Saheeh Bukhari*, has written that the common phrase in all narrations is that Ali[A.S] was master of all those whose master the Prophet[S.A] was and God should keep him as friend who is Ali's[A.S] friend and as enemy who is Ali's [A.S] enemy.[28]

After the description of the Prophet's speech *Mishkat* reports:

> Umar, after this, met Ali and said to him "Congratulations. O son of Abu Talib[R.A], morning and evening and for ever, you are the master of every male and female faithful." [29]

This is taken from Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal.

Ibne Aseer in *Asadul Ghaba* and Wahiduz Zaman Hyderabadi in *Al-Lugha* have also reported the above narration.

Preservation of the events is the responsibility of history. The event under consideration refers to the Prophet's utterance of the above quoted words. Regarding their authenticity there is perfect unanimity among the Shias and Sunnis. As far as the interpretation of the meaning of the Prophet's[S.A] words is concerned that is beyond the purview of history. However, regarding the import of the word 'master' (*Maula*) a well-known and pious person belonging to the majority community, Ali Hasan Jaisi, has observed that Ali[A.S] was *Maula* of the believers in the same sense in which the Prophet [S.A] himself was their *Maula*. As the Prophet[S.A] has used the same word for himself and Ali[A.S],

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[28] *Seeratun Nabi* Vol.2 p.168
[29] *Mishkat* (Delhi) Vol.2, p.597

no one having faith in the traditions of the Prophet[s.a] can reasonably disagree with the above view.

Return to Medina and Preparations for despatching Usama's army

Two confrontations with Romans had already taken place at Mutah and Tabuk. There was no fighting at Tabuk though Islam's influence had definitely increased through that expedition. The defeat suffered by the Muslims at Mutah was not avenged as yet whereby the Prophet[s.a] was naturally very sad. This was the apparent reason behind the preparation for another expedition against the Romans. There might have been some divine considerations too, some of which may come to light at some stage whereas some others may remain unrevealed forever.

If kinship had been a matter of consideration for the Prophet[s.a] then, for Mutah expedition, he should have made Jafar the first commander of the army. Jafar was his uncle's son and a real brother of Ali[a.s]. But, as most of the historians maintain, the first commander was Zaid bin Harisa, his freedman. Surely, the Prophet[s.a] loved Jafar immensely as his close relative and also for his personal qualities. Hence it was that he felt deeply aggrieved on his death. There was mourning for Jafar in his house. When the Prophet[s.a] saw his daughter, Fatima[a.s], weeping for Jafar, the Prophet[s.a], instead of forbidding her, said the following historic words: "For a person like Jafar, the mourners must mourn."

When an army was arranged by the Prophet[s.a] to deal with the Romans he could have made Jafar's son, Abdullah, its commander. In terms of years Abdullah was not yet a

full grown young man but he had crossed the stage of adolescence. His appointment would have meant that as the guardian of his father's blood, he was being sent to avenge it. But instead of him Zaid's son, Usama, who was very young, was made the commander.

With the exception of Ali[A.S.] all the senior and venerable companions were ordered to join that army and fight under the command of young Usama. Among them were all those persons who, later on, in their own conceit, or in the eyes of the world, appeared worthy of supreme leadership. Usama was a minor. His appointment was resented and objected to in the higher circles. Shah Abdul Haq writes in *Madarij-un-Nubuwwa* :

> The Prophet[S.A.] directed that the senior *Muhajireen* and *Ansar* like Abu Bakr Siddiq, Umar Faruq, Usman Zunnurain, Saad bin Abi Waqas, Abu Ubaida Jarrah and others should accompany Usama's army. Ali[A.S.] was not included in it. Some persons felt hurt that a slave was made the leader of *Muhajireen* and *Ansar*. They started criticizing it in their circles. When the Prophet[S.A.] learnt about it he became sad and also very angry.

The Prophet's[S.A.] reply to these critics, quoted by Shaikh Abdul Haq, is very enlightening as it points towards a missing link of the history. According to him the Prophet[S.A.] said:

> You people had also earlier resented the appointment of Usama's father, Zaid bin Harisa, as commander. Now you are disliking Usama. God and His Messenger do not care for your displeasure. What God and His Prophet have decided cannot be put aside.

The actual words of Shah Abdul Haq are as follows:

> The Prophet[s.a.] went up the pulpit and said: "O people! What is this that in respect of the appointment of Usama as leader you express your disapproval and in respect of his father's leadership also you had made adverse comments. I swear by God that he is worthy of leadership and his father too was worthy of leadership.[30]

This incident contains within itself many significant revelations for the world. Since the Prophet[s.a.] was, for some time past, indicating that he was expecting to leave the world soon, others had also become conscious of it. In addition to this, there were those special and elaborate arrangements that were made to declare his successor (at Ghadeer). Excluding Ali[a.s.], he was now sending outside Medina all those persons who could be claimants to his succession. It was a very significant matter and it was correctly interpreted by the people of a later period. In the fourth century (A.H.) Shaikh Mufeed referred to it as follows:

> It was done so that no such person remained at Medina at the time of his (Prophet's[s.a.]) death who could raise a voice of dissent or set up a claim for the leadership of the Muslims. In this way it was expected that his plan concerning the person chosen by him as his successor would be completed without any opposition from or conflict with a contender.[31]

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[30] *Madarijun-Nubuwwa*
[31] *Irshad* p. 84

Tabarsi also briefly referred to it in 7th century A.H. He says:

> The Prophet[SA] had done it so that no such person remained at Medina at the time of his death who could dispute his succession (Imamate) or who harboured an ambition to become the leader. In this way the rightful claimant and designated successor's task was expected to be accomplished without any obstruction or resistence.[32]

When the reason behind the dispatching of Usama's army and inclusion of elderly companions therein could so easily be perceived by the people of later periods, how could it have been missed by the shrewd persons who had direct interest in it? They knew that the Prophet's command meant destruction of their schemes. They needed an excuse for not acting as they were directed by the Prophet[SA]. This excuse they found in Usama's tender age. They made an issue of it. The Prophet[SA] set their protests aside, saying that the decision taken by God and His Messenger could not change. It was thereby clarified that in affairs pertaining to God the question of the age of the incumbent carried no weight. At the same time it was also established that the decision or opinion of the masses counted for nothing in respect of the appointments to the Islamic offices.

If this resentment had remained confined to their mind or, at the most, to their verbal protests, it would not have been an unusual matter. Such things had happened in the past as well and the Prophet[SA], under divine guidance, had tolerated them in the higher interests of Islam. But now it was a matter of life and death for their designs. Hence,

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[32] *Aalamul Wara*

every effort was made to cause delay in the execution of the Prophet's[SAW] command.

Eventually when the army marched out of Medina it did not go very far. At Jarf, a place just outside the city, it pitched its tents. Meanwhile the Prophet[SAW] himself fell ill at Medina. This created a mental hurdle as well. The interested parties realized that the time to carry out their schemes concerning the arrangements after the Prophet's[SAW] demise, had drawn very near. This illness provided them a specious excuse to stay put. How could they leave the Prophet[SAW] when his illness was aggravating day by day? This excuse mattered more to those people who used to be ever around the Prophet[SAW]. Their especial personal attributes would not allow them to leave the Prophet[SAW] in that condition. But, despite all this, the Prophet[SAW] kept on insisting: "Despatch Usama's army, despatch Usama's army."[33]

Expediency and political foresightedness of certain people however, prevailed over God and the Prophet's[SAW] persistent injunctions, and Usama's army did not move out in the Prophet's[SAW] lifetime.

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[33] *Aalamul Wara*

19

LAST DAYS OF THE PROPHET[S.A.]

Prophet's [S.A.] illness

During the last days of the month of Safar Prophet's[S.A.] illness became more serious. He began to feel that his physical strength will not sustain him for long. On a Tuesday he took Ali[A.S.] by his hand and, accompanied by a group of his companions, went to *Jannatul Baqui*, where his close relatives and friends were buried. He greeted the dead and also conveyed to his companions that the time of his departure from this world was drawing nearer. He told Ali[A.S.] in the presence of all others that only he should bathe his dead body and warned that no one else should cast a glance upon his entire body. He added that it would not be good if anyone did so. He then came back to his house. After this his illness gained in intensity and his condition continued to deteriorate.

The Last Sermon: Message to Muslims of all Times

On Friday the Prophet[S.A.] delivered his last sermon. It contained several important instructions for his followers that were to be observed till Doomsday. Unfortunately, they were soon forgotten. Most of the Muslim authors have not even referred to them in their books. Among the Shia authors, Shaikh Mufeed in *Irshad* and Tabarsi in *Aalamul Wara* have reproduced the entire sermon. According to them, the Prophet[S.A.] said:

O, people! rest assured that there is nothing between a human being and his Creator that may do good to him or ward off evil, except good deeds. O, people! no claimant should stake a claim nor any day-dreamer should indulge in fanciful thinking. I swear by Him who has sent me with truth that there is nothing except my own conduct that can secure salvation for me provided His mercy is also there. Even I shall be nowhere if I were to disobey Him. Then after saying "Be witness" three times, he added, "I have conveyed to you what I had to convey."

He then came down from the pulpit and led the prayers. After that he returned to his house.[1]

Transfer of Residence and Plot Concerning the Leading of Prayers

The Prophet[S.A.] was hitherto staying at the House of Umme Salma. When it became apparent that the last stage of his blessed existence in this transitory place had arrived, Ayesha approached him with a request to shift to her house. The Prophet[S.A.] who was courtesy personified, granted her request. Everybody knew that his health was declining day by day. He was mostly in the state of unconsciousness. One morning Bilal came to inform the Prophet[S.A.] about the prayer. Hafsa was also there. She had specially spent that night at Ayesha's house. The two of them felt that the Prophet[S.A.] was not fit enough to go to the mosque and, therefore, someone else should be told to lead the prayer. Ayesha suggested the name of her father, Abu Bakr, whereas Hafsa proposed the name of her father, Umar.

[1] *Irshad* p.85; *Aalamul Wara* p.141

Ayesha acted fast and sent a messenger to her father to tell him to lead the prayer as the Prophet's[S.A.] condition was very critical. It is this very crucial prayer that is so loudly talked about in histories and in the accounts of religious debates and contentions. The Shiite account of this issue is given below from Tabarsi's *Aalamul Wara*:

> Ayesha said that Abu Bakr be asked to lead the prayer. Hafsa suggested Umar's name. The Prophet[S.A.] told them to hold their tongues and added that they were like the women with whom Yusuf had to deal. He then stood up though he was not in a condition to do so without support. He was under the impression that both Abu Bakr and Umar had gone with Usama's army. He caught hold of the hands of Ali ibne Abu Talib [A.S] and Fazal bin Abbas for support. He was so weak that his feet were dragging on the ground. When he reached the mosque he found Abu Bakr was already in the *Mehrab*.[2] On the Prophet's[S.A.] indication he stepped back. The Prophet[S.A.] stood up, said the *Takbeer* and led the prayers. After concluding the same he returned back to his house and called to his place Abu Bakr, Umar and some others who were in the mosque. He asked them that had he not told them to go with Usama's army. Abu Bakr replied that he had gone with it but had came back to see him (the Prophet[S.A.]) once again. Umar said he did not go because he did not like to get information about his

[2] A recess forming a kind of kiosk. This part of the mosque is reserved for *Imam*, one who leads the congregational prayers.- *Tr.*

> (Prophet's^{SA}) welfare from people travelling from Medina. The Prophet^{SA} then again said, repeatedly for three times, that Usama's army must depart. Thereafter he fainted due to the strain suffered by him.[3]

An earlier scholar, Shaikh Mufeed, has given similar details of the prayer in question.

The fanciful verbal embroidery that has been worked into this incident by the authors belonging to the majority sect is worth noting. One should go through their accounts and then leave it to one's own conscience to seek out the truth. In this way it should be possible for one to get at the reality.

Ibne Khaldun says that when the Prophet^{SA} reached the mosque Abu Bakr wanted to step back. The Prophet^{SA} pulled him to his place and started reciting the Quranic chapter from the place where Aub Bakr had left it. This prayer was performed this way; while Abu Bakr was led by the Prophet^{SA}, the others were led by Abu Bakr. The feasibility as well as the propriety of such an arrangement is to be decided by the theologians. They have to say if an entire congregation can be held by a person who himself is offering prayer behind another *Imam* (leader). Shah Abdul Haq has tried to explain it by suggesting that the position of Abu Bakr had become that of a *Mukabbir*.[4] He writes:

> Abu Bakr was following him (the Prophet^{SA}) and the other people were following Abu Bakr. That is to say, they followed him in respect of

[3] *Aalamul Wara* p.141

[4] *Mukabbir* means amplifier of *Takbeer*. *Mukabbir* stands just behind the Imam and announces changes of posture at appropriate time.- *Tr.*

> *Takbeer* (that he pronounced loudly) on the movements and postures of the Prophetﷺ (in the course of the prayer).

Allama Shibli, probably following him, has remarked: "Abu Bakr watched the Prophet ﷺ and others watched Abu Bakr in completing the various stages of the prayer." His student, Shah Moinuddin Ahmad Nadwi writes:

> After taking the bath the Prophetﷺ went to the mosque supported by Aliؓ and Abbas. The congregation was already in position and Abu Bakr was leading the prayer. On sensing the Prophet'sﷺ arrival, he stepped back. The Prophetﷺ gestured to him not to move and himself led the prayer sitting by the side of Abu Bakr.[5]

The author's predilection for truth is shown by the statement that the Prophetﷺ "led the prayer", instead of "offered the prayer."

The Prophet's Mental Agony and His Last Attempt to Stem the Rot

A fleeting view of the history of Islam would suffice to make one realize that that Prophetﷺ who, for the benefit and guidance of the mankind, had willingly endured all kind of hardships was now, towards the end of his life, in great distress in respect of the future of his mission. As the moment of his departure from this transitory world drew nearer and nearer, his worries in this respect went on increasing. His apprehension that all his efforts to reform

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[5] *Tareekhe Islam* Vol.1 p. 114

the society might come to nothing was mounting with every passing moment. Even from his sick bed he did his best to prevent such a calamity. Through a series of instructions and proclamations he tried to keep the people on the right path. Now, alas, in the closing stage of his life, he was witnessing a change in the mood and the attitude of his people. These were the same people who had been brought up on the principle of unqualified and unflinching loyalty to him. A mere hint from him used to make them spend every ounce of their energy to fulfil his wish. Now the things had changed. Defiance was writ large on their faces. He was now seeing his hitherto faithful followers not only ignoring his instructions but also openly flouting them. What to say of the generality of the muslims, even those eminent people whose conduct was watched and followed by others, were paying no regard to him. They had become totally indifferent to his words and wishes. It was but natural for the Prophet[SAW] to feel that if they could so blatantly defy him on finding him weakened by illness, what they would not do after his death. After having witnessed the manoeuverings in respect of the leadership of the congregational prayer, he was in no doubt about the designs of the people around him. He was convinced that they were bent upon bypassing the person whose advancement was considered essential both by God and him for the attainment of the divine objectives. Instead of him, they would push forward some one else of their choice. Now it was also quite obvious that the calculated delay in the departure of Usama's army was due to these designs which undoubtedly were contrary to the wishes of God and the Prophet[SAW]. The people just saw that the Prophet[SAW] was unwell and in great distress. Some of them believed or, for political reasons, preferred to believe and also wanted others to believe, that

the discomfort that the Prophet[S.A.] was experiencing was due to his illness. But actually his restlessness and uneasiness were caused more by his inner anguish than by the disease. Still, to leave no excuse for his disobedient followers, he made one last attempt to keep them on the right path. He desired that inkpot and paper be brought to him so that he may leave a written document that would not let them go astray till the Day of Judgement. Most of the historians and writers of traditions report this incident in detail. A Shia scholar, Shaikh Mufeed, describes it thus:

> Owing to the severity of the strain (caused by the visit to the mosque), the Prophet[S.A.] fell unconscious and remained in that state for a long time. On seeing him in this condition, the muslims around him started crying. His wives and children and other relatives also started wailing. The noise made him to open his eyes. He then said, "Bring inkpot and *Shana* (shoulder blade of animals then used for writing) so that I may write something after which you shall never lose your way." Thereafter he again fainted. Someone from among the selected few present there stood up to bring the inkpot and shoulder blade for writing. Umar told him to come back as he (the Prophet[S.A.]) was "in a state of delirium". When the Prophet[S.A.] again opened his eyes, somebody asked him, "O Messenger of God, should I bring the inkpot and shoulder-blade to you for writing." He replied:

"Now! Even after what you have uttered? No. (It would be useless.) "[6]

The details given in the works of Sunni authors are more explicit. In *Saheeh Bukhari* the following narration of Ibne Abbas is quoted through Saeed bin Jubair.

> Oh the Thursday! And what do you know what that Thursday was? When the illness of the Messenger of God grew more severe, he said: "Let me write a document so that you may never go astray after me." A contention arose among the people (over it). Someone said that it was not proper to quarrel near the Prophet[sa]. Some other person enquired about his condition. He was told that he (the Prophet[sa]) was (God forbid) delirious. Some people suggested asking him again. Thereupon they went up to him to ask again. The Prophet[sa] told them, "leave me in whatever condition I am. It is better than what you want from me."[7]

Bukhari has reported another tradition following this one:

> Zohri narrates from Ibne Abbas upon the authority of Ubaidullah bin Abdullah bin Utbah that when the Prophet[sa] was on the verge of death, some people were present in the house. The Prophet[sa] said to them, "Come on, let me write a document for you so that you are never led astray." Some people said that the Prophet[sa] was labouring under the strain of the disease. God's book was

[6] *Irshad* p.86; similar account is found in *Aalamul Wara* p.141
[7] *Saheeh Bukhari (Taisarul Bari)*, Vol. 4, p. 327

with them and that was sufficient for them. Over this there was a dispute between the people present in the house. Some wanted the pen and inkpot brought to him so that he could prepare a document that would keep them from going astray. Others said something different. When there was a lot of noise and disturbance, the Prophet[S.A.] told them to go away from him. Ubaidullah is on record that Ibne Abbas used to say that the calamity, the real calamity, whole and sole, was that the Prophet[S.A.] was not allowed to write what he wanted to."[8]

This episode has been reported by Imam Ahmad ibne Hanbal at various places in his *Musnad.* Some of the versions reproduced by him remove the obfuscation surrounding the personality of the individual who had opposed the Prophet[S.A.] and had uttered those particular words (about the sufficiency of the Holy Quran). A few relevant examples from Vol.V of this book are given below.

On page 116 of this volume the following narration of Saeed bin Jubair is produced:

Saeed bin Jubair reports that Ibne Abbas said: "The day of Thursday! What a Thursday it was!" After this I saw tears rolling down both his cheeks. Then Ibne Abbas continued: "The Prophet [S.A.] said that a writing board, or a shoulder blade and inkpot be brought to him so that he may write something that would check them from going astray.

[8] *Saheeh Bukhari (Taisarul Bari),* Vol. 4 p.328

Thereupon, the people said that the Prophet$^{s^{\wedge}}$ (God forbid) was raving."

The following account appears on page 45 of the same volume:

It is narrated by Ubaidullah bin Abdullah from Ibne Abbas that he said: When the time of the Prophet's$^{s^{\wedge}}$ death-agony drew near, there were some people in the house. Umar ibne Khattab was among them. The Prophet$^{s^{\wedge}}$ said that he would write something after which they would never deviate from the right path. On this Umar observed, "the Prophet$^{s^{\wedge}}$ is under the influence of his disease and we have Quran with us. The book of God is sufficient for us." This created a dissension among the people that soon developed into a quarrel. Some of them wanted the articles (that the Prophet$^{s^{\wedge}}$ had asked for) to be brought to him so that he may write that thing that would keep them on the right path. Others said what Umar had said. When the vulgarity and brawling near the Prophet$^{s^{\wedge}}$ became unbearable, he ordered them to leave. Ubaidullah's statement is that Ibne Abbas used to say that it was "a great catastrophe, the sole catastrophe, that a clamour was raised and the Prophet$^{s^{\wedge}}$ was prevented from writing the document."

There are two narrations regarding this event in the fourth volume of *Musnad*. They are also being produced here.

One of them, appearing on page 235, is that of Taos. According to him, Ibne Abbas said:

> When the time of the Prophet's[SA] death-agony drew near, he said: "Bring to me a shoulder-blade so that I write on it something that will not let a quarrel rise between any two of you." On this, the people started shouting and howling. Then the lady said "Alas! How lamentable your behaviour! Remember your commitments and pledges to the Prophet[SA]."

The last part of the narration is very important. However, by not clearly identifying "the lady", he has left unsatisfied our curiosity as to who that respectable woman was who reprimanded the companions in so few but harsh words. Nor has he specified the commitments and pledges that the said lady wanted them to remember.

Ubaidullah's narration is again produced with slight variations on page 356 of this volume. It reads as follows:

> Ubaidullah bin Abdullah reports Ibne Abbas as saying: "When the time of the Prophet's[SA] death drew near he said that he would write a document that would prevent them (his followers) from straying away from the right path. Several people were present in the house at that moment and Umar ibne Khattab was among them. He said 'the Prophet[SA] is in the grip of the disease and you have the Quran with you. For us the book of God is sufficient'. A dispute arose over this and it soon developed into a quarrel. Some of them said that the Prophet[SA] should be allowed to write for them what he wanted to write or that they should bring (inkpot etc.) to him so that he might write for

them. Others said what Umar had already said. When the clamour and dissension rose high and caused distress to the Prophet[S.A.], he told them to go away from him." Ubaidullah adds that Ibne Abbas used to say that it was a great calamity that by their annoying clamour they prevented the Prophet[S.A.] from writing that document.

The Last Will

The Prophet[S.A.] was deeply hurt by the attitude of his companions in respect of the document that he wanted to write. He felt so disgusted that he turned his face away from those who were there and did not utter a single word. Noticing this they left the place, leaving only his close relatives with him. The Prophet[S.A.] then said, " Call back my uncle Abbas and brother Ali[A.S.]" When they came and sat near him, he first asked his respectable uncle whether or not he was prepared to take upon himself the responsibility of complying with his will to honour his commitments to others and to pay back his debts. Abbas' reply was that he had grown old and had a large family. Moreover, he said that his (the Prophet's[S.A.]) liberality was as unconfined as the wind and, therefore, he must have made promises to numerous people. For these reasons he wished to be excused. After this the Prophet[S.A.] turned towards Ali[A.S.] and said to him all that he had said to his uncle. Ali[A.S.] promised to honour each and everything. Thereupon the Prophet[S.A.] embraced him and gave him his finger-ring to wear. He asked for his sword and coat of mails. When they were brought to him he gave them to Ali[A.S.] saying, "have possession of these in my life time". Then he got his

personal horse equipped with saddle and bridle and told Ali[A.S] to take it to his house.

All this clearly indicates the Prophet's[S.A] disenchantment with the people around him. It is also evident that near him was also an element that was transmitting these pieces of inside information to the interested parties outside the house. On the basis of this information, thorough preparations were being made to crush the plan of God and the Prophet[S.A] . The veil of secrecy covering this aspect shall be removed by divine agency when the time comes for it.

After these happenings, a day arrived when the Prophet[S.A] prohibited the people from visiting him. His condition became very critical. Suddenly he opened his eyes and said, "Call my brother and special companion". After this he closed his eyes owing to weakness. Ali[A.S] never used to leave him alone, unless he was required to attend to something very important. It was some such occasion that had made him leave the Prophet[S.A] at that moment. Taking advantage of the ambiguity of the Prophet's[S.A] words, Ayesha sent for her father Abu Bakr. When he arrived, the Prophet[S.A] looked at him and then turned his face. After Abu Bakr went away, the Prophet[S.A] again said, "Call my brother and my soul-mate." Now Hafsa called her father, Umar. As before, the Prophet[S.A] turned his face after looking at him. Ultimately Umme Salma said: "O people. Call Ali[A.S]. He desires no one other than him." When Ali[A.S] came the Prophet[S.A] told him to draw close to him and pressing him against his bosom, he spoke to him in undertones. Thereafter, Ali[A.S] stood up and the Prophet[S.A] closed his eyes, as if to have some rest. Soon after this he was in the throes

of death. After a while he spoke to him again. He said, "O Ali, take my head in your lap. Keep your hand close to my mouth and when I breathe my last then rub your face with that hand." Then he directed him to turn him towards *Qibla*. Thereafter he added, "You alone should perform all my funeral rites and be the first to lead the funeral prayers." Lastly the Prophet[S.A] told him, "Do not leave me till you have buried me." Accordingly Ali[A.S.] placed the Prophet's[S.A] head in his lap and the Prophet [S.A] became unconscious.

Fatima[A.S.] looked at her father's face and started crying. At the same time she also recited the following verse:

> "The luminous face by which the gracious rain is prayed for. The support of the orphans and guardian of the widows."

The Prophet[S.A] opened his eyes and said in a very weak voice that his uncle, Abu Talib[R.A], had composed it. But, he added, that it would be more proper at that time to recite the following words of Almighty God:

> Muhammad is no more than an Apostle: many were the Apostles that passed away before him. If he died or were slain, will ye then turn back on your heels? [9]

The Prophet's[S.A] words amply show how deeply concerned he was about the well being of the humanity in the last moments of his life. It means as if he was seeing that his followers had forgotten his teachings and advice and most of them had become apostates. On hearing what her father had said, Fatima[A.S.] continued to weep. The Prophet[S.A] beckoned to her and whispered something into

[9] Quran 3:144

her ear whereby her face became radiant with joy. Later on she disclosed that her father had told her that she would be the first from among the members of his family to join him.

Allama Shibli has also referred to this incident but in a different manner. He writes:

> The Prophet[SA] loved Fatima Zahra[AS] very much. During his illness he sent for her. On her arrival he whispered something in her ear hearing which she started weeping. He called her again and again whispered something at which she began to laugh. When Ayesha enquired about it, Fatima[AS] told her that she began to weep when her father told her that would die of that disease and she started laughing when he told her that from among his family members she would be the first to meet him."[10]

Shibli again refers to Fatima's[AS] presence which shows that she was always with the Prophet[SA]. He adds:

> He (the Prophet[SA]) fainted frquently as the day advanced. In between there were some moments of relief. Seeing his condition, Fatima[AS] exclaimed, "Oh my father's agony!". Hearing this the Prophet[SA] then uttered, " Your father shall have no discomfort after this day."[11]

Thereafter, the Prophet[SA] breathed his last. At that moment, as directed by the Prophet[SA], Ali[AS] had placed his right hand just below his throat. After the blessed soul left

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[10] *Seeratun Nabi* Vol.2 p. 182
[11] *Seeratun Nabi* Vol.2 p. 180

the body, he rubbed his hand on his face. Afterwards he did the required things with regard to the sacred corpse and got busy with the funerary arrangements like bathing and shrouding the body.

An account of such a show of natural love and devotion was not likely to find a place in the works of the official historiographers of the later rulers. However, Allama Shibli has stated the scene thus:

> "Funerary rites were performed by the near relatives. Fazal bin Abbas and Usama bin Zaid held the curtain up and Ali[a.s] bathed the dead body. Abbas was also there. It is found in some accounts that he too was holding the curtain."[12]

The generality of the companions (citizens of Medina) was not interested in the political goings on. The effect that the Prophet's demise had on them was very deep. The entire population of Medina burst into tears on hearing the wailing and crying of Fatima[a.s]. Each one of them was throwing dust upon his head owing to the intensity of grief.

The view prevailing among Shia scholars is that the Prophet[s.a] had expired on 28th Safar 10 A.H. An ancient Shia scholar Kulaini, the author of *Kafi*, is of the same view. Sunni scholars generally hold the view that the Prophet[s.a] died on 12th Rabiul Awwal. Yet another view, based on credible evidence and assessments, is that he died on 2nd Rabiul Awwal. This view, in our opinion, seems to be correct.

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[12] *Seeratun Nabi* Vol.2 p. 184

INDEX

Aad, 32
Aamash, 460
Aamul-Huzn, 113
Aas bin Wail, 100
Aban bin Usman, 396
Abbas, 45, 419
Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib, 129, 211, 222
Abd, 391
Abd Munaf, 40
Abd Shams, 40
Abdud Dar, 269
Abdul Malik, 194
Abdul Muttalib, 41
Abdul Rahman bin Awf, 67
Abdullah, 45
Abdullah bin Abi Hadbard, 447
Abdullah bin Abi Rabia, 95, 242
Abdullah bin Abi Salul., 325
Abdullah bin Hajash, 184
Abdullah bin Huzam, 132
Abdullah bin Masood, 204, 225
Abdullah bin Rawaha, 396
Abdullah bin Salam, 63
Abdullah bin Ubayy, 125, 243, 293, 325, 462
Abdullah bin Umair, 246
Abdullah bin Umar, 399
Abla, 457
Abraha, 43
Abu Amir, 252
Abu Amir Ashari, 453
Abu Ayyub Ansari, 154
Abu Bakr Siddiq, 67, 141, 163, 203, 260, 304, 446, 462, 489, 495
Abu Dajana, 260, 293
Abu Dajana Ansari, 251
Abu Darda, 163
Abu Daud Manzil, 212
Abu Jahl, 81, 100, 183, 209, 218
Abu Jandal, 359
Abu Karz, 141
Abu Lababa, 333
Abu Lahab, 45, 97, 208
Abu Musa Ashari, 453
Abu Rafe, 212
Abu Saadatul Ashr, 45
Abu Saeed Khadri, 246
Abu Sufyan, 91, 185, 193, 423
Abu Talib[RA], 45, 50, 56, 84, 88, 104, 107
Abu Ubaida Jarrah, 163, 259, 260, 4, 89
Abu Umayya bin Mughaira Makhzumi, 61
Abu Uzza, 242
Abu Wahab bin Amr, 60
Abu Zar, 163
Abu Zar Ghifari, 427
Abul Aas bin Rabii, 102
Abul Bakhtari, 215
Abul Bakhtari ibne Hashim, 106
Abul Baraa, 288
Abul Heesam, 120
Abul Heesam bin Tayhan, 119
Abwa, 48, 183

Adam[A.S.], 5
Adi bin Hatim, 464
Adi bin Qais, 106
Adnan, 34
Ahlul Bait, 25, 47
Ahram, 470
Ahraman, 77
Ainiya bin Hasan Fazari, 464
Akrama bin Abi Jahl Makhzumi, 309
Akrama bin Abu Jahl, 183, 247
Ali bin Ibrahim, 120
Ali[A.S.], 58, 66, 70, 107, 130, 136, 163, 164, 209, 224, 230, 247, 268, 274, 293, 338, 382, 440, 453, 462, 468, 477
Ameen, 52, 137
Ameerul Momineen, 478
Amina, 45
Ammar, 93
Ammar Yasir, 163, 225, 458
Ammara bin Ziyad bin Sakan, 261
Amr bin Aas, 95
Amr bin Abdwud, 307
Amr bin Aitam, 464
Amr bin Hazrami, 184
Amr bin Maadi Karb, 464
Amr bin Salim, 414
Amr Jamuh, 225
Amr son of Umayya Zamri, 289
Anas bin Nazar, 256
Angels, 4
Ansar, 161, 206
Ansars, 150
Aqamat, 171
Aqba, 125, 129
Aqba bin Abi Maeet, 100
Aqba bin Usman, 258
Aqeel, 208
Aqra, 464
Araba bin Aus, 246
Arab-e-Aarba, 32
Arab-e-Mustariba, 33
Arab-e-Mutaarriba, 33
Arafat, 473
Aryan, 78
As'ad bin Zurara, 119
Asaad bin Zurara, 124
Asaba, 251
Ashabe Aqba, 460
Asma binte Umais, 95
Aswad bin Abde Yaghus, 221
Aswad bin Abdul Aswad Makhzumi, 225
Ata bin Hajib, 464
Aus, 118, 134
Autas, 446
Aweem bin Saada, 149
Awf bin Haris bin Afra, 214
Ayesha, 259, 494
Azan, 171
Azazeel, 4
Azrah, 457
Badr, 180, 188
Bahira, 51
Baitul Muqaddas, 233
Balqa, 397
Bani Al Doos, 168
Bani Al Mustaliq, 292
Bani Al Shaitaba, 168
Bani Amr, 126, 166
Bani Aus, 166
Bani Awf, 126, 166
Bani Haris, 166
Bani Harisa, 245
Bani Hashim, 81
Bani Ismail, 28

Bani Israil, 28
Bani Jafna, 168
Bani Jusham, 166
Bani Lihyan, 340
Bani Makhzum, 81
Bani Makhzum', 444
Bani Mughaira, 81
Bani Nabeet, 166
Bani Najjar, 158, 166
Bani Nazeer, 164, 291, 292
Bani Qaynuqa, 164, 229
Bani Qurayzah, 164, 292, 302, 323
Bani Saeda, 166
Bani Salim, 151, 239
Bani Salma, 245
Bani Umayya, 41, 81, 384
Banu Amr bin Awf, 144
Baqui, 493
Baraa bin Aazib, 246
Baraa bin Marur, 131
Bareeda Aslami, 382
Bawat, 182, 184
Behran, 240
Besat, 63, 172
Bilal, 93, 390, 474, 494
Binte Haris, 337
Bir Ali, 472
Bir Mauna, 286
Buas, 120
Budnay, 343
Dait, 166
Darul Nadwa, 134
Dasaur bin Haris bin Maharib, 238
Dawate Asheera, 69
Dumatuljandal, 340
Etikaf, 188
Eve, 6
Event of the Elephant, 42
Fadak, 380
Fatima binte Asad, 58
Fatima Zahra ^AS, 72, 114, 230, 294
Fazal bin Abbas, 508
Fihr, 37
Gabriel, 4
Ghadeere Khum, 475
Ghare-Hira, 63
Ghar-e-Thawr, 140
Ghatfan, 297
Ghazi, 280
Ghazwa, 182
Ghazwa Badrul Ula, 184
Ghazwa-e-Waddan, 183
Habeel, 7
Habeera bin Wahab, 318
Habib bin Asaaf, 145
Habira bin Ali Wahab Makhzumi, 309
Hafsa, 494
Haj, 2, 21, 223
Hajj-e-Tamatto, 470
Hajon, 112
Hajra, 19
Hajre Aswad, 60
Hajre Ismail, 121, 220
Hakeem bin Hazam, 185, 424
Halima, 48
Hamarate Mashriqia, 474
Hamdan, 468
Hamza, 45, 130, 182, 183, 210, 264
Hanzala *'Ghaseelul-Malaika'*, 262
Haris bin Abi Hala, 82
Haris bin Abi Zarar, 295
Haris bin Umair Azdi, 394
Haris Bin Umar, 391
Haris son of Samma, 289

Harra, 263
Hasan [AS], 240
Haseel bin Jabir, 256
Hashim, 40
Hassan Bin Sabit, 478
Hatib bin Balqa, 416
Hatib bin Umayya bin Rafey, 281
Hawazin, 446
Hazam, 289
Hazar, 172
Heraclius, 387, 391
Hijaz, 19
Hijrat, 32, 132, 140
Hilful Fuzul, 52
Hinda, 91, 228, 241, 275
Hira, 159
Hisham bin Urwa, 193
Hudaibiya, 340, 341
Hujjatul Wida, 469
Humarul Asad, 285
Hunain, 446
Husain [AS], 181, 294
Huyee bin Akhtab, 164, 236, 296, 338
Huzaifa, 322
Huzaifa Yamani, 163, 458
Iblis, 4
Ibne Abbas, 207
Ibne Qamiya, 267
Ibne QeemJauziya, 448
Ibnul Art, 93
Ibnul Qeem, 438
Ibrahim[AS], 9, 62, 158
Idul Azha, 21
Imam al Hanaila Ibnul Qeem, 449
Isa, 10
Ishaq, 10
Islam, 9, 10, 79, 122
Ismail[AS], 9, 29, 158
Israil, 10, 28
Istilam, 473
Itban bin Malik, 163
Jabir bin Abdullah Ansari, 346
Jafar bin Abu Talib, 95, 383, 396, 398
Jafar-e-Tayyar, 67
Jaifar, 391
Jannatul-Baqi, 111
Jannatul-Mualla, 111
Jarba, 457
Jarf, 492
Jehad, 176, 185, 201
Jesus, 77
Jinn, 3
Jizya, 457, 468
John Bajoot Ghulub, 400
Jubair bin Mutim, 243
Jurhum, 26, 32
Kaab bin Asad, 165, 303
Kaab son of Ashraf, 292
Kaaba, 25, 76, 102, 158
Kaabul-Ahbar, 63
Kalda, 450
Kalma, 108, 128, 239
Karbala, 181
Kausar, 477
Khabeeb, 287
Khadijah, 53, 66, 101, 112
Khaibar, 291, 339
Khalid bin Waleed, 81, 247, 363, 399
Khandaq, 297
Kharja bin Zaid, 145, 163
Kharrar, 183
Khawat bin Jubair, 300
Khazraj, 118, 134
Kinana, 297
Kulsum bin Hadam, 144, 150

Kurz bin Jabir Fahri, 184
Laaqatuldam, 61
Liwa, 261
Lut, 16
Maan, 397
Maaz bin Afra, 158
Maaz bin Amr, 218
Magians, 77
Majdi bin Amr, 183
Malik bin Amr, 245
Malik bin Awf, 447
Mamba, 413
Manabba bin Usman, 317
Manzar, 288
Manzar bin Amar, 163
Manzar bin Salva, 391
Maquqas, 387, 391
Mardas, 309
Marhab, 386
Marwa, 20
Masharulharam, 475
Masjide Nabawi, 150, 162, 328, 384
Masjidul Haram, 82, 424
Mawakhat, 162
Mecca, 2
Medina, 118, 143
Meeqat, 223, 472
Mina, 23, 473
Miqdad, 204
Miqdad bin Amr, 183
Miqdad bin Aswad, 251
Mosque of Victory, 322
Muawiya, 435
Mubahela, 465
Muhajir, 161
Muhammad bin Muslema, 294, 374
Muhammad [SA], 27, 48, 61, 77, 84, 158
Muhammad Taqi's [AS], 57
Mukhaireeq, 165, 281, 380
Mullah Rafi Bazil, 387
Munafiqeen, 174
Muraysi, 295
Mursid, 287
Mus'ab bin Umair, 124, 261
Musa, 10
Musab bin Umair, 163
Mushrik, 12
Muslim, 10, 153
Mutah, 384
Mutam, 116
Mutam bin Adi, 106
Mutim bin Jubair, 300
Muttalib, 40
Muzdalifa, 475
Nabash ibne Qais, 333
Najashi, 43, 95
Najran, 465
Namaz, 2, 171
Namra, 473
Namrud, 14
Naqib, 131
Nasi, 156, 471
Nawfil bin Abdullah, 317
Nawfil son of Abdullah, 309
Nazar bin Haris, 100, 219
Negus, 390
Nikah, 56
Nufaysah, 55
Nuh [AS], 9
Qabail-e-Baida, 33
Qabeel, 7
Qais, 390
Qais bin Asim, 464
Qais bin Saad bin Ubbada, 274
Qamus, 377
Qarqaratul-Kidr, 237
Qasar, 445

Qaswa, 426
Qazman, 281
Qibla, 233, 506
Quba, 144
Quraish, 37
Quran, 4
Qusayy, 38
Rabia, 91
Rafe bin Khudaij, 246
Rafe bin Malik, 132
Rafe bin Malik Zarqi, 129
Rahba, 486
Rajei, 286
Rayat, 261
Romans, 78
Roza, 2
Ruhul qudus, 479
Rukne Aswad, 60
Rukne Yamani, 60, 473
Saad bin Abi Waqas, 67, 489
Saad bin Khaseema, 144, 149
Saad bin Maaz, 126, 163, 206, 283, 304, 320, 325
Saad bin Rabi, 264
Saad bin Ubbada, 247, 429
Saad bin Usman, 258
Saad bin Waqas', 183
Saad, son of Abi Waqas, 183
Sadiq, 137
Saeed bin Jubair, 500
Safa, 20
Safiya, 279, 390
Safwan, 182
Safwan bin Umayya, 242, 450
Saheeh Muslim, 419
Sai, 386
Salama bin Waqsh, 163
Salman, 163, 447
Salman Farsi, 298
Samiyya, 93
Samra bin Jundab, 246
Samud, 32
Saqeef, 115
Saqi-ul-Hujjaj, 42
Sara, 16, 416
Sariya, 182
Satan, 4
Sawiq, 235
Sehahe Sitta, 373, 441
Shaiba bin Usman bin Abi Talha, 450
Shariat, 8, 10
Sheba, 209
Sheba bin Rabia bin Abd Shams, 225
Shebe Abu Talib , 99
Shees[A.S.], 7
Shirk, 11, 64
Shrajeel Ghassani, 391
Shura, 351
Suffah, 162
Suhail bin Amr, 224, 348, 359, 432
Suhail Rumi, 93
Sura, 4
Tabuk, 457
Taiba, 461
Taif, 113
Talha bin Abdullah, 260
Talha bin Abi Talha, 247
Talha bin Ubaidullah, 67
Talha bin Usman, 248
Taos, 503
Taqayya, 67
Tarukh, 12
Tarvia, 473
Tawaf, 60
Torah, 29, 33
Tubba, 42
Ubaida bin Haris, 183

Ubaida bin Harisa, 210
Ubaidullah bin Abdullah bin Utbah, 500
Ubaidullah bin Jubair, 247
Ubbada bin Samit, 230
Ubi bin Khalaf Jamhi, 267
Umair bin Humam, 213
Umar, 98, 155, 157, 203, 258, 344, 447, 460, 478, 495
Umar bin Umayya Zari, 383
Umar Faruq, 489
Umayya bin Khalaf, 215
Umme Ammara Ansaria, 263
Umme Habiba, 415
Umme Jamil, 97
Umme Salim binte Malhan, 451
Umme Salma, 494
Ummul Fazl, 474
Umra, 223
Urwa Bin Masood, 464
Usama, 337, 474, 508, 489
Usama bin Zaid,
Usayd bin Huzayr, 126, 159, 283
Usayd bin Zohair, 246
Ushaira, 182
Usman, 67, 163, 343
Usman bin Affan, 258, 259
Usman bin Mazoon, 234
Usman Zunnurain, 489
Utbah, 91, 120
Utbah bin Abi Moeet, 208, 219
Utbah bin Rabia, 134, 209
Uzair, 77
Victory Mosque', 298
Wahabi, 235
Waleed, 81, 209
Wehrgeld (*Dait*), 46
Yaman, 259
Yaqub, 28
Yasir, 93
Yazdan, 77
Yazid, 181, 228, 437
Yesrib, 118
Yusuf[A.S], 29
Zabarqan bin Badr, 464
Zaid bin Arqam, 484
Zaid bin Harisa, 67, 86, 113, 395, 397
Zaid bin Sabit, 246
Zaidul Khail, 464
Zakaria bin Yahya, 156
Zakwan, 120
Zakwan bin Abde Qais, 119
Zam Zam, 20, 45
Zamaa bin Aswad, 106, 215
Zaneera, 93
Zarar bin Khattab, 309,318
Zi Tua, 473
Zi-Amr, 238
Ziqarad, 339
Zohri, 500
Zorastrianism, 78
Zubair, 45, 338
Zubair bin Awam, 67,198, 25
Zuhair bin Ubi Umayya, 106
Zulfiqar, 272, 312
Zunawas, 43

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