

## 031. Building of the first Mosques in Islam

We are still discussing the first few days of the Prophet's ﷺ arrival. In this episode, we back up a little bit to talk about the Prophet's ﷺ stay in Quba, before he entered central Madinah.

### When Did the Prophet ﷺ Arrive in Quba?

As to when he arrived in Quba, we don't know for sure. The sahaba did not concern themselves with dates that much. We have a spectrum of opinions among the scholars, and the 12th of Rabi' al-Awwal is commonly put — but academically, this doesn't make sense. One early book of history mentions the Prophet ﷺ left Makkah on the 1st of Rabi' al-Awwal; and the average time it took to get from Makkah to Madinah by a fast rider was about 3½ days; and if it was a slow caravan, it would take up to 9 days; so it doesn't make sense that the Prophet ﷺ arrived on the 12th, even if we put in 2-3 nights in Ghari Thawr. A date of 8th or 9th makes more sense.

And we know from the reports that the Prophet ﷺ arrived around high noon: the reports say that when the news reached Madinah that the Prophet ﷺ had left Makkah, the Ansar went out every morning to wait for the Prophet ﷺ to come, until eventually, when the sun got too hot (by 11 AM or so), they would go back to qaylulah — and the reports say the Prophet ﷺ arrived at this time when everybody had gone back home. So from this, we know that he ﷺ arrived at around high noon. And this was on a Monday, as mentioned in Ibn Ishaq.

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### Houses the Prophet ﷺ Stayed at While in Quba

We already said that Madinah was composed of small pockets of villages, and that the farthest settlement of Madinah in the direction of Makkah was Quba. So the people of Quba met the Prophet ﷺ first.

When in Quba, the Prophet ﷺ stayed at the house of Kulthum ibn al-Hidm (كلثوم بن الهمد), who was an elderly man from the tribe of Amr ibn Awf (بنو عمرو بن عوف), and he was the first sahabi to die in Madinah after the Prophet ﷺ arrived. So subhan'Allah, Allah allowed him to live until the Prophet ﷺ came, hosted the Prophet ﷺ, and then died. What an honor.

It is also said that the Prophet ﷺ stayed in the house of Sa'd ibn Khaythama (سعد بن خيثمة). But some reports say, no, rather, he would spend the night at the house of Kulthum, and then go to the house of Sa'd ibn Khaythama during the day — Kulthum was a married man with children, and Sa'd was a bachelor, so the Prophet ﷺ would spend the day in the house of Sa'd so that guests could come without any problem. Abu Bakr RA stayed in the house of another of the Ansar.

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## Building Masjid Quba & the Blessing of Masjid Quba

The next day, the Prophet ﷺ began building the first masjid in Madinah, which is Masjid Quba (مسجد قباء).<sup>[1]</sup> He ﷺ began building it when Ali RA arrived, i.e., 2-3 days after staying in Quba. And then, according to Ibn Ishaq, they set out for the city of Madinah (central Madinah) on Friday morning. So Masjid Quba was begun to be built on Wednesday or Thursday. The first stone / pillar was put by the Prophet ﷺ, then Ali and Abu Bakr RA continued, and then the Ansar took over from there.

Technically, Masjid Quba was the first masjid the Prophet ﷺ built — but it's worth mentioning that he did not witness its completion. The first masjid he completed himself and prayed in was his own masjid, Masjid al-Nabawi. Of course, there's a "first" element to both of them.

There is a little bit of controversy in the books of tafsir about the reference in verse [9:108] of the Quran — which masjid is being referred to when Allah SWT says, "A mosque founded on taqwa from the first day"? Is it Masjid Quba or Masjid al-Nabawi? There are two opinions (obviously):

1) The majority opinion is that it is Masjid Quba, since it is in the same vicinity as the other masjid being referenced in the same verse, which is the masjid built by the munafiqun (Masjid al-Dirar): "Do not [O Prophet] ever pray in it" [Quran, 9:108].<sup>[2]</sup> And in one hadith in Abu Dawud, we are specifically told that the reference to the "mosque founded upon taqwa" in the verse is to Masjid Quba: When verse [9:108] was revealed, the people of Quba were asked, "Why did Allah praise you in a manner that He doesn't praise us: 'In it are men who wish to purify themselves' [9:108]?" And the people of Quba said with regards to purifying themselves after using the restroom: They have a practice that they would wipe themselves, and then wash with water.<sup>[3]</sup> So from this hadith, we learn that the reference is to Masjid Quba.<sup>[4]</sup>

2) But one day, when a sahabi came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked him, "Which is the masjid referred to by Allah in... (basically [9:108])?", the Prophet ﷺ said, "Indeed, wallahi, it is this masjid of mine (i.e., Masjid al-Nabawi)" [Tirmidhi] — this hadith is also authentic.

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<sup>1</sup> And there was already a makeshift masjid that the Ansar would use to pray Jumu'ah in, which was most likely the house of As'ad ibn Zurarah.

<sup>2</sup> For a more detailed discussion on Masjid al-Dirar, see [episode 90](#).

<sup>3</sup> Whereas most of the people at the time would only wipe themselves and they would not use water.

<sup>4</sup> Trivia on the blessing of Masjid Quba: The Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever does wudu from his house and then prays 2 rak'at in Masjid Quba will get the reward of a full Umrah." And the Prophet ﷺ would always at least once a week ride to Quba and pray in there — normally on a Monday.

Q: So which one?

A: It's both. The verse applies to both. Both masjids were built upon taqwa from the first day. And the reason the Prophet ﷺ said "my masjid" was so that no one thinks Masjid Quba has a higher blessing than his mosque — because it doesn't. And Allah knows best.

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### The Prophet's ﷺ First Salat al-Jumu'ah

Recall Salat al-Jumu'ah had already begun and taken place even before the Prophet ﷺ came — because they had Mus'ab ibn Umayr RA with them [see [episode 25](#)]. And up until this point, the Prophet ﷺ had not prayed Jumu'ah once yet.<sup>[5]</sup>

After spending a few days in Quba, the Prophet ﷺ announced on Thursday night that he would enter [central] Madinah the next morning. On Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, he was in Quba helping build the masjid. And on Friday morning, he left Quba, and Salat al-Jumu'ah occurred in the middle. So the first Jumu'ah that the Prophet ﷺ prayed was neither in Masjid Quba, nor was it in Masjid al-Nabawi<sup>[6]</sup>; rather, he prayed it in the area of Banu Salama (بنو سلمة). He just stops over there and gives his first Jumu'ah khutbah.

And this khutbah has been recorded by Ibn Ishaq and al-Bayhaqi with a slightly weak chain — but there is no haraj / problem in narrating it. What is really amazing is that all of the khutbahs of the Prophet ﷺ that are recorded —and we only have a few of them— they do not last more than 3-5 minutes. The khutbahs of the Prophet ﷺ were extremely short.<sup>[7]</sup>

As to his first Friday khutbah ﷺ, it comprised of a few things:

In the first khutbah, he encouraged the Muslims to be generous, reminded them of the certainty of death and of meeting Allah SWT, and that Allah will ask every one of them what he had been given and how he spent it; and then he said —and this part is recorded in Bukhari—: "Whoever is able to save himself from the Fire even with the seed of a date, let him do so. And if he doesn't even have this, then with a good word. Because every [good] deed is multiplied 10 times." Then he sat down. That's the first khutbah: Charity, death, meeting Allah, hisab<sup>[8]</sup>, and speaking good.

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<sup>5</sup> And this, by the way, shows us the importance of the commandment of Jumu'ah — it is so important that the sahaba had to establish it even without the Prophet ﷺ.

<sup>6</sup> Because there was no Masjid al-Nabawi yet at the time.

<sup>7</sup> In one hadith, the Prophet ﷺ said, "It is from the fiqh (intelligence / understanding) of a man that he shortens the khutbah, and lengthens the salah." So his ﷺ salah was longer than his khutbah. But in our times, it's the other way around. Why? Because in our times, Jumu'ah is the only time 90% of the ummah ever comes to masjid. Whereas at the time of the Prophet ﷺ, he was speaking to people whose Iman was at a different level, and they did not need the reminders that we need. So this is one of those things that the ummah has had to change. But still, we try to keep it reasonable: 20-25 minutes is reasonable. An hour is clearly too long.

<sup>8</sup> Hisab (حساب) - accountability.

Then he stood up, and began the second khutbah with khutbat al-hajah.<sup>[9][10]</sup> The Prophet ﷺ then said, "The successful one is he whom Allah has beautified his heart, and has caused him to enter Islam after leaving kufr, and has chosen him above the rest of the people for the best of all matters (i.e., you who have accepted Islam have been blessed like no one else on earth)." He then said, "Love what Allah SWT loves, and love Allah with your entire heart, and never tire of the Speech of Allah and of the dhikr of Allah. And never let your heart become hard. Allah chooses what He wishes and what He blesses, and He blessed this (i.e., the Quran and dhikr) to be the best deed. So worship Allah, and do not associate partners with Him. And have taqwa of Him as He said you should, and be sincere to Allah in all that you say. Love one another with the spirit of Allah between you. And remember, Allah hates His promise be broken. Wassalamu'alaykum<sup>[11]</sup>."

Subhan'Allah, look at how comprehensive the khutbah is, and how pertinent it is. In the first khutbah, the Prophet ﷺ stressed charity because Islam needed money and sacrifice at that time. Indeed, if there was any time people needed to donate for the cause of Allah, it was right at the beginning of Islam. He further reminded them of the reality of life and the certainty of death. This short khutbah has both threats and rewards. This is the way of Islam. We tell people the rewards of Allah to make them feel happy and joyful, but we also make them scared of the fearful punishment of Allah. This concept is called *targhib* and *tarhib* (الترغيب والترهيب) in Arabic. Note the first khutbah is action-based, and the second is purely spiritual. Subhan'Allah, this is the perfection of Islam. Further, he tells them to never get tired of reading the Quran or doing dhikr — as these two can make your heart soft. And he concludes by reminding them to love one another with the help of Allah, for His sake, and he reminds them that they have a promise to Allah to fulfill His religion.

He then entered [central] Madinah after this, and the events went as we discussed previously [see [episode 30](#)]. The camel sat down, the Prophet ﷺ asked whose house was the closest, and he stayed with Abu Ayyub.

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### Tangent: The Khutbat al-Hajah

The khutbat al-hajah<sup>[12]</sup>:

إن الحمد لله نحمده ونستعينه ، ونعوذ بالله من شرور أنفسنا ومن سيئات أعمالنا ، من يهده الله فلا مضل له ، ومن يضلل فلا هادي له ، وأشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له ، وأشهد أن محمدا عبده ورسوله

"Verily, all praise is due to Allah, therefore, we praise Him, and we ask for His help. And we seek refuge in Allah from the evil of our deeds and the consequences of our souls. Verily, whomever Allah guides, no one can misguide. Whomever Allah misguides, no one can guide him [back to the Straight Path]. I testify that there is no deity worthy of worship

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<sup>9</sup> Note 1: This is contrary to what we do today, of reciting khutbat al-hajah in the first khutbah.

<sup>10</sup> Note 2: However, from other narrations, we learn that he would usually recite the khutbat al-hajah in the first khutbah. (So it's just possible he changed over later.)

<sup>11</sup> Wassalamu'alaykum (والسلام عليكم) - and may peace be upon you.

<sup>12</sup> Khutbat al-hajah (خطبة الحاجة) - sermon of necessities.

except Allah —alone and with no partner— and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger."

This is so eloquent. It is such a beautiful and concise speech. This khutbah is so powerful that some people accepted Islam just because of this khutbah. The most famous example is that of Dimad al-Azdi (ضمد الأزدي) [during Makkah dawah]. He was from the leaders of the tribes of Yemen. And he was a medicine man. When he came to Makkah, the people of Makkah told him, "Beware of this man [Muhammad]. He is a magician, he is a crazy man," etc. So Dimad put cotton in his ears to make sure he didn't hear what the Prophet ﷺ said — they warned him so much that he became terrified. But then he said to himself, "I am an intelligent man. How powerful can his speech be? If he is wrong, I will guide him. If he is sick, I'm a medicine man — I will cure him." So he took the cotton out, and walked up to the Prophet ﷺ, and said, "Your people have warned me about you. But I want to listen to what you have to say." So the Prophet ﷺ recited khutbat al-hajah, and said, "Amma ba'd<sup>[13]</sup>..." — and he was going to begin the actual speech. But Dimad said, "Stop. Repeat this word that you have just said." So the Prophet ﷺ repeated the entire khutbat al-hajah. And Dimad said, "I have memorized the poetry of everyone out there, and I consider myself an intelligent and educated man. But wallahi, I have never heard anything as eloquent as this. By Allah, you must be a man Allah inspires." And khalas, he accepted Islam right then and there. This is how eloquent khutbat al-hajah is, and it deserves its own lecture.

And people have written books about it. Ibn Taymiyyah has a treatise explaining khutbat al-hajah. Ibn al-Qayyim has many pages about khutbat al-hajah in his explanation of Sunan Abi Dawud. In our times, Sheikh al-Albani has written an entire booklet about khutbat al-hajah and its reports.

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### Status of the Masjid in Islam

The first thing the Prophet ﷺ did in Madinah was turn his attention to building the masjid. Notice in the span of 5 days, the Prophet ﷺ has built two masjids, and he doesn't even have a roof over his head yet.<sup>[14][15]</sup> We see therefore the importance of the masjid. The masjid was built even before his house.

— It shows us the status of the House of Allah AWJ; Allah literally calls masjids His Houses, and He praises them in the Quran [24:36].

— The masjid was the place of ilm (knowledge) and shura (discussion / consultation).

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<sup>13</sup> Amma ba'd (أما بعد) - as to what follows.

<sup>14</sup> Side note: The people also built a third masjid where the Prophet ﷺ stopped and did khutbah.

<sup>15</sup> On this note, there were many masjids in Madinah at the time of the Prophet ﷺ — not just Masjid Quba and Masjid al-Nabawi. There were at least a dozen masjids — but the Prophet's ﷺ Mosque was the central and the largest, and it also appears that, after its completion, it was the only masjid where Jumu'ah was done.

— It was the place where people decided affairs and socialized. They would laugh and joke in the masjid.

— The masjid was the place of celebration, e.g., nikahs.

— And subhan'Allah, the Prophet ﷺ was in his Masjid more than he was in his own house.

— From the masjid, ilm, Quran, and the armies of Islam spread.<sup>[16]</sup>

— And in it, those who had no house would sleep: as soon as Muslims came, they would be housed in the masjid if they had no house. The Prophet ﷺ said in a sahih hadith, "Masjid is the house of every muttaqi<sup>[17]</sup>." Of course, the scholars have discussed whether it is wajib to house every Muslim who has no shelter — but basically, the general rule of Islam is that for a Muslim who needs a place to sleep, the masjid will become his place to sleep.<sup>[18]</sup>

— And of course, the Masjid of the Prophet ﷺ literally became a university, a house, and a masjid, all in one, for Ahl al-Suffa<sup>[19]</sup> — and we will talk about Ahl al-Suffa in [episode 34](#), insha'Allah.

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### Poem That the Sahaba Versified While Building Masjid al-Nabawi

We mentioned that the Prophet ﷺ himself participated in building the masjid [see [episode 30](#)]. When the sahaba saw him, they versified a poem:

لئن قعدنا والنبي يعمل لذاك منا العمل المضلل

"Wallahi, if we sit down and the Prophet ﷺ is working, then this from us is a very astray / shameful matter."

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### Ammar ibn Yasir's Light-Hearted Exchange With the Prophet ﷺ While Building Masjid al-Nabawi

One incident is narrated, which has deep theological and historical implications. Ammar ibn Yasir<sup>[20]</sup> was carrying two large bricks (quarry stones), and his entire body was dusted in full — and he is struggling with them; he says (jokingly), "O Prophet ﷺ, they are

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<sup>16</sup> The armies would be arranged inside the masjid, and then they would go out from there.

<sup>17</sup> Muttaqi (متقي) - can loosely be translated as 'believer.'

<sup>18</sup> Side note: This hadith has a secondary meaning as well, which is, "The muttaqi will want to be in the masjid" — i.e., they will feel comfortable being in the masjid as they will in their house.

<sup>19</sup> Ahl al-Suffa (أهل الصفة) - the People of the Suffa.

<sup>20</sup> [Both his parents were the first shaheeds.](#)

killing me by giving me two stones and they are only carrying one stone."<sup>[21]</sup> The Prophet ﷺ smiled and said, "No, O Son of Sumayyah<sup>[22]</sup>, they are not killing you. Rather, the people who shall kill you will be al-Fiat al-Baghiyah<sup>[23]</sup>." The Prophet ﷺ also said, "Everyone is getting one reward and you are getting two. And the last thing you shall drink in this world will be a glass of milk."

Subhan'Allah. Ammar only joked with the Prophet ﷺ, and the Prophet ﷺ responded with a hadith that would carry such deep theological and historical implications. Ammar ibn Yasir's death would become a very important death in Islam. Why? Because during the time of fitna (37 AH, in Ali's khilafa), Ammar would choose to be on the side of Ali RA against the forces of Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan RA (معاوية بن أبي سفيان). Thus as Sunni, we believe that Ali was closer to the truth than Muawiyah, based on this hadith of Ammar. But also as Sunni, we respect all of the sahaba, so we don't say anything bad about Muawiyah. We say Muawiyah was sincere too — it's just that Ali was closer to the truth<sup>[24]</sup> — radi-Allahu-anhum ajma'in<sup>[25]</sup>.

And indeed, as the Prophet ﷺ prophesied, Ammar ibn Yasir drank some milk, went to fight in the battle against the forces of Muawiyah, and he died from an arrow shot.

### Changing of the Rak'at & the Legislation of Adhan

Moving on to the prayers in the masjid. We don't know exactly when the changing of the rak'at of the 5 salahs occurred. Recall the 5 salahs were given during [al-Isra wal-Mi'raj](#). However, at that time, every single salah was two rak'at. In Sahih Bukhari, Aisha RA tells us, "When we came to Madinah, the salahs were placed as you know them; and the two rak'at were kept for the traveler." This shows us, therefore, that at some point in the early Madinan phase, the Prophet ﷺ and the sahaba started praying as we now know it: 2-4-4-3-4. Before this, every salah was just two rak'at. And then the sunan and the nawafil were added.

As to the call of prayer: The Prophet ﷺ called the sahaba and asked them, "How should we call the people at the time of the salah?" One said, "Let us use a bell like the

<sup>21</sup> Side notes: This shows us the sahaba had a sense of humor with the Prophet ﷺ. It also shows a fiqhi point: When it comes to these types of jokes, it is not considered 'lying' as long as the person you are speaking to understands that it is a joke.

<sup>22</sup> Notice the Prophet ﷺ called him "Son of Sumayyah" to give honor to his mother Sumayyah, the first shaheed in our religion. Forever afterwards the sahaba would call him "Son of Sumayyah" because the Prophet ﷺ called him this.

<sup>23</sup> Al-Fiat al-Baghiyah (الفئة الباغية) - the Group That Has Gone Beyond the Bounds.

<sup>24</sup> As a footnote: There were three groups of sahaba during the time of fitna: [1] The group of Ali. [2] The group of Muawiyah. [3] The group that didn't fight, i.e., the abadilah: Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr, Abdullah ibn Umar, and Abdullah ibn Abbas — they were asked multiple times to take part, but they said no. And Ibn Taymiyyah says, "This group of sahaba [who didn't pick sides] was ON the truth; Ali was \*closer\* to the truth; and Muawiyah was \*not as close\* as Ali."

<sup>25</sup> Radi-Allahu-anhum ajma'in (رضي الله عنهم أجمعين) - may Allah be pleased with them all.

Christians." But this was discarded.<sup>[26]</sup> Others say, "Let us use a shofar (i.e., a horn)." But this was discarded too. And others gave other ideas, but no idea basically made sense, so the meeting finished without any idea being chosen. That night, two people saw a dream: Umar RA and Abdullah ibn Zayd (عبد الله بن زيد) RA. Their dreams were the same. Abdullah ibn Zayd saw in his dream a man selling some items (either the horn or the bell or something). So he went up to him and said, "Can I buy these items?" The man said, "Why?" He said, "Because the Prophet ﷺ wants to decide how to call the people to prayer, so I'm thinking one of these will do the job." The man said, "Should I not tell you something better than that?" Abdullah said, "Of course." The man said, "When you want to call the people to prayer, say, 'Allahu'akbar, Allahu'akbar (and all the way to the end — basically adhan as we know it now).'" And then he woke up — this dream was so vivid he rushed to the Prophet ﷺ to tell him. And the Prophet ﷺ said, "This is a true dream, insha'Allah." And it's clear from the report that Abdullah ibn Zayd was hoping to be the muezzin — but the Prophet ﷺ had other plans. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Stand up, O Bilal, because you have the loudest voice." And the Prophet ﷺ told Abdullah ibn Zayd to stand with Bilal to tell him the adhan. So Abdullah ibn Zayd told him every phrase, and Bilal repeated it in a loud voice.<sup>[27]</sup> And as Bilal is saying the adhan, Umar RA comes rushing into the masjid without having fully tied his lower garment, and says to the Prophet ﷺ, "O Messenger of Allah, I saw these phrases in my dream [too]." So it appears Allah AWJ had shown the dream to multiple of the sahaba — and He had willed that Abdullah ibn Zayd is the one who gets the honor of telling it to the Prophet ﷺ.

It is important to note that this is \*the only\* aspect of our shariah legislated by the dream of a sahabi. It is also important to note that technically, the dream itself was not the source of the legislation, but rather, the Prophet ﷺ saying "it is true." We DO NOT base our shariah on dreams — if the Prophet ﷺ had not said "it is true," we would not have based our shariah on it.

Why was the adhan legislated in this manner? Allah knows best. Sh. YQ hasn't found anybody commenting on this. And Sh. YQ also tried to look up about Abdullah ibn Zayd, but all he could find was a statement from Ibn Hajar who said, "This is the sahabi who is famous for the story of the dream." That's it. So why did Allah choose him for the dream? We do not know.

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### Houses of the Prophet ﷺ

So the Prophet ﷺ spent around 2-3 weeks building his mosque, and thereafter, started building his houses. At the time, he had 2 wives: Sawda RA and Aisha RA. And both of their houses were built next to the masjid. These were the only two houses of the Prophet ﷺ that were connected to the masjid.<sup>[28]</sup> Note Sawda RA was an elderly lady and senior to

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<sup>26</sup> And there are authentic hadiths that mention the Prophet ﷺ did not like bells, and that he also said, "The angels do not accompany any caravan that has a bell."

<sup>27</sup> So technically, Abdullah ibn Zayd did give the first adhan.

<sup>28</sup> Other wives were married later on by a number of years; and by that time, people had moved in and connected other houses to the masjid, so the Prophet's ﷺ other wives' houses were in a separate block, i.e., they didn't have direct entrances to the masjid.



the Prophet ﷺ in age. She wanted to please the Prophet ﷺ so much that she told him one year, "Ya Rasulallah, I am an elderly lady, and I know that you prefer the company of Aisha, so I will gift my night to her." This means Aisha's RA house was the only house the Prophet ﷺ \*lived in\* that was connected to the masjid. Sawda's RA house was connected as well, but the Prophet ﷺ didn't spend the night there. He would visit Sawda and spend time with her during the day, but he would not spend the night in her house, because she gifted her night to Aisha.

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Next time, we will discuss the pairing up of the Muhajirun and the Ansar [episode 32], and the constitution that the Prophet ﷺ drew up between the Ansar, the Muhajirun, the pagans, and the Jews, of Madinah [episode 33]. This was an unprecedented constitution.

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## Q&A

Sunnah prayer.

The regular sunan can be divided into two categories:

1) Sunan al-Ratibah = prayers that the Prophet ﷺ would do as a habit, i.e., the 10 or 12 rak'at that are linked to the 5 daily salawat. The Prophet ﷺ said in a hadith, "Whoever prays for the sake of Allah 10 rak'at a day, Allah will build a palace for him in Jannah." 12 has also been reported. These 10 or 12 rak'at are:

Fajr: 2 sunnah before Fajr

Zuhr: 4 before Zuhr, 2 after (some say 2 before, and 2 after)

Maghrib: 2 after Maghrib

Isha: 2 after Isha

These are the Sunan al-Rawatib (or Sunan al-Ratibah) which the Prophet ﷺ always prayed when he wasn't traveling. Except for the sunnah of Fajr, he would pray it even when he was traveling.

2) Witr prayer. In the terminology of hadith, witr prayer is basically tahajjud and is basically qiyam al-layl. Witr = tahajjud = qiyam al-layl. (It's basically the same concept: "the night prayer.") Witr can be said any time after Isha until Fajr. If you can't get to the level of excellence of waking up at 3 AM, you can pray it before going to sleep — but it's the least rewarding to do so. Witr is basically praying an odd number of rak'at — the Prophet ﷺ would usually pray 11 or 13. This the Prophet ﷺ would never miss even when he was traveling. Ibn Taymiyyah and others say witr was wajib upon the Prophet ﷺ no matter what (but not upon his ummah), based on verse [17:79] in the Quran.

There is also nafl prayer which is unlimited in its scope. You may pray it at any time of the day and night, as long as it's not in the times of prohibition.

## 032. The People of As-Suffa

Note: The episode is mistakenly titled "The People of As-Suffa." A more fitting title would be "The Muakha." If you want to learn about the People of As-Suffa, jump to [episode 34](#).

### **Tangent: Establishment of Hijri Calendar During the Reign of Umar RA**

Before we move on — there is an interesting important milestone in our history that is not related directly to the incident of the Hijrah, but it is very important for our history, and that is the establishment of the Islamic calendar based upon the Hijrah.

A sign of civilization is to have a calendar, script, architecture, etc. And the Arabs did not have a calendar that they relied upon. The whole miracle of Islam is that it came and transformed this backward society to become the rulers of the entire world — and Allah says this in the Quran [21:10]: "We have revealed a Book, in it will be your remembrance / legacy."

The Arabs had many problems:

1. They didn't have a unified calendar; rather, each tribe had its own calendar system. And it's based upon important incidents, e.g., when someone important in their tribe dies, they call the whole year "the year of the death of the chieftain" — and they would use these as demarcations, e.g., "two years after the death of the chieftain," "three years before the incident of the elephant," etc. Any important incident becomes a milestone — and every few years, some milestone happens, and they would just calculate their calendar and sense of time around this. But of course, this was just a local decentralized calendar to each tribe.

2. There was also a very confusing practice that the jahili Arabs had: al-Nasi (النسيء) [see Quran, 9:37]. In the time of Ibrahim AS, Allah revealed down the shariah that 4 months of the year will be sacred. Allah tells this in the Quran, "Indeed, the number of months with Allah is 12 [lunar] months in the register of Allah [from] the day He created the heavens and the earth; of these, four are sacred" [Quran, 9:36].<sup>[29]</sup> The concept of keeping four months sacred is from the time of Ibrahim AS, and the Arabs knew and followed this. But the issue was that the powerful tribes (e.g., the Quraysh) would flaunt these four months. Suppose they wanted to declare a war and it just so happened it's in the Sacred Month (and of course you can't have any fighting during a Sacred Month), so they would just swap the current month around — e.g., they would change Muharram to Safar. This is called al-Nasi, and it's a type of kufr<sup>[30]</sup>. Literally, they would swap months around at their desire, announce this, and the other tribes would pay heed to this and follow them.

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<sup>29</sup> Allah decreed there is 12 months from the beginning of time. And notice that every significant calendar on the face of this world has had 12 months. It's in the shariah of the earliest prophets. Where did the Romans, Persians, etc., get 12? All of this goes back to the original shariah that Allah revealed down. And 7 days of the week is also in the shariah — Allah decreed this.

<sup>30</sup> [See Quran, 9:37](#).

Now imagine what would happen after decades and centuries of swapping months around. The entire months are going to be jumbled up like a jigsaw puzzle, and nobody has any idea what month should it actually be. So the months lost the significance of their order that they used to have. But the year the Prophet ﷺ performed the Hajjat al-Wada' [episode 100], he announced that, "This year, the months have fallen in order the way that they were when Allah created the heavens and the earth." Allah willed that in the year of Hajjat al-Wada', the months go in their proper order. And the Prophet ﷺ said, "From now on, no swapping." So from that time up until our time, the [Hijri] months have been repeating correctly. And so the problem with the order of the months is taken care of.

3. The other issue is the year. The Prophet ﷺ did not directly institute a calendar. What happened was, one year —most likely in the 17th year of the Hijrah— one or two things happened: (1) Umar RA was presented with a case of two people fighting. One of them said, "He was supposed to pay me back money by Sha'ban, and it's already Ramadan." The other said, "No, I meant Sha'ban of next year. Not this year." So Umar RA said, "How are we going to decide this dispute?" — Each had a valid point because the contract just said "Sha'ban." Allah knows best — maybe both of them were honest; but this, of course, caused a problem. (2) Umar RA then got a letter from Abu Musa al-Ash'ari (أبو موسى الأشعري) or one of his governors, who said basically a similar thing, "O Umar, sometimes you tell us to do something by a particular month, but we don't know if you mean the same year's or the next year's month. So find a way to tell us."

So Umar RA called a gathering of the sahaba to sort this out. One or two suggested, "We will follow the calendar of the Romans or the Persians," but this was immediately rejected because the Muslims realized they had their own civilization now — you don't need to be following others. So they decided to have their own calendar; and Umar RA asked, "Which year should we begin with?" The sahaba differed. One of them said: with the death of the Prophet ﷺ. Another said: with the birth of the Prophet ﷺ. Another said the Battle of Badr. Ali ibn Abi Talib said, "The year of the Hijrah shall be the first year of the calendar because this was the one decisive thing that changed the Muslims from being humiliated to being honored." The sahaba all agreed to this. Umar RA said, "This is the wisest opinion."<sup>[31][32]</sup> The second issue is: Which month should be taken as the first month? People differed again. Some said Ramadan as it's the holiest month; others said Dhu al-Hijjah, Rajab, etc., until Uthman ibn Affan said, "It shall be Muharram." Why Muharram? Scholars have differed. Two reasons have been given by our classical scholars:

i. It's linked to Ali's announcement of the year of the Hijrah being the first year. Which month did the Hijrah occur in? Yes, the month the Prophet ﷺ Migrated was Safar<sup>[33]</sup> — so why not choose Safar then? Because the announcement came for people to do Hijrah in Muharram, and the bulk of Muslims Emigrated then<sup>[34]</sup>. So Muharram was taken as the first month.

<sup>31</sup> Side note 1: Later scholars tried to read in a Quranic evidence for this (from verse [9:108]), but Allah knows best.

<sup>32</sup> Side note 2: Hijri calendar starts with 1 AH; there is no 0 AH.

<sup>33</sup> Late Safar to early Rabi' al-Awwal.

<sup>34</sup> And only the Prophet ﷺ and a few other people Emigrated right at the end of Safar.

ii. In some reports, we find Uthman RA expressed a reason. In those days, the sahaba did Hajj pretty much every year. And for them, returning back from Hajj represented a new life and a fresh beginning. And when do you come back from Hajj? The end of Dhu al-Hijjah. So what month represents the new beginning? The following month, which is Muharram. So they took Muharram as the first month.

The reason we are mentioning this tangent now is to show that the sahaba understood the significance of the Hijrah.

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### Summary of the Madani Seerah

The Makkan period lasted 13 years; the Madani period lasted 10 years — and this period can be split up into three distinct categories:

1. Era of consolidation: This was an era of internal dissent being eliminated. There were internal dissents from the hypocrites and the Jews — these were the two major points of weakness for the Muslims at the beginning<sup>[35]</sup>, and the threats from the hypocrites were minimized, and those from the Jews were eliminated in the end. And there were also external threats from the Quraysh. This era of consolidation spanned from the beginning of the Hijrah up until the Battle of Ahzab [5 AH]. During this time, any opposition —internal and external— was either eliminated, or minimized to the extent that the existence of the Islamic state was no longer in threat. After this, the Muslim republic could stand confidently independent of any serious threats.

In the beginning, the very existence of the ummah was at stake — the Prophet ﷺ himself said during the Battle of Badr, "O Allah, if this group [of Muslims] is destroyed, You will not be worshiped on earth," which shows how serious of a threat the Muslims were in. The Battle of Uhud was also the same. In the Battle of Ahzab, the Muslims were almost about to be eliminated — but of course, Allah protected them and destroyed the enemies — and this was when the tide began to shift.

2. Era of truce: This lasted two and a half years — from the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah [6 AH] up until the Conquest of Makkah [8 AH]. In this era, the Muslims witnessed peace along with the coexistence of non-Muslims. And the Prophet ﷺ was sending out letters, emissaries, and envoys. During this era, the Muslim republic expanded fivefold.<sup>[36]</sup>

3. Era of establishment: This is post-Conquest of Makkah [8 AH] up until the death of the Prophet ﷺ in Rabi' al-Awwal in the 11th Hijrah. This is when Allah revealed the verses of Surah al-Nasr, "This is the ultimate victory" — i.e., that the entire Arabian Peninsula embraced Islam.

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<sup>35</sup> And there were pagans as well, but these were eventually eliminated.

<sup>36</sup> So it expanded much more than in the era of war.

Note that even though we have discussed 53 years of the Prophet's ﷺ life, the Madani seerah is three times as large as the Makkan seerah —because we have three times the information— so, there is still much more to go, insha'Allah.

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## Loving Madinah

Now, how did the Muhajirun like Madinah? The fact of the matter is, they did not like it. Not because of anything problematic, but because they missed home. There is truly no place like home. It doesn't matter how well you are treated at someone's house, or if you visit a fancy hotel, there is no place like home. The Muhajirun missed the environment, the city, and the people of Makkah, so much so that they literally fell sick. Aisha RA narrates that she visited Abu Bakr and Bilal RA after she arrived in Madinah and asked them, "How are you?" And she said both of them were moaning, and Abu Bakr was in a severe fever, and he said, "We wake up with our family, but death is closer to us than our shoelaces / sandal-straps" — he was so sick he was thinking of death.

Aisha RA then asks Bilal and he also says some poetry, "How I wish that I would spend the night in a valley full of lemongrass and jalil," i.e., he is missing the thorny plants and dryness of Makkah. And Bilal said to Aisha, "May Allah's curse be on..." and he started listing the Quraysh leaders. Why? Because — he says, "They kicked us out of our houses" — and he is venting his anger out on them.

And Aisha RA says she goes back to the Prophet ﷺ and tells him what had transpired. And so the Prophet ﷺ made a special du'a for all of the Muhajirun (and Muslims in general), "O Allah, make Madinah beloved to us like we used to love Makkah, or even more." And, "O Allah, bless us in our food measurements; O Allah, remove the bad weather and diseases / plagues<sup>[37]</sup> and throw it outside of Madinah in the barren land of Juhfah (جحفة)." And so slowly but surely, the love of Madinah entered their hearts, so much so that when the Muslims would go away from Madinah, they would count the days they were going to come back to the city. And when the Prophet ﷺ would see Madinah in the distance, he would fasten his camel / horse to reach home quicker. And indeed, even today, when we visit Madinah, it is truly peaceful, and there is a sense of love for Madinah that is not felt elsewhere.

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## The Hadith of Salam

The famous first hadith that is narrated from Madinah was by Abdullah ibn Salam (عبد الله بن سلام) — the big Jewish rabbi who converted to Islam; one of the few who did. He said when he heard the Prophet ﷺ arrived in Quba, he rushed to take a look at him. And he was of the first who arrived. And when he saw the face of the Prophet ﷺ, he knew that, "This face is not the face of a liar" — Allah AWWJ allows righteousness and piety to show in a way that we will never understand. This is called firasa (فراصة): pure people can sense pure

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<sup>37</sup> Madinah had more plagues than Makkah.

people. (And in one hadith, the Prophet ﷺ affirmed the reality of firasa.) And Abdullah ibn Salam says the first thing he heard the Prophet ﷺ say was, "Spread the greetings of salam<sup>[38]</sup>; feed the people; be good to your relatives; and pray during the night when everybody is asleep. You will enter Jannah in salam (peace)." So the Prophet ﷺ is encouraging being brotherly, kind, and generous, from day one. And then he went a step further and instituted the concept of muakha:

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### **The Muakha (المواخاة): The Pairing up of the Muhajirun and the Ansar**

Of the early things the Prophet ﷺ did —so much so that one of the earlier scholars said he did this even before the masjid was built— was he made a muakha<sup>[39]</sup> between the Muhajirun and the Ansar, despite the fact that he had already encouraged the Ansar to be generous to the Muhajirun (and they were indeed generous).

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### **Tangent: Generosity of the Ansar**

Allah SWT mentions the generosity of the Ansar<sup>[40]</sup> in the Quran [59:9]:

وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شَحْنًا نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

"And those who prepared the abode (الدار)<sup>[41]</sup> and [adopted] the faith before them. They love those who Emigrated to them and found no hesitancy to give everything. And they preferred others over themselves, even if they themselves were in poverty." The Ansar gave the Muhajirun everything they needed, from home, to food, to animals, etc.

It is even reported in Sahih Bukhari that the Ansar came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "O Messenger of Allah, we shall give half of our land over to the Muhajirun." And the Prophet ﷺ made du'a for them, but he refused to accept such a generous gift. He said, "They (the Muhajirun) will take care of the manual labor, and you will share in the produce," i.e., let them do work for the dates and for the privilege. Subhan'Allah, this shows us the spirit of Islam — that the Prophet ﷺ did not want these free handouts; he wanted the Muhajirun to work. And he also didn't want shaytan to maybe bring animosity between the Muslims 5 generations or 5 decades later; the descendants of the Ansar might say, "Oh, we gave you all of this for free," etc. You never know. The Ansar of course had pure hearts, but how about their descendants? Or the munafiqun who were forced to give? So this is the long-term

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<sup>38</sup> Salam (سلام) - peace.

<sup>39</sup> Al-Muakha (المواخاة) - making people 'akhi,' i.e., 'brothers'

<sup>40</sup> The Ansar (الأنصار) - the Helpers.

<sup>41</sup> Side note: Notice Allah called Madinah "the abode / home / house" — this is an interesting noun to use. And also note He said THE house, instead of THEIR house. What's the difference? It is technically the house of the Ansar, so if Allah had said, "Those who had prepared THEIR house," this would have been accurate; but He didn't — Allah called it THE house because the Ansar gave up half of their house to the Muhajirun. So Allah calls Madinah THE house of the Ansar and the Muhajirun.

thinking of the Prophet ﷺ — he cut off this possibility; even though it was such a generous gift. The Prophet ﷺ said, 'No. They shall do work, and take their wages in dates and in food. And you can take your percentage as well.' So he insisted the Muhajirun to do work, and he insisted the Ansar be generous too.

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### (Cont.) The Muakha

The Prophet ﷺ paired every single male Muhajir with an Ansari. In this early stage, the pairing was so complete that they would be considered like full brothers even in inheritance (but this was of course later abrogated). It is mentioned that over 100 such pairs were done — which basically means, for every single male Muhajir, there was a pair done. One of the examples is the muakha between Abu Bakr and Kharijah ibn Zayd (خارجة بن زيد). And every time you look at the biographies of the people that are being paired, you find that they have a lot of things in common — they were very similar. Abu Bakr and Kharijah ibn Zayd were both one of the noblemen of their people. The Prophet ﷺ knows exactly who he is pairing with who. Every one of these names that had been paired together, we also find them mentioned in the seerah many times together. Which means they took this pairing-together very seriously that they literally became like brothers to one another. For example, the famous story about when Salman al-Farisi visited Abu Darda (أبو الدرداء) in his house.

Another famous story is of Abd al-Rahman ibn Awf (Muhajir) and Sa'd ibn al-Rabi' (Ansari). Sa'd wanted to split everything down the middle and give it to Abd al-Rahman: his house, his money, his land, and he even offered one of his two wives. But Abd al-Rahman said, "May Allah bless you even more in your money and your family — but I don't want any of this; just tell me where the marketplace is." And Abd al-Rahman worked hard, bought and sold items, engaged in trade, until he got some money, and built himself up. The Prophet ﷺ saw him one day walking by in fancy clothing with perfume; and Abd al-Rahman informed him that he got married to a woman of the Ansar. Notice the generosity of the Ansari and the self-honor of the Muhajir. One is offering out of Iman, and the other is declining out of Iman.

The Ansar, in fact, helped the Muhajirun so much that the Muhajirun went to the Prophet ﷺ worried and said, "O Messenger of Allah, we have never seen a group of people like this: They share everything with us equally at times of difficulty, and are generous with us at times of ease; they have taken care of our needs, and allowed us to share with them in good — so much so that we are worried." They are worried that the Ansar will take all of their ajr away from them; that all of the rewards from enduring the torture in Makkah, leaving behind their wealth for the sake of Allah, etc., will go to the Ansar. Look at the complaint — it's truly amazing! (It's not a complaint against the Ansar, obviously; it's a troubled worry that they have about their own good deed.) The Prophet ﷺ said, "No. They will not get all of your reward as long as you praise them and make du'a for them." 'You have your reward, they have their reward.' So what the Muhajirun did cannot be just taken by the Ansar. This is why the Muhajirun are at a higher level than the Ansar, even after all that the Ansar did.

We already mentioned that the pairs would even inherit from one another — until finally, after the Battle of Badr [2 AH], Allah revealed Surah al-Anfal and said,

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْ بَعْدُ وَهَاجَرُوا وَمَعَكُمْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مِنْكُمْ ۖ وَأُولُو الْأَرْحَامِ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِبَعْضٍ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

"And those who believed after [the initial Emigration] and Emigrated and fought with you — they are of you. But those of [blood] relationship are more entitled [to inheritance] in the decree of Allah. Indeed, Allah is Knowing of all things" [8:75], i.e., this abrogated the inheritance clause between each pair.

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### Points of Benefit From Muakha

There are several points regarding the muakha:

1. We need to resurrect this sunnah of muakha. The muakha began in the early Madani phase and continued right until the end, even after the Conquest of Makkah. How do we know? By the names of the people mentioned who were paired together. E.g., Salman al-Farisi and Abu Darda. And Ja'far ibn Abi Talib, [he came to Madinah in the 7th year of the Hijrah](#), and still, the Prophet ﷺ did muakha between him and Mu'adh ibn Jabal. It's also mentioned that the Prophet ﷺ did muakha for Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan — and he accepted Islam after the Conquest of Makkah [8 AH]. So, this shows us that the concept of pairing people together was not something that was unique only to the beginning of Islam. It lasted throughout the entire course of the Madani phase. Therefore from this, we extract that this is a neglected sunnah — and up until our time, we should be doing this, especially when people convert to Islam. We need to resurrect this sunnah.

2. It also shows that for any society to grow and develop, there needs to be a strong bond between the people. And the strongest of bonds is a bond of religion. Because the people of a religion, they share many things in common that really define ethics, outlook on life, etc. In fact, the Quran [49:10] tells us that this is indeed the strongest bond. When you look at this early society of Muslims, you find that no society in the history of mankind has been as selfless and as generous to strangers as them. And it's one thing to do it — and then Allah praised the purity of their hearts from above the seventh heaven, saying, "They love whoever Immigrates to them, never having a desire in their hearts for whatever [of the gains] is given to the Muhajirun" [Quran, 59:9]. Never in the history of humanity have we found this type of example of selflessness, of genuinely giving for the sake of the other. And it is impossible for any society to achieve such standards without having these bonds — and that is what the Prophet ﷺ established as soon as he moved to Madinah.

3. Also realize that the true leader —the Prophet ﷺ in this case— cannot just give general advice and leave it at that. Rather, the Prophet ﷺ implemented this decision [of muakha] himself. How so? He himself chose the two people one after the other — because he knew each one of the Muhajirun better than anybody else, so he knew who was the most qualified to be the brother of each Muhajir. Therefore, we learn that the real leader is not just theory and talk, he is also practice and action. Anas ibn Malik mentions, "The Prophet ﷺ



[literally] sat down and did the muakha in our house."<sup>[42]</sup> And this shows the Prophet ﷺ was a very practical and pragmatic visionary — not just somebody talking theoretically.

4. It also shows us the wisdom of Allah in gradually formulating the laws of the shariah. As we know, the shariah came down bit by bit — it didn't just come down altogether. In the beginning, when the Muhajirun had no family, the Ansar literally became their family — there was even inheritance between the two. Then Allah made it easier, and once the Muhajirun had their own family, He changed the laws of inheritance. For that generation, Allah allowed them to experience the shariah being brought down in a gradual manner. Similarly, the prohibition of wine did not come down overnight: It came down in four steps. First, it was discouraged, until it was forbidden in the end [see [episode 54](#)]. Question: If a new convert in our times comes and says, "Why can't I use this four-step program to give up alcohol? Give me one year for each of these stages," etc., the response is, by unanimous consensus of all the scholars of Islam, a new convert is not allowed this privilege that the sahaba had. Why? The sahaba were the first society of Muslims — they had no role model or support. Whereas when a convert comes to Islam, there is a society up and running exemplifying the shariah. Therefore, you cannot give him the laxities the first generation had. So we will say, "You are not going to be given this concession. You are required to stop drinking instantly." Not only this, we know that technically, the convert should start praying immediately, even if he has to hold a paper during prayer to recite al-Fatiha. Technically, the shariah is applicable upon him instantly — but of course, it's a different story that we as a community need to be wise in gradually telling him what to do.

5. It shows the status of the Ansar: Allah praises them in multiple verses, which is why loving the Ansar is a sign of Iman. And in Sahih Bukhari and Muslim, the Prophet ﷺ said, "The sign of Iman is to love the Ansar; and a sign of hypocrisy is to hate the Ansar." Therefore, we must love the Ansar. In fact, so much is the blessings of the Ansar the Prophet ﷺ even said to them, "Were it not for the Hijrah, I would have considered myself one of you. If all of mankind went in one direction and the Ansar went in another direction, I would choose the direction of the Ansar." When did he say this? After the Conquest of Makkah [see [episode 83](#)]. The amount of praise he gave to the Ansar is literally unprecedented — but note the Muhajirun still have a degree above them. Subhan'Allah. Whenever Allah praises the Ansar, He praises the Muhajirun before them every time. He SWT says in the Quran:

وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ

"The first people to embrace Islam from the Muhajirin and the Ansar..." [9:100].

لَقَدْ تَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ

"Allah has already forgiven the Prophet and the Muhajirin and the Ansar..." [9:117].

And even in the highest praise to the Ansar in verse [59:9], Allah praised the Muhajirun first in verse [59:8] — the verse right before it.

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<sup>42</sup> Side note: What does it mean "in our house (في دارنا)"? Scholars say probably Anas meant in his area of Madinah, because the Prophet ﷺ didn't have the masjid yet.

## 033. The Treaty & Constitution of Madinah

### The Constitution of Madinah

The next major incident of the early Madani period is the promulgation of the Constitution of Madinah. What exactly is this constitution?

One of the problems we have is this constitution is not mentioned in every classical source of seerah; and those that mention it, sometimes they mention it without a chain of narrators (isnad)<sup>[43]</sup>. When we go back to Ibn Ishaq, he mentions it in full, but says, "It has been narrated to me" — the issue here is there are 150 years between him and the Prophet ﷺ, so we don't have a direct isnad. Other early books sometimes mention the Constitution as well, but again, without a full chain of narrators. Some books of hadith, e.g., Musnad Imam Ahmad, do mention one phrase of the Constitution<sup>[44]</sup> — but the problem comes is that there is no early book that mentions the \*whole\* constitution \*with\* an isnad. And this has led some people to doubt there ever was a constitution; they say, "There is no evidence for this constitution to have taken place."

However, many modern researchers say, even if there is no chain of narrators, when you look at this constitution and its language, you see that it uses a very archaic language — a language that is not common even in the time of Ibn Ishaq; and if somebody were to fabricate it, he wouldn't have fabricated it with such a difficult language. And therefore, the majority of scholars of our times consider this constitution to be an authentic constitution. Note we will not discuss every single clause — because the Constitution takes up 5 pages. What we will do is break up the Constitution into four issues:

1. Everything related to the Muslims
2. Everything related to the Jews
3. Everything related to the pagans
4. Everything related to everyone in general

The constitution is written in a very difficult language; and it's composed of sentences, e.g., "The Prophet ﷺ said this, and he said this, and he said this," and a lot of what is mentioned are the names of tribes that we don't know anymore<sup>[45]</sup>. It mentions every single

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<sup>43</sup> Imam al-Dhahabi and others just gloss over the Constitution. It seems many people underestimated the importance of this constitution. Ibn Sa'd and al-Waqidi hardly mention it. And it's mentioned in bits and pieces by others. So it seems the significance of the Constitution is not fully appreciated. For us who live in Muslim minority lands, however, this constitution is very heartening and optimistic.

<sup>44</sup> Imam Ahmad says, "The Prophet ﷺ wrote a book between the Muhajirun and the Ansar, and this book mention in it: 'Every one of them would take care of their own debts and problems, and there will be *islah* (إصلاح) and *ma'ruf* (معروف) between them.'"

<sup>45</sup> Recall "the Ansar" means "the Helpers," and they were composed primarily of the Aws and the Khazraj, but there were more than these two; and even within the Aws and the Khazraj, there are at least 40-50 subtribes. And for most of these subtribes, we don't have much details of their names.

one of these names<sup>[46]</sup> and what is required of this subtribe. The same applies for the Jews: There were three large tribes, but within them, there were many subtribes.

And the way the Constitution was written was very different from today: sentences were jumbled up (not each in their own section), and it's very difficult to analyze. So we will simplify it:

## 1. Clauses Related to the Muslims

— Of the clauses, the Prophet ﷺ said in the Constitution, "The Muslims from the Quraysh and Yathrib<sup>[47][48]</sup>, and those who join them, are one ummah. And this ummah is in and unto itself<sup>[49]</sup>."

— He then mentions 40 subtribes all by name, and says, "Every subtribe will be left with their own responsibilities they had before Islam. They shall take care of their own blood-money disputes, their own prisoners of war, and their own poor." So in this early stage, the welfare system was local — if someone needed help, they would keep it to a tribal level.

— Another clause: All of the Muslims shall unite against those who do injustice, even if it be one of their own. So this means if somebody does zulm (oppression), even if he is a Muslim, everyone will unite against him.<sup>[50]</sup>

— The final clause was, "The dhimmah<sup>[51]</sup> granted by the Muslims is the same, and even the lowliest of them can give protection." What is the concept of dhimmah? In that Islamic state, how did somebody get a 'visa' to enter Dar al-Islam (Madinah)? The Prophet ﷺ is saying every Muslim has the right to give anybody whom they know this 'visa'<sup>[52]</sup>, even if the person giving this 'visa' is the lowliest of society<sup>[53]</sup> — he has the permissibility to allow anybody to enter Madinah. So this is the 'visa.' And if somebody comes in with this 'visa,' nobody can harm him.

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<sup>46</sup> Which is, in fact, a sign of its authenticity.

<sup>47</sup> Notice the name "Yathrib" is used, which again shows its authenticity, because right when the Prophet ﷺ came, Madinah was still called Yathrib. The fact that it's called Yathrib shows he is talking to people who are not used to the name Madinah yet.

<sup>48</sup> Also, notice the term "Muhajirun" and "Ansar" is not used yet.

<sup>49</sup> Meaning the ummah is unique to itself to the exclusion of the rest of mankind. This is a unique ummah. You have bonds that nobody else can share

<sup>50</sup> And this actually goes back to the Hilf al-Fudul — "Everybody will be united against the zalim even if they are one of our own" [see [episode 8](#)].

<sup>51</sup> Dhimmah (ذمة) - protection.

<sup>52</sup> i.e., protection / dhimmah.

<sup>53</sup> Even if they are a slave or a child at the age of tamyiz (تميز).

## 2. Clauses Related to the Jews

Again, the Prophet ﷺ mentioned all of the Jewish tribes by name specifically<sup>[54]</sup>, and then:

— He ﷺ said, "All of these Jews are one ummah, along with the Believers." Meaning they have a type of status that in some ways is equivalent to the Muslim ummah. And the Prophet ﷺ said they shall take care of their own disputes, affairs, blood money, internal crime, etc. — meaning they are all in charge of it, unless they wish to come to the Muslims for help OR if it involves an event between both the Jews and the Muslims. If there is zulm, murder, etc., between the two ummahs, then it will go to the higher authority. Otherwise, the affairs of the Jews are the business of the Jews.

— The Prophet ﷺ further said, "Between the two (i.e., the Muslims and the Jews) shall be mutual support against those who fight the subjects / people of this constitution. And the Jews will spend along with the Muslims as long as they are being fought." So notice: Yes, financial obligations for domestic affairs are not the same<sup>[55]</sup>, but when it comes to dealing with external enemies<sup>[56]</sup>, financial obligations are the same — the Muslims must spend on defense, and the Jews must equally spend on defense. Both will spend for the sake of the protection of Madinah. Therefore, in times of crisis, the two shall unite and help one another — both the Jews and the Muslims are responsible for the costs.

— The Prophet ﷺ said, no Jews can leave Madinah without his permission ﷺ. And note that in 7th century Arabia, "leaving [your place of residence]" essentially meant changing your citizenship. It was a very different time. Where you live was where your tribe was where your loyalty was where your 'passport' — it was all the same. So for them to leave Madinah basically meant renouncing their citizenship and joining another camp — and you cannot just leave without permission and become a traitor / neutral. To this day, if you want to give up your US citizenship, you must renounce it. Similarly in the case of Madinah.

— Another clause is that if any Jew wishes to convert to Islam, he shall be helped and protected, and no injustice shall be done to him (i.e., nobody can harm him).

## 3. Clauses Related to the Pagans

Note the fact that there were clauses for the pagans shows that there were still pagans in Madinah at this early stage. Their presence in Madinah lasted up until [the Battle of Badr](#) [2 AH] — when the Prophet ﷺ returned from the battle victorious, that's when every pagan realized that, "We are such a small minority, we can't stay pagan now," and they converted.<sup>[57]</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> And there were around 12 different tribes.

<sup>55</sup> The Muslims must take care of their poor, and the Jews will take care of their poor; the Muslims sort out their feuds, and the Jews theirs.

<sup>56</sup> i.e., if someone attacks Madinah.

<sup>57</sup> And consequently, that's also when the phenomenon of nifaq (نفاق - hypocrisy) began.

— The main clause is that the Prophet ﷺ said, "No mushrik shall offer protection to the Quraysh even if it is in return for life or money, nor shall he in any way come between the Quraysh and the Believers (i.e., to defend)" — i.e., the Prophet ﷺ is saying you cannot support the pagans in Makkah or defend them, or come between us and them. In short, to stay out of affairs between Makkah and Madinah. And this, by the way, shows us the Prophet ﷺ allowed the pagans to be in Madinah.<sup>[58]</sup>

#### 4. Clauses Related to Everyone

— The Prophet ﷺ said the interior of Yathrib is a Haram for the subjects of this constitution. Thus it's a sacred land and all the rules of a Haram must be followed (e.g., no weapons that are unsheathed; no plucking leaves or trees; no hunting; no fighting or killing; etc.)

— And the Prophet ﷺ also demarcated exactly what is Madinah: He mentioned the four points and said, "This is the Haram."<sup>[59]</sup> At east and west are two labba (volcanic foundations); at south and north are the mountains of [Ayr and Thawr](#).

— He also said, "Whatever disagreement occurs between the peoples of this constitution which leads to internal fasad<sup>[60]</sup> shall be decided by Allah and His Messenger." (E.g., disagreement between Muslims & Jews, Jews & pagans, pagans & Muslims.)

— He also said, "It will not be allowed for any Believer who agrees to this constitution—and believes in Allah and the Last Day—to help or support any rebel (anybody who opposes this constitution). Whoever does so will have the curse of Allah, the angels, and all of mankind; and no good deed will be accepted from him."

— The final point he mentions is, "Whoever leaves Madinah shall be safe, whoever stays in Madinah shall be safe, except for anyone who does an injustice or sin. And Allah will protect those who are pious and righteous..."—and the Constitution ends with—: "...and Muhammad is His Messenger." So you may come and go as you please as long as you haven't done a crime.

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<sup>58</sup> Tangent: Later on, the madhahib (مذاهب - madhhabs) differed: Can pagans live in the state of Islam? [See also: [episode 15](#).] Some schools of thought say no, but Hanafi school says yes. Of the evidences of the Hanafi thought is that the Prophet ﷺ allowed the pagans to live in Madinah.

<sup>59</sup> And the bulk of people lived inside the Haram.

<sup>60</sup> Fasad (فساد) - discord.

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## Misinterpretations of the Constitution

Some people exaggerate the importance of this constitution; others disregard it completely. This is the standard case of everything — some people go to one extreme, others go to the other extreme:

One extreme: One academic Muslim leader in the 1980s said Thomas Jefferson read this constitution and based the whole American constitution on it. But to Sh. YQ, this type of mentality is a sign of an inferiority complex; that everything that is good somehow has to be linked to Islam and say "we invented it." There is no doubt this constitution was ahead of its time, and the Western civilization took some aspects from it — but to claim the whole constitution is based on that of Madinah's is far-fetched — because they are so different.

Another extreme is the non-Muslims who try to read in evil intentions into the Prophet ﷺ and say he wanted to isolate the Jews by making them a separate ummah. These non-Muslims accuse the Prophet ﷺ of treating the Jews unfairly. And for them, this is not an 'accusation' anymore; for them, it's a 'fact.' And they say this constitution is antisemitic. But obviously, this is not the case, because the same obligations on the Jews are on the Muslims.

As usual, the truth is in between the two extremes. This constitution was very significant, it had a lot of long-range implications, and it established an overall philosophy of how an Islamic state is run.

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## Points of Benefit From the Constitution

1. Of the most important concepts that this constitution puts into writing is that the Prophet ﷺ is defining relationships based upon theology. This is completely unique in the history of Arabia. Because he said the Ansar, Muhajirun, etc., are all one ummah. And anyone who converts to the faith will become a part of the ummah. So the old system of lineage, of tribalism, of "you are who your father was" is being broken. Now you are who \*you\* are. At that time, this was completely unprecedented. Bilal RA was a slave and Abu Bakr RA was a nobleman from a pure lineage — however, this constitution in writing now means they are one and the same, in one ummah. Note the word "ummah" occurs in the Quran [23:52]. The word "ummah (أمة)" comes from "umm (أم)" which means "mother." And the word "umm" comes from "amma (أُم)" which means "to strive for." "Amma" is basically the object of attention; and when a child is born, that object is their mother, so a mother is called "umm." And the reason an ummah is called "ummah" is because the bonds between every person in that ummah are so strong that it's as if they have one mother; the people are bonded so strongly it's as if they are one family.<sup>[61]</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Of course, there are many other meanings of ummah — Ibrahim AS is called an ummah because the quality of his Iman is so strong it's as if he is a whole ummah by himself. The word has over 15 derived meanings.

2. This constitution demonstrates the justice of the Prophet ﷺ. Contrary to what the non-Muslims in our time say, he treated the Jews with the utmost respect and gave them their full rights. And, as we will see throughout the upcoming episodes, the Jews were the ones who refused to take these privileges and kept on making things difficult for themselves. As we will see, they were treated the way they were treated because of their actions, not because of who they were. — And this is not antisemitism. Notice the constitution says, "اليهود أمة مع المؤمنين (The Jews are an ummah along with the Believers)," i.e., 'You are an ummah and we are an ummah — along with each other we are two ummahs.' The word used in Ibn Ishaq is literally "ma'a (مع)" which means "along with" — it's an amazing respect given to the Jews. If they had fulfilled and lived up to the Constitution, they would have been shown the utmost honor, and they would have benefited the most. They were tradesmen, jewelers, craftsmen, businessmen, etc., and the success of the Muslims would have meant their success as well — because they were a part of the community. They would have risen along with the Muslims. But they broke these promises. The clause was very clear: Do not side with the pagans against us. But the Banu Qurayza did [see [episode 59](#)]. So what came to them was fully deserved. Similarly the Banu Nadir [see [episode 53](#)] and the Banu Qaynuqa [see [episode 43](#)].

3. Another benefit of this constitution is that we are seeing that the Prophet's ﷺ political status has now become a de facto leader. His followers are so numerous he can establish a constitution on their behalf. Even the Jews and the pagans — they are told that they do have independence, but if something happens that deals with each other, they must come to the Prophet ﷺ. Therefore, this constitution made official what was already understood: The Prophet ﷺ is the de facto and the accepted ruler of Madinah.

4. Notice there is no mention of jizya (جزية) in the Constitution. Why? Because Allah AWJ had not revealed the laws of jizya yet.

5. Another benefit is: The reality of Islam —without any political correctness or appeasement— is that freedom of religion is guaranteed by the shariah — not to an unlimited extent, but to a great extent. No doubt, classical Islamic fiqh did not give the types of freedom the modern secular world gives: a non-Muslim does not have the right to preach and convert others; but apart from that, pretty much everything is allowed. The non-Muslims are even allowed to sell alcohol amongst themselves.<sup>[62]</sup> This is the type of freedom that Islam allowed.

The irony is, in our times, we Muslims are accused of being intolerant — but yet, if we compare our track record with the accuser's, it's unbelievable how they can have the audacity to say that we are religiously intolerant. We cannot allow people to say things about Islam when they don't even know their own faith. They have no right to tell us that our faith was intolerant, when, Western powers were frankly the most religiously intolerant in the history of humanity. Even when Constantine converted to Christianity, what did he do? He

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<sup>62</sup> So much so the books of fiqh discuss the issue if a Muslim is married to a Christian lady, can he prevent her from drinking wine? And the majority of scholars say no. He can enforce the wine not be in the house, but he cannot prevent her from drinking, because wine is 'halal' for her, and the Catholics drink it in their churches as a part of their rituals.

adopted a version of Trinitarian Christianity and outlawed all other Christianities — e.g., those who believed that Jesus is al-Masih<sup>[63]</sup> and not the son of God, and those who believed that Christianity is not a new religion<sup>[64]</sup>. Constantine came along and banned everyone who didn't follow his version of Christianity. Everyone had to either flee or get killed.

Arius, the main opponent of Constantine, did not believe in the Trinity or Divinity of Jesus. He had to run away and go down south.<sup>[65]</sup> And this is just the beginning. And throughout medieval times, the Catholic church killed millions. And we are not talking about killing Jews or others, we are talking about killing fellow Christians! The Roman Catholic church could not tolerate dissent! And there was a group called the Huguenots — again, tens of thousands were killed. The Anabaptists as well: 20,000-30,000 were killed. And there were wars between Catholics and Protestants. Even Martin Luther had to flee to Switzerland because Roman Catholics wanted to kill him. This is not even intolerance of another religion; this is intolerance within their \*own\* religion! It's ironic that even John Locke<sup>[66]</sup> said to look at the Turks. He is putting the Ottomans (Turks) as the role models. John Locke said to the Christians: The Turks allow different faiths to live peacefully — why don't you follow them?

6. Getting back to the Constitution: We notice the semi-independence of every single group of people. The Prophet ﷺ is giving them almost full independence \*within\* the state of Islam: each group is responsible for their own affairs — the positives and the negatives, including crimes and issues. However, when it comes to the issues of the state, everyone becomes \*one\* group. E.g., if an external threat comes, they will be united.<sup>[67]</sup>

7. Another benefit: It doesn't matter if you are a Muslim or a non-Muslim, if you commit a crime, you will be dealt with and not be protected. The Constitution says, "All of the Muslims shall unite against those who do injustice, even if it be one of their own." So simply being a Muslim does not let you off the hook. If someone commits a crime, everyone has to unite against him regardless of his religion. No one can shelter a murderer, a thief, a fraudster, or a criminal. Again, these are novel ideas for the time.

8. The Prophet ﷺ accepted the legal norms and urf<sup>[68]</sup> of every tribe, as long as they did not conflict with the shariah. He allowed the tribes to deal with their own internal laws as long as they did not conflict with the laws of the shariah.<sup>[69]</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Al-Masih (المسيح) - the Messiah.

<sup>64</sup> i.e., that Christianity is just "Judaism + believing in al-Masih."

<sup>65</sup> It's said he went down to what is in the time of the Prophet ﷺ Abyssinia; and it's said therefore the ruler of Abyssinia was aware of the Arian creeds.

<sup>66</sup> John Locke — the main founding father of intellectual political science of this country; considered to be the greatest philosopher of the time.

<sup>67</sup> Side note: Some people in our time say the system of the Prophet ﷺ is a federalist system. And even though trying to read modern terms back into history is a little bit problematic, there is an element of truth to this.

<sup>68</sup> Urf (عرف) - custom.

<sup>69</sup> And we should be aware that there are five Qawa'id Fiqhiyyah (قواعد فقهية - Major Fiqhi Rules that govern all of fiqh) — and one of them is: In the absence of a shar'i ruling, the culture of a people (how people typically interact with one another) will be given precedence.



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### **What Has Occurred in Madinah Since the Arrival of the Prophet ﷺ**

Let us now take a look back and see what exactly has occurred since the arrival of the Prophet ﷺ in Madinah:

i) The first thing the Prophet ﷺ does is build a masjid — and the masjid is of course the basis of tawhid and the fundamental of religion.

ii) He then establishes the bonds between the Muhajirun and the Ansar through the muakha (pairing).

iii) He then makes this entire constitution —where he ratifies / affirms the status of the Muslims, the Jews, and every single group— and forms the first Islamic state / the first federation.

## 034. Change of the Qiblah & Abrogation in Qur'an

We pointed out that the Constitution of Madinah was unprecedented and forward-thinking. The Prophet ﷺ gave each religious group nearly complete independence, and then put some bonds between them that were more political in nature.

### Philosophical Tangent: Bonds of Religion vs. Bonds of Nationality

The modern world is divided into nation-states, and we are told to view each other based on our nationality: Americans, Canadians, British, Mexicans, Australians, Nicaraguans, etc., and we are told that this is the strongest bond. But if you really think about it, the bonds of the nation-state are actually pretty imaginary, because there is nothing that combines people of one nationality other than that nationality. E.g., what is the one thing common in all Americans? Is it language? Religion? Skin color? Ethnicity? Food? Hardly anything! In fact, the only thing that is common is the fact that we are American. Which is a circular conundrum. The modern world makes fun of religious people, saying, "You guys still view religion as being the primary factor?!" But wallahi, think about it logically: Religion gives you so many things in common: Ethics, values, philosophy of living, morality, language, qibla (which we are going to discuss today), etc., i.e., that which is genuinely important; not superficial things like skin color, ethnicity, etc. So it makes more sense to divide the system of governance based on religion rather than on nationality.

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The point is when the Prophet ﷺ came to Madinah, he got rid of the "Aws vs. Khazraj" mentality, and retained the Yahud<sup>[70]</sup>, Muslim, mushrik identity. And he put the Yahud as an ummah alongside the Muslims. Then he allowed each group to judge according to their own laws. He in fact gave each group semi-independence — even if murder occurs, "you guys deal with it internally" — unless it's the two groups that are fighting one another, then they had to go external. Otherwise, there was, for all practical purposes, complete independence. And this was completely unprecedented.

As we have said, after the Battle of Badr [episode 42], the pagans of Madinah fizzled off — so there were two ummahs left after that. And if the Jews had fulfilled their part of the bargain, they certainly would have become the most successful Jewish community in the whole world. But instead, they did not appreciate the freedom<sup>[71]</sup> — so what happened to them happened, as we will see in the upcoming episodes.

And of course, non-Muslims in our time claim that the Prophet ﷺ was antisemitic. But we completely reject this allegation and will prove (in fact, already have) that this was not the case.

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<sup>70</sup> Yahud (يهود) - the Jews.

<sup>71</sup> Even though they had never been given that much freedom — a complete semi-independent state.

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## The Concept of Naskh (Abrogation)

The next major incident took place a few months after the promulgation of the Constitution of Madinah. During these 7-8 months, nothing major occurred. Recall the seerah is like a series of snapshots where only major events are recorded — and in between them, there isn't a running list of events.

The next major incident mentioned in the books of seerah is the change of qibla — and it occurred around 15-16 months after the Emigration of the Prophet ﷺ. And it caused a mini-crisis. Why? For many reasons:

Perhaps the main reason was that this was the first time Allah had abrogated a ruling. The concept of naskh<sup>[72]</sup> was new to both Muslims and non-Muslims. What is abrogation? Allah reveals a law, then He reveals a new law to abrogate the first law.<sup>[73]</sup> This is a detailed topic of Usul al-Fiqh<sup>[74]</sup>. Classic example that we all know: Allah revealed in the Quran that those women whose husbands die shall wait one year before getting remarried [Quran, 2:240]. A few months / years later, Allah abrogated the year and put in place "4 months and 10 days" [Quran, 2:234]. So there are two verses in the Quran that clash — and it's not a contradiction, but rather, a clear case of abrogation. It's not a contradiction because we no longer implement the abrogated ruling.

The first time abrogation occurred was pertaining to the change of qibla:

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## Change of the Qibla

### 1. Background

Initially, the Prophet ﷺ was told by Allah SWT to pray facing Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem) and he did so throughout his entire time in Makkah. It is reported in some of the books<sup>[75]</sup> that whenever the Prophet ﷺ prayed in Makkah facing Jerusalem, he would in fact put the Ka'bah in front of him — so he had a 'double qibla' basically. He would situate himself such that the Ka'bah was in front of him and Bayt al-Maqdis was also in that direction. Therefore, it's as if he wanted to pray facing the Ka'bah.

And when the Prophet ﷺ Emigrated to Madinah, initially, the qibla was still Bayt al-Maqdis —and as we know, [Madinah is due north of Makkah; and Bayt al-Maqdis is due north of Madinah](#); so if you are in Madinah and want to pray facing Bayt al-Maqdis, you have

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<sup>72</sup> Naskh (نسخ) - abrogation.

<sup>73</sup> Side note: The Shia denies abrogation, the Mu'tazila denies abrogation, but we Ahl al-Sunnah affirms it.

<sup>74</sup> Usul al-Fiqh (أصول الفقه) - Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence.

<sup>75</sup> E.g., Ibn Sa'd's Tabaqat, al-Hakim's Mustadrak.

to turn your back to the Ka'bah in Makkah— so when the Prophet ﷺ moved to Madinah, he had to turn his back to the Ka'bah when he was praying.

But —as we will discuss— eventually, Allah AWJ changed the qibla to the Ka'bah in Makkah<sup>[76]</sup>. Why? (1) He SWT wanted to show to the Jews that the Prophet ﷺ was following the real religion of Ibrahim AS<sup>[77]</sup>; (2) Because Makkah was the first, original qibla.<sup>[78][79]</sup>

## 2. Tensions Between the Prophet ﷺ and the Jews

We will delve into this topic in the upcoming episodes<sup>[80]</sup>, but for a brief introduction to this concept:

The tensions between the Prophet ﷺ and the Jews began after his Emigration to Madinah.

Initially, when the Prophet ﷺ Emigrated, he was very optimistic. Why not? After all, he is finally amongst a people who believe in the Abrahamic faith. He is amongst a large group of Jews who believe in the same God and line of prophets. The Quraysh didn't even know what a prophet is, nor did they believe in a Book. The Jews on the other hand believe in everything: Paradise, Hell, Judgment Day, etc. And they have been waiting for a prophet. And they know that the Prophet ﷺ is \*the\* Prophet — indeed, Allah SWT said, 'They recognize the Prophet ﷺ like they recognize their own children' [see Quran, 2:146]. And so, the Prophet's ﷺ heart was very optimistic and hopeful. Also, [Abdullah ibn Salam](#), their main rabbi, converted — so this is even more reason to be optimistic.

Aisha RA narrates that when the Prophet ﷺ first came to Madinah, he wanted to resemble the Jews as much as possible, to show them that "we are the same," i.e., to make

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<sup>76</sup> By the way, naskh / abrogation doesn't have to be Quran with Quran. All four logical possibilities can occur between the Quran and Sunnah: (i) the Quran can abrogate the Sunnah; (ii) the Sunnah can abrogate the Quran; (iii) the Sunnah can abrogate the Sunnah; and (iv) the Quran can abrogate the Quran. And the ruling to pray towards Bayt al-Maqdis, Allah had revealed it in the Sunnah — it's not in the Quran.

<sup>77</sup> As we have previously said, Ibrahim AS was the one who made Makkah the holiest land by the permission of Allah SWT.

<sup>78</sup> Remember, "The first House [of worship] ever established for humanity is the one at Bakkah" [Quran, 3:96]. And in one narration, it is said that when the Prophet ﷺ was asked what is the first masjid ever built on earth, he said the Ka'bah. And when he was asked what is the next, he said Bayt al-Maqdis. When he was asked what was the time between them, he said 40 years (between the time Ibrahim AS built the Ka'bah and the time either Ishaq AS or Ya'qub AS built some kind of structure in Bayt al-Maqdis).

<sup>79</sup> By the way, many of the prophets —over 70 of them— including Musa AS, made hajj to Makkah, but not their followers — we know this because our Prophet ﷺ told us.

<sup>80</sup> We will discuss at length these tensions between the Prophet ﷺ and the Jews in the upcoming episodes. In particular, there are three topics we will discuss in direct response to common attacks on Islam in our times: (1) The Prophet's ﷺ treatment of the Jews; (2) Accusation that the Prophet ﷺ was always waging war as a military commander; (3) Women's issues and the marriage to Aisha RA. We will discuss these topics in a way that will defend our Prophet ﷺ, while being fair to our tradition.

them feel comfortable. But as the tensions increased, eventually, the Prophet ﷺ began commanding the Muslims to dissociate from them, to be different from them. In the beginning, it was the opposite — but when it was clear that the Jews, through their arrogance, had made up their mind to never accept the Prophet ﷺ, the Prophet ﷺ gave completely opposite rulings. So much so that even where you part your hair, the Prophet ﷺ said, "They part it on this side, [so] you part it on the other side." And in Bukhari, the Prophet ﷺ said, "The Jews don't pray with their shoes on, so you pray with your shoes on." (But if in a mosque for example, of course, you must take your shoes off.) The Prophet ﷺ further said the Jews don't touch their women in the menses, so to be different from them, he ﷺ said to the Muslims: Eat with your women, sit with them, and do everything other than the actual act of intimacy.

So our shariah came to be totally different from that of the Jews wherever Allah AWJ wanted it to be different. And one of those things to be different came down as the qibla.

### 3. Revelation of the Verse

When the Jews began openly expressing their animosity, the Prophet ﷺ began wanting to change the direction of the qibla. And of course, he could not change it of his own will. And it's narrated that once, when Jibril AS came down with some Quran, the Prophet ﷺ expressed his hope to Jibril, saying, "O Jibril, I wish to pray facing Makkah." But Jibril said, "I am a slave just like you, and I only come by the command of Allah. If you want this, make du'a to Allah."

So the Prophet ﷺ began making du'a earnestly —in tahajjud, at night, in the day— so much so that he was looking up to the sky — and looking up to the sky is only done in du'as at times of extreme distress. Normally, the Prophet ﷺ would lower his head — but on specific occasions, when the situation called for it, he would raise his head up to the sky. (E.g., before the Battle of Badr [which will happen in a few months], he looked up to the sky and begged Allah for help — and this was the most famous time he did so in public. Very rarely did he look up to the sky — and doing so is a sign of extreme desperation.)

Therefore, the Prophet ﷺ did this; and he did it at night when no one was looking. How do we know he did it? Because Allah revealed it in the Quran, "Indeed, We see you [O Prophet] turning your face towards heaven. Now We will make you turn towards a direction [of prayer] that will please you" [see Quran, 2:144]. Notice the way the verse is phrased — instead of saying, 'Allah had already decreed the qibla is going to change to Makkah,' He SWT said, 'Because you want it, I am giving it to you.' This is to show that the desire of the Prophet ﷺ is indeed one that Allah wants to fulfill and give. Allah says, "We will cause you to turn to a direction that will please you. So from now on, turn your face in the direction of Masjid al-Haram; and wherever you are, turn your face in that direction" [see Quran, 2:144]. And Allah AWJ then revealed multiple verses dealing with the change of the qibla — which are all now in the first two pages of the 2nd juz<sup>[81]</sup> of the Quran.

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<sup>81</sup> Juz (جزء) - part.

#### 4. Wisdoms of the Change of the Qibla

When these verses came down —roughly 15-16 months after Hijrah— this command proved to be a great source of confusion for everyone — the Muslims, the Jews, and the mushrikun. Why? Allah mentions in the Quran, "The foolish people will begin questioning, 'Why have they turned away from the qibla that they were upon?'" [Quran, 2:142]. One of the Jews said, "If this man is a prophet, why is he praying one day facing north and the other day south?" Another said, "Isn't our qibla good enough for him?" Of course, the issue of abrogation itself was new. Therefore, Allah revealed the concept of abrogation itself in Surah al-Baqarah<sup>[82]</sup> : "Whenever We abrogate a ruling or We cause it to be forgotten, We then bring forth something better than it, or [at least] something equivalent" [Quran, 2:106]. So there is a wisdom behind abrogations in Islam. And Allah mentions, "We changed the qibla only to test those who followed the Prophet ﷺ versus those who rejected the Prophet ﷺ" [see Quran, 2:143]. So every commandment is a test.

1. For the Muslims, it was a test to see whether they implemented this new ruling from Allah SWT — and of course, they did.

2. For the Jews, there was a clear sign / message: 'This Prophet came in the line of your prophets, so he is facing your qibla<sup>[83]</sup>; but he shall now supersede your prophethood line, and he shall take it back to the original.' i.e., The purpose primarily was to demonstrate to the Jews that this prophet is from the same tradition as their religion, but he is not just a Jewish prophet; he is more than this (i.e., he is a prophet for mankind). Remember, the Jews think they are the chosen people.<sup>[84]</sup> But Allah wanted to demonstrate that this status would now cease, primarily through the change of the qibla.

The Jews then began saying, "Anyone who faces any direction other than Bayt al-Maqdis, Allah will never be pleased with him, and He will not accept from him." And they said, "It's a part of piety to face Jerusalem." At this, Allah revealed, "Piety is not in which direction you face; real piety is to believe in Allah and the Final Day and..." [see Quran, 2:177].<sup>[85]</sup> And Allah SWT consoled the Prophet ﷺ : "Even if you were to bring every proof to the People of the Book, they won't follow your qibla; and you will not follow their qibla; and they themselves don't follow each other's qibla" [Quran, 2:145].

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<sup>82</sup> Side note: Recall Surah al-Baqarah was the first major surah to be revealed in Madinah. So it provides us the first year and a half: It mentions Badr, the change of qibla, and a lot about the Jews. Think about that. Why does it talk so much about the Jews? Because this is when the Muslims needed to know all of this information. Surah al-Baqarah is full of the story of Bani Israel, Musa AS, etc.

<sup>83</sup> And indeed, for the first year and a half of the Prophet's ﷺ time in Madinah, he faced Bayt al-Maqdis.

<sup>84</sup> And we Muslims indeed believe they \*were\* a chosen people, because Allah says in the Quran that they were a chosen people [see Quran, 2:47 & 2:122].

<sup>85</sup> This also shows that those groups of Jews whose main emphasis is the observance of the law with very little spirituality have got it wrong. The emphasis of rituals should be about what's inside the heart — along with the observance of the law.

3. And even for the mushrikun (pagans), there is a message: They are not worthy of being the custodians of the Ka'bah; rather, the Prophet ﷺ is more worthy — he will be the one who inherits the Ka'bah and resurrects the prestige that it had in the time of Ibrahim AS.

So in the change of the qibla, there were multiple messages being given.

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### Theological Tangent: The Status of Salah in Islam

There is an interesting theological point: When the qibla changed, the sahaba asked the Prophet ﷺ, "What will happen to those who prayed facing Bayt al-Maqdis and then died before this verse came down? Will Allah accept their salah?" Of course, [salah became obligatory after al-Isra wal-Mi'raj](#). So they are asking, for 3-5 years, were the Muslims been praying in the wrong direction? At this, Allah revealed in the same series of verses, "Allah will never cause your faith to be wasted away" [Quran, 2:143].

Now this verse was primary evidence for many of our classical scholars when they talked about the status of salah, that praying is a requirement of being a Muslim. This was their main evidence always. Why? The question that the sahaba asked was, "Will Allah accept their SALAH?" And Allah revealed, "Allah won't cause your IMAN to waste away" [Quran, 2:143]. So Imam Bukhari says, "Allah called their SALAH their IMAN." Thus without salah, you don't have Iman. Therefore, salah is a necessary requirement of being a Muslim — not a luxury (i.e., NOT something if you do it you are good and if you don't do it you are bad). [Quran, 2:143] is the primary verse used for evidence. Ibn al-Qayyim wrote a whole book about this — see "Hukm Tarik al-Salah"<sup>[86]</sup>; in it, he mentioned 22 verses to support this, along with dozens of ahadith. Of the verses that are used are [9:11], [74:42-43], [75:31], [77:48], and [30:31]. And many scholars say salah is a necessary part of being a Muslim. In Sahih Muslim, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever abandons the salah is a kafir."

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### Masjid al-Qiblatayn (Mosque of the Two Qiblas)

There is a common myth that the Prophet ﷺ was praying one day and Jibril AS came down and told him to pray the other way so he turned around and the whole congregation turned around with him. But this is not true — this is a confusion later on that took place. The authentic reports are very clear: The Prophet ﷺ prayed Fajr facing Jerusalem, and then he prayed Zuhr facing Makkah. So the commandment came down in the early morning; and when it came down, the Prophet ﷺ announced it in his masjid; and so what used to be the front of the masjid became the back; and the previous back became the new front. Now those people who prayed Zuhr with the Prophet ﷺ, they were supposed to go back and tell their people of the change of the qibla. But the sahabi who was tasked with telling the people of the famous masjid that we now call [Masjid al-Qiblatayn](#)<sup>[87]</sup>, he arrived late. By the time he reached the mosque, the people were already praying Asr. So

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<sup>86</sup> Hukm Tarik al-Salah (حكم تارك الصلاة) - Ruling on Neglecting Prayer.

<sup>87</sup> Side note: This masjid was the masjid of the tribe of Banu Salama.

\*while\* they were praying, he cried out from the back of the mosque, "O people of the masjid! I have just come from the Prophet's ﷺ Masjid, and I prayed with him Zuhr, and he was praying facing Makkah! The command has come to change direction!" Therefore, this was the masjid where the entire jama'ah<sup>[88]</sup> turned around, and the imam walked straight through the entire sufuf<sup>[89]</sup>, changing direction. And this masjid, therefore, became known as Masjid al-Qiblatayn<sup>[90]</sup>. This is why it's called this, and it was not something the Prophet ﷺ himself did.

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## "Ummatan Wasata"

No doubt, the entire first page of the 2nd juz is relevant — but one particular ayah is especially relevant, which came down smack in the middle of these verses about the qibla. Allah says, "We have made you an ummatan wasata (أمة وسطا - outstanding nation)" [Quran, 2:143].

Note the Arabic word used is "wasat (وسط)" — and its meaning is commonly thought to be 'the middle / moderate' — and this is valid, but this is actually its secondary meaning. The primary meaning of the word is 'the highest' — classically, the term wasat meant this. So for example, the highest point of a mountain is its wasat. (And note the highest for the mountain is usually also the middle.) And wasat does not just mean highest in stature, but also highest in excellence, character, and honesty. And Allah uses the term in the Quran primarily for this meaning. E.g., in Surah Nun, a.k.a., Surah al-Qalam [68:28], in the story of the garden, the word is used to say 'the best one / the wisest one / the most knowledgeable one.' Therefore, in Surah al-Baqarah, when Allah says "ummatan wasata," it primarily means, 'the best nation.' And yes, it does have another meaning which is, 'the middle (not extreme) nation' — but this is secondary.

Allah is saying that Muslims are the pinnacle of all nations. And it is the perfect time to demonstrate this, because, 'You won't face the qibla of the Jews or Christians; rather, We have given you the best qibla, which is Makkah, the true original qibla of mankind.'

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## The Roof of Masjid al-Nabawi

After the qibla change, the back of the Prophet's ﷺ Masjid becomes the front, and the front becomes the back. The Prophet ﷺ then commanded that the back of the masjid which used to be the front be covered up by a shade.<sup>[91]</sup> Why? Because the number of people who were Emigrating to Madinah became too much to absorb by the people of Madinah — so they needed a shelter. The first batch of Emigrants, of course, every one of

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<sup>88</sup> Jama'ah (جماعة) - congregation.

<sup>89</sup> Sufuf (صفوف) - lines / rows.

<sup>90</sup> Masjid al-Qiblatayn (مسجد القبلتين) - Mosque of the Two Qiblas.

<sup>91</sup> Note: Initially, there was no roof at all. Only later there were palm trees put up. But as mentioned in [episode 30](#), this roof was not waterproof. Only after Umar's RA reign did the roof become watertight.



them was given a household (and the household basically adopted him for a while, took care of him until he got on his own feet, and then sent him his way) — however, as the number of Muhajirun and converts increased, the Prophet ﷺ could not handle all of them — so what happened? A public shelter was built inside the masjid. And the shelter became known as the Suffa<sup>[92]</sup>. And the people who stayed there became known as Ahl al-Suffa:

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## Ahl al-Suffa

Ahl al-Suffa<sup>[93]</sup> have a special status in our seerah books. They have entire chapters dedicated to them. Why? Because they are —in many cases— the elite of the sahaba — they possessed exemplary Iman. They had basically given up everything and lived in a public shelter in the masjid of the Prophet ﷺ. Note, the Suffa was probably built around Ramadan; and it was only after [Badr](#) this concept of the People of the Suffa became known. Up until Ramadan, every Muhajir or convert could be accommodated — the Prophet ﷺ assigned them to the sahaba, and they took those people on as their guests. But eventually, it got too crowded — the houses that could cater for multiple people were saturated. And so, the Prophet ﷺ built this Suffa. He ﷺ spent a lot of energy on these people.

There are many narrations on the difficulties faced by the People of the Suffa. They were so poor that the Prophet ﷺ had to make a general commandment to the women, "O women, don't raise your heads up from sajdah until some time has passed" — because some of the People of the Suffa, when they went into sajdah, their awrah (عورة) would be exposed. It's an embarrassing hadith, but it shows how poor the People of the Suffa were. This is why the Prophet ﷺ gave many hadiths about taking care of the People of the Suffa:

When [his grandchild was born](#) (Hasan RA), he ﷺ said to Fatima RA, "Give some charity to the People of the Suffa."

And some years later, when the Prophet ﷺ got a whole batch of prisoners of war who were going to become slaves, and when Fatima RA came complaining to the Prophet ﷺ saying, "O my father, I have so much housework to do. Can you give me one servant?", the Prophet ﷺ said, "How can I give you a servant when the People of the Suffa, their stomach have collapsed? They have nothing to eat. By Allah, I will sell all of them<sup>[94]</sup> and spend the money on the People of the Suffa." The People of the Suffa were on his mind at all times.

There is a semi-humorous tradition about [Abu Hurairah \(أبو هريرة\) RA](#), who was the most famous person of the Ahl al-Suffa. Abu Hurairah narrated this himself. He says, "Many times, I would ask a Companion (sahabi) a question when he went out of the masjid; and wallahi, I knew the answer better than him. But the only reason I'm asking is to drag out the

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<sup>92</sup> Trivia: As for the raised platform in our time, people say that that is the place of the Suffa, but in fact, it appears that the Suffa was ahead of that point. Also, the Suffa was \*not\* a raised platform.

<sup>93</sup> Ahl al-Suffa (أهل الصفة) - the People of the Suffa.

<sup>94</sup> i.e., the prisoners of war.

conversation until I get to his doorstep [in hopes that] perhaps he might invite me in for a meal."

Further, Abu Hurairah is the one who narrated that, "Once, the Prophet ﷺ saw me so hungry that I was weak with exhaustion. So he ﷺ invited me to his house. And he asked Aisha RA, 'Is there anything to eat or drink?' Aisha RA said, 'Yes, one of the neighboring Ansar has given us a glass of milk.'" Of course, Abu Hurairah became happy. But the Prophet ﷺ said to him, "Go and call the [other] People of the Suffa." And there were like 30-40 people! He is narrating the hadith, and he said: "I HAD to obey the command" — and so he gathered together all of them. The Prophet ﷺ handed Abu Hurairah the cup and said, "Go to every one of them and give them the cup." (And so it's as if he was their servant, serving them.) And he continued narrating, "So I went to every one of them giving the cup, and I thought to myself, 'What will be left for me?' Every single one of them finished, until finally, there was only me and the Prophet ﷺ left who had not drunk from the cup. And the Prophet ﷺ said to me, 'Sit down.' So I sat down. He said, 'Drink.' So I drank." And Abu Hurairah said the cup was brimming as if it was more than the first time the Prophet ﷺ handed it to him. And the Prophet ﷺ said again, "Drink" — so Abu Hurairah drank again. And the Prophet ﷺ kept saying, "Drink, drink, drink," until Abu Hurairah said, "Wallahi, O Messenger of Allah! There is not a single space left in my stomach for this milk." (The Prophet ﷺ knows exactly what's happening — it's a type of joke, playing with Abu Hurairah RA.) Then, after all of the 30-40 people had drunk, the Prophet ﷺ took the cup the last, and he drank from it.

Most of the Companions went for two days in succession without food, so much so that when the Prophet ﷺ came into the masjid to lead the congregational prayers, they would fall down due to weakness. Food given in charity to the Prophet ﷺ was given to them — when the Prophet ﷺ was offered food as a present, he would invite them to share it. Often, the Prophet ﷺ would ask one of his other Companions to take some of the People of Suffa for supper and to entertain them as best they could. Sa'd ibn Ubadah (سعد بن عباد) RA sometimes entertained as many as eighty men at once.

It is said that one of the sahaba said, "Why not anytime we get some food or harvest some dates, we give a portion to the People of the Suffa?" So a string was hung between the 2 pillars of the Suffa, and food (mainly dates) was put on it so that the people could eat without having to beg for it.<sup>[95]</sup>

As we said, the most famous inhabitant of the Suffa was Abu Hurairah. His name was Abd al-Rahman ibn Sakhr (عبد الرحمن بن صخر), and he was from the tribe of Daws (بنو دوس) from Yemen. He came to Madinah after the Battle of Khaybar, i.e., the 7th year of the Hijrah. YET he is the number one narrator of hadith. He narrated so many ahadith that even some of the next generation said, "How can he know so much when some of the sahaba are longer Companions than him?" They began questioning him. And he explained himself how this is the case: Abu Hurairah said (in Bukhari and Muslim), "The people are complaining that I narrate too many ahadith. But were it not for the fact that Allah has criticized those who withhold knowledge<sup>[96]</sup>, I would not have narrated one hadith! And I will tell you why I know

<sup>95</sup> And this custom lasted up until the 1940s / 1950s — so it lasted for 1300 years!

<sup>96</sup> See Quran [2:159].

more than our brothers of the Muhajirun and the Ansar. As for the Muhajirun, they were busy buying and selling in the marketplace. As for the Ansar, they were busy harvesting in the fields. As for me, I would stick to the Prophet ﷺ with my hungry stomach. Therefore, I would memorize what they would not memorize."

By the way, Abu Hurairah was not poor; he was from what we would call a middle-class family. We know this because eventually, his mother who was in Yemen, when she moved to Madinah, she purchased a house in Madinah. But Abu Hurairah stayed in the Suffa. Why? Because not only was the Suffa a shelter, but it also became the first university of Islam. Because the Prophet ﷺ spent significant time in his masjid. So Abu Hurairah stuck to the masjid to be with the Prophet ﷺ and learn from him as much as he could. Abu Hurairah at this time gave up an easy life for the sake of knowledge.

Even some of the Ansar moved into the Suffa. Hanzala (حنظلة), who was the one washed by the angels<sup>[97]</sup>, also did so. Ka'b ibn Malik (كعب بن مالك), who is famous for the story of repentance<sup>[98]</sup>, is also a member of the Suffa. This shows us that the Suffa isn't a freeloading shelter — it is primarily a place of learning. It's just too good — the Prophet ﷺ is often there. Some of the Ansar therefore left their houses and moved into the Suffa. And also the Muhajirun: [Abu Dharr al-Ghifari](#), [Suhayb al-Rumi](#), [Bilal ibn Rabah](#), [Abdullah ibn Mas'ud](#) — they moved into the Suffa.

And the People of the Suffa became legendary amongst the sahaba for being the best of them: The most in the memorization of the Quran, the most in tahajjud, the most in knowledge, etc. And in every single major battle, amongst the top of the shuhada were the People of the Suffa; including in the Wars of Ridda [11-12 AH] — so many of the People of Suffa died that Umar RA wanted to compile the Quran because of it. Umar RA went to Abu Bakr RA and said, "O Abu Bakr, we have lost many of the People of the Suffa, and they were all memorizers of the Quran. And I am worried that unless you do something, if more of the memorizers die, we won't have the Quran." So think about the status of the People of Suffa and how it is associated with the Quran! The reason why the Quran is compiled is because so many of the People of Suffa died. In the Wars of Ridda against [Musaylimah al-Kadhdhab](#), many of them died.

How many people were in the Suffa? At times, 5 or 10; other times, up to 70. Anytime a delegation came, they would stay in the Suffa. It is said that people from far villages would come and stay in the Suffa to learn the Quran, fiqh, how to pray, etc., and they would then go back to their people to teach them. Ibn Mas'ud said, "Anytime anyone came to us, the Prophet ﷺ would assign one of us to the newcomer to teach him the Quran and salah." So the Suffa was like a university.

And after the Prophet ﷺ died, the Suffa did not retain the status that it used to retain.

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<sup>97</sup> See [episode 48](#).

<sup>98</sup> See [episode 88](#).

One final note: The covering (roof) of the Prophet's ﷺ Masjid was only at the back, for the People of the Suffa. And this shows us he ﷺ prioritized them over even the regular musallin<sup>[99]</sup>. He was more concerned about Ahl al-Suffa because they lived in the masjid.

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### Sirma the Hanif of Madinah

Interesting story: We learn that around this time, one of the elderly people in Madinah converted to Islam, and his name was Sirma (صرمة). And Sirma was the only hanif we know of in Madinah. Recall "hanifs" were people who abandoned idolatry and said they would follow the [monotheistic] religion of Ibrahim AS [see [episode 4](#)]. And Sirma was the hanif of Madinah. He was 100+ years old when the Prophet ﷺ came. When he was a young man, he was just like the hanifs of Makkah — he openly rejected the idolatry of his people. And one day, he decided to accept Christianity. But right before he converted, he said Christianity doesn't make sense either. So he said he would remain on the way of Ibrahim AS. Ibn Ishaq mentions that he would even do ghusl after intercourse, tell his woman to do ghusl after their menses, etc. — so he had some idea about the shariah of Ibrahim AS. He had poetry that praised monotheism and criticized paganism and idolatry. And he stayed amongst the Quraysh in Makkah for many years before the coming of the Prophet ﷺ — but he didn't find what he wanted, so he returned back and became a hanif. When the Prophet ﷺ Emigrated, he was still alive (the very last few weeks or months of his life), and Allah blessed him to convert. And he passed away shortly afterward. It's a beautiful story. For 120 years, he waited for the Truth, and it's as if Allah stretched his life out to give him the blessing of being a sahabi and of those who saw and lived with the Prophet ﷺ — because he was that sincere. This shows that those who are sincere, Allah SWT will bless them in that sincerity.

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<sup>99</sup> Musallin (مصلين) - congregation [of those who pray].

## 035. The Preparation for Badr

We discussed the famous Constitution of Madinah, and the People of the Suffa. Today, we will talk about a number of important changes in the Madani society. Of course, the Prophet ﷺ had moved to a new place —it's a new era, and everything is different— so a number of different policies were put into place that were new and were impossible to implement in Makkah. We will discuss three of them — two of them briefly, and one of them in detail:

1. Economic policies
2. Spiritual developments
3. Political and military developments

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### 1. Economic Policies

In Makkah, the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims were a minority. They could not have an independent economic policy. However, in Madinah, they are now independent in terms of there being no more dictatorship. Therefore, one of the first things the Prophet ﷺ did when he came to Madinah was he visited the souqs (marketplaces) of Madinah. In those times, the Arabs of Madinah (the Ansar) primarily were involved in cultivation — generally, they were not people of business; and if they wanted to do business, they would go to the souqs of the Jews. The Jewish tribes had the biggest souqs outside of Madinah. The Jews were known for their businesses while the Arabs were more known for cultivation. The Arabs of Madinah did not have a major souq inside the city. The major souqs were basically in the encampments of the Jewish tribes outside of the center of Madinah. So the Prophet ﷺ visited those souqs —and this is reported in Sunan Ibn Majah— and he disapproved of the practices and the deception that was going on, and he said to the Muslims, "This is not a souq for you." Then he went back to his masjid, and with his own feet, he demarcated lines in the sand, and said, "This shall be your souq. So let it not be diminished, and let no one tax the people in it." So he instituted a souq towards the west of the masjid, and gave two simple rules:

- i. All business must be done within the demarcated line (meaning no one should encroach on any houses, etc.)
- ii. No extra taxes (no one is going to be having to pay a fee to be in the souq)

And it is not true, by the way, to say that Islam promotes a capitalist system. As we know, there are three main "-isms" in the 20th and 21st centuries: socialism, communism, and capitalism. And if we were forced to compare, no doubt, the Islamic system is closest to the capitalist system — but there are many differences; and it's not fair to say that Islam is an "-ism." Islam is its own system. The Prophet ﷺ instituted a whole new policy of economics that was unprecedented at the time. And of course, this is a whole different tangent that we don't have time to talk about — what new policies did the Prophet ﷺ bring,

etc. Many books have been written on this. Notably, he banned interest completely. Also, he linked buying and trading to religiosity and spirituality: he praised honesty, criticized dishonesty, and further said, "The righteous businessmen will be blessed on the Day of Judgment," "Those who cheat and lie is not of us," etc. And anyone who understands the modern economic system knows that if you don't have ethics and morals, 'you can do whatever you want' — the only thing that is preventing you from abusing your power or wealth over other people is an inner conscience. And the Prophet ﷺ linked commerce with religiosity and encouraged practices that are spiritual in nature, and then of course, also demanded a certain code of conduct. E.g., he forbade cheating, lying, swearing false oaths, and hiding defects. He used to monitor the souqs that he instituted himself — famous hadith in Bukhari: He once found a date seller who was selling bags of dates, and the seller would put good quality dates at the top of the bag, but rotting ones at the bottom — the Prophet ﷺ said to him, "Whoever cheats is not of us."

Also, the Prophet ﷺ forbade anyone living in Madinah to act as an agent for a Bedouin who comes. Let the Bedouin go to the marketplace and buy and sell himself. Why? Because when you have an agent who lives in the city, he will know the ins and outs, and he will inflate or deflate, and he is going to play the game. Whereas the Bedouin, he will go and he is going to give a fair price. There is clear wisdom here too. The Prophet ﷺ knows middlemen would play tricks and take advantage of the ignorance of the outsider. And subhan'Allah, look at how modern economics works — so much of the profit goes to people who don't do much but simply possess shrewdness. So the Prophet ﷺ forbade this and many other practices which we don't have time to get into — but the point is, very early on, the Prophet ﷺ rejected the marketplaces that were there, and he established his own souq with his own Islamic shariah being fulfilled. And of course, this souq flourished. Therefore, later on, when the Jewish tribes were expelled one by one and their souqs collapsed, it left no effect on the Muslim economy, since they were wholly independent. — A big lesson for us to learn in the modern world.

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## 2. Spiritual Practices

As soon as the Prophet ﷺ Emigrated, one by one, the major [ritualistic] commandments came down — within a year, pretty much the entire shariah of worship had been revealed<sup>[100]</sup> :

### I. Fasting

The Ramadan of the year of Emigration, nothing happened — meaning there was no shariah for fasting. Next Muharram, on the 10th, the Prophet ﷺ made the fast of the 10th of Muharram wajib (obligatory): "Whoever ate breakfast in the morning, let him not eat anything for the rest of the day. Today is going to be wajib to fast." And the fast was one day only; not one month. So the first obligatory fast in Islam was a stepping stone to let the

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<sup>100</sup> Except for Hajj, which will be revealed in the 9th year of the Hijrah — it was delayed because Makkah at this point is still enemy territory.

Muslims get used to fasting. Then, that Ramadan (meaning the Ramadan of the 2nd year), Allah AWJ revealed in the Quran verse 185 of Surah al-Baqarah, "Whoever is present in the month (i.e., not traveling), then he should fast that month" [see Quran, 2:185]. So the 2nd year, Ramadan became wajib<sup>[101]</sup> — and at that point in time, the 10th of Muharram became sunnah.

## II. Zakat

And in that Ramadan as well, Zakat al-Fitr (زكاة الفطر) was revealed and became wajib. As we know, Zakat al-Fitr is the easier of the zakat<sup>[102]</sup> — again, to make the Muslims used to the concept of zakat. Then within a few months, the same year, Zakat al-Mal (زكاة المال)<sup>[103]</sup> was revealed.

## III. Salah

And of course, at this point in time, the basic rulings of the salah (صلاة) had been perfected; the Prophet ﷺ said, "Pray as you see me pray." And as we said, in Makkah, all of the salahs were two rak'at, and then when he ﷺ moved to Madinah, Zuhr, Asr, Maghrib, and Isha increased in length (4, 4, 3, 4).

## IV. Purifications

Also, how you do taharah (طهارة), wudu (وضوء), the laws of janaba (جنابة) and ghusl (غسل), etc., all of these came down within these first two years.

So by the time the second Ramadan finishes, all of these laws have been ordained. A lot was happening in Madinah.

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## 3. Political and Military Developments

This is a whole new different ballpark. In Makkah, there were no military developments. The Prophet ﷺ never once did anything military in Makkah. In Makkah, the Muslims were told to turn the other cheek, "Turn away from them" [Quran, 32:30], "Endure with beautiful patience" [Quran, 70:5], "Whatever they do to you, trust in Allah" [Quran, 26:216-217] — the Muslims were told to remain patient even though the sahaba were literally torn to shreds, like

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<sup>101</sup> Side note: Some scholars say, even the Ramadan of the previous year, while not wajib, it was encouraged to fast. Allah knows best whether this is true, but it wasn't wajib for sure. By unanimous consensus, Ramadan became wajib in the 2nd year.

<sup>102</sup> In our days, it's about \$7-\$10.

<sup>103</sup> Giving 2.5% of your wealth.

Yasir, Sumayyah, Bilal, et al. Think about it — technically, the Prophet ﷺ could have told one of the sahaba to kill the persecutor of Bilal. But he understands that this is not the right way to do things, and he understands the repercussions. One needs to think 10 steps ahead and not just 1 step ahead. Even if Bilal is suffering, to kill his persecutor (Umayyah ibn Khalaf) would bring much more persecution, and the ummah cannot bear it now. One must look at the overall picture and weigh the benefits and the negatives — in Arabic, this is called *masalih* and *mafasid*<sup>[104]</sup>.

In fact, in the early stage, some people wanted to fight, especially the youngest; but Allah criticized them: "Don't you see those people who were told (in the days of Makkah) to 'lower your hands, establish salah and pay zakat'<sup>[105]</sup>? These same people who were bursting to fight, when permission was finally given (in the Madinan phase) to fight, all of a sudden, they balked" [see Quran, 4:77]. Allah criticized them for their hesitancy and lack of enthusiasm now. And of course, Allah SWT then revealed verses that allowed *jihad* (جهاد) and *qital* (قتال).

The first verse that was revealed about *jihad* really underscores the philosophy of why Allah SWT allows *jihad*. It explains why Allah allows military fighting. Verses 39 to 40 of Surah al-Hajj provide the first concession for *jihad*, in which Allah says:

أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلُمُوا ۖ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ

"Permission [to fight] has been given to those who are being fought, because they were wronged. And indeed, Allah is competent to give them victory" [22:39].

الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ۚ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ لَهْجَمَتْ صَوَامِعُ وَبِيَعٌ  
وَصَلَوَاتٌ وَمَسَاجِدُ يُذْكَرُ فِيهَا اسْمُ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا ۚ وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ

"[They are] those who have been evicted from their homes without right — only because they say, 'Our Lord is Allah.' And were it not that Allah checks the people, some by means of others, there would have been demolished monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, in which the name of Allah is much mentioned. And Allah will surely support those who support Him. Indeed, Allah is Powerful and Exalted in Might" [22:40].

Breaking it down:

— Allah says, "Permission is given." Notice the phrase used. Before, Allah had withheld those who wanted to retaliate; and now, permission is granted.

— Next, "Because they have been wronged." Notice here fighting is done for those or on behalf of those who have been wronged, against the oppressors. And no nation / tribunal / law would not recognize this type of fighting. Oppressed people whose rights have been

<sup>104</sup> *Masalih* and *mafasid* (مصالح ومفاسد) - pros and cons / benefits and harms.

<sup>105</sup> Side note: Every reference of *zakat* in the Makkan phase is optional charity; not compulsory. In Makkah, general rules of ethics came, but no real laws or obligatory commandments came down, other than praying 2 rak'at of *salah* five times a day. Thus in Makkah, the Prophet ﷺ was forced to tell the people to not fight and just concentrate on spirituality.



taken away are allowed to fight if the only medium they have to get those rights back is to fight.

— Next, "And Allah is capable of protecting them."

— Next, "Those who were kicked out of their houses just because they said, 'Our Lord is Allah.'" Notice the reasoning of jihad is very clear: The oppressors wanted to kill you, they kicked you out of your houses, they confiscated your property, so \*now\* I am giving you permission to fight back.

The philosophy of jihad is so clear: "Because they have persecuted you, permission is given." Any society on earth would justify and accept this as being a just cause.

Subhan'Allah, America went to war because the British raised the taxes on tea — if that is a worthy cause, then wallahi, Islamic causes (to retaliate against oppressors) are a billion times more worthy.

— Next, [Sh. YQ got verse 22:40 and verse 2:251 mixed up, but the point made is still valid as both verses convey a similar message]: "Were it not for the fact that Allah allows wars, the world would go to chaos." You need to have people stand up and fight for the truth. And everybody—even pacifists— needs to understand that if people didn't oppose Hitler, the world would be a fascist state now. You have to stand up. This is what Allah is saying, "Had Allah not repelled a group of people by [the might of] another (i.e., had Allah not allowed war), corruption would have dominated the earth. But Allah is Gracious to all" [Quran, 2:251].

What is the reason people go to war in Islamic shariah? To fight against zulm<sup>[106]</sup> and fasad<sup>[107]</sup>. This is exactly what—in any society—is called a just war theory. You are allowed to go to war for certain causes. And we should not shy away from saying this.

Yes, in our religion as well, we have something called jihad, and it is not what most non-Muslims think it to be; it's a noble cause for people who have been denied their rights and basic freedoms, to fight against those who have oppressed them, in order to get their rights and freedoms back.

Abu Bakr RA said, "When Allah revealed Surah al-Hajj<sup>[108]</sup>, I knew there would be war." And of course, this would happen very soon after.

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<sup>106</sup> Zulm (ظلم) - injustice / oppression.

<sup>107</sup> Fasad (فساد) - corruption.

<sup>108</sup> Side note: The majority of scholars say Surah al-Hajj was revealed right at the very end of the Makkan era; and some say right at the beginning of the Madinan era.

## Four Stages of Jihad

To summarize, the stages of jihad in the seerah of the Prophet ﷺ can be divided into four primary phases:

1. Military jihad was forbidden — the jihad in the Makkan era was the jihad of the nafs<sup>[109]</sup> and soul: be patient, and "don't worry, Allah will take care of those who mock you" [see Quran, 15:95]. "Your job is only to deliver [the message], judgment is for Us" [Quran, 13:40]. This first stage lasted all 13 years of Makkah.

2. Permission is given for military jihad, but it's not made obligatory [see Quran, 22:39]. So in the beginning, jihad was on a volunteer basis. This was immediately after the Hijrah.

3. Jihad became wajib (obligatory) against the Quraysh only; not against the other tribes. This was the bulk of the Madani phase.

4. The Prophet ﷺ engaged in jihad against all of the polytheists of Arabia. And this is when he said "أمرت أن أقاتل الناس حتى يقولوا لا إله إلا الله."

Now after this, the scholars differed whether this commandment ("أمرت أن أقاتل الناس حتى يقولوا لا إله إلا الله") is still applicable. And this is a theoretical issue. In our times, no major scholar is discussing the issue. And for most of the ummah's history —after the time of the Umayyads<sup>[110]</sup>— the Muslim khulafa by and large have not been engaged in war with other nations. By and large, the Islamic conquest took place in the first 150 years — and what Muslims conquered in the first 150 years is where Islam stands to this day, by and large (with small exceptions). This shows us that for the bulk of the history of the ummah, people did not interpret jihad to be an all-out war against all of mankind. They understood that there is a time and a place — and when there is no need, there is no reason to engage in jihad.

This therefore began the first of a series of expeditions that the Prophet ﷺ and the sahaba engaged in. And there were many reasons for these expeditions — they had some specific goals:

1. The main goal was to show to the Quraysh that the Muslims had not fled weakly, but rather, they had fled and now will fight back and regain what was taken from them; to illustrate and establish that the Muslims are an independent political and military force. And note that for the first few years, up until the Battle of Khandaq [5 AH], the Muslims only targeted the Quraysh. No other Arab tribes were targeted unless they attacked first.

2. To cut off the oxygen supply, i.e., money, from the Quraysh. The Quraysh got their oxygen from [Rihlat al-Shita'i wa al-Sayf](#) — without this linkage, the Quraysh would have collapsed; this is what brought izzah and economic prosperity to the Quraysh and made Makkah the center of the entire Arabian Peninsula. So the Prophet ﷺ wanted to attack both the Rihlat al-Shita' and the Rihlat al-Sayf (i.e., both up north to the Byzantine Empire and down south to Yemen).

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<sup>109</sup> Nafs (نفس) - self.

<sup>110</sup> i.e., basically since the time of the Abbasids.

To go to Syria from Makkah, the Quraysh had to pass right by Madinah — to get to Rome, or rather a city called Bosra<sup>[111]</sup>, which was right at the tip of the Byzantine Empire, they had to pass by Madinah. So the Prophet ﷺ wanted to cut off these lifelines of the Quraysh, especially the one to Syria (and they also attempted Yemen, as we will discuss). And this shows the strategy of the Prophet ﷺ.

3. To increase the size of the Islamic state. To make treaties with neighboring tribes and make the Islamic new state larger. And this is something that happened clearly after the Battle of Badr [2 AH] and the Battle of Uhud [3 AH] — Madinah expanded in its size. Neighboring tribes form alliances, so you become larger and larger.

## Two Types of Military Expeditions

The scholars of seerah mention two types of military expeditions:

1. Ghazwa (غزوة) [plural: ghazawat (غزوات)] — is any military expedition that the Prophet ﷺ himself accompanied. (And of course, anytime he accompanied, he was the commander.) Ghazwa is typically translated as "war" or "battle."

2. Sariyya (سرية) [plural: saraya (سرايا)] — is something that he ﷺ commanded the sahaba to go on, and he did not accompany. Sariyya is typically translated as "expedition."

The ones that the Prophet ﷺ accompanied, of course, are more important for us.

How many ghazawat and how many saraya were there?

As for ghazawat: There are a number of opinions:

In Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, Zayd ibn Arqam (زيد بن أرقم) says, "The Prophet ﷺ participated in 19 ghazwas and he only did 1 Hajj."

In Sahih Muslim, another sahabi, Burayda (بريدة) says, "The Prophet ﷺ participated in 19 ghazwas; and he fought in only 8 of them<sup>[112]</sup>."

This shows there are 8 that are of particular importance. What are these 8? There is a little bit of ikhtilaf<sup>[113]</sup> as to what these 8 are:

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<sup>111</sup> Trivia: To this day, there are still ruins of the trading places that made Bosra famous — the same trading places that the Quraysh went to.

<sup>112</sup> Meaning the rest didn't actually end up in a battle — the Prophet ﷺ participated, but there was no battle for whatever reason: either a truce or the two sides never met.

<sup>113</sup> Ikhtilaf (إختلاف) - difference of opinion.

One list is:

1. Badr (بدر)
2. Uhud (أحد)
3. Ahzab (أحزاب)
4. Al-Muraysi' (المريسيع) (a.k.a. Bani al-Mustaliq [بني المصطلق])
5. Al-Qadid (القديد)
6. Khaybar (خيبر)
7. Makkah (مكة)
8. Hunayn (حنين)

Another sahabi says:

1. Badr (بدر)
2. Uhud (أحد)
3. Ahzab (أحزاب)
4. Bani al-Mustaliq (بني المصطلق) (a.k.a. Al-Muraysi' [المريسيع])
5. Khaybar (خيبر)
6. Makkah (مكة)
7. Hunayn (حنين)
8. Ta'if (طائف)

The point is, for every military expedition that the Prophet ﷺ engaged in and there was actually a battle, we have a lot of details about. And for the ones where there wasn't an actual battle, we don't have so much details — sometimes we just have a reference.

As for saraya: There are so many that the scholars don't really list all of them with many details; sometimes they will just mention with one line, and sometimes don't even mention it. One scholar mentions there were 24 saraya. Ibn Ishaq lists 30. Al-Waqidi lists 48. Ibn al-Jawzi (ابن الجوزي) (d. 597 AH) lists 56. It really depends on how you want to constitute a sariyya — a sariyya could even be 3 people going out to check out something, i.e., to spy. So how many saraya were there? Definitely around 30-40 or so, we can say.

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### Ghazwa al-Abwa

It appears the first military expedition that the Muslims engaged in was that of al-Abwa — Ghazwa al-Abwa (غزوة الأبواء). This took place on the 12th of Safar, 2nd year of the Hijrah, i.e., 11 months after the Emigration of the Prophet ﷺ. In this expedition, the Prophet ﷺ heard of a caravan of the Quraysh, so the Muslims went out. But they couldn't get to it in time, so there was no actual battle.

However, the Prophet ﷺ formed the first of many alliances — with the Banu Damra (بني ضمرة), a local tribe around Madinah. So for the first time, the Muslim ummah expanded. We are getting the beginnings of an independent Islamic state. The military state reached a level that was another 100 miles outside of the city.

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### Sariyya of Ubaydah ibn al-Harith

The second expedition that took place was the first time an arrow was shot in the Way of Allah SWT. It is called "the first arrow fi-SabiliLlah (في سبيل الله)." And because of this, it is mentioned with great pride by the one who did it (and he deserves to be proud). But again, no actual fighting occurred. Some arrows were passed back and forth, and no blood was shed, and then a neutral party came in and basically caused a type of truce, and the Quraysh went their way, and the Muslims went their way. This sariyya is called the Sariyya of Ubaydah ibn al-Harith (سرية عبيدة بن الحارث). And Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas was the first person to shoot that arrow in the Way of Allah SWT.

After this, the neutral tribe formed an alliance with the Muslims. So once again, in the wisdom of Allah AWJ, more tribes are embracing, if not the religion of Islam, at least the political state of Islam. What does it mean embracing the political state? They write a contract that they will not support the Quraysh; and if the Quraysh comes, they will inform the Prophet ﷺ. And this, of course, makes them a part of the Islamic state.

This too happened within the 1st year of the Hijrah.

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### Ghazwa al-Ushayra

The first significant expedition, even though, again, no blood was shed, was the Ghazwa al-Ushayra (غزوة العشيرة). The Prophet ﷺ took around 150-200 sahaba to attack the Quraysh's most significant caravan. This is the annual caravan that went up to Syria. It's not small — it has in it at least 70-80 camels. Also, it has on it around 70%-80% of the wealth in Makkah. Because anyone who has any money in Makkah would invest in this caravan. Even if you are a woman —like Khadija RA used to do— you would invest in this caravan. It is the main source of money — they purchase some goods, send it to Syria, get the money back, purchase other goods, send it to Yemen, get the money back, and so on and so forth — this is how they get richer; by being the middleman between the trades and the goods up north and down south. Who was the leader of this particular caravan from Makkah that the Prophet ﷺ was targeting? The famous Abu Sufyan ibn Harb (أبو سفيان بن حرب).

However, qaddar'Allah<sup>[114]</sup>, they weren't able to cross paths. Some say it was a 'stroke of luck' that one of the people in the caravan accidentally strayed and happened to see the Muslims from the distance coming. So he rushed back to inform his people, and Abu Sufyan hastily went a way that otherwise he would have not gone. Obviously, it's the qadr of Allah — Allah made it so that Abu Sufyan finds out about the Muslims, so that he immediately diverts the caravan, so that it doesn't cross paths with the Muslims — and little did he (Abu Sufyan) realize that in his attempt to save the caravan, he would bring about an even bigger

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<sup>114</sup> Qaddar'Allah (قدر الله) - Allah willed.

destruction to the Quraysh, as we will see in the upcoming episodes. Truly, "They plan, and Allah plans. And Allah is the best of planners" [Quran, 3:54].

So the caravan and the Muslims didn't cross paths — the caravan made it to Syria, and the Muslims, for now, decided to return to Madinah.

This expedition, Ghazwa al-Ushayra, serves as the first stage in the lead-up to the famous Major Battle of Badr — they involve the same caravan: As we have discussed, Ghazwa al-Ushayra is the thwarted interception attempt of the caravan on its journey up to Syria; and the Major Battle of Badr will involve the targeting of that same caravan on its return journey to Makkah. The details of the Major Battle of Badr (Ghazwa Badr al-Kubra) will be discussed in the next episode.

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### Ghazwa Badr al-Sughra

There is another ghazwa, and it is called Ghazwa Badr al-Sughra (غزوة بدر الصغرى - the Minor Battle of Badr) — not to be confused with stage one of Ghazwa Badr al-Kubra which is Ghazwa al-Ushayra. Ghazwa Badr al-Sughra (or sometimes called Ghazwa Badr al-Ula [غزوة بدر الأولى - the First Battle of Badr]) is called the Battle of Badr because it took place on the Plains of Badr — but it has nothing to do with the Ghazwa Badr al-Kubra, as it didn't involve the Quraysh; rather, it involved one of the allies of the Quraysh.

What happened was that one of these allies of the Quraysh snuck into Madinah in the middle of the night and stole a bunch of camels from inside Madinah — and they killed 1-2 herders along the way. As soon as the Prophet ﷺ found out, he gathered 70 of the Muhajirun and went out with them to look for these people who stole the camels.<sup>[115]</sup> But because the raiders were 4-5 in number, they were much faster than the Muslims, and so they managed to flee the scene. So the Prophet ﷺ was not able to capture them at this point in time.

And this shows us that even though he is the prophet of Allah, Allah didn't just gift him with miracle after miracle. Allah didn't just allow every expedition to be successful. Some of them he came back empty-handed, because there is a lesson to be learned even in this; because there are other wisdoms that we might not understand. But Allah's AWJ plan is infinitely wise.

One of the consequences of the First Battle of Badr was that the Prophet ﷺ decided that he needed to have spies for reconnaissance (i.e., to monitor the tracks of the Quraysh and their allies). So the Prophet ﷺ sent out groups of sahaba to find out what was happening with the Quraysh's trip to Yemen. Even though Yemen is on the opposite side (the southern point of Makkah), the Prophet ﷺ still wants to know all the options. Because, of course, an attack on the Yemeni side would take the Quraysh completely by surprise — they would never expect the Muslims from up north (i.e., Madinah) to double back all the way

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<sup>115</sup> And this was the first time they reached the Plain of Badr — hence why it's called the [Minor] Battle of Badr.

around Makkah and try to attack them from the direction of Yemen. Now, interestingly enough, no attack of the Muslims actually took place — but the Prophet ﷺ is not ruling it out. Look at this. He is keeping all options on the table. He sends out a reconnaissance expedition to see what is happening with the caravans of the Quraysh that go to Yemen — 'If we missed the caravan of the Quraysh from Syria, let us get the ones from the Yemeni side.' And so this is now called Sariyya Nakhla. Again, Sariyya Nakhla is the direct consequence of the First Battle of Badr:

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### Sariyya Nakhla

The main incident we will discuss in this episode is the Sariyya Nakhla (سرية نخلة). It took place in the month of Rajab, 2 AH. The Prophet ﷺ handpicked 8 of the Muhajirun<sup>[116]</sup>, put his cousin Abdullah ibn Jahsh (عبد الله بن جحش) in charge, and gave him a letter, and told this group to go northeast, travel for 2 days, and then on the morning of the 2nd day to open the letter. After two days, Abdullah ibn Jahsh obeyed the Prophet ﷺ and opened up the letter. The Prophet ﷺ said to him in it, "When this letter of mine is read to you, proceed to Nakhla (eastern side of Makkah towards Ta'if)." So now they will have to double back and go down to Nakhla. And the Prophet ﷺ said, "Watch the movement of the Quraysh and inform us of their preparations and actions. Do not force any of your companions to go — whoever wants to come back can come back [to Madinah]."

Now, why this strange letter?

Firstly, for utmost secrecy. Not even the people knew where they were going.

Secondly, for illusion — he sends them northeast and then they have to go down south. In a hadith, the Prophet ﷺ said, "الحرب خدعة" (war is deceit)." And Sun Tzu says a similar thing in his famous book: "All warfare is based on deception. Hence, when we are able to attack, we must seem unable; when using our forces, we must appear inactive; when we are near, we must make the enemy believe we are far away; when far away, we must make them believe we are near."

Also, the Prophet ﷺ is giving them permission to come back because they are literally walking straight into Makkah, i.e., the enemy territory, unarmed and defenseless. 8 defenseless people don't stand a chance against the whole city. When Abdullah ibn Jahsh read the letter, he said to his companions, "Whoever wants shahada (martyrdom) and is eager to meet Allah, let him come with me. And whoever doesn't may go back to Madinah. But as for me, I am going to proceed onwards to Makkah." Literally, he is thinking there is no way this will be successful — but, 'if the Prophet ﷺ wants it, let it be.'<sup>[117]</sup> And obviously, all

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<sup>116</sup> Notice every expedition thus far involves Muhajirun only. No Ansar.

<sup>117</sup> But of course, as we know, Allah willed for all of them to return safely to Madinah, as we will see.

8 of them followed the Prophet's ﷺ message and proceeded with Abdullah ibn Jahsh. They had 4 camels, so two people to a camel.<sup>[118]</sup>

On the way to Nakhla, one morning, they woke up and a camel was missing. And it was the camel of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas and Utbah ibn Ghazwan (عتبة بن غزوان). So Sa'd and Utbah insisted, "You guys go ahead, leave us in the desert, and we will try to find our camel; the expedition must go on." So Sa'd and Utbah were left to find their camel / figure out another means to go back to Madinah. So 6 people then actually got to Nakhla. Nakhla is a small grove of date palms outside of Makkah. And they arrived at Nakhla on the 30th of Rajab. The last day of Rajab. And before even they set up camp, they saw in the distance a caravan coming. And they hid themselves waiting to see what it was. It turned out to be one of the smaller business caravans of the Quraysh coming back early from the trade, and it was loaded with goods complete to the top. And it didn't have any military protection since the Quraysh were so sure nothing would happen at this time. So the 6 began discussing amongst themselves what should be done. There were around 8-9 camels and just 3 men guarding them, so it was like a fortune, and it would have been easy to retrieve.

But there were 2 issues:

i) The Prophet ﷺ only told them to get information. He didn't say 'don't fight,' but the purpose was information. Not an attack.

ii) A bigger problem is that it's the 30th of Rajab, i.e., it's the Sacred Month. And of course, in the Sacred Month, you are not supposed to fight. However, what made it so difficult was that there were literally just 1-2 hours left until Maghrib, and after Maghrib, it's Sha'ban! Transitioning out of the Sacred Month! So they began discussing what was to be done. They said, "If we wait until the sun sets, the caravan will be gone — but if we fight them now, we will be guilty of fighting in the Sacred Month."

And by the way, up until this point, the Muslims had not been successful with any capture missions. And this was an opportunity to get 8-9 camels loaded with spices / goods, etc. So this was a lot of benefit and blessings for the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims. So they went and attacked. One of the caravaneers was killed, and two of them were captured and taken as prisoners of war. And as they came, they went all the way back to Madinah.

When the Prophet ﷺ saw them come back with all of this, and heard that they had killed someone, he realized this would be a very negative PR disaster. He told them, "I didn't command you to fight"—and he refused to accept any of the booty. And the Quraysh had a field day with this — they spread across the entire peninsula: "Look at these Muslims! They contradicted the shariah of Ibrahim and went against the Ashhur al-Hurum<sup>[119]</sup>! They shed the blood of an innocent person in the Sacred Month!" They made a very big brouhaha out of this. And Ibn Ishaq and others say the Prophet ﷺ felt great stress — because the criticism

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<sup>118</sup> Side note: There was never one person per camel for \*any\* expedition in the time of the Prophet ﷺ. The Muslims didn't have such luxury. The Quraysh tried to do it in the Major Battle of Badr, but the Muslims could not.

<sup>119</sup> Ashhur al-Hurum (أشهر الحرم) - Sacred Months.



in its place was valid: the Muslims shed blood in the Sacred Month. So the Prophet ﷺ did not know what to do.<sup>[120]</sup> As the fitna gained momentum, Allah revealed in the Quran:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ وَصَدٌّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَكُفْرٌ بِهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ

"They ask you about the Sacred Month — about fighting therein. Say, 'Fighting therein is great [sin], but averting [people] from the Way of Allah and disbelief in Him and [preventing access to] al-Masjid al-Haram and the expulsion of its people therefrom are greater [evil] in the Sight of Allah. And fitna is greater [evil] than killing...' [2:217].

Wallahi, this is the height of eloquence. It's beautiful. Allah criticized the shedding of the blood, He did not sanction it —the Muslims should not have shed this blood and He affirms this— but then He gave a judgment that clearly shows that our Lord is a Lord who is al-Haqq<sup>[121]</sup> and decrees with haqq<sup>[122]</sup>; He criticized the Quraysh by saying, 'Who do you think you are? You are preventing people from coming to the Bayt al-Haram, and you have rejected Allah, and expelled people from Makkah. All of this is much worse in the Eyes of Allah. And the fitna<sup>[123]</sup> that you are causing is far bigger [evil] than the blood that this person has shed.'

Ibn al-Qayyim comments: So Allah says in this verse that, 'The matter you have criticized the Muslims for is indeed a big sin — but if it so, then what you have done of rejecting Allah, of preventing people from coming to His House, and of expelling the Muslims who truly belong there (physically and spiritually), is yet a greater crime.' (Side note: Ibn Abbas said "fitna" in this verse means "shirk [تَشْرِك]." And no doubt, it is true that one of the references is shirk — but we can also be more encompassing and say that included in the fitna is the chaos, the breaking up of the tribes, and the expelling of the Muslims from their household, that the Quraysh has caused — this is also fitna. And Allah is saying this fitna AND the shirk is worse than the shedding of blood.) So Ibn al-Qayyim says Allah says, 'The shirk that you are upon, and the fitna that you have caused because of it, is even greater [evil] in the Sight of Allah than the crime of fighting in the Sacred Month.'

Again, it is worth noting that the verse is extremely eloquent — many scholars have had long discussions about how Allah AWJ phrased the verse — it is very atypical. There is even an academic paper in Western journals about the grammatical analysis of the verse.

In any case, once this verse was revealed, the Prophet ﷺ accepted the booty and agreed to take the two prisoners of war. He sent a message to the Quraysh to send a ransom for these two, and stipulated, "We will not release these two prisoners until our two companions (Sa'd and Utbah) reach us safely." However, Sa'd and Utbah, in fact, were never seen by the Quraysh — and eventually, they found their camel, and after a week or two, made their way back to Madinah. So the two prisoners were released, and amazingly, one of them, al-Hakam ibn Kaisan (الحكم بن كيسان), accepted Islam. But he accepted Islam only

<sup>120</sup> Side note: And it is said that even the Jews became happy at this. From the beginning, it was clear that the Jews would not be on the side of the Muslims.

<sup>121</sup> Al-Haqq (الْحَقُّ) - the Absolute Truth.

<sup>122</sup> Haqq (حَقٌّ) - truth / justice.

<sup>123</sup> Fitna (فِتْنَةٌ) - trial and tribulation.

after the ransom was paid for him. And this is not the only time this has happened. This scenario of accepting Islam as prisoners of war, contingent upon the payment of ransom, became a recurring theme in subsequent battles. Multiple times prisoners of war accepted Islam, but only after the ransom came — because they (the converts) wanted the money to be in the hands of the Prophet ﷺ. So al-Hakam ibn Kaisan is the first example of many to come, including the older brother of Khalid ibn al-Walid.

(Al-Hakam ibn Kaisan later died a shaheed in one of the battles during the time of the Prophet ﷺ.)

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## Lessons From the Episode

1. Look at the infinite justice of Allah. And who is better at judging than Allah SWT? Allah did not exonerate the Muslims from their mistake, but He said the crimes of the Quraysh were much worse. This is the reality of the shariah of Allah — there is infinite justice.

2. We also see the different expeditions that the Prophet ﷺ engaged in and they show us no victory comes with ease. Even the prophets of Allah will not be handed victory just like that — even they need to go out and sacrifice their families, loved ones, and themselves — the Prophet ﷺ himself was injured — we will see all of these in the future battles. One needs to show dedication, determination, perseverance, and sincerity; and then Allah SWT will bless you with success. \*Even\* the prophets of Allah had to struggle, so how about those lesser than them (i.e., all of us).

3. Also see that the Prophet ﷺ would always choose his immediate family to take the most dangerous task — he chose his cousin Ubaydah ibn al-Harith (عبيدة بن الحارث), his uncle Hamzah ibn Abdul Muttalib<sup>[124]</sup>, his relative from his mother side Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, his cousin Abdullah ibn Jahsh, et al., to lead dangerous expeditions. The point is, no one can accuse the Prophet ﷺ of putting his family out of harm's way. Rather, he puts them right in front. Because the leader, the prophet, or any person, has to sacrifice himself and his loved ones before he is going to sacrifice others. And that is why in the ghazawat, the Prophet ﷺ would be at the forefront, and in the saraya, he sent his own relatives, to show the people that nobody can accuse him of trying to protect his own family from the hardships of war.

4. Notice as well that up until now, only the Muhajirun are going on expeditions; no Ansar. — Why? Firstly, because the Muhajirun should not be made to forget about Makkah. Secondly, one of the main reasons why there are no Ansar is because of the Second Oath of Aqaba — it was an oath of protection; there was no offensive clause [see [episode 25](#)]. Thus, the Prophet ﷺ as a wise leader never pushed the Ansar. In the Battle of Badr al-Kubra, as we will see, they will volunteer. But when they volunteer and it turns out to be an army, that is when the Ansar add their own condition: to join the Prophet ﷺ even in offensive battles. We will talk about this in [episode 37](#).

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<sup>124</sup> We didn't talk about some of these expeditions due to time constraints.

5. We see that in this early stage, jihad was not obligatory — it was voluntary. Even the 8 that the Prophet ﷺ chose, he told them, 'If you want to go back, you can go back.' This is tadrib<sup>[125]</sup> — he ﷺ is raising the bar slowly to train the sahaba.

6. Non-Muslims in medieval and our times criticize and distort this picture and accuse the Prophet ﷺ and the early Muslims of basically being highway robbers. They say the Prophet ﷺ and the early Muslims financed themselves off of highway robbery. Brothers and sisters, this is the case with all of the enemies of Allah, that they take something and distort the truth in it. There is an element of truth, but they distort it in a sinister manner, and they then read in what they want, and then propagate it in an extremely negative manner. And this is exactly like Allah says: You are accusing the Muslims of this, but what are you doing? And you are ignoring the context. The Prophet ﷺ is not targeting any tribe other than the Quraysh. This is a very important point. It's only them. All of the other transactions in Arabia are safe. And subhan'Allah, what is wrong with trying to get back your wealth from the people who confiscated your land and property? As we said, if our nation (Americans) attacked its government because of a raise of taxes on tea and that's why they killed the British soldiers and overturned the ships of Her Majesty and His Majesty, then subhan'Allah, what double standard is this? After all that the Quraysh had done, now the Prophet ﷺ is getting back a fraction — and you want to read in something sinister?! This is the reality of those whose hearts are full of hatred — they take these little things and distort them and ignore the entire context of what is happening. And this is exactly what is happening now in our times. Malcolm X famously said in the 60s, "The media's the most powerful entity on earth. They have the power to make the innocent guilty and to make the guilty innocent, and that's power. Because they control the minds of the masses." And this is so true even in our time: a little Palestinian kid throwing a stone, they make him to be the oppressor; and the military tank in front of him is made out to be the oppressed. This is the reality of the world that we live in.

We also see the hypocrisy of the Quraysh (and of all those who wish to oppose Allah and His Messenger) — they accuse the Muslims of a sin (which \*might\* be a sin) but who are they to accuse anyone of anything when the crimes they are guilty of, we cannot even compare them to what the Muslims have done? Wallahi, how true this is in the world that we live in now. Yes, things happen that we all disagree with — of terrorism of one side versus the other, which we all disagree with; but are they going to ignore where those are coming from? Are they going to ignore the context? Are they going to ignore the anger? Are they going to ignore their own zulm and oppression that has caused people to do another minor type of zulm and oppression?! You cannot fight terror with terror. Terrorism only leads to other terrorism. And just because a \*country\* does it, it doesn't mean it's not terrorism anymore. When you kill, it is going to come back to you. كما تدین تدان — what goes around comes around. Wallahi, the exact same thing we find now. The irony of ironies is they accuse Muslims of being terrorists but they ignore the policies that are taking place in the world that are the real policies of terrorism. And so many people are talking about this. Forget Muslims; read Noam Chomsky, Chris Hedges, Robert Fisk, Glenn Greenwald, et al. None of them accuse the Muslims of being the primary terrorist. Of course, none of them justifies the terrorism done by the small groups of Muslims that are fanatical, but they are

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<sup>125</sup> Tadrib (تدريب) - training.

putting it into context, just like Allah says in verse [2:217]. This is a very important lesson for us to learn from in the modern world that we live in —the hypocrisy of the Quraysh of the past, and of the modern powers of our times— so that insha'Allah ta'ala, we don't fall into the mistake of either of these extremists. We speak the truth whatever the truth is — even if it is against us, we will speak it; and if it is against others, we will also speak it.

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So all of these minor expeditions will lead up to the Major Battle of Badr which is the first and the biggest encounter where the table will completely turn; it is one of the biggest miracles of Islam. Allah called it Yawm al-Furqan<sup>[126]</sup> — the day that the Truth was made clear from the error, the day that victory was granted to the Muslims the type of victory that was unprecedented — and it was to have repercussions all the way down throughout Islamic history. The stage is set for the Battle of Badr.

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<sup>126</sup> Yawm al-Furqan (يوم الفرقان) - the Day of Criterion.

## 036. The Battle of Badr 1

### Recap

As we mentioned before, there were two threats facing the Muslims: Internal and external. (i) As for the internal threats, Madinah was not yet unified, so there would always be a group of people who were not happy with the changes — i.e., the Jews and the mushriks who would eventually become the munafiqun — the Prophet ﷺ dealt with the munafiqun until the end of his life. (ii) Externally, the main difficulty right now is only the Quraysh of Makkah. But slowly, in the next few years, the entire Arabian Peninsula will become involved. And for the first time in human history, the entire peninsula will become polarized between two camps. And this polarization is the precursor to the unification of Arabia. The unification of Arabia which never happened in the history of humanity, it will happen for the first time under the Prophet ﷺ. And how will all that happen? Of course primarily through military expeditions.

The history of the Madani seerah is therefore a history of military expeditions. We would like to know so much more information; but again, the chroniclers only recorded that which was the most important from their perspective; and so probably 80% of the Madani phase is simply one battle after another. We will try our best to extrapolate the other incidents as they occur.

To summarize what we had discussed in the last lesson: We discussed the minor events before Badr; one of them was the Sariyya Nakhla. Some sahaba were sent to find out information outside of Makkah; they saw an unexpected small caravan with booty and decided to raid it, killing one person in the process, and they brought back the booty to the Prophet ﷺ. But the Prophet ﷺ said, "I didn't tell you to fight or kill anyone." Why was this problematic? Because it occurred in the Sacred Month. And Allah revealed verse [2:217] in Surah al-Baqarah.

The other incident was the Ghazwa al-Ushayra which was the part 1 of the Battle of Badr [al-Kubra]. How is it part 1? As previously discussed, the Prophet ﷺ knew that the caravan of Abu Sufyan was going northwards towards Syria — and the Ghazwa al-Ushayra was the Prophet's ﷺ attempt to intercept that caravan on its journey up — and the Battle of Badr [al-Kubra] is going to be the targeting of that same caravan on its journey down. So Ghazwa al-Ushayra set up Ghazwa Badr [al-Kubra]. And, as we said, in Ghazwa al-Ushayra, the caravan raiding didn't happen, because by the time the Prophet ﷺ reached al-Ushayra, Abu Sufyan had heard the news and fled quickly and took another route to Syria. So the Prophet ﷺ never actually met the caravan. Other minor things happened and he ﷺ formed some alliances and tribal agreements, so there was a success — but there was no military conflict in Ghazwa al-Ushayra. But one of the consequences of the ghazwa was that, because of it, Abu Sufyan was on high alert, because he already learned that the Prophet ﷺ was interested in his caravan.

The concept of targeting caravans goes back even before Ghazwa al-Ushayra:

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## Targeting of Caravan

One of the particular incidents narrated in Sahih Bukhari shows us that the targeting of the caravan was something that even the Ansar were thinking about. Sa'd ibn Mu'adh (the most vibrant leader of the Ansar) was a close friend of Umayya ibn Khalaf (the owner of Bilal) in the days of Jahiliyyah. The two were business partners. So whenever Umayya would go north, he would stop over in Madinah and stay at the house of Sa'd. And likewise, Sa'd would stay at the house of Umayya whenever he went to Makkah. One time, in 1 AH, Sa'd went to Makkah —perhaps for business trips— and it was the custom of the time that they would always do tawaf whenever they visited Makkah. So Sa'd asked Umayya, "When is a good time to do tawaf?" Umayya said, "Go at a time when no one else is there [at the Ka'bah]." So clearly, they knew some tension could happen if Sa'd was seen in public. Why? Because it was known that Sa'd was helping the Prophet ﷺ. His Islam was not known, but what was known was that he was supporting and protecting the Muslims — so Umayya said, "Go right in the heat of the sun when everyone is asleep" — and so they went at noontime.

But lo and behold, Allah willed that they meet Abu Jahal; and Abu Jahal asked Umayya, "Who is your friend?" He figured something was fishy because nobody would do tawaf at that hour in the heat of the sun. Umayya said, "This is Sa'd ibn Mu'adh from Yathrib." And so Abu Jahal got angry and said, "How is it possible that you are performing tawaf around the House in safety after you have given protection to the suba (صباة)<sup>[127]</sup> and claim that you will help them?! You have the audacity to come to Makkah and show your face and do tawaf in such safety?! Wallahi, were it not for the fact that you are a guest of Abu Safwan (أبو صفوان) (i.e., Umayya), you would not return home in one piece!" — this is an open threat. And the threat contradicts everything of their religion<sup>[128]</sup> — they knew that Makkah was sacred all the way from the time of Ibrahim AS<sup>[129]</sup> and no one has the right to stop anybody from coming to Makkah — but when it came to Islam, the double standards began for the first time. Abu Jahal didn't even know that Sa'd was a Muslim so he said, "You are helping the Muslims" — but that was enough of a crime in his eyes to prevent Sa'd from coming to Makkah. At this, Sa'd got very angry, raised his voice, and said, "Wallahi, if you are going to threaten me and deprive me of tawaf, I will deprive you of something more painful to you than this (i.e., your trade routes to Syria)!" He said this in front of the Ka'bah so that everybody in Makkah could hear.

And so the concept of targeting the caravans of the Quraysh was not just something that the Prophet ﷺ told them to do. Even though, yes, up until this time, no Ansari has participated — but Sa'd is feeling the pressure, so he basically says, 'Khalas, tit for tat! You are going to threaten me?! Now you will see as well what we are going to do!' And that is exactly what he did — he then began to target the caravans of the Quraysh, as we will see.

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<sup>127</sup> Note: The Quraysh called the Muslims "suba / renegades," i.e., "the people who have left the religion of our forefathers."

<sup>128</sup> And of Islam as well, by the way.

<sup>129</sup> See Quran, [3:97].

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## The Plains of Badr

What is Badr? It is an area or a location that is named after a well that is named after the person who dug the well. So Badr is the name of a human. Many centuries ago, Badr ibn Yakhlood (بدر بن يخلد) from the tribe of Banu Damra dug up a well, so the well was called the Well of Badr, and that whole plain / area around the well was then called the Plains of Badr. It is located between Makkah and Madinah, closer to Madinah than to Makkah — [approximately 130 km southwest of Madinah, and 280 km northwest of Makkah](#). It takes around 1 hour and 15 mins in our time to get to Badr from Madinah by car. Before modern transportation, it took around 3 days.

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## Symbolic Correlation Between the Change of the Qibla and the Battle of Badr

Interestingly, less than a month before the Battle of Badr, the change of the qibla happened (as we discussed) — and there is a significant correlation. The change literally occurred 3 weeks before the Battle of Badr — there is no doubt there was a symbolic change taking place: the qibla of the Muslims changed to Makkah, and then the Muslims were granted the greatest victory of early Islam — it is as if there is a sign that: Now that the qibla has changed and you have won the Battle of Badr, slowly, [Makkah as well will be yours](#).

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## Incidents Leading Up to Ghazwa Badr al-Kubra

Now, we get to the incidents leading up to Ghazwa Badr al-Kubra (غزوة بدر الكبرى - the Great Battle of Badr). It is called the Great Battle of Badr in order to distinguish it from [Ghazwa Badr al-Sughra](#) (غزوة بدر الصغرى - the Small Battle of Badr; which took place close to Badr but had nothing to do with the Quraysh or the caravan of Abu Sufyan).

As we said, stage 1 of the Great Battle of Badr is \*not\* the Small Battle of Badr, but rather, the Ghazwa al-Ushayra, which took place in Jumada al-Awwal (جمادى الأولى) of the 2nd year of the Hijrah. The Prophet ﷺ went to the area of Ushayra (not Badr) and camped there until the very first few days of Jumada al-Thani (جمادى الثاني), and then he returned back to Madinah. When the time came that the Muslims expected the caravan back (and this is now in Ramadan), the Prophet ﷺ began sending multiple spies to see where the caravan had reached. And we have at least 2 or 3 ahadith that mention different spies — so this means basically, over the course of every few days, he ﷺ was sending out another few people.

For example, in Sahih Muslim, Anas ibn Malik says, when the time came for the caravan's return, the Prophet ﷺ sent a spy to find out about the advent of the caravan. And when the spy returned, the Prophet ﷺ made sure that nobody was sitting in the room

—except for Anas who was excused because he was a 7-year-old child— and the sahabi (spy) informed him ﷺ about the whereabouts of the caravan.

In another hadith in Ibn Ishaq, it is mentioned that the Prophet ﷺ sent Talha ibn Ubaydillah (طلحة بن عبيد الله) and Sa'id ibn Zayd (two famous sahaba) to monitor the activities. And they waited for the caravan and followed it for a while until it passed them by, and then they galloped back quickly to Madinah. And they reported to the Prophet ﷺ that it was under the command of Abu Sufyan, and it had around 1,000 camels in its entourage. Early history books say the Quraysh had never had such a large caravan in recent history. This was the largest caravan in recent / recorded history. Why is this the case? Most likely, due to economic factors prior to this — they acquired the Muslims' wealth, i.e., they confiscated Muslim property and land in Makkah after the Muslims had Emigrated<sup>[130]</sup> — and perhaps other things happened as well which the books of history don't mention. And this was a fortune in that day; the net worth would be around 5-20 million dollars in our times. This, for the early nascent Muslim community that had nothing, would change its entire treasury. So we can understand why the Prophet ﷺ was so eager.

So the Prophet ﷺ gathered some sahaba... And here is a little bit of contradiction what exactly happened:

- a. In Sahih Muslim, it's reported that the Prophet ﷺ didn't announce where he was going — he just said, "We have a mission to undertake, so whoever has his animal ready should come with me." Some sahaba said, "Ya Rasulullah, my animal isn't ready. It's in another place in Madinah. Let me go get it ready." But the Prophet ﷺ said, "No. Only those whose animals are right here and now. We are leaving right now."
- b. In Ibn Ishaq, it is said that the Prophet ﷺ said to the sahaba, "This is the caravan of the Quraysh, it's coming back to you. And it has in it the money of the Quraysh. So let us go out to meet it. Perhaps Allah will give it to you."

How do we reconcile these two narrations? Allahu a'lam. But it seems when the Prophet ﷺ stood in the masjid, he didn't announce who, where, or what mission they were undertaking. Why? Because there could be spies from the Quraysh in the gathering. So the Prophet ﷺ did not make any public announcement. Rather, he said, "We have a mission to undertake, so whoever has his animal ready should come with me." "We are leaving right now." And indeed, that is the ultimate surprise tactic; not even the sahaba knew where they were going. And when the army had left Madinah and the Prophet ﷺ could see who he was with, \*then\* he announced to them, "This is the caravan of the Quraysh, it's coming back to you. And it has in it the money of the Quraysh. So let us go out to meet it. Perhaps Allah will give it to you." So he didn't mention where he was going in the beginning until finally they left the city. And this shows again and again the meticulous planning of the

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<sup>130</sup> In our last lesson, we had already talked about how non-Muslim orientalist have skewed and have attacked the Prophet ﷺ by saying he was a highway robber — but this is ridiculous, because most of the wealth in Abu Sufyan's caravan was directly confiscated from the Muslims anyway. That was one of the main reasons why the caravan had so much money.



Prophet ﷺ. We have seen this in every major incident — we have seen this in the Hijrah, Bay'at al-Aqaba, etc. Even though he is the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and he could put his trust in Allah SWT without doing anything, that is not what he did. And that is against the sunnah. You must do everything you can, and \*then\* put your trust in Allah.

No one knew where they were going. The Prophet ﷺ didn't even give the sahaba preparation. Why? Because this was easy prey. It is reported that there were only 40 armed guards to this 1000s camel's fortune. So the Prophet ﷺ realized, "If we only have 200-300 people, that is all we need" — and they don't even have to be armed to the hilt. So the Prophet ﷺ basically said, "Whoever is ready, let's go now!" And that is exactly what happened. Badr was not meant to be a war. It was meant to be quick and easy confiscation of 1,000 camels — the Muslims would outnumber the 40 guards, the guards would either run or stay and die, and the entire camels would be taken. What's vital is speed and urgency — what's needed is for the Quraysh to not find out.

But Allah willed otherwise for a wisdom that was known to Him — which we will see clearly in the aftermath of the Battle of Badr.

So in the Battle of Badr, none of the sahaba were fully armed — and the animals that were taken were animals that happened to be there only. The entire army of 300+ people only had 2 riding horses and less than 100 camels. Why? Because it wasn't assumed that they would be needing fast horses and a lot of camels. This was supposed to be easy prey — basically targeting a sitting duck. They just had to go, show them 300 people, and take the prize.

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### Eagerness of the Youths

When the Muslims reached the first encampment and set up tents, this was when the Prophet ﷺ took a detailed survey of everyone who was participating. He made an assessment — and he noticed that there were two people who were too young to participate. And these were al-Bara' ibn Azib (البراء بن عازب) and Abdullah ibn Umar (عبد الله بن عمر); they were under 14. So the two underage warriors were sent back.

In those times, 15 was basically what we would consider to be 18 — they matured much faster. And in every single major battle, we will continue to see this, that 11-14 year olds eager to participate, but the Prophet ﷺ will tell them no. In their eagerness, they wanted to be 'man'.<sup>[131]</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> In our time, we have dumbed down our own youths. If we were to treat them like adults, those young men would become adults faster. But because we have this false age of adolescence, where biologically, they are men or women, but intellectually, we treat them like kids — we are going to get problems. We Muslims firmly believe that Allah AWJ has made the age of puberty to be the age of intelligence. Therefore, if society were to treat these youngsters the way they deserve, with intellectual integrity, honesty, and respect, then these youngsters would grow up faster. And this isn't just Islamic, by the way — 100 years ago, in every society, when you were 15-16, you were an adult.

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## Number of Muslim Army

The final count was around 315 —some books mention 313, some mention 315, some mention 317— but basically, three hundred and ten and an odd number. And these were all the volunteers. Around 83 of the Muhajirun, 62 of the Aws, and 170 of the Khazraj. The Khazraj were double the Aws.<sup>[132]</sup>

The two horses belong to Zubayr ibn al-Awwam and al-Miqdad ibn al-Aswad (المقداد بن الأسود). There were less than 100 camels; some books mention 70 — so basically, every three people had to share a camel. So they would take shifts and turns walking and then riding the camel.

Note: There has to be some significance to this number "three hundred and ten and something." This number occurs in multiple places in our religion. Of them is in the famous hadith of Abu Dharr al-Ghifari where the Prophet ﷺ was asked, "How many rasuls are there?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Three hundred and ten and something." Also, the number of people fighting with Dawud AS against Goliath was three hundred and ten and something.<sup>[133]</sup>

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## Sharing of the Camel

So the sahaba had to share a camel — three people per camel. And the Prophet ﷺ was assigned the camel of Ali ibn Abi Talib, along with Abu Lubaba (أبو لبابة)<sup>[134]</sup>. Imam Ahmad in his Musnad mentions a very beautiful incident: Imagine if you had to share a camel with the Prophet ﷺ — what would you do? You will say, "Ya Rasulallah, tafaddal<sup>[135]</sup> — you take the camel, we will walk." And so, both Ali and Abu Lubaba insisted, "Ya Rasulallah, we will walk, and you take the camel." The response of the Prophet ﷺ is so sweet and gentle and profound. It's so full of wisdom. He could have said, "Yes" — and wallahi, if he had said yes, who would have objected. He is the Messenger of Allah! And forget even the religious side, he is the general, the commander, and the leader! The leader never travels in the same way as a soldier / private. So if he rode it, no one would have objected. Alternatively, he could have said, "No, let's be fair. Let's share" — just be blunt. But rather, the Prophet ﷺ allowed them to share in a manner that was very sweet and beautiful: He smiled back at them and

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<sup>132</sup> Why is this? Firstly, because the Khazraj were more than the Aws. Secondly, the percentage of Muslims in the Khazraj was more than the percentage of Muslims in the Aws. As we said, the Khazraj were generally the poorer tribe — and generally speaking, [the poor convert before the rich](#).

<sup>133</sup> <https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3957>

<sup>134</sup> Abu Lubaba is the famous sahabi who tied himself to the masjid as an act of repentance — out of guilt, he deprived himself of food and water and said, "I won't leave until Allah forgives me" [see [episode 61](#)].

<sup>135</sup> Tafaddal (تفضل) - go ahead.

said, "The two of you are not any younger / stronger than I am<sup>[136]</sup>, and I am not in any less need of the ajr (reward) than the two of you (meaning, neither am I in any less need of the rewards from Allah which I will get if I walk)." When he said this to them, they had no response. How are you going to respond when he says, "I am doing this for the reward of Allah just like you." And so the Prophet ﷺ insisted that they take turns on this one camel — and that was his way of enforcing fairness and equitable treatment.

And it goes without saying the psychological repercussions of the Prophet ﷺ walking: Imagine if you were in that army and were experiencing all the discomfort from the heat, the desert sand, the thirst, etc., but then you saw the Prophet ﷺ walking — you cannot complain! This is the wisdom. Why was the Prophet ﷺ so respected? Because he acted like a true prophet of Allah. And subhan'Allah, when you have a leader like this, what is going to happen? Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman — they all lived the same lifestyle during their reign as khulafa. As we know, when Umar RA conquered Jerusalem, he walked in while his slave was on the camel. And the people of Jerusalem thought Umar RA was the slave and the slave was Umar! Because what leader in the world would walk leading in his slave while he is walking. Where did Umar learn this from? He had the best teacher, the best master, the best mu'allim (معلم), and that is the Prophet ﷺ.

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### Mini Story 1: 'O You Who Believe, Fulfill Your Promises!'

Again, the seerah is composed of many small incidents, so we need to try to connect these disconnected incidents. Another disconnected incident that is a precursor to the Battle of Badr —which we can profoundly benefit from, especially for the political climate that we are living in— is the incident related to the lack of participation of Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman (حذيفة بن اليمان) and his father al-Yaman. They wanted to participate in the Battle of Badr, but they were held back because of a promise they made to the Quraysh:

These two were once captured by the Quraysh, and the Quraysh were almost going to kill them, when finally, one of the Quraysh decided, "You know what, let's just make them promise that they are not ever going to fight alongside Muhammad." Note that Hudhayfah and his father were not Muhajirs. His father was not from Makkah or Madinah. He came to Madinah in the days of Jahiliyyah because of a crime he had committed — so he abandoned his tribe, came to Madinah, and was 'adopted' by the people of Madinah. And then, he became a sahabi (i.e., accepted Islam) along with his son. So the two of them are neither Makki nor quite Madani; so when the Quraysh capture them, they don't have any direct animosity — rather, they are people who are caught up in the situation. So one of the Quraysh has sympathy and says, "We won't kill you, but promise us you won't fight us alongside Muhammad."

When the Prophet ﷺ heard this, he forbade Hudhayfah and his father to fight in the Battle of Badr or any ghazwa against the Quraysh. This shows us a Muslim is upon his word

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<sup>136</sup> Side note: Technically, Ali RA was around mid-20s, (and we don't know the age of Abu Lubaba), and the Prophet ﷺ was 54-55 — so the Prophet ﷺ was clearly senior in age.

and promises. A Muslim is never a traitor no matter what — treaties must be respected and honored. Legally binding contracts have to be upheld. This shows us it's not allowed from a shariah perspective to break one's word. Therefore, if you have a visa and passport and live in a Western country, you cannot be a traitor to the state. Hudhayfah and his father, even though they were put on the verge of death by the Quraysh and thus had no choice but to give their word, when the Prophet ﷺ heard about the promise that they had made, he told them to uphold it, and did not allow them to fight in the Battle of Badr. "المسلمون على شروطهم" (A Muslim is upon his word / promises)" — this is a hadith. And in the Quran, Allah says, "O you who believe, fulfill your covenant" [Quran, 5:1].

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### Mini Story 2: 'We Do Not Ask for Help From Pagans'

Another incident occurred when the Prophet ﷺ was leaving Madinah — one of the pagans of Madinah who was known for his bravery and fighting skills marched up to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "I wish to join you." The sahaba were happy to see him because they were getting a strong man. But the Prophet ﷺ asked him, "Do you testify that Allah is your One Lord and I am the Messenger?" He said, "No." In response, the Prophet ﷺ said, "إنا لا نستعين بمشرك" (We do not ask for help from pagans)." So the man stayed where he was, and a few hours later caught up and again asked, "Allow me to come with you." Again, the Prophet ﷺ asked him, "Do you testify..." but he still said, "No." And so the Prophet ﷺ replied, "We do not ask for help from pagans." A few hours later, he comes back and asks to join again. The Prophet ﷺ asks, "Do you testify..." and this time, he says yes and recites the kalimah shahada, i.e., he accepts Islam. At this point, he was allowed to join the expedition of the Muslims.

On this hadith: "We do not ask for help from pagans," we have varying opinions from the scholars about its interpretation. It was used politically in our times: in Gulf War I, Gulf War II, etc. "Are we allowed to ask for military help from a non-Muslim?" The four schools of thought differ as to the extent of its implications. Some scholars say you can never ask for any such help. Other scholars say it is allowed with conditions. So there is a spectrum of opinion. Imam al-Nawawi says, "This hadith shows that the general rule is that you don't ask for help from the pagan army. But there are exceptions. The Prophet ﷺ himself sought the help of Abdullah ibn Urayqit (a pagan) at a time of great sensitivity (he was [the guide during the Hijrah](#)). Think about it — this man could have gotten 100 camels as a reward for turning in the Prophet ﷺ. Yet, the Prophet ﷺ trusted his life with Abdullah ibn Urayqit, after Allah AWJ. So based on this, Imam al-Nawawi says if a person has a good opinion of Islam, and can be trusted, and the situation calls for it, then one can ask for the help of mushriks against an enemy. Similarly, [the Prophet ﷺ asked for help from Mut'im ibn Adi](#) after Abu Lahab stopped giving him protection (after Abu Talib died). The point is that we should know that there is a spectrum of opinions. And frankly, each opinion has some strength and evidence to it. And in Sh. YQ's humble opinion, it is a case-by-case situation and basis — when such a situation arises, then the scholars of that region and land, let them talk among themselves and come to a conclusion. And this is an ijtihadi issue anyway.

Another interesting point: Subhan'Allah, our religion doesn't ask us to look into the chests of people. Here is a man — wallahi, the average person would doubt his Islam.

Correct? The time, the place, and the circumstance — Once he says no, twice he says no, and the third time finally he basically says, "You know what? Okay, khalas. I'm a Muslim." Wallahi, the average person would doubt his Islam. But what does our religion tell us? Islam tells us to judge people by outward, and leave the inner to Allah SWT. Wallahi, we would be so much better if we simply followed this. Don't doubt people's intentions. The Prophet ﷺ asked him three times, "Are you a Muslim?" And there's a lot of money to be gained if he's a Muslim. So on the third time, he goes, "Khalas. I'm a Muslim." And nobody questions his Islam. Let it be. And in fact, there is no denying that our religion gives incentives for people to convert. Monetary sometimes, political at other times. Why? If they convert for any reason, because Islam is true, we are very confident that they will eventually convert for the right reason. We are so confident of our faith that, 'You know what? Khalas! Convert for the money! No big deal! But what's going to happen? Slowly, Islam and Iman will enter the heart.' This is the reality that we see from people to this day who convert for secondary reasons — primarily in our times, for marriage and love. [See also: [episode 83](#).]

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### Spying Games

It seems we can guesstimate that the Prophet ﷺ left Madinah on the 12th of Ramadan in 2 AH. And he put in charge of Madinah Abdullah ibn Umami Maktum (عبد الله بن أم مكتوم) — and subhan'Allah, this sahabi was blind, but he was still put in charge. This shows that Islam does not discriminate against people with disability. And this isn't the only instance. The Prophet ﷺ put Ibn Umami Maktum in charge of Madinah at least a dozen times. Why? Because Ibn Umami Maktum was a wise and sensible man. And his blindness did not come in the way of him being, in effect, the temporary mayor of Madinah.

In the meantime, Abu Sufyan is coming back from Syria, and he is taking extra precautions. Why? Because he already found out during the Ghazwa al-Ushayra that he was close to getting caught by just one day. Thus, on the way back, he took extra measures — so much so that he sent delegations out to spy on any spies. Ibn Ishaq mentions, some Bedouins mentioned that they saw two men spying on the camp (of course these two men are Talha and Sa'id ibn Zayd). The Bedouins took Abu Sufyan to Talha and Sa'id's campsite and he examined their camp and markings. In his intelligence and desperation, he opened up the camel dung and found the date seeds of Madinah. He said, "These are the dates of Yathrib!" So Abu Sufyan panics. And this panic causes him to go into overdrive mode. He does two things, both of which, qaddar'Allah, saved him, but also brought about the biggest disaster to the Quraysh. The two things are:

1. He took an unknown route back to Makkah. He hired a local guide and said, "Get us out of here. Take us along the shoreline." So he went from a much farther route, diverging from the more commonly taken path, basically bypassing the entire region of Madinah.

2. He sent for reinforcements by sending his fastest rider, Damdam ibn Amr al-Ghifari (ددم بن عمرو الغفاري), to Makkah to announce to the Quraysh that unless they did something, their caravan would be confiscated — unless they sent reinforcements, their money would be destroyed. And Damdam was truly very fast — think about it: this was probably taking place on the 10th of Ramadan, and the Battle of Badr will occur at the Plains of Badr on the

17th. So within 2-3 days, Damdam must have reached Makkah, and the same day, the Quraysh make the decision, and within 3 days, they come back and are at Badr. This is super fast speed.

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### The Dream of Atikah bint Abdul Muttalib

We have one last thing to discuss in today's lesson, and that is the events happening in Makkah before Damdam arrives that sets the stage: The dream of Atikah bint Abdul Muttalib (عاتكة بنت عبد المطلب), the full sister of Abdullah and Abu Talib (and thus, the full aunt of the Prophet ﷺ).<sup>[137]</sup>

Atikah had this dream three days before Damdam's arrival (so the Makkans still had no clue what was going on with their caravan). She woke up flustered and agitated, and she called her brother Abbas<sup>[138]</sup>, and said to him, "I saw a dream that I am very concerned about." Abbas asked, "What happened? Tell me." She said, "In my dream, I saw that in three days, a crier will come to Makkah, racing on his camel, and he first goes to the Ka'bah and cries out, 'O you, traitors! Meet your death in three days from now (i.e., 6 days from the point Atikah saw this dream),' and then the crier is on top of the Ka'bah and says the same thing. Then he is on top of the Mountain of Abu Qubays<sup>[139]</sup> and says the same thing." So the crier said the same thing three times, "O traitors!" Note: Why are the Quraysh called traitors in the dream? Because for the first time in the history of the Arabs, they have betrayed the foundation of what they considered the most important to them, and that is blood (tribes); they have not allowed their tribesmen to basically live with them. Another opinion is that they are called traitors because they are traitors to the religion of Ibrahim AS — and this is also plausible. Atikah continues, "This crier picks up a large rock (from the mountain of Abu Qubays), topples it down the mountain, it cracks up at the base, and it keeps on rolling until it hits every house in Makkah."

What is the interpretation of this dream? It's pretty obvious. Clearly, it is showing that whatever announcement this man will make will cause the deaths of these traitors in three days. And the rock hitting every house is the sign that every house will be struck with a calamity. What calamity? The death of multiple people in the household. And indeed, not a single household of the Quraysh was spared in the Battle of Badr.

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<sup>137</sup> Tangent: Did Atikah accept Islam or not? Ibn Ishaq mentions that the only aunt of the Prophet ﷺ who accepted Islam was Safiyyah RA. However, Ibn Sa'd says Atikah also accepted Islam. He said she Migrated to Madinah after this incident of the dream, and died in Madinah. But truth be told, even Ibn Hajar finds this skeptical, because we don't have a single report about anything from Atikah after this dream — had she converted, we would have heard of stories like we have heard from Safiyyah. So Allah knows best. Ibn Sa'd says she converted, but Ibn Ishaq —who is the earlier and greater authority— says none of the aunts of the Prophet ﷺ accepted Islam other than Safiyyah. Whichever the case, one thing is for sure: We never hear of Atikah after this dream.

<sup>138</sup> She was closest to him in age and bond.

<sup>139</sup> Mountain of Abu Qubays (جبل أبي قبيس) - this mountain was the highest peak in the immediate vicinity.

Abbas became very worried and said to Atikah, "This dream is a very dangerous dream, and I am worried that if you tell it to people, you will get into trouble. So keep it to yourself. Don't tell anybody about this dream."<sup>[140]</sup> Abbas said not to tell anyone, yet he couldn't follow his own advice, and he told his best friend al-Walid ibn Utbah (الوليد بن عتبة) about the dream. And he said, "O al-Walid! Please don't tell anyone else" — and al-Walid promised not to tell anybody. But then, al-Walid goes and tells his father Utbah about the dream, and says, "Abbas made me promise not to tell anybody, so please don't tell anybody..." so on and so forth, until within a short period of time, the whole city of Makkah is now gossiping about this strange dream. All the while, Abbas remains under the impression that nobody in Makkah knows except al-Walid.

And however you want to interpret the dream, there are clearly signs of doom and dread. The dream was clearly against the Quraysh, and so they were not too happy about it.

In any case, Abbas goes to sleep, and by the time he wakes up, everyone in the city is gossiping. And oblivious to the city's chatter, he goes about his business, then as was their custom, does tawaf after Asr. And he sees Abu Jahal surrounded by his minions — Abu Jahal says, "O Abbas, when you are done, come here." So Abbas does tawaf and then comes to Abu Jahal. Abu Jahal says, "O children of Abdul Muttalib, since when did you get a female prophetess?" — he is being sarcastic. Abbas says, "What do you mean?" Abu Jahal: "Are you not satisfied that you have a man who claims to be a prophet? You now want women to be predicting the future as well? If it is true that a crier will come after three days, then it will happen; but if it does not happen, then by Allah, we will make a sign and place it on the door of the Ka'bah that the Banu Abdul Muttalib are the most lying of the Arabs known to man!" i.e., "We will publicly shame you!" Abbas narrates this hadith himself later on, and says he was caught off guard, so he denied everything.

The news of what Abu Jahal did to Abbas humiliated the whole Banu Hashim tribe. Thus, the Banu Abdul Muttalib are fuming. Before Abbas even gets back to his house, the women have already heard of what just took place (how news spreads!), and so, when he comes back, they begin lashing out at him, "Are you not a man?! Could you not defend your own women? Have you no shame? You and your sister and your tribe were dissed, and you just stand there and take it?" Until finally, Abbas said he decided the next day to publicly refute Abu Jahal. Now it is no longer a matter of dream; it is now a matter of tribalism. And Abbas later narrates, "For the rest of the day, all the women of Banu Abdul Muttalib came and had it out with me." So now he is thinking, "What can I say tomorrow..."

He wakes up the next day and goes to find Abu Jahal. And he narrates this in the first person in the Mustadrak of al-Hakim: "When I came to the Ka'bah, I saw Abu Jahal in the distance. But as soon as he saw me, he turned pale, turned his back to me, and walked away. I said, 'What is the matter with him? Doesn't he have the courage to face me now?' I went to go face him when I finally saw what had caused him to go pale." It's the third day. The crier has arrived and Abu Jahal has already heard him. So Abu Jahal is so embarrassed

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<sup>140</sup> And it is said that Atikah used to see true dreams like this regularly. And we know that seeing true dreams is something that Allah blesses some people with. E.g., The king at the time of Yusuf AS — he wasn't a Muslim, yet he saw these dreams [see Quran, 12:46]. These dreams can come to non-Muslims as well.

that he cannot even face al-Abbas now. And of course, the crier is none other than Damdam — and to give a melodramatic effect, Damdam mutilated his own camel —in one narration, it's said he chopped its nose off— and smeared the blood over the camel, had torn his clothes, looked disheveled, and entered Makkah riding backward — all of this to give the impression that he himself had also been attacked. And then he cried out, "O Quraysh, your caravan! O Quraysh, your caravan! Your property and money with Abu Sufyan is being attacked by Muhammad and his Companions right now! And you will not be able to defend it unless you act immediately! SOS! SOS!" (And of course, it is all a lie — because as of yet, there is no actual attack happening.)

And Damdam came to the Ka'bah and made the announcement — and of course, his announcement was "come and fight," but Atikah is already telling them that no, rather, "come and meet your deaths."

Official narration:

In March 624, Atikah reported a frightening dream to her brother Abbas. She had dreamed that a camel had halted near Makkah and that its rider had shouted: "Come forth, O people! And do not leave your men to face a disaster that will come three days hence!" Then the man had climbed a mountain and thrown down a rock, which had shattered, spraying pieces on every building in the city. Abbas warned Atikah not to tell anyone about this dream, but he told a friend, who told his father, and soon it was common knowledge in Makkah. Abu Jahal asked Abbas: "Are you not satisfied that your men should play the prophet, that your women should do so also? Atikah has predicted that there will be war in three days. If the three days pass and nothing happens, we will write you down as the greatest liars in Arabia!" Three days later, a messenger from Abu Sufyan arrived in the valley, stood up on his camel, and tore his shirt, shouting: "O Quraysh! The merchant-camels, the merchant-camels! Muhammad and his Companions are lying in wait for your property, which is with Abu Sufyan! I do not think that you will overtake it! Help! Help!" Thus alerted, the Quraysh armed themselves for the Battle of Badr. However, Atikah's brother Abu Lahab did not join the army, saying he was afraid of Atikah's predictive dream.

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## Q&A

Usul al-Fiqh: Do the rulings upon the Prophet ﷺ differ from the rulings upon the other Muslims? The response is: there are some elements / aspects of the shariah where what is unique to him is different than what he has legislated upon us. There are certain hadiths that have been interpreted in this light, that a certain ruling was unique for the Prophet ﷺ and it was not something that we need to follow. But these are 'the exception rather than the rule.' And generally speaking, when these exceptions exist, he himself points it out. And the most famous example is that of *wisal* (وصال), which is fasting for 2-3 days nonstop (i.e., without suhoor and iftar). Or if it is explicitly mentioned in the Quran —e.g., where Allah says, "This is exclusively for you, not for the rest of the Believers" [33:50]— then, the ruling is unique to the Prophet ﷺ and does not apply to us. So it is true that this is something that exists in Usul al-Fiqh — but we don't invoke this principle unless there is explicit evidence to show this. Otherwise, the general rule is that everything the Prophet ﷺ



did and said and approved, we are also told to follow it. Because he is our uswah<sup>[141]</sup>. Now, this does play into fiqh — for example, drinking while standing. The Prophet ﷺ apparently said in a hadith —and there is ikhtilaf whether it is authentic or not—: "Don't drink while standing"; but it is reported in another hadith that he himself drank while standing, as recorded in Bukhari. So how do we reconcile this? Some people say, it is khas<sup>[142]</sup> for him; and the majority say, 'Well, this shows it is allowed. You can do it, but it's makruh to drink while standing.' So this tension does exist in fiqh. But it should only be evoked when there is no other means of reconciliation.

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<sup>141</sup> Uswah (أسوة) - role model.

<sup>142</sup> Khas (خاص) - exclusive.

## 037. The Battle of Badr 2

Now we will move on to the Big Battle of Badr. Recall Badr was a person's name who dug a well at a particular place — the well is then named after him, and the place was then called after the well. We mentioned Abu Sufyan detected the presence of the Prophet ﷺ and thus he took an alternate route closer to the Red Sea, and he sent a crier to the people of Quraysh to rally them up. Also, we mentioned the dream of Atikah — what happened after? :

The Quraysh convened a council and they debated what must be done. Almost unanimously, they agreed to send an army to protect the caravan. The exaggerated reports of Damdam made them very worried that their livestock was in danger. Therefore, the largest and quickest gathering ever in the history of Makkah took place, in that, they gathered together the largest quantity of people in the smallest amount of time. Literally within a day, they prepared and left Makkah.

A number of incidents occurred during this time. Ibn Ishaq mentions not a single family in Makkah was left behind except that someone from that family was sent. (And indeed, this is in line with Atikah's dream, that a rock will strike every household in Makkah.) And if they could not send somebody from within the household, they hired another person to go in his place.

### To Participate or Not to Participate: Abu Lahab

Abu Lahab (أبو لهب) himself, who was the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ and the chieftain of the Banu Hashim, decided not to go, and instead, found someone to go in his place. [Al-As ibn Wa'il](#) had an outstanding loan of 4,000 dirhams with Abu Lahab — so Abu Lahab said to him, "Go in my place and I will forgive this loan and wipe it out." So this person went, and Abu Lahab did not go. It is not mentioned why he did not go. Perhaps along with the natural fear and cowardice of meeting an enemy and of being killed, Allah knows best, there was also probably a sense of personal conflict that at the end of the day, it is his subtribe he will be fighting, and it is his own nephew. He ultimately could not meet his own tribe in battle, as this goes against all that the jahili Arab stood for. Even though Abu Lahab is not worthy of any praise, nonetheless, sometimes, we find that he did some things of nobility (noble according to his custom, not according to Islam) — e.g., when the Prophet ﷺ was born, he was so happy [he freed a slave](#). Also, after the death of Abu Talib, [he initially protected the Prophet ﷺ](#) — despite all that happened, he said, "At the end of the day, he (the Prophet ﷺ) is my tribe, my nephew — I must protect him." So there seems to be that deep down inside, he had some sense of karam<sup>[143]</sup> that stopped him from fighting the Prophet ﷺ in battle. But again, this is Sh. YQ's theory. The classical books don't mention anything about why Abu Lahab would not go out and fight.

Also note, even though Abu Lahab is of the worst, there are people much worse than him, e.g., Abu Jahal and Umayya.

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<sup>143</sup> Karam (كرم) - nobility.

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### To Fight or Not to Fight: Utbah ibn Rabi'ah

Utbah ibn Rabi'ah (عتبة بن ربيعة) is the person who [gifted the grapes to the Prophet ﷺ](#) after the incident of Ta'if (with the Christian slave). Again, this person Utbah, who was a distant uncle of the Prophet ﷺ, had some noble traits. He also hesitated, and initially, refused to go. He decided not to fight because the Muslims were his blood relatives. However, his brother Shaybah (شيبه) said, "If we abandon our people at a time such as this crucial time, then for the rest of our lives we will have to suffer mockery and humiliation." So the both of them prepared to go out — little did they know they were preparing for their own deaths. What we now call "blind nationalism," this is what caused them to basically support the cause of their people. And they both will die in the [mubaraza](#)<sup>[144]</sup>.

We are jumping the gun (and we will repeat this story in the next episode), but Utbah clearly demonstrates some common sense and values — he is the one who will try to prevent the battle until the very last second. When the two armies lined up, Utbah was so disgusted that cousins and uncles would fight each other, so he jumped on his red camel and told the Quraysh, "Do not fight! Even if you win you will be the losers (because you will have killed your own brothers and sons)! Blame it on me and my cowardice! Go ahead and tell the Arabs that \*I\* became scared and \*I\* was the one who stopped you! Let the blame come to me!" — that is truly a sense of nobility. But ultimately, the battle went on.

Note this mentality that you blindly follow your people even though they do wrong, is not of Islam. Only Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is the human being that we support unconditionally. As for other human beings, we look at their cause, methodology, etc. — we need to see what is right and what is wrong. We as Muslims are told to follow the truth even if it is against ourselves, or against our father and mother. Utbah was a wise man at the end of the day. In fact (again, [we are jumping the gun](#)) the Prophet ﷺ himself said, "If anyone in that gathering (i.e., the army of the Quraysh) has any wisdom / good, it is the man on the red camel." So the Prophet ﷺ is testifying Utbah to be good. But Abu Jahal won over — he accused Utbah of something; and in his anger, Utbah became the first person to go and fight in the mubaraza and die.

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### To Participate or Not to Participate: Uqba ibn Abi Mu'ayt

Utbah and Abu Lahab, perhaps their reasons for not wanting to go were somewhat noble by jahili standards. But Uqba ibn Abi Mu'ayt's reason was out of pure cowardice. Uqba ibn Abi Mu'ayt (عقبة بن أبي معيط) was perhaps the lowest of the low of the enemies of the Prophet ﷺ. As we said, those who opposed Islam in Makkah were of spectrum. Some of them, even though they were pagans, had some nobility — they didn't do that which was undignified. And the best example of this is Abu Sufyan — despite his Jahiliyyah, paganism, etc., he had a sense of nobility in him. Thus, he never did anything vulgar or crude or demeaning to his own dignity. And generally speaking (and of course, there are always

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<sup>144</sup> [Mubaraza](#) (مبارزة) - a duel to the death that precedes the war.

exceptions), those who were noble enemies, Allah SWT eventually guided them. And those who were crude, vulgar, had no manners, etc., were not guided. Uqba was perhaps the worst of the worst; filthiest of the filthy. This is perhaps why Allah SWT didn't even mention him in the Quran. He is so filthy he is not even worthy of being mentioned.

Uqba was that one who snuck up behind the Prophet ﷺ and [choked him](#) while he was praying in front of the Ka'bah; and Abu Bakr came running up and said, "Will you kill a man just because he says Allah is his Lord?!" Then Abu Bakr was beaten, bloodied and bruised, until he was in bed for a week. Uqba was one of those who approved the assassination of the Prophet ﷺ in the [secret meeting](#). And Uqba was that person who when Abu Jahal said, "Who amongst you will pick up the carcass / intestines of the animal and throw it on Muhammad when he is doing sajdah?", he stood up and [did the deed](#). Ibn Ishaq said, "The worst of the people stood up and rushed to get it" — and that is Uqba.<sup>[145][146]</sup> And then, they were all laughing when the Prophet ﷺ was stuck under the carcass. Ibn Mas'ud RA said, "I was standing at the distance looking, but I could not do anything" — because Ibn Mas'ud RA did not have protection [see [episode 15](#)].

It is narrated that Uqba once sarcastically invited the Prophet ﷺ to a meal. And the Prophet ﷺ said, "I will never eat with you until you testify 'la ilaha illaLlah Muhammadur RasuluLlah.'" In his anger, Uqba spat on the face of the Prophet ﷺ. And the Prophet ﷺ calmly wiped the spit away, and prophesied, "O Uqba, when I meet you outside of the valleys of Makkah, I shall kill / execute you while you are tied up." Subhan'Allah. And because of this, Uqba was frightened when he heard of the Battle of Badr; he said, "This man has promised to kill me, so I cannot go out of Makkah now." (Look at the irony here — deep down inside, he knew the prophecy was true, and that is why he did not want to leave Makkah.) But one of his family said, "Don't worry, I have the fastest camel — I will give it to you; so even if the army flees, your camel will take you back to Makkah safe" — and the others were also castigating and making fun of him — so to prove his manhood, Uqba decided to go ahead and accompany. But of course, even if you have the fastest camel, you cannot outwit the makr<sup>[147]</sup> of Allah AWJ. As we will see in one of the upcoming episodes, when the army of Quraysh fled, Uqba's camel was the first to flee. So he was left in the middle of an empty plain with no protection — and he was captured and executed (one of only two who were executed in the Battle of Badr).

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### To Participate or Not to Participate: Umayya ibn Khalaf

Umayya ibn Khalaf (أمية بن خلف), the master of Bilal RA, was the stereotypical coward — an overly fed huge man wearing fancy garments. He has a lot of money and slaves, but no skills of war. When Umayya heard of the battle, he found someone to represent him, paid

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<sup>145</sup> Note 1: The sajdah is an Islamic routine — this posture thus was being mocked by the Quraysh.

<sup>146</sup> Note 2: Uqba was a rich nobleman, yet he picked up this filthy carcass. He would \*never\* do this for any other cause — but the filthiness inside of him was worse than the filthiness of this carcass — for him to pick up this filth and rush back happy to throw it on the Prophet ﷺ — can you imagine his mentality?

<sup>147</sup> Makr (مكر) - plan.

him a small fortune, and said, "This man will represent me" — and he was happy that he managed to get out. But Umayya was ultimately one of the seniors / leaders of the Quraysh —his presence would bring great morale to the troops— so Abu Jahal said, "If you do not go, this will demoralize many people. You are the sayyid of this whole valley! [So you must go!]" Still, Umayya was hesitant.

Abu Jahal then went to Uqba and they devised a tactic to make sure Umayya went out. When Umayya was sitting in the public space on a fancy carpet with his entourage, Uqba came to him with a perfume burner and coal underneath it —of the type that women use— and said, "This is your gift, O Umayya! Perfume yourself as you are worthy of being perfumed!" i.e., "You are no man." Umayya understood what was going on — so he stood up and cursed Uqba and whoever sent Uqba (because he knew Uqba was not smart enough to do this himself). Umayya was so insulted he finally changed his mind. But even then, his cowardice shows: Ibn Ishaq says when Umayya goes back home, he tells his wife, "Go purchase for me the best camel that money can buy." (Why? So he can run away whenever the need arises.) His wife begged him, "Don't go! You never know, you might die!" etc. — and Umayya did not intend to fight in the first place, so he calmed her down, "Don't worry, I don't really intend to fight. I'm just going to make a show of it and just quietly sneak back." But ultimately, everyone whom Allah has destined to die will die. As Allah SWT said, "Still it transpired so Allah may establish what He had destined — that those who were to perish and those who were to survive might do so after the Truth had been made clear to both" [Quran, 8:42].

Recall when the incident of the intestines happened, the Prophet ﷺ stood up and made du'a to Allah, "O Allah, I leave you to deal with... [and he mentioned all of the 7 or 8 people by name (i.e., Umayya, Abu Jahal, Uqba, et al.).]" And every single one whom he mentioned will be among the first people to die in the Battle of Badr. And Umayya is one of them. He is one of the people destined to die in the Battle of Badr. So Umayya as well began to make preparations to 'join' the army — little did he know he was preparing for his own death.

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### Refreshing Memory: The Prophet's ﷺ Du'a Against the Leaders of the Quraysh

[Bukhari Volume 1. Book 9. Number 499:](#)

Narrated Amr ibn Maymun (عمرو بن ميمون):

Abdullah ibn Mas'ud said, "While Rasulullah ﷺ was praying beside the Ka'bah, there were some Quraysh people sitting in a gathering. One of them said, 'Don't you see this (who does deeds just to show off)? Who amongst you can go and bring the dung, blood, and the abdominal contents (intestines, etc.) of the slaughtered camels of the family of so-and-so and then wait till he prostrates and put that in between his shoulders?' The worst amongst them (Uqba ibn Abi Mu'ayt) went (and brought them) and when Rasulullah ﷺ prostrated, he put them between his shoulders. The Prophet ﷺ remained in prostration and they laughed so much so that they fell on each other. A passerby went to Fatima who was a young girl in those days. She came running and the Prophet ﷺ was still in prostration. She

removed them and cursed upon the Quraysh on their faces. When Rasulullah ﷺ completed his prayer, he said, 'O Allah! Take revenge on Quraysh.' He said so thrice and added, 'O Allah! take revenge on Amr ibn Hisham (Abu Jahal), Utbah ibn Rabi'ah, Shaybah ibn Rabi'ah, al-Walid ibn Utbah, Umayya ibn Khalaf, Uqba ibn Abi Mu'ayt, and Umara ibn al-Walid.'" Abdullah ibn Mas'ud added, "By Allah! I saw all of them dead in the battlefield on the Day of Badr and they were dragged and thrown in the Qalib (القليب) (a well) at Badr. Rasulullah ﷺ then said, 'Allah's curse has descended upon the people of the Qalib.'"

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### The Du'a of the Quraysh

It's mentioned in the Tafsir of al-Suddi (تفسير السدي) that before the army of Quraysh left Makkah, they made a du'a. They gathered around the Ka'bah, held on to the rings and the cloth of the Ka'bah, and said: "O Allah, whichever of the two armies is more noble in Your Eyes, help them! O Allah, whichever of the two groups is more honorable, give them victory! And O Allah, send Your aid upon the better of the two tribes!" Little did they realize they were making du'a against themselves. And Allah SWT references this in Surah al-Anfal, a surah that deals with the Incident of Badr. Verse 19 says:

إِنْ تَسْتَفِئِحُوا فَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ الْفَتْحُ وَإِنْ تَنْتَهُوا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَإِنْ تَعُودُوا نَعُدْ وَلَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْكُمْ فِئَتُكُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ وَالَّهِ مَعِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

"If you [pagans of Makkah] sought judgment, now it has come to you. And if you cease, it will be for your own good. But if you persist, We will persist. And your forces —no matter how numerous they might be— will not benefit you whatsoever. For Allah is certainly with the believers" [Quran, 8:19].

Allah is saying, 'Victory has already come not to you (not to the Quraysh), but rather, to the other side (the Muslims). But if you stop what you are doing, it is better for you. And if you return to war, We shall return to war. And all of your numbers won't benefit, because Allah is with the Muslims.'

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### Iblis Appearing in the Form of Suraqa ibn Malik

The Quraysh marched outside of Makkah, and their numbers were around 1,300 — the largest ever gathered in the Quraysh's history. And this number will increase exponentially in future battles — in Uhud [3 AH], it will become 3,000, and Ahzab [5 AH] 5,000+. Because clearly, Allah SWT is intending, in a very expedited way, the conversion of the entire Arabian Peninsula.

So the Quraysh had 1,300 people as they were exiting. And from the beginning, we notice that they were not united — there was always bickering. Allah says in the Quran, "You think they are one group, but in reality, their hearts are disunited" [see Quran, 59:14]. And as they exited Makkah, this disunity showed itself. One group began debating among themselves, "All of the men of fighting age are marching outside of Makkah; are we going to leave the city unprotected?!" — and then they brought up an old rivalry that existed before

the coming of Islam. What had happened in the past? The Quraysh and the Banu Bakr (بنو بكر) had started a small tension / war:

To make a long story short: One of the Qureshi youth, who was a future leader of the Quraysh, wandered into the land of the Banu Bakr —and Ibn Ishaq mentions he was a tall and handsome man— and when the leader of the Banu Bakr saw him, he felt jealous, so he told someone from their tribe to assassinate him. Before this, by many years or decades, there was a blood feud between the two tribes where one member of the Quraysh had killed someone from the Banu Bakr. So the chief of Banu Bakr used that as an excuse and said, "I am going to make up for that one for one by killing this young man." When the Quraysh sent a representative and asked about the reason for the killing, the chieftain of Banu Bakr said, "A man for a man. Remember that guy you killed long ago? I killed this young man for that young man that was killed — so let's call it quits." So the Quraysh said, "Fine, we won't go to war. A man for a man. We did owe them blood money we never paid up." However, the brother of this killed man decided to go and kill the chieftain of the Banu Bakr. Not just any average guy. The very man who ordered the assassination. And the brother was successful; he cut up the chieftain in pieces in a gruesome fashion and brought the pieces back to Makkah, and put them on the door of the Ka'bah. So the news spread that the Quraysh had killed the chieftain of Banu Bakr. This is now war. — But before any war could take place, the Message of Islam became stronger and stronger, and the both tribes had to basically deal with the Muslims; so they paused their animosity for a while. So the situation was now in limbo — unresolved.

And now when the Quraysh is leaving Makkah for Badr, they are getting paranoid: "Maybe \*now\* the Banu Bakr are going to come and attack Makkah when it is empty — they will take our women, kill our children," etc. So there was a huge commotion in the army. And as it is, generally, people don't want to go to war — they want an excuse to get back. So a large segment of the army was about to return. But what happened? Shaytan became desperate — Iblis himself physically came to them in the form of Suraqa ibn Malik<sup>[148]</sup>. Iblis chose to appear in the form of Suraqa because Suraqa was from the Banu Kinana — and the Banu Kinana is the larger tribe of the Banu Bakr (just like Quraysh is the larger tribe of the Banu Hashim) — i.e., Banu Kinana rivals the Quraysh, and Banu Bakr is one of the tribes of the Banu Kinana. And Suraqa was a chieftain of another subtribe of the Banu Kinana. So Iblis comes in his form and says, "Don't worry, I have heard of your fear, and I will make sure that the Banu Bakr won't attack you. I will be your protector. You can count on my word." (And of course, shaytan never spoke truth — this is all lie.) And he even said, "I will accompany you as well [to the war, and fight along with you], so that you know I am serious." So the Quraysh were so happy that one of the chieftains of the Banu Kinana was coming and promised them this.

(But as we all know, later on, when shaytan saw the angels coming down on the morning of Badr, he turned around and started running away. And the Quraysh were like, "Suraqa, why are you running away?!" — because the Quraysh could not see the angels. Someone tried to stop him, but he pushed that person and revealed his true identity, as

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<sup>148</sup> Suraqa ibn Malik is the same person who [tried to capture the Prophet ﷺ during the Hijrah](#). Note at this point in time, Suraqa isn't a Muslim yet. He will embrace Islam later in 8 AH

recorded in the Quran: "And [remember] when Satan made their deeds pleasing to them and said, 'No one can defeat you today from amongst the people; and indeed, I am your protector!' But when the two armies faced each other, he turned his back around and said, 'Indeed, I am disassociated from you. Indeed, I see what you do not see; indeed, I fear Allah. And Allah is severe in punishment'" [8:48].)

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### **The Size of the Quraysh Army**

In Musnad Imam Ahmad, Ibn Ishaq, etc., it is said that there were 1,300 people, Abu Jahal was their undisputed main leader, they had over 100 horses, over 600 suits of armor, [and probably around] 500 camels not only to ride on but also to use as food (and it is said that every day, they slaughtered 10 camels); they even brought along their qaynat<sup>[149]</sup> to boost their morale (like a type of cheerleaders). Allah mentions this in the Quran [8:47], "Don't be like those [pagans] who exited their homes arrogantly, only to show off to the people, and to block others from the Path of Allah. And Allah is Fully Aware of what they do." So Allah describes their psychological frame of mind: When they were walking out, they were feeling puffed up; they wanted people to hear that they were 1,300 strong, the largest army that the Arabs had ever seen up until that time. They wanted to block others from the Path of Allah, but rather, Allah had surrounded all of them — they thought they were blocking Allah's Path; little did they realize Allah had blocked them.

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There are three things going on now: (1) Abu Sufyan and his caravan; (2) the Quraysh army; and (3) the Muslim army.

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### **Updates on Abu Sufyan's Caravan and the Quraysh Army**

Once Abu Sufyan felt that the caravan was safe and beyond the reach of the Muslims, he sent someone to tell the Quraysh that his caravan is now safe and that they can go back. Notice even Abu Sufyan didn't want war. He said, "Go tell the army to return." Once the person met the army, they reconvened to decide what to do. Utbah said, "Let's go back; the caravan is safe." But Abu Jahal said, "No. We will go to Badr and we will stay there for three days —drink our wine, have our women sing for us— and let the news spread in all of Arabia that we are a nation to be feared." Notice here there is still no talk of war — the whole purpose of the army was to protect the caravan. So even though Abu Jahal said to carry on, around 300-350 people, consisting of Banu Zuhrah and other smaller tribes, returned back to Makkah. So around ¼ of the army went back, and this was obviously demoralizing. So the Quraysh was differing among themselves; and as we will come to, we will see that the Muslims as well was differing among themselves. So both parties didn't want to go. But Allah has already decreed Badr will take place, and no one can escape from the qadr of Allah AWJ. Allah mentions this in Surah al-Anfal:

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<sup>149</sup> Qaynat (قينات) - singing girls.



"Even if the two armies had made an appointment [to meet], both would have certainly missed it. Still, it transpired so Allah may establish what He had destined — that those who were to perish and those who were to survive might do so after the Truth had been made clear to both" [Quran, 8:42].

When the Quraysh army reached Juhfa (جُفَّة) —most likely before the envoy of Abu Sufyan reached them— one of the youngest men from the Banu Hashim (a son of the cousin of the Prophet ﷺ) who was in the Quraysh army, saw a dream. He saw in his dream that a crier, who had a camel with him, riding towards them and announced, "Utbah ibn Rabi'ah has been killed, Shaybah ibn Rabi'ah has been killed, Abu al-Hakam ibn Hisham (Abu Jahal) has been killed, Umayyah ibn Khalaf has been killed..." and he kept on mentioning every single famous name of the Quraysh, and said they all have been killed. And then the young man said the crier cut the hump of the camel and sent the camel forward, and the camel went into their encampment, and its blood splattered on every single tent. The interpretation of the dream is very obvious: Not only are the mentioned people going to be killed, but every single tent will have casualties. But the army ignored this dream and considered it to be a meaningless dream — little did they realize it was a true dream.

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### Updates on the Muslim Army

Back to the Muslim side now. When they left Madinah, they had \*no\* clue they would meet an army. They just thought it was going to be an easy and quick raid where they were 315 against only ~40 armed guards. They thought it would be a clear victory. However, rumors began to come that there was an army that had left Makkah intending to fight the Muslims.

We don't know when, but the Prophet ﷺ was shown a dream that he would be fighting an army. He ﷺ was hoping that this dream would manifest at a later date —maybe not on this particular expedition— but then when the rumor began to reach, the Prophet ﷺ began to think maybe it would manifest in this expedition. He asked the Muslims, "What do you think if instead [of Abu Sufyan's caravan,] we met a group from Makkah that has been already informed of your departure (i.e., a group that is prepared to fight you)?" Some of the sahaba began to question this — they said, "Ya Rasulallah, we do not have any preparations to fight an army. We came to attack the caravan."

The next day, the Prophet ﷺ repeated the same question, and the sahaba's response was even more firm that they were not ready to face an army. Allah SWT mentions this in the Quran:

كَمَا أَخْرَجَكَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَيْتِكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَكَاذِبُونَ  
يُجَادِلُونَكَ فِي الْحَقِّ بَعْدَمَا تَبَيَّنَ كَأَنَّمَا يُسَاقُونَ إِلَى الْمَوْتِ وَهُمْ يَنْظُرُونَ

"...when your Lord brought you [O Prophet] out of your home for a just cause, a group of believers was totally against it. They disputed with you about the truth after it had been made clear, as if they were being driven to death with their eyes wide open" [Quran, 8:5-6].

Further:

وَإِذْ يَعِدُكُمُ اللَّهُ إِحْدَى الطَّائِفَتَيْنِ أَنَّهَا لَكُمْ وَتَوَدُّونَ أَنَّ غَيْرَ ذَاتِ الشُّوْكَةِ تَكُونُ لَكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُحَقِّقَ الْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَاتِهِ وَيَقْطَعَ دَابِرَ الْكَافِرِينَ

"[Remember, O believers,] when Allah promised [to give] you the upper hand over either target, you wished to capture the unarmed party. But it was Allah's Will to establish the Truth by His Words and uproot the disbelievers" [Quran, 8:7].

At this stage, the Prophet ﷺ himself was unsure; but he told them, "Even if we meet the other group (the army), Allah has promised us victory," i.e., "Don't worry." But still, the human soul is weak; they said, "We are not ready. We cannot fight an army — we don't have armor, we don't have food, we don't have supplies, we don't have anything. We literally were expecting [an easy] expedition and come back within 2 days." As Allah said in the Quran, they continued arguing even after the Prophet ﷺ had explained to them [see Quran, 8:5-6]. But Allah wanted His decree to go forth. Further, He SWT said, 'You wanted the one with no weapons to be yours, but Allah had a far bigger thing in store — [and that is] to show who was upon the Truth' [see Quran, 8:7]. Remember, the Day of Badr is also called Yawm al-Furqan<sup>150</sup>. So Allah is saying, 'Today, I want to show who is true, and destroy the false, even if the disbelievers do not like it' [see Quran, 8:7-8].

We can derive a benefit from the above verses: It is not nifaq to sometimes feel hesitant (out of fear etc.) to do a positive deed, as long as your Iman eventually wins over. Even though the sahaba are as perfect a generation as possible, they are humans after all; and humans can't be perfect. Thus, they were arguing, "We can't do this. No way we can fight the Quraysh," etc. But this arguing doesn't make them any less of a believer — as we see in verse [8:5], Allah calls them "believers" even though they tried to persuade the Prophet ﷺ not to go. Still, they are not munafiqs. And this is a big sigh of relief for us. Because it shows that even the believer can have some fear and hesitation. Yes Allah SWT mildly reproached them, but He still called them Mu'minin. So to be a bit hesitant to do a positive deed in itself is not nifaq (hypocrisy), as long as your Iman eventually wins over. Another example is, Allah says in the Quran [2:216], "Qital has been made obligatory upon you though you hate it" — Allah SWT said, "You HATE it," but did their hate of the qital make them munafiq? No. So in our times for example, occasionally to feel a slight hesitation to wake up for Fajr, that in itself is not nifaq, as long as we get out of our bed and pray our Fajr.

The Muslims make their way to Badr, and they are still not sure which groups they will meet. The 1,000 or the 40. The Prophet ﷺ himself then acted as a scout with Abu Bakr RA to find out whether it was the 1,000 or the 40 — this shows the sensitivity of the situation that the Prophet ﷺ himself is now acting as a scout and a fact finder. And this is the only time he does so in the entire seerah. He and Abu Bakr find information, until they come across an old Bedouin somewhere outside of Badr. And Bedouins are neutral people — they side neither with the Quraysh nor the people of Madinah; so it's a good place to get information from. The Bedouin obviously does not recognize who these two people are, so the Prophet ﷺ asks him, "Do you have any information about the Quraysh, and about Muhammad and his army?" He is asking about himself as well so that suspicion doesn't fall on him — to give the impression that he himself is also neutral. If he only asks about the

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<sup>150</sup> Yawm al-Furqan (يوم الفرقان) - the Day of Criterion.

Quraysh, then obviously people might infer that he is on the side of the Muslims. But the Bedouin was also smart, he asked, "Who are you?" i.e., "I can't tell you until I know which side you are on." Of course, the Prophet ﷺ is not going to reveal that he is in fact the leader of the Muslim army, so rather, he said, "I promise to tell you \*where\* we are from as long as you tell us any information that you have." With this, the Bedouin got the impression that, "Okay, if they are going to tell me, then clearly, they are not on one of the two sides; or else they wouldn't want to tell me." So the Bedouin says, "Okay, if you want to know, then this is the information I have: It has reached us that Muhammad has left Yathrib on such-and-such a date, and if this is true, then they are camped right outside of Badr" — and this information is dead on; such is the accuracy of the information of the Bedouins (as they needed this information to survive themselves). The Bedouin continued, "And it has reached me that the army of the Quraysh has left Makkah on such-and-such a date, and if this is accurate, then they must be at such-and-such a location now" — and we know that this bit is also accurate. Then the Bedouin asked, "So where are you from?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "We are from water." And he and Abu Bakr left the scene. Now what did the Prophet ﷺ mean when he said, "We are from water"? This is called tawriya<sup>[151]</sup> — you hide a truth with another truth, not with a lie. So tawriya is not lying. Islam does not allow lying. So tawriya is allowed. But our shariah also tells us that whoever uses tawriya excessively, it is only going to be a matter of time before he gets accused of lying — i.e., it is not encouraged even though it is allowed. So what does it mean "we are from water"? Allah says in the Quran [21:30], "We created from water every living thing" — so yes, we are from water.

The Prophet ﷺ comes back and does not tell the army anything yet. He first and foremost goes and stands in salah asking Allah for help. As he was praying, a commotion began. The sahaba had captured two of the slaves from the Quraysh — and they asked, "Where are you from?" The slaves said, "We are from the army of the Quraysh." So the sahaba began beating up the slaves, saying, "No! You are lying! You are not from the army! You are from the caravan of Abu Sufyan!" Notice the sahaba themselves are so eager that what they are going to meet up is not the army but the caravan, so they are throwing their own projections onto these slaves. They continued beating until finally, the slaves said, "Yes, from the caravan! From the caravan!" Then after a while, the sahaba asked again, and the slaves said, "We are from the army" — so the sahaba beat them again until they said, "No, no! From the caravan! From the caravan!"

This happened for a while until the Prophet ﷺ finished his salah and said to the sahaba, "When they tell you the truth, you beat them; and when they lie, you let them go," i.e., how foolish is that? You torture them just to make them say what you want to believe; and under torture, of course, people will say anything. So what's the point? Then the Prophet ﷺ came up to the slaves and asked, "Tell me, how many people are in the army?" They said, "We are just slaves; we don't know these things" — and indeed, most slaves are illiterate and uneducated — they cannot count to 1,000 or even 100. So then the Prophet ﷺ changed the question and asked —and again here we see his wisdom ﷺ—: "Tell me, how many camels do the Quraysh kill every day?" — a question they would know, as this is their job to slaughter, cook, etc. So they replied, "9 or 10." And the Prophet ﷺ immediately said, "They [the army] are between 900 to 1,000 people." He then asked, "Who is present amongst them from their noblemen?" (And thus began a who's who of the Quraysh. This is

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<sup>151</sup> Tawriya (تورية) - double meaning / double entendre.

the whole point and beauty of Badr, that \*every single\* major henchman of the Quraysh will be eliminated. It was a victory upon victory.) The slaves began mentioning: Umayyah ibn Khalaf, Utbah ibn Rabi'ah, Shaybah ibn Rabi'ah, Abu Jahal, et al.

And unlike us, the sahaba of course didn't know the outcome of the battle, so this news caused them to be very disheartened. Because if all of the noblemen are coming, this means the Quraysh must have the best armor, the best weapon, the best riding animal, etc. So this demoralized them. This is now the test of their Iman. The Prophet ﷺ on the other hand smiled in happiness, because he knew Allah's promise is true. As Allah SWT said in the Quran, "Whichever of the two you meet, they will be yours. You wanted the unarmed one, but Allah intended to establish the Truth by His Words and to eliminate the disbelievers" [see Quran, 8:7]. The Prophet ﷺ told the Muslims, "Look, Makkah has presented to you the cream of the crop!" And when he saw the look of dejection in the faces of the sahaba, he ﷺ showed to them and said, "By Allah, Umayyah will be killed over here; Shaybah will be killed over here; Utbah will be killed over here; Abu Jahal will be killed over here," and so on — he prophesied to them every single location where the leaders of the Quraysh would meet their death.

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### The Famous Statement of Sa'd ibn Mu'adh RA

Now that the Muslims realized they were facing an army, the Prophet ﷺ knew he had to rile up the troops. (This shows us, no doubt, the sahaba felt the fear, but when push came to shove, they passed the test, i.e., they fought. And this is the difference between Iman<sup>[152]</sup> and nifaq<sup>[153]</sup>. No doubt Iman might feel hesitant, but in the end, it will overcome it.)

The Prophet ﷺ called a gathering of the sahaba and asked them, "What should we do now?" (Obviously, there is really no choice — running away now would be a humiliation. The army has come — you have to meet them in battle.) And this is not the first time nor will it be the last that we will see shura<sup>[154]</sup> in action. يد الله على الجماعة (Allah's Hand is upon the congregation) — meaning consultation is a praiseworthy element of Islam. Even though the Prophet ﷺ had no need of shura (because he receives Divine Revelation directly), he demonstrated to the sahaba (and to all of us) what a leader should do. Also, to have the troops involved in the decision-making is the best way to motivate them. So he asked, "What do you think we should do?"

Abu Bakr stands, praises Allah SWT, sends peace and blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ, and says, "Ya Rasulullah! Do as you please! We are behind you!" And he sits down. The Prophet ﷺ thanked and praised him, and asked them again, "What do you think we should do?" Silence. And then Umar RA stands up and repeats what Abu Bakr has said, with more emphasis, "Ya Rasulullah! Do as you please! For verily, we will do anything you want us to do!" And he sits down. The Prophet ﷺ thanked and praised him, and asked them the same question, "What do you think we should do?" Silence again — what does he want?

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<sup>152</sup> Iman (إيمان) - Faith.

<sup>153</sup> Nifaq (نفاق) - hypocrisy.

<sup>154</sup> Shura (شورى) - consultation.

Now another Muhajir, al-Miqdad ibn Amr (المقداد بن عمرو) stands up. He probably thought maybe Abu Bakr and Umar weren't forceful enough, so he said with fiery language, "Ya Rasulallah! Do as Allah has commanded you to do! We are right behind you! Ya Rasulallah! We will not say to you as the Bani Israel said to Musa ('You and your God, go and fight! We are staying right here!' [see Quran, 5:24]); rather, we will say, 'You and your Lord, go and fight! And we are right behind you!' Ya Rasulallah! Take us to the corner of the world — we will follow you until we meet Allah's decree!" — Subhan'Allah, you can't get more eloquent than this. The Prophet ﷺ thanked him and praised him, \*but\* for the fourth time, he asked, "What do you think we should do?" What is going on? What does the Prophet ﷺ want?

He ﷺ wanted to hear from the Ansar. As of now, all of those who stood up, Abu Bakr, Umar, and al-Miqdad, are all Muhajirun. Recall in the Covenant of Aqaba, the Ansar only promised the Prophet ﷺ that they would [\\*protect the Prophet ﷺ as they would protect their own families\\*](#). And Badr is not \*protection\*; it is \*offensive.\* The Ansar had not signed up for this. So now, for the first time, the Ansar are being asked in a very gentle manner — and notice the Prophet ﷺ didn't even put them on the spot.

When the Prophet ﷺ asked the same question for the fourth time, the great leader of the Ansar, Sa'd ibn Mu'adh stood up and asked, "Perhaps you are waiting for us, ya Rasulallah?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Yes." So Sa'd gave that famous eloquent speech, "Ya Rasulallah! After all, we believed in you, trusted you, and testified that what you have come with is the Truth! And we have given you our promises and oaths that we will listen-and-obey you!" Notice the beauty of Sa'd's response. He didn't go back to the bare minimum and say, "The promise was only to \*protect\* you," rather, he mentioned the other phrase in their oath, "We will \*obey\* you." Look at his Iman. He is going to the \*spirit\* of the law instead of the \*letter\* of the law. Then he said, "Ya Rasulallah! Go forth and do as you see fit! We are with you! I swear by the One who has sent you with the Truth — were you to charge us galloping into the ocean, we will go right behind you! We are not scared of meeting the enemy tomorrow! We will show you our patience during battle. And la'allaLlah<sup>[155]</sup>, Allah will show you through us that which will comfort you. So go forth upon the blessings of Allah! We are right behind you!" When Sa'd said this, the Prophet ﷺ was so happy his face lit up like the moon; Sa'd's response really reinvigorated him. And he ﷺ told them again, "By Allah, Allah has promised me one of the two — and it is this one (i.e., the army we are facing tomorrow). And every one of them (Abu Jahal, Umayya ibn Khalaf, et al.) will die tomorrow." He then began the actual preparations for war.

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<sup>155</sup> La'allaLlah (لعل الله) - basically 'insha'Allah.'

## 038. The Battle of Badr 3

As we mentioned last time, the Prophet ﷺ had to verify from the Ansar whether they were willing to fight — and Sa'd ibn Mu'adh stood up and gave a beautiful speech.

### Preparations for the Battle: The Muslims

When the Prophet ﷺ saw the enthusiasm coming from the sahaba, he began the preparations for the war. He divided the army into three flanks, and he gave the primary flag which was white<sup>[156]</sup> to Mus'ab ibn Umayr. On the right-hand side, he ﷺ placed Ali ibn Abi Talib, and he gave him all of the Muhajirun. On the left side, he placed Sa'd ibn Mu'adh, and he gave him all of the Ansar. According to one report, the Prophet ﷺ had a backup group as well — maybe for reinforcements — and he placed them under the charge of Qays ibn Abi Sa'sa'a (قيس بن أبي صعصعة). But the two primary groups were the ones on the right and left.

Two lessons from this:

1) In this division between the Muhajirun and the Ansar, we learn that Islam takes into account cultural and ethnic divisions. The Prophet ﷺ divided up the Ansar and Muhajirun because they both knew each other better. They felt more comfortable around each other. Thus, the attitude of some Muslims in our time to ignore culture completely is extreme and wrong. Allah clearly says, "We have made you into peoples [i.e., ethnicities / races] and tribes" [Quran, 49:13]. So Allah is saying He has made us into various ethnicities so that we can get to know each other. In other words, if we were all the same, how would anyone stand out? We wouldn't. Each one of us has a personal identity. So the Prophet ﷺ took advantage of this ethnic division. Birds of a feather flock together — people of a particular area will socialize more with each other — and there is nothing inherently un-Islamic about this, as long as it is not taken to an extreme.

2) When you give the position of leadership, you need to give it to those people who are respected in the community.

2a) Notice the Prophet ﷺ put in charge of them young dynamic visionaries (Ali & Sa'd), and both of them were of their noblemen. There is a reality that you cannot deny: there are certain people in every community that are more respected than others; some people have qualities that set them apart from others; some people have leadership, charisma, etc., that make them respected amongst their peers. The Prophet ﷺ didn't choose a nobody to lead — he chose those who would have the respect of their respective ethnicities. And indeed, Ali is the great-grandson of Abdul Muttalib; everyone loved and adored him. His lineage and everything were of the highest caliber. Similarly, Sa'd ibn Mu'adh was the future leader of the Ansar. So once again, we see the element of

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<sup>156</sup> Note: The Prophet ﷺ had different flags in every battle — sometimes white, sometimes black, and sometimes other colors.

pragmatism: when you give the position of leadership, you need to give it to those people who are respected in the community.

2b) Notice also that the Prophet ﷺ chose as the flag bearer someone whom both the Ansar and the Muhajirun look up to, i.e., Mus'ab ibn Umayr. He is of course a Muhajir and a Qureshi, but he is the earliest of people to Emigrate to Madinah, and therefore, the respect he has amongst the Ansar is unparalleled, as most of the Ansar converted at his hands. He was the 'most Madani' of the Muhajirun — respected by both the Muhajirun and the Ansar. Hence the Prophet ﷺ chose him to symbolize the entire army. This shows us the wisdom of the Prophet ﷺ. [157]

The Prophet ﷺ arrived at Badr before the Quraysh — preceded them by a day. He came to the Plains of Badr on the 16th of Ramadan, 2 AH. And he immediately set up his camp and tents on the outskirts of the plains. Before he had set up camp, one of the scouts, al-Hubab ibn al-Mundhir (الحباب بن المنذر) asked him, "Ya Rasulullah, this place that you have decided for us to camp, is this something Allah has told you to do such that we are not allowed to move one inch forward or backward, or is it your own opinion based on tactics and strategies of war?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "No, this is my own strategy." So he said, "In that case, ya Rasulullah, I suggest we don't camp at the corner of the plain, rather, we should proceed until we are beyond the midpoint, and therefore the wells of Badr will be behind us. In this case, we shall have plenty of water, and they (the enemy) will have to rely on their jugs and canisters." And of course, not having access to water is a big demoralizing factor. The Prophet ﷺ followed this advice and said, "You have directed us to the better opinion." In one narration, it's said that Jibril AS came down to tell the Prophet ﷺ, "Follow the advice of al-Hubab." So the Prophet ﷺ proceeded onward until the Muslims had blocked all of the wells and camped there. The Prophet ﷺ put all the wells behind him and blocked the smaller wells after taking water out and putting the water into the big well. And the biggest well was positioned such that it was in the center of the Muslim camp.

This incident is one of dozens of examples of the Prophet ﷺ taking advice from the sahaba and sometimes even changing his opinion based on it. The concept of shura is shown over and over again. He would always take the opinions of the sahaba.

Also in this incident, al-Hubab demonstrated that sometimes, the Prophet ﷺ did things from his own opinion.

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<sup>157</sup> One of the main purposes of the flag bearer is to mark your army and make it easier to organize. And although honorable, it's a very dangerous position; because the flag bearer is always the target of the enemy. The enemy wants the flag to fall because it symbolizes omen. When the other army sees the flag fall, it encourages them and gives them a morale boost. And therefore, the flag bearer is always the center of attack. Also note that the flag bearer is always impaired since he has one hand holding the flag. So he cannot fight to the same level as those who are not holding the flag.

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### Tangent: Did the Prophet ﷺ Sometimes Make His Own Ijtihad?

Now note this issue is a huge topic in Usul al-Fiqh: Did the Prophet ﷺ sometimes do things from his own opinion, not from Allah SWT? And this incident of the well suggests sometimes he did. This is true. There's not a problem to say that. But the problem is that some people take this exception and make a general rule out of it, e.g., by saying, "Look, we see in this incident that the Prophet ﷺ sometimes did things from his own opinion. Therefore, we can go through the whole sunnah and pick and choose what was a personal opinion that he used to do, and what was from Allah." And this understanding is wrong for many reasons:

1. You cannot extrapolate the incident of Badr into shariah. The incident of Badr is a particular strategy of war. You cannot say when the Prophet ﷺ commanded us to pray that that was just his opinion. The shariah is what he is \*commanding\* you to do. Whereas the location he is camping at Badr, there is no shariah to be derived, as the Battle of Badr is only going to take place once. We don't do Badr every year. When the Prophet ﷺ camps at Badr, he is not intending to \*legislate a position\* of where to camp at Badr. Whereas when he prays, fasts, legislates laws for inheritance, divorce, marriage, etc., all of this is shariah — he intends for the Muslims [across all generations] to follow him. Therefore, we cannot equate the one-time incident of Badr with the rest of the shariah.

2. Notice al-Hubab had to ask him ﷺ point blank — he didn't assume he could understand which one is from Allah's wahy and which one is from the Prophet's ﷺ opinion — "Ya Rasulallah, is this from Allah's wahy, or is it from your ijtihad?" We obviously cannot do this now, as the Prophet ﷺ is no longer living amongst us.

The basic rule is that whatever the Prophet ﷺ said and did, it becomes our shariah.

Sometimes, the Prophet ﷺ was asked, "Is this something you are commanding, or is this just a suggestion?" — but this was very rare. Usually, the sahaba listened-and-obeyed. There are literally dozens of examples where the sahaba would hear something and they would apply the ruling so literally that sometimes it borders on the unimaginable:

1) One such is that during an expedition, the Prophet ﷺ commanded no one to enter his tent. One of the sahaba was outside and he had a pressing need; so he asked the Prophet ﷺ, "Ya Rasulallah, may I enter the tent? I need to speak to you." The Prophet ﷺ said yes. But then the sahaba remembered the commandment that you are not supposed to enter, so he asked, "Ya Rasulallah, can I enter with my whole body or just part of my body?" because he was confused and didn't want to break the command of the Prophet ﷺ.

2) Another incident is, once, the Prophet ﷺ was giving a khutbah, and he mentioned to someone, "Stop." And a sahabi who was walking through the door didn't see the context of the word "stop," so he literally stopped mid-door with one of his feet in the air.

We can go on and on...



3) The Prophet ﷺ in [the Battle of Khaybar](#) told Ali ibn Abi Talib, "Go forth and do not come back until you are victorious." And Ali RA walked 10 spaces, but then he had a question — and he was about to turn around, but then he realized the Prophet ﷺ said, "Don't come back until you are victorious" — so because he didn't want to turn around, he shouted out loud, "Ya Rasulallah! What should I tell them?" He was being so literal that he didn't even turn around. He didn't want to turn his back until he was victorious.

And we have hundreds of examples like this. Whereas, there is only one or two instances where a sahabi asked, "Is this wahy from Allah or is this just a suggestion?":

1) This incident with al-Hubab is one of them.

2) Another is the incident of Barirah (بريرة) who was a slave and married to a slave. One day, she was freed. In Islamic fiqh, when the slave is freed and s/he has a marriage, it is up to them whether to continue the marriage or not. So, now that Barirah becomes free, she has the right to continue or annul the marriage (faskh - فسخ). She decided to annul it. And so her husband Mughith (مغيث) begged and cried, "Please take me back," etc. But Barirah didn't even look back, and they were going around the city like this. Ibn Abbas said, "I saw Mughith's beard was wet with tears crying out, 'O Barirah! O Barirah!'" The Prophet ﷺ saw the two of them walking around the city like this, so he said to Barirah, "O Barirah, why don't you take him back?" She asked, "Ya Rasulallah, are you commanding me or is it just a suggestion?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "No, I am just reconciling," i.e., just a suggestion. So she said, "I have no need of him."

We can literally count these types of incidents on the fingers of one hand. In fact, some say these were the only two incidents in the whole seerah where this happened.

So in conclusion, it is extreme and wrong to misuse these two incidents and say, "The Prophet ﷺ did not command any laws that are of a legal nature and it was all his personal opinion, so we don't have to follow them. What we follow is only theology and rituals (salah, zakat, etc.), so don't tell us to follow hudud, marriage and divorce, financial transactions, etc. — because these were all his personal opinions." Again, this is extreme and wrong. The basic ruling is whatever the Prophet ﷺ said and did, it becomes our shariah, including the laws of marriage and divorce, financial transactions, etc.

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## The Rain & the Sleep

After the Muslims took all the water out of the small wells and transported it to the big wells, this is when Sa'd ibn Mu'adh suggested, "Ya Rasulallah, why don't we make for you a special khayma (خيمة) (i.e., headquarters) where you can monitor the battle?" The Prophet ﷺ agreed, and the sahaba chose an area where he could see the battle, and built for him a headquarters on the Plains of Badr. And night fell and the Quraysh were seen on the horizon. It was thus known to all that the battle would take place the very next morning.

It is narrated in the Musnad of Imam Ahmad that the Prophet ﷺ spent the whole night awake making du'a to Allah SWT and making prolonged sajdah. And he said, "O Allah, if You destroy this group, You are not going to be worshiped on earth" — because he ﷺ is the final prophet. And in the middle of the night, light rain began to fall, and the people had to take their belongings and shelter themselves under trees, shrubs, and maybe in the shade of their camels. And the Prophet ﷺ continued to pray and make du'a until finally, the dawn broke. And he was the one who said, "O people, time for salah." And thus began the 17th of Ramadan in the 2nd year of the Hijrah. According to modern historians, this is March 17th 624 CE. And it was a Friday.

In Surah al-Anfal, Allah mentions both the rain and the sleep as being miracles from Him. He says, "When sleep overcame you, this was a blessing from Him. And He sent down for you from the skies rain to purify you [with a physical bath], to wipe away the filth of shaytan from you [with a spiritual bath], and to make your footsteps firm" [see Quran, 8:11]. Subhan'Allah, when there is no rain, the desert sand is very difficult to walk on; and conversely, too much rain makes it impossible to walk as it becomes muddy; but the right amount of rain will make the sand firm — and Allah caused the Muslim's side of the field to become firm.

It's reported in the Musnad of Imam Ahmad that Ali RA said, "If you could only have seen us on the night of Badr, every one of us was dead asleep, except for the Prophet ﷺ who was praying behind a tree and making du'a until the morning." And subhan'Allah, this is a miracle — why? Because the night before anything (e.g., big test, exam, even more so a battle) you are so nervous that you cannot sleep — yet, the sahaba were fast asleep. This is truly a miracle and a gift from Allah, as He said in verse [8:11]. Imagine the affairs of the Quraysh: Worry, concern, and no sleep. And again, we know if Allah helps you, there is none that can overcome you. It's also said —even though there doesn't seem to be any authentic isnad— that the Quraysh side received a downpour of rain, which is the worst.

Also, notice the concern of the Prophet ﷺ — even though he is the prophet of Allah and he puts his trust in Allah, still he is concerned about what can he do for his people as a leader. So he begs Allah all night in sajdah. In fact, it's reported in al-Tabarani that Ibn Mas'ud said, "I have never seen anyone pleading more than the Prophet ﷺ was pleading on the night of Badr." The question arises: Did he ﷺ go to sleep at all? Ibn Kathir says he did doze off, and it was in this dozing off that Allah SWT showed him the dream. What dream? It's referenced in the Quran, that, "Allah showed them (the Quraysh) to you as being small in number; if He had shown them to you as big as they were, you would have despaired and differed with each other. But Allah protected you (by not showing the real quantity)" [Quran, 8:43]. Note that "not showing the real quantity" is not misinformation. Allah never does anything incorrectly. If there are 100 people and you see 10 of them, then these are simply 10 out of the 100. There is nothing incorrect about that. If Allah showed 150 out of 100, this would have been incorrect, but He SWT did not do that. Rather, He showed the Prophet ﷺ a dream of a section of the Quraysh army. And this section is a correct, valid, and true section. So because Allah showed him their quantity to be fewer than they actually were, when the Prophet ﷺ woke up, he felt a surge of confidence. He was optimistic. This is of the mercy of Allah SWT.

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## Aligning the Muslim Army

As the sun rose up —and the Muslims have prayed Salah al-Fajr— the Prophet ﷺ is now starting to align the Muslim army. And he did a tactic that was never done before amongst the Arabs. This a tactic that we all know of, but amongst the Arabs, they did not have this tactic. The Arabs of old used the tactic of al-kar wa al-far<sup>[158]</sup> which is to attack in circles — they would attack and then come back and recuperate, and then they go out and attack and then come back and recuperate, so on and so forth. On the contrary, the tactic of the Prophet ﷺ is the modern tactic that we are all used to, which is military battalions marching in rows. Allah AWJ references this in the Quran [61:4]. This tactic was not known to the Arabs. But Allah taught our Prophet ﷺ this tactic, and this is now the standard practice of all armies in the world. Of course, in Badr, the Muslims didn't have all of the weapons — but eventually, in future battles, the front row is going to have the javelins and spears; the back row is going to have the bow and arrow, and the middle rows are going to have the swords. In Badr, they only had some of these weapons, but nonetheless, they did what they could. The Prophet ﷺ did not go through any military school; rather, Allah AWJ blessed him with this intuition of how to arrange the army. This tactic of course worked out for the betterment of the Muslims.

And the Prophet ﷺ was walking between the rows straightening them like he straightens the rows for salah. And he had a stick that he would use to tap people to make the rows completely straight. And there was one sahabi, Suwad (سواد), who was standing in front of the line (i.e., was not in the line), so the Prophet ﷺ poked him in the stomach and said, "O Suwad, straighten up." Suwad said, "Ya Rasulallah, you have poked me and caused pain without any cause (i.e., unjustly). And Allah has sent you with Truth and justice, so I demand justice." Immediately, the Prophet ﷺ drops the stick, raises his shirt, and says, "Here is qisas (قصاص)." i.e., "Here, poke me back." Subhan'Allah. And Suwad immediately bowed down and hugged and kissed the skin of the Prophet ﷺ that was exposed, and the Prophet ﷺ asked, "What is this, O Suwad?" Suwad said, "Ya Rasulallah, you see the situation we are in. So if I die, I wish that my last breath / time be that my skin touches your skin before my death." Subhan'Allah. He didn't die in the battle, but the point is he was very clever — he plotted to kiss and hug the Prophet ﷺ. So the Prophet ﷺ made du'a for him and asked Allah to bless him.

From this incident, we learn that in the Sight of Allah SWT, when it comes to rights and privileges and wrongs and zulm, everybody is the same. Kings and peasants, they are all under the shariah of Allah SWT. And that is why the Prophet ﷺ was so literal when he said, "Yes, you are right. I shouldn't have poked you without any reason; so do it back to me." This is why our religion led the world for as long as it did. The leader and the led, the ruler and those who were ruled, they were all equivalent in the Eyes of Allah SWT. And we all know the famous story where, sometimes, even the khalifa, when he went to court, was judged as being wrong. The famous story of the Jew and Ali RA: When Ali was taken to court, the judge ruled against him, and he RA accepted the judgment. And the Jew

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<sup>158</sup> Al-kar wa al-far (الكر والفر) - hit and run.

immediately accepted Islam and said, "This religion that causes a judge to judge against the khalifa has to be the religion of Truth."

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As the sun is rising and finally the two armies can see one another, the Prophet ﷺ sees a man galloping (on a red camel) back and forth in the lines of the Quraysh — and the Prophet ﷺ says to the Muslims, "If there is any good in the Quraysh, it is in that person. And if they have any good in them, they shall listen to him." In another version, he said, "If they listen to him, they shall be successful." And the Prophet ﷺ said to Ali RA, "O Ali, call out to Hamzah (who is standing right in the front) and ask him, 'Who is that man, and what is he saying?'" Note we infer from this that Allah SWT gave the Prophet ﷺ wahy that the man on the red camel was saying something good, but the content of his speech was not specified. (Who was this man and what was he saying, we will talk about it in a while.)

When the Prophet ﷺ saw the Quraysh, once again, he began to raise his hands to Allah SWT and made du'a against the Quraysh, "O Allah, this is the Quraysh, they have come against You with their pride and arrogance, challenging You and rejecting Your Messenger. O Allah, Your Help that has been promised; O Allah, Your Help that has been promised; O Allah, Your Help that has been promised. O Allah, cause them to be destroyed today." He continued to make du'a even until the very last minute.

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### The Quraysh Side

Now to the Quraysh side. On the morning of the 17th, the Quraysh are not sure yet what the size of the Muslim army is. So after Fajr, they send their most experienced scout Umayr ibn Wahab al-Jumahi (عمير بن وهب الجمحي). So he goes far and wide around the Plains of Badr to get an estimation as to how many Muslims there are. And he tells the Quraysh, "They are around 300 — but I feel there is a huge catastrophe about to happen. There are young men of Yathrib waiting to inflict death; a group of people who have no help other than their swords (i.e., no armor, not many spears, javelins, etc., nothing really) so they will be vicious in their fighting. By Allah, I don't think you will be able to kill anyone amongst them until they kill at least one of you. And if 300 of you die, then what pleasure will you gain for winning? (If 1/3 of you die, what's the point of this battle?) Now do as you please." So he is saying he sensed determination in the Muslims. And to this, Abu Jahal said, "We didn't ask for your advice."

Note that we are seeing there are still people in the Quraysh army who don't want to fight. More than 300 returned already. And the likes of Umayyah and Uqba didn't want to come — but Abu Jahal enticed them, "Look, let's just camp at Badr, sing and get drunk for 3 days, and let the people hear that we are not scared of anybody." So there's talk of war, but there's still hope there's not going to be a battle. That is the position right now.

Another person trying to stop the battle was [Hakim ibn Hizam](#)<sup>[159]</sup>. Hakim goes to Utbah ibn Rabi'ah who didn't want war from day one, and he encourages him to mediate a truce, and asks, "Why don't you take on the blood money of al-Hadrami?" Note Amr al-Hadrami (عمرو بن الحضرمي) was the person who died when the six sahaba attacked the caravan in the Sacred Month. And the Quraysh were hyping this up, saying, "These are the people who killed al-Hadrami! We need to avenge him!" So Utbah said, "Okay, fine. If this is what is going to prevent bloodshed, I will pay the blood money" — it is A LOT of money. And he made a speech to the relatives of al-Hadrami that, "I will give the money," i.e., "Stop chanting his name (stop making him be the cause)." Hakim himself said, "Take the advice of this man," and Utbah said, "If someone accuses you of cowardice, mention my name and say that Utbah was the one who became a coward. Go ahead and say that, even though you know I am not a coward. For by Allah, what will you gain by fighting this man (the Prophet ﷺ)? If you are able to defeat him, you will be killing your own father, brother, cousin, nephew, etc. How would you like it that you are amongst the murderers of your own brother, father, etc.?" meaning, "Even if you don't kill him, somebody in your side of the army will kill your father, son, etc. And how would you like it to see in Makkah somebody who killed your own brother, etc.?" He is evoking Jahiliyyah here — it was all about tribalism.

And he continues, "Let us return and leave Muhammad and his Companions to the rest of the Arabs. If they overcome him, this is what you want (and it won't be at our hands). And if it is the other case (i.e., he overcomes them), then surely, in his honor is our honor as well (i.e., isn't he a Qureshi at the end of the day?). And we will have an excuse for him to forgive us." (So this was when he was on his red camel going back and forth, and this was what the Prophet ﷺ was seeing on the other side.) And when this happened, Hakim was so happy he rushed to Abu Jahal and said, "Utbah has agreed to pay the blood money of the Hadrami. So let us avoid this bloodshed." But Abu Jahal just mocked Hakim and said, "O Hakim, didn't Utbah find any messenger other than you?" i.e., "You are a servant of Utbah now?" Hakim responded and said, "I am not a messenger to him. I agree with the message. I want no bloodshed." When Abu Jahal finds out people are changing their minds, he goes to the blood brother of al-Hadrami and says, "Will you be happy to take some gold for your brother? Have you no shame?" So this young brother of al-Hadrami was persuaded, he stood up and gave a passionate talk to the army about his brother. Abu Jahal at this point said, "O Utbah, you have become a coward after looking at the army of the Muslims." And Utbah flipped. This is strange here; Utbah himself said, "Call me a coward" — but when Abu Jahal called him a coward, he flipped. And Utbah said, "This person (Abu Jahal) who perfumes his behind with perfume of women (making derogatory remarks), he accuses me of being a coward? He shall see who the real coward is." And at this, Utbah called his own brother and son to march out with him right then and there for the mubaraza (مبارزة - a duel to the death that precedes the war).

Notice the Prophet ﷺ praised the wisdom of Utbah even though that wisdom was not coming from Islamic ideals — it was coming from Jahiliyyah; he wanted to stop the fight out of tribalism. It's not as if he is saying, "They are upon the Truth and we are upon batil." But this ideal of his, of not wanting to fight, is a good ideal. And what he said made a lot of

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<sup>159</sup> His son, Hizam ibn Hakim ibn Hizam (حزام بن حكيم بن حزام) is a sahabi and is on the other side (Muslim's side).

sense, "How could you fight your own brothers and fathers, and then you go home and the murderers of your own brother will be your neighbor?"

What we learn here is: In the world that we live in, there are people who are defending ideals that might not be coming from Islam, but those ideals are good and virtuous in and of themselves, e.g., freedom of other people, the right for the government not to kill its own citizens, etc. There are many who support causes that are not coming from shariah (not coming from the Quran and sunnah), but those causes are causes that are just causes. E.g., no government should execute its own people without any trial, no government should send drones and just fire upon civilians, etc. And there are many people in these lands that are opposed to these policies. And there is nothing wrong with us —not just praising them— but getting involved with them and helping them out. Here is the Prophet ﷺ saying, "If there is any wisdom in this whole qawm (قوم), it is in that person there," "If they have any good in them, they will listen to this man." They are idol worshipers, but they still have wisdom and good. Even though Utbah's ideals were coming from Jahiliyyah, still because those ideals were good, the Prophet ﷺ called it wise ideals. This incident and the whole seerah shows us that a person can be good and bad at the same time, i.e., even idol worshipers can have principles that are worthy of admiration and respect, and yes, even support.

As the Quraysh line up, Abu Jahal stands up and makes a du'a to Allah loudly, "O Allah, whichever of the two of these armies has brought more evil, and cut the ties of kinship, and has brought the more unknown doctrines, let them meet their death today." Little did he know he was making du'a against the Quraysh army, as in all three of these counts the mushriks are more guilty than the Muslims. (1) The one who is bringing more evil, (2) the one who is cutting the ties of kinship, and (3) the one who is bringing new doctrines; the mushriks are more guilty in all these. The Prophet ﷺ is bringing the doctrine of Ibrahim AS — the original doctrines of the Arabs (tawhid). And Abu Jahal is following the newer doctrine (paganism). Thus, he is making du'a against himself.

This is what Allah SWT says in the Quran, "If you are asking for victory, it is too late (i.e., the victory has already been given against you)" [see Quran, 8:19].

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### **Certain People Should Not Be Killed**

The Prophet ﷺ told the Muslim army that certain people should not be killed. In particular:

1. His uncle al-Abbas ibn Abdul Muttalib (العباس بن عبد المطلب)
2. Abu al-Bukhturi ibn Hisham (أبو البخترى بن هشام). One of the major things about him was he was one of the most important people to break the Boycott.

And he ﷺ mentioned some others, and then said, "All of these people, they are fighting even though they don't want to. They have been forced to fight."

This shows us that not all enemies are the same. Even those in an army, some of them are better than others.

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## The First Person to Die

There was an incident that occurred before the mubaraza (whether the night before or early morning) one person died from Abu Jahal's tribe and his name was al-Aswad ibn Abd al-Asad al-Makhzumi (الأسود بن عبد الأسد المخزومي). When the Quraysh came to the battlefield and saw all the water had been cut off, al-Aswad said, "I will be the one to get some water for you, or I will die trying." And so he attempted to sneak into the side where there were the wells, but Hamzah saw him and cut off his leg and then killed him before he reached the water. (Therefore, he was true in what he said: He died trying.) So he was thus the first person to be killed in the Battle of Badr.

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## The Mubaraza

We had mentioned that Utbah was the one who started the mubaraza. Mubaraza means a battle / championship / open bout —if you like— between specific people. The way the Arabs would have a war is that before the two armies actually engage one another, a few people would fight one-on-one — typically between some of the senior figures<sup>[160]</sup>; usually between people of second-tier/rank if you like. This would give a morale boost to one of the two sides.

From the Quraysh side:

1. Utbah ibn Rabi'ah (عتبة بن ربيعة)
2. Utbah's younger brother Shaybah ibn Rabi'ah (شيبه بن ربيعة), and
3. Utbah's son al-Walid ibn Utbah (الوليد بن عتبة)

This is the cream of the crop of the Quraysh — second-tier, just one level below Abu Jahal. Utbah and Shaybah were elderly people, maybe in their early 60s or late 50s. They marched forth and shouted out, "Who will come forth and battle us?" Immediately, three young people from the Ansar stood up in their eagerness, and they were:

1. Awf ibn al-Harith (عوف بن الحارث), also known as Awf ibn Afra' (عوف بن عفرأ)
2. Muawwidh ibn al-Harith (معوذ بن الحارث), also known as Muawwidh ibn Afra' (معوذ بن عفرأ)<sup>[161]</sup>, and
3. Abdullah ibn Rawahah (عبد الله بن رواحة)

And all of them were very young. They said, "We will battle you!" Utbah asked, "Who are you?" They introduced themselves but Utbah said, "We have no battle with you. We

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<sup>160</sup> But not the actual leader, because that would be too demoralizing for any group if they lose

<sup>161</sup> Muawwidh ibn Afra' is one of two people who will eventually kill Abu Jahal — and we will talk about his story in the next episode.

have no problem with you. We didn't come to fight you. We don't know you people, why should we fight you? We are fighting our own blood." Again, they are thinking pure Jahiliyyah. They really don't even see the point of fighting the Ansar. Think about that. They don't understand the bonds of Iman are stronger than bonds of blood. They are basically saying, "Send us our own," so then they called out, "O Muhammad, send us equals worthy of us!" And so the Prophet ﷺ said, "Stand up, O Ubaydah ibn al-Harith, and you, O Hamzah, and you, O Ali."

1. Ubaydah ibn al-Harith ibn al-Muttalib (عبدة بن الحارث بن المطلب)
2. Hamzah ibn Abdul Muttalib (حمزة بن عبد المطلب), and
3. Ali ibn Abi Talib ibn Abdul Muttalib (علي بن أبي طالب بن عبد المطلب)

So the Prophet ﷺ sent out three people that were noblemen and core Qureshi. Utbah asked, "Who are you?" — because they were far away and he could not recognize them by their features. So they introduced themselves, and when Utbah heard the names, he said, "Noble adversaries. Come and let us fight!"

Ubaydah ibn al-Harith ibn al-Muttalib ibn Abd Manaf was the oldest of the three. Remember al-Muttalib is the uncle of Abdul Muttalib. So Ubaydah was the Prophet's ﷺ father's second cousin. Note he is not Banu Hashim by the way, because Hashim is al-Muttalib's brother. But he is still a Qureshi (from Banu Abd Manaf's branch). He is the oldest among the three, so he goes towards Utbah, Hamzah goes to Utbah's younger brother Shaybah, and then of course the two youngsters are Ali and al-Walid, so they fight each other.<sup>[162]</sup> Indeed, it is the only logical pairing that each pairing is by age. It is said both Hamzah and Ali instantly pounced and killed their opponents without a single injury on themselves. As for Ubaydah, Utbah managed to slice his leg off, so Ubaydah fell down and Utbah was about to kill him, but by that time, both Hamzah and Ali had finished off the other two, so they came to the rescue of Ubaydah and killed Utbah. So Utbah's side: father, brother, and son all died, all because Utbah was insulted that Abu Jahal called him a coward. Think about that.

Allah references this mubaraza in Surah al-Hajj verse 19:

هَذَانِ خَصْمَانِ اخْتَصَمُوا فِي رَبِّهِمْ

"These are the two people who are arguing about their Lord" [22:19].

According to the majority of the scholars of tafsir, this is a revelation regarding this mubaraza: One group has one position about their Lord, and another group has another position. And Ali RA used to say, "I will be the first person who will argue on the Day of Judgment since I was the first to kill on [the Day of] Badr. And this ayah came down about me." This is one of the interpretations of this verse.

Then Ubaydah was carried on the shoulders of Hamzah and Ali, and he died a few days later from the effects of the wounds — because his whole leg was cut off and they couldn't stop the bleeding. And he was an elderly man as it is. So he became an after-effect shaheed a few days later. As for now, when it appeared that all three of them came back

<sup>162</sup> Some of the books of hadith mention different pairings, but this is Ibn Ishaq's version.



safe, killing all three of the mushriks, this provided a big morale boost to the Muslims. And of course, this was just an 'appetizer' that Allah gave to the Muslims — and eventually, the whole victory would be theirs.

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### The Army of 1,000 Angels

It's narrated in Sahih Muslim that when the Prophet ﷺ lined up the army, he once again turned to face the qibla and made du'a, "O Allah, fulfill Your promise to me. O Allah, give me what You have promised. O Allah, if this group is destroyed, You shall not be worshiped on earth," and he raised his hands completely to the skies. This is one of the three postures that we learn from the sunnah about how to make du'a:

1. The most common posture: palms outwards ([see the video at minute 1:12:00](#)). And the Prophet ﷺ explicitly said, "Do not ask Allah from the backs of your palms."
2. Sometimes the Prophet ﷺ would make du'a by simply raising a finger ([see the video at minute 1:12:27](#)), especially for dhikr or istighfar (astaghfirullah, astaghfirullah, astaghfirullah).
3. And very rarely, he would raise his hands all the way up to the heavens ([see the video at minute 1:12:46](#)), palms facing outwards and up. On this occasion, you are allowed to raise your head up to the heavens. (This is only done outside of salah. In salah, you are not allowed to raise your eyes up.)

The Prophet ﷺ kept on making du'a so much that his upper garment fell off and his whole chest was exposed and open. At this, Abu Bakr RA stooped down, picked up the upper clothing, and wrapped it around the Prophet ﷺ, hugged him from behind, and said, "Enough, ya Rasulallah, enough. Your Lord will give you as He promised."

Subhan'Allah, we notice here that the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr RA are perfecting two essential emotions: Hope and fear. You have to have both. Each one has a time when it deserves to be more than the other. Even though both are necessary, at this point in time, the Prophet ﷺ had more fear, and Abu Bakr had more hope.

Abu Bakr had barely said "your Lord will give you as He promised" when the Prophet ﷺ went into a trance, which means wahy was coming. Literally, as soon as he lowered his hands, Allah's response came. And this goes back to the hadith in Abu Dawud wherein the Prophet ﷺ said, "When Allah's servant raises his hands up, Allah is embarrassed that those hands come back (down) without putting something in them." To Allah belongs the more perfect example — but if anyone of us with nobility feel shy when someone comes and asks of us, then how about Allah who is al-Karim<sup>[163]</sup>? And how about when His own Messenger is doing the asking? How can those hands come back without giving him something? So barely have those hands come down except that Jibril comes with wahy — and it is said that the Prophet's ﷺ eyes were shut tight. And Ibn Mas'ud narrated that

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<sup>163</sup> Al-Karim (الكريم) - the Most Generous.

when the wahy ended, the Prophet ﷺ turned around, and it was as if his face was the moon. The wahy made him so happy that his face is now like the moon. And he tells Abu Bakr RA, "Be happy, O Abu Bakr! For indeed, the help of Allah AWJ has come. This is Jibril AS (the Prophet ﷺ is pointing), he has worn his turban and he is holding on to the straps of his horse guiding it through the valley." And Allah says in the Quran:

إِذْ نَسْتَعِثُونَ رَبَّكُمْ فَاسْتَجَابَ لَكُمْ أَنِّي مُمِدُّكُمْ بِأَلْفٍ مِّنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُرْدِفِينَ

"[Remember] when you asked help of your Lord, and He answered you, 'Indeed, I will reinforce you with a thousand from the angels, following one another'" [Quran, 8:9].

One angel could have taken care of all of the mushriks, but Allah SWT sent 1,000 angels! Subhan'Allah.

And the Prophet ﷺ began reciting:

سَيُهْزَمُ الْجَمْعُ وَيُوَلُّونَ الدُّبُرَ

"The groups shall be defeated and they shall turn their backs and flee" [see Quran, 54:45]. Umar RA said he never understood this verse until the Prophet ﷺ recited it on the morning of Badr.

The Prophet ﷺ then stooped down, picked up some pebbles, threw them toward the direction of the Quraysh, and said, "شاهت الوجوه" (May these faces be cursed)" 3 times. And every single person in the army of the Quraysh felt blinded by this (they got something in their eyes and nostrils), even though the Prophet ﷺ was far away. This was a miracle. Allah says this in the Quran:

وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَىٰ

"...And it was not you [O Prophet] who threw [a handful of sand at the disbelievers], but it was Allah who did so..." [8:17].

And after this, the actual battle began.

## 039. The Battle of Badr 4

We will discuss the actual gist of the battle. Now the problem comes with the actual battle is that we cannot describe a battle between hundreds of people except with specific stories between individuals. It's not possible to describe an entire battle as this is the old-style battle where you are one-on-one. What we have is a series of small incidents —that is all that we know— maybe 10-15 incidents of specific battles between two people. And this is our narration / version of the Battle of Badr. We want to have much more details, but unfortunately, we don't have most of these details recorded. What we have is literally probably around 15 stories, and that is about it. And again, another issue is the chronological order of the battles — we simply don't know.

### Umayr ibn al-Humam RA

Of the stories that occurred at the beginning is that of Umayr ibn al-Humam (عمير بن الحمام). When the mushrikun ran towards the Muslims, and the Muslims charged forward, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Stand up and embrace Jannah whose width is like the heavens and the earth." Umayr was eating some dates to strengthen himself; and when he heard this, he said, "Bakhin bakhin (بخ بخ)" — an archaic Arabic phrase used to trivialize something. The Prophet ﷺ said, "What do you mean? (i.e., how are you trivializing this?)" Umayr said, "What I mean, ya Rasulullah, is that, if this is true, then what use is it to remain living here?! I \*want\* to be of those people of Jannah!" The Prophet ﷺ said, "You are of those people." When Umayr heard this, he threw away the dates and said, "If I live long enough to finish these dates, then it is too long of a life!" — and he stood up and charged into the army. And he is one of the handful of sahaba who died in the Battle of Badr. Indeed, the Badriyun<sup>164</sup>, as it is, were the most elite of the sahaba — and of them, the shuhada of Badr were at a higher level — so Umayr ibn al-Humam RA was a very high-level sahabi.

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### The Battle of Badr

It's also narrated that when the army began to charge, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Do not throw your arrows until they come within distance; then when they come, shower them with arrows — but save some for later on."

And in Abu Dawud, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Don't unsheathe your swords until they are right upon you."

And at some point in time —perhaps now or perhaps before this— the Prophet ﷺ picked up a handful of dust and threw it in the direction of the faces of the mushrikun, and said, "May these faces be cursed." And it's said every single mushrik was blinded for a short

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<sup>164</sup> Badriyun (بدريون) - Participants of [the Battle of] Badr.

while. (It would make sense that this happened right when the mushriks were charging at the Muslims.) And as we said, Allah SWT references this in the Quran in Surah al-Anfal [8:17].

Did the Prophet ﷺ himself fight in the Battle of Badr? There is some controversy here. The majority opinion is the Prophet ﷺ did not fight in most of the battles —he was a military commander maintaining order, etc.— but as for Badr, it appears to be that he was physically fighting, along with making du'a in the tent. So what Ibn Hajar and others opine is that he ﷺ would fight, and then go back to his tent to make du'a, and then would repeat. This is based on a narration by Ali RA in Musnad Imam Ahmad: "On the Day of Badr, we saw the Prophet ﷺ was the closest of us to the enemy, and when the fighting got tough, we would seek protection through him," i.e., coming close to him. And Ali RA said, "The Prophet ﷺ was the most aggressive / brave of us on that day." Now, Ali RA himself also narrates he came to see what the Prophet ﷺ was doing in his tent and he found him in sajdah, saying, "Ya Hayyu ya Qayyum, ya Hayyu ya Qayyum"<sup>[165]</sup>, "so he (Ali) went away to fight. And then he came back again to find the Prophet ﷺ still in sajdah, so he went away. And then he came back for the third time and the Prophet ﷺ was still in sajdah. And after this, Allah SWT wrote victory for the Muslims, so he didn't come back for the fourth time. So Ali RA narrates both of these narrations (that the Prophet ﷺ was in the tent, and that he ﷺ was in the front of the army) — thus, the only way to reconcile is that the battle lasted multiple hours, and therefore, the Prophet ﷺ was alternating between fighting and making du'a. Remember, the battle was on a Friday, the 17th of Ramadan, 2 AH. And Abu Bakr RA would stay with the Prophet ﷺ wherever he went — he guarded him while he made du'a. This is what Ibn Kathir and Ibn Hajar mentioned.

### The Army of 1,000 Angels

We also know from the Quran that Allah SWT sent down 1,000 angels:

إِذْ تَسْتَغِيثُونَ رَبَّكُمْ فَاسْتَجَبَ لَكُمْ أَنِّي مُمِدِّكُمْ بِأَلْفٍ مِّنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُرَدِّفِينَ

"[Remember] when you cried out to your Lord for help, He answered, 'I will reinforce / help you with a thousand angels — followed by many others'" [Quran, 8:9].

Notice Allah says here, "I will \*help\* you," i.e., not "you sit back and relax." No. 'You do your job and I will help you.'

And Allah says in the Quran:

إِذْ يُوحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ أَنِّي مَعَكُمْ فَتَبَيَّنُوا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ۖ سَالَفِي فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَلرُّعْبَ فَاضْتَرُّوا فَوْقَ الْأَعْنَاقِ وَاضْطَرُّوا مِنْهُمْ كُلُّ بَنَانٍ

"[Remember] when your Lord inspired to the angels, 'I am with you, so strengthen those who have believed. I will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieved, so strike [them] upon the necks and strike from them every fingertip'" [Quran, 8:12].

<sup>165</sup> Ya Hayyu ya Qayyum, ya Hayyu ya Qayyum (يا حي يا قيوم ، يا حي يا قيوم) - O the Ever-Living, All-Sustaining; O the Ever-Living, All-Sustaining.

Notice here that the angels \*helped\* the believers. The believers are raising the sword and fighting, and the angels complete the action. Not that the believers did nothing and the angels took charge of them. No.

A number of stories have been narrated that the sahaba saw the angels. We already mentioned in the last lesson that as soon as the Prophet ﷺ lowered his hands, he said, "Allah has answered our prayer. Here is Jibril, turbaned, armed, and riding a horse." Notice even the angels have horses, which leads to the interesting theological question that there are animals within the realm of the angels. (And we know for a fact that [even jinn have animals](#).) Allah has created creatures way beyond our imagination. "And He creates what you do not know" [Quran, 16:8].

Why are the angels armed? Allah wants to show us even the angels need to put in the effort.

Of the stories mentioned, in Sahih Muslim, Ibn Abbas narrates that one of the sahaba was in hot pursuit of a mushrik, and he heard the sound of a whip coming from in front of him, and he heard a rider (an angel) calling out to his horse, "Go forth, Haizum (حيزوم)!" and he saw the mushrik he was about to attack, his nose was instantly chopped off. Before the Muslim could lower his sword, the angel chopped the mushrik's nose off. (Again, the key point here is the angels \*helped\* the believers — for every action that they began, the angels completed it. We need to put in the effort, \*then\* Allah will help us.) And when the sahaba told the Prophet ﷺ what happened, the Prophet ﷺ said, "You have told the truth — that was a help Allah had sent down from the Third Heaven."

Al-Abbas (the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ) would later be brought as a prisoner of war (from the mushrik side) —and he was a strong warrior— and the Ansari who brought him was a small, stout person — so Abbas, embarrassed, when he got to the Prophet ﷺ, said, "This man did not capture me!" And the Ansari said, "No, I captured him!" Abbas looked around trying to see the 'man' who captured him, and he said, "No. The man who captured me had parted his hair, and he was the most handsome man I have ever seen, on the most beautiful horse of black and white mixture. But I don't see where he is [now]." The Ansari said, "No, ya Rasulullah. I was the one." The Prophet ﷺ said to the Ansari, "Be quiet, for Allah helped you with a noble angel."

As we said, the Prophet ﷺ specified two people should not be killed. In one narration, it's said the Prophet ﷺ specified that all of Banu Hashim must not be killed. Why? Because they have been forced to fight (recall Abu Lahab didn't even come). Along with this, he said not to kill Abu al-Bukhturi since he helped break the Boycott. Thus the Prophet ﷺ here is returning the favor. Those who have done good for the Muslims, they will be remembered. This clearly shows us that we as Muslims living in a non-Muslim land, we look at the sympathetic non-Muslims, we see who is supporting the cause of freedom for every religion to practice its faith, and we do not treat them the same way we treat Islamophobes. This is clear-cut from the seerah. Those who treat us with justice and dignity and kindness, we must return the favor. There are some isolationists amongst us who say 'all kuffar this, all kuffar that' — but wallahi, this mentality is wrong. Yes, those non-Muslims have kufr; but some kuffar, they also stand for truth and justice. Their kufr does not prevent them from standing up for truth. And Abu al-Bukhturi was one such person. And Mut'im ibn

Adi was another person. If people stand for truth and justice, their kufr shouldn't stop us from respecting them and standing with them in noble causes.

Yet another unnamed Ansari, his son narrated that his father (i.e., the unnamed Ansari) was pursuing an enemy — and before he could lift his sword, he saw a man fall dead right in front of him with a sword wound. So this son of the Ansari said his father knew he was being helped.<sup>[166]</sup>

There is also a beautiful hadith in Mustadrak of al-Hakim: Zubayr ibn al-Awwam, whom the Prophet ﷺ called his hawari<sup>[167]</sup>, was wearing a yellow turban during the battle. And to imitate him, all the angels came down in the same garment as al-Zubayr, including the yellow turban. This is a great honor for Zubayr ibn al-Awwam — all the angels came in the same clothes as him. And Allah chose these 1,000 angels Himself, and He blessed them through the Battle of Badr. Later in the seerah, Jibril AS once asked the Prophet ﷺ (and this hadith is in Bukhari): "What do you think of those (Muslims) who participated in the Battle of Badr?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "We think they are the best of all of us." And Jibril AS said, "And similarly, those who participated in the Battle of Badr from the angels, we too think the same." This shows us the angels also have ranks. And the elite of them are those who participated in Badr.

Now, why did Allah send 1,000 angels when frankly one was enough? When Allah wanted to destroy the people of Lut<sup>[168]</sup> AS, it is said Jibril AS came in his real form, took one tip of his wing, and he just hit the ground next to the cities with it, and the hit was so powerful the cities flipped all the way up and then they came crashing down. So then why does Allah AWJ send 1,000 angels? Again, here we get to the simple fact that throughout the Quran and sunnah, the entire message that is given is: You don't get anything for free. Not even Jannah! You have to put in an effort. Even if that effort isn't enough to deserve the result, i.e., Jannah is beyond what our actions deserve. We don't \*earn\* Jannah — but we need to pay some price and put the effort in. What truly matters is that the effort is sincere and genuine — because that's what Allah values. Thus, when the 300+ sahaba were literally walking into death, then Allah sent His angels to help them, to complete each of their actions. The angels were just mukammal<sup>[169]</sup> and mumid<sup>[170]</sup> — and we gave so many examples. Every time we hear of an incident, the sahabi is doing something, then the angel finishes it off. Think about that. Never do we hear of an incident where the angel does the whole chore for the sahaba. You have to follow the means to get to the end. You have to traverse the path to get to the destination. You need to get there. And even if you are not able to, Allah will bless you — but you need to put in the dedication to do so. Subhan'Allah, even Maryam AS, when she was alone and in labor, Allah said, 'Don't worry, I will bless you... \*but\* you need to shake the

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<sup>166</sup> Technical note: A sahabi who is unknown does not affect the validity of the hadith chain. The chain is still authentic. Whereas if you don't know the name of the second or third or fourth person in the chain, then for sure the hadith is weak. As for the sahaba, if somebody says, "One of the sahaba said," or, "My father (who is a sahabi) said," and we don't know his name, we do not care, because جهالة الصحابي لا تضر, the fact that the Companion is unknown does not affect the chain.

<sup>167</sup> Hawari (حواري) - disciple.

<sup>168</sup> Lut (لوط) - Lot.

<sup>169</sup> Mukammal (مكمل) - completer / finisher.

<sup>170</sup> Mumid (ممد) - helper.

tree.' She could not stand up, so Allah said, okay, do what you can, i.e., shake the tree [see Quran, 19:25]. Even Maryam AS in that state, still didn't get it for free. The point is so profound here. If this is the case for someone like Maryam AS when she was giving birth to that miraculous child Isa AS, then how about us? This is one of the most important lessons of the Battle of Badr. The victory was ultimate, it was miraculous, but still, it wasn't given until the Muslims went the whole nine yards in the thick of the battle.

Ibn Abbas also narrates that, "Never did the angels actually fight with the believers except on the Day of Badr," i.e., in every other occasion, they merely were backups — they were present, but didn't physically fight; except for Badr.

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### Ukasha ibn Mihsan RA

We also have the story of Ukasha ibn Mihsan (عكاشة بن محصن). He hit the armor of someone and his sword broke. And he complained to the Prophet ﷺ, "Ya Rasulallah, I only have one sword. What am I going to do now?" The Prophet ﷺ picked up some twigs and said, "Here, go fight with this." So Ukasha, without a second thought, went out with the twigs, raised them, and suddenly, they transformed into the best sword he had ever seen. Look at the tawakkul here. This is what you call Iman. And he fought with this sword in every battle until he died a shaheed against Musaylimah [much later on, during the khilafa of Abu Bakr, 11 AH]. And it is said they buried him with that sword (but this is one of those legends Allah knows how true it is).

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### The End of Abu Jahal

Of the stories, one of the highlights of the Battle of Badr is the killing of Abu Jahal Amr ibn Hisham (أبو جهل عمرو بن هشام). And the Prophet ﷺ said he is the fir'awn (pharaoh) of this ummah. And Allah willed he be killed by two young teenagers around 16-17 years old. There is great wisdom here, that this great tyrant will be killed by some teenagers. It's another humiliation for him, and an honor for the two teenagers and the Ansar.

Abd al-Rahman ibn Awf RA said when he was battling in Badr, he wanted strong people by his side so that if they finished their 1-on-1 battle, they could help him. But, he narrates, that when he turned to his left and right, he saw young small men fighting. So he was disappointed. And their names were Mu'adh ibn Amr ibn al-Jumuh (معاذ بن عمرو بن الجموح) and Muawwidh ibn Afra' (معوذ بن عفراء). And Mu'adh ibn Amr ibn al-Jumuh's father was a leader of the Banu Salama. Mu'adh himself took the shahada at the Second Covenant of Aqaba. And he is around 16 now. Ibn Abbas narrates: Suddenly, one of these boys poked Abd al-Rahman ibn Awf and whispered in his ear, "Where is Abu Jahal?" It turns out both of these boys were friends and they had a competition between them to see who would kill Abu Jahal. They are both young Ansaris, so they haven't seen Abu Jahal. So one of them poked Abd al-Rahman and said, "O uncle, have you seen Abu Jahal before? I have heard he has disrespected the Prophet ﷺ, and I have given an oath to Allah that if I see him, my shadow will overlap with his [and they won't part] until one of the two of us is dead." And so

Abd al-Rahman said, "If I see him, I will tell you." And barely had he got back to his position when the other boy poked him and asked the exact same question. And he told him the exact same answer. And so when Abd al-Rahman heard this, he felt comforted that although these guys are young, they both have spirit. Ibn Hajar and others mention that Abu Jahal was standing in a grove of trees — a type of protection. And he was surrounded by his men, most importantly by his son Ikrimah (عكرمة) who was a strong, young man.

Abd al-Rahman narrates further, "And so when we were fighting, I saw in the distance Abu Jahal. So I shouted out loud [to the boys], 'This is your 'companion!'" As soon as he said that, the two of them darted into the army to get to him. They make their way to the grove where Abu Jahal is. Mu'adh ibn Amr raced forward through the trees, and scared that he wasn't going to get to Abu Jahal, he jumped forward with his sword to try to get the remaining distance before somebody stopped him. But he wasn't able to reach the upper portion of Abu Jahal. We can imagine that he is now in the air, and so the full force of his whole body is now coming down. And his sword came smashing down onto the left leg of Abu Jahal, and it completely severed his leg. Ikrimah, trying to defend his father, his sword chopped off the entire right arm of Mu'adh simultaneously. (And Mu'adh after this lived with one arm for his entire life.) And Mu'adh later narrated that his arm hung onto his body with just one tendon, and it got in his way in Badr, so he put it on his foot, bent down, and ripped it off. This is a 16-17 year-old. And he used his left hand for the rest of the battle. This is Mu'adh ibn Amr ibn al-Jumuh. (And he lived a long life and died a natural death in the khilafah of Uthman RA.)

The second of the two was Muawwidh ibn Afra' — recall he was the one who volunteered to fight in the mubaraza. His mother Afra' was so pious that all her children were named after her. Afra' had three sons, and two of them became shaheed in the Battle of Badr (both brothers who stood up for the mubaraza). Muawwidh, we don't know exactly where his blow landed on Abu Jahal, but it also struck somewhere in his body. So he also gets a blow to Abu Jahal. And so both Mu'adh and Muawwidh come rushing back to the Prophet ﷺ saying, "I killed Abu Jahal," "I killed Abu Jahal," and they started arguing as to who killed him when the Prophet ﷺ said, "Show me your swords." They both showed him the swords. The Prophet ﷺ said, "The both of you have killed him" — meaning both of these wounds together will cause his death. So the honor of killing Abu Jahal goes to the both of them. But Mu'adh was the one to get the armor of Abu Jahal (since Muawwidh was later martyred in the battle). In Islamic law, whoever you kill in a war, you get their personal belongings. So Mu'adh got a mini fortune.

To finish up the story of Abu Jahal: After the Battle of Badr had finished, the Prophet ﷺ told the sahaba, "Go and find the body of Abu Jahal." So a number of sahaba split out and it was Abdullah ibn Mas'ud<sup>[171]</sup> who found him. Abu Jahal was breathing heavily and was about to die. So Ibn Mas'ud places his foot on the chest of Abu Jahal and says, "Do you finally admit Allah has disgraced you, O enemy of Allah?" But to the very end, Abu Jahal remained obstinate and stubborn, he responded, "How have I been disgraced? A person killed by his own people" — meaning Abu Jahal is trying to put the blame on the Muslims, that, "Shame on you [for killing your own tribesman]!" To the very end, he tried to throw the

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<sup>171</sup> Note: Ibn Mas'ud is the 6th convert to Islam — the one who was humiliated many times in Makkah as he was a low caste.



blame on the Muslims. Then he asked Ibn Mas'ud, "Tell me, what is the result of the battle? Who has won today?" Ibn Mas'ud said, "Allah and His Messenger have won." Abu Jahal then noticed the foot on his chest — and out of arrogance, he said, "You have stepped on a high place, O son of a shepherd." At this, Ibn Mas'ud pulled his sword out to kill Abu Jahal; but his sword had been made dull by the whole day of Badr, so he got the sword of Abu Jahal and delivered the final blow using his own sword. So Ibn Mas'ud got the honor of giving Abu Jahal the final blow<sup>[172]</sup>. He then came back to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "Ya Rasulallah, I found the corpse of Abu Jahal." The Prophet ﷺ asked, "Do you swear by Allah?" He said, "Yes, I swear by Allah." "Do you swear by Allah?" "Yes, I swear by Allah." "Do you swear by Allah?" "Yes, I swear by Allah." — 3 times, as this was a very big news. And then the Prophet ﷺ said, "Show me [the body]." So they went to see the body, and this was when the Prophet ﷺ said, "This was the fir'awn (pharaoh) of this ummah" — and this was the only time he said this.

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### The End of Umayyah ibn Khalaf

Another story is that of Umayyah ibn Khalaf who met a very evil end. And indeed, in this story, we see Allah's justice is infinite. That, as you do unto others, it shall be done unto you.

When the Quraysh had fled, Umayyah began to look for people to be on his side. One of his best friends in the days of Jahiliyyah was Abd al-Rahman ibn Awf — so much so that even after Abd al-Rahman converted to Islam, they remained good friends.

(Tangent: Before Abd al-Rahman became Muslim, his name was Abd Amr [عبد عمرو]. So when he converted, he changed his name to Abd al-Rahman. But Umayyah said to him, "I cannot call you this because I don't know who this 'Rahman' is." Abd al-Rahman said, "I will not respond to my old name Abd Amr." So Umayyah said, "Okay, I will call you Abd al-Ilah [عبد الإله]." And Abd al-Rahman said he was fine with that, so he would always be called Abd al-Ilah by Umayyah.)

So when Umayyah sees Abd al-Rahman pass by during the Battle of Badr, he holds onto him with two hands —and he notices Abd al-Rahman has in his hands the armor of someone he had killed— so Umayyah says, "O Abd al-Ilah, what if I were to give you much more than this armor? What if I were to give you many milking camels? Get rid of this armor! Protect me! Take me as a prisoner, and I will give you as much as you want!" Begging for his life to the very end. And, even on the battlefield, Abd al-Rahman is still a businessman — so he throws away the armor, and he takes Umayyah and his son back to the camp of the Muslims as prisoners of war.

Two things to note:

1. The laws of war have not yet been revealed — as we will see later, the Muslims didn't know what to do with the prisoners of war, ransom, booty, etc. All of this, [laws pertaining to them] will come down later on.

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<sup>172</sup> But note it's not the full honor since Abu Jahal would have died anyway.

2. Technically, they are still on the battlefield, and this is a key point. They are not actually in the safety zone (the camp) yet. So it's a gray area.

Now, Allah willed Bilal RA sees Abd al-Rahman RA holding Umayyah's hand as a prisoner. So Bilal RA says, "Umayyah ibn Khalaf the leader of the kuffar! You are giving him security?! Over my dead body!" And Abd al-Rahman starts pleading, "Calm down, Bilal. Calm down. These are my prisoners." But Bilal kept on raising his voice until he called the Ansar and told them, "This is that man who tortured me!" And subhan'Allah, it's amazing how Allah AWJ has preserved the honor and story of Bilal — it's well known even to our children; how much more so amongst the sahaba. Everyone knows it. So when Bilal showed Umayyah to the Ansar, now Abd al-Rahman had to negotiate with all of them, "These are my prisoners, they have entrusted themselves to me." But Bilal RA kept on saying, "You are not going to save this man." Until finally, they surrounded Abd al-Rahman and began prodding Umayyah. So much so that it's said Abd al-Rahman tried to stop them with his own body, and he was actually wounded on his foot from trying to protect Umayyah. But eventually, both Umayyah and his son were killed. And Abd al-Rahman would say till he died, "May Allah have mercy on Bilal. Not only did he stop me from getting my two ransoms, but I never got the armor back as well."

Subhan'Allah. The same voice that called out, "Ahad-un-ahad (One God, One God)", that was the voice that caused Umayyah's death. That same loud voice, Allah AWJ willed that it came back to haunt Umayyah. And it was that voice that brought the help of the Ansar and managed to kill Umayyah ibn Khalaf before he reached the safety of the camp.

And Umayyah ibn Khalaf was the only person who was not buried on the Day of Badr. The rest were. Umayyah, after the battle had finished, the Muslims found his body on a bed of pebbles (which was what he would use to torture Bilal with). And whenever they tried to lift him up, the flesh would just decompose — so they couldn't pick him up. This is truly Allah's qadr. So they had to leave him on those pebbles — and for the sake of covering a dead body, they put more pebbles on top of him. They took the same burning hot pebbles of the desert and just threw them onto his body. Truly, كما تدین تدان (as you do unto others, so it shall be done unto you).

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### **The Father of Abu Ubaydah Amir ibn al-Jarrah**

Abu Ubaydah Amir ibn al-Jarrah (أبو عبيدة عامر بن الجراح) RA, one of the Ten Promised Jannah, his father Jarrah was on the side of the mushriks, and he was a bitter enemy who could not stand his son having converted. In the Battle of Badr, he wanted to kill his own son. Whenever Jarrah would see Abu Ubaydah, he would make his way to him to kill him. And every time Abu Ubaydah sees his father coming, he would go somewhere else out of respect and love; until finally, his father surprised him. Out of the blue, suddenly Jarrah came jumping on him to kill him. And in self-defense, Abu Ubaydah killed his own father. After this, the people began speaking, that, "He has killed his own father." And Abu Ubaydah felt a great amount of sadness. "What have I done..." — Now, this is of course something bad

enough in our times (out of pure humanity); but especially in those Jahiliyyah tribalism days, it was worse. So Abu Ubaydah really felt depressed and sad.

At this, Allah SWT revealed in the Quran the last verse of Surah al-Mujadila (سورة المجادلة):

لَا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ يُوَادُّونَ مَنْ حَادَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَوْ كَانُوا آبَاءَهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ أَوْ إِخْوَانَهُمْ أَوْ عَشِيرَتَهُمْ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ كَتَبَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَأَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ مِّنْهُ وَيُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرَى مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ حِزْبُ اللَّهِ ۚ أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

"You will never find a people who [truly] believe in Allah and the Last Day loyal to those who defy Allah and His Messenger, even if they were their parents, children, siblings, or extended family. For those [believers], Allah has instilled faith in their hearts and strengthened them with a spirit from Him. He will admit them into Gardens under which rivers flow, to stay there forever. Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. They are the party of Allah. Indeed, Allah's party is bound to succeed" [Quran, 58:22].

Subhan'Allah. This verse is a praise for Abu Ubaydah from Allah. In our religion, there is no question that one's ultimate loyalty always is to Allah SWT — and every other loyalty is conditional to that loyalty. This is simply a given in Islam; there is no room for negotiation in this regard.

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### Abu Hudhayfah RA

Abu Hudhayfah ibn Utbah (أبو حذيفة بن عتبة) RA is the son of Utbah ibn Rabi'ah, one of the three who died in the mubaraza.<sup>[173]</sup>

When Abu Hudhayfah heard the Prophet ﷺ say the Banu Hashim should not be killed, he said, "So our fathers, uncles, and brothers will be killed, but the uncle and family of the Prophet ﷺ will not be killed?!" — the Jahiliyyah tendency came out in him. And the news spread that Abu Hudhayfah said this — and on top of this, he swore to kill al-Abbas. When the Prophet ﷺ heard this, he told Umar RA, "O Abu Hafs (أبو حفص), will the face of the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ be struck with a sword?" — meaning don't let it happen. Umar RA said, "Ya Rasulallah, he has committed nifaq (hypocrisy); let me take care of him (kill him)." But the Prophet ﷺ forbade him from doing that, so Umar RA went to Abu Hudhayfah and made sure he was put into place. Later on, Abu Hudhayfah used to say, "I shall never feel safe against the consequences of that one sentence (that I said) unless Allah accepts me as a shaheed," i.e., "I made a big mistake. I'm always going to be worried about it unless Allah accepts me as a shaheed." And his du'a was accepted and he died a shaheed in the Battle of Yamama [12 AH].

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<sup>173</sup> Tangent: One of the famous reciters of the Quran among the sahaba named Salim Mawla Abi Hudhayfah (سالم مولى أبي حذيفة) is Abu Hudhayfah's freed slave. There are a lot of hadith about Salim. He has a beautiful voice. And Abu Hudhayfah's sister is Hind (هند) the wife of Abu Sufyan.

A number of points here:

1. Firstly, realize even the greatest of the sahaba, they are human and they can fall into an error. Therefore, if one of us makes a mistake, take heart that people far better than us have fallen into far bigger mistakes than us. Imagine someone swearing they will kill the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ; can you imagine how guilty he must have felt afterward? But he repented and Allah accepted the repentance.

2. Notice the wisdom of the Prophet ﷺ — he handled the situation in a very wise manner. He knows Umar will put Abu Hudhayfah in his place, so he expresses his frustration to Umar. He didn't directly go to Abu Hudhayfah because that would have been too humiliating for Abu Hudhayfah. And he ﷺ realizes Abu Hudhayfah's brother, uncle, and father all just died, so he excused him and didn't take him to task. There are no consequences because one's emotional state is overlooked.

As we will see in the next episode, after the battle was finished, all of the bodies of the mushriks were thrown into the well. And when the body of Utbah was being dragged to be thrown into the well, Abu Hudhayfah's face became very pale. You could see the effects of grief on him. Upon this, the Prophet ﷺ said to him, "Perhaps you find this difficult," and Abu Hudhayfah said, "Ya Rasulallah, I have no doubt my father died upon kufr — but I knew from him wisdom, love, and great care." (And indeed, frankly, Utbah was [of the better of the Quraysh](#).) So he is saying his father was a good person, and he had hoped that Allah AWJ would guide him to Islam — and so when he died in kufr, that grieved him. So the Prophet ﷺ made du'a for Abu Hudhayfah — and this is his way of showing Abu Hudhayfah that there are no hard feelings — everything is forgiven.

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### Abu al-Bukhturi

Now, even though the Prophet ﷺ forbade the killing of al-Abbas, the Banu Hashim, and Abu al-Bukhturi, unfortunately, Abu al-Bukhturi was killed. An Ansari saw him and told him, "O Abu al-Bukhturi, we have been forbidden from harming you, so surrender yourself and let me take you back to the camp." But Abu al-Bukhturi said, "How about my friend?" The Ansari said, "We have no laws about him." So Abu al-Bukhturi said, "No. Let not the women of Quraysh say that I saved myself at the expense of my friend." So he charged forward and the Ansari had to kill him in self-defense. The Ansari then came to the Prophet ﷺ and told him, "Ya Rasulallah, I tried my best to take him prisoner like you said, but he refused except to fight, so I had to kill him." So the Prophet ﷺ excused him for killing Abu al-Bukhturi.

## 040. The Battle of Badr 5

We are still discussing the incidents during the Battle of Badr. The next is a tafsir of something Allah says in the Quran:

### Iblis on the Day of Badr

وَإِذْ زَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَلَهُمْ وَقَالَ لَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ الْيَوْمَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَإِنِّي جَارٌّ لَكُمْ فَكُلَّمَا تَرَآتِ الْفِئَتَانِ نَكَصَ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ وَقَالَ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّنْكُمْ إِنِّي أَرَىٰ مَا لَا تَرَوْنَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ وَاللَّهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

"And [remember] when satan made their [evil] deeds appealing to them, and said, 'No one can overcome you today. I am surely by your side.' But when the two forces faced off, he cowered and said, 'I have absolutely nothing to do with you. I certainly see what you do not see. I truly fear Allah, for Allah is severe in punishment'" [Quran, 8:48].

What is this a reference to? We [already mentioned](#) the first half of the story: When the Quraysh were leaving Makkah, they almost turned back out of paranoia that another tribe might attack Makkah while they were away — but shaytan came to them in the form of Suraqa ibn Malik (a nobleman from the Banu Kinana), guaranteeing that they won't be attacked, so much so that he said, "I will accompany you, so you can be sure that if anything happens, you can kill me." But what happened? When the Muslim and mushrik armies met one another, and when shaytan saw the angels come down, he turned around and began running away. So al-Harith ibn Hisham (الحارث بن هشام) said, "Where are you running away, O Suraqa?" And shaytan pushed him so severely that al-Harith flew upwards and fell on his back. And shaytan said, "I see what you don't, and I fear Allah" [as recorded in the Quran, 8:48]. And it's narrated in Imam Malik's Muwatta that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Shaytan was never more humiliated than he was on the Day of Badr" — because of what he saw of the blessings and mercy of Allah, and he saw Jibril AS inciting the angels, "Go forth!" So shaytan felt the lowest ever in his life on the Day of Badr. And in this manifestation, we see the trickery of shaytan — how he offered them promises, but at the last minute, he literally ran away. And this is shaytan's ways — he promises everything, but he is a fraudster and trickster; he does not feel ashamed to lie.

Also, look at the significance of how Iblis himself is getting involved. We know from our texts that Iblis does not get involved except in very evil matters. As the Prophet ﷺ says in a hadith, Iblis has a throne somewhere over the water, and he sends shayatin to do his bidding. So for Iblis to physically come to Badr, it's clear how desperate he was.

Also, look at the picture: On the one side, you have that very same entity who refused to do sajdah to Adam AS — Iblis, the worst of all shayatin — and you have Abu Jahal, Uqba, Umayyah ibn Khalaf, and Utbah. And 100m away, you have Jibril AS — the best of all angels — and the Prophet ﷺ, Abu Bakr, Umar, and Ali. Indeed, this is truly the Yawm al-Furqan (يوم الفرقان - the Day of Decision / Criterion / Separation) [see Quran, 8:41]. What was separated? Truth from falsehood. Correctness from evil. Jibril vs. Iblis. The Prophet ﷺ vs. Abu Jahal. And so on. This type of battle has never taken place since Allah created mankind, up until the Day of Judgment. And this is why the Day of Badr was indeed the greatest victory given to the Prophet ﷺ in terms of actual military expeditions.

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## The Defeat of the Quraysh

So eventually, the Quraysh turned on their backs and fled back to Makkah.

Some modern military analysts, when they looked at the map of Badr, noticed that there was one clear passageway back to Makkah that the Prophet ﷺ could have blocked if he wanted to but he didn't do so. So it is as if the Prophet ﷺ allowed one escape passage back for the Quraysh (this is a theory, as we don't know what is in the mind of the Prophet ﷺ). Modern military analysts theorize that the Prophet ﷺ did this to leave a pressure valve outlet — that is, he left a very clear area for the Quraysh to retreat because when a group knows that they are fighting to death, they will fight much more eagerly in desperation; but when there is a pressure valve outlet, their resolve will go down very fast — "I can always run away." And that passageway was exactly where the Quraysh retreated from.

The net result at the end of the battle: 70 of the Quraysh had been killed and around 73-74 were taken prisoners of war out of more than 1,000. So around 15% of their army was either killed or taken prisoners of war. And from the Muslim side, there were no prisoners of war, and 15 were martyred. And this is less than 5% of the Muslims.

When the army of the Quraysh fled, the Prophet ﷺ regrouped the sahaba and told them that they would remain at Badr for 3 days. Why?

1. To bury the shaheed.<sup>[174]</sup>
2. To recover and recuperate.
3. To ensure the Quraysh don't launch a counterattack.
4. Most importantly, to clarify who is the winner and who is the loser. The Prophet ﷺ and the sahaba camped at the battlefield for 3 days and the Quraysh didn't have the audacity or galls to return back and fight — so clearly, the Prophet ﷺ was the victor of this battle.

The 15 sahaba who died each got their own grave. As for the Quraysh, the 70+ who died, they were all 'interred' collectively in a well: their bodies were thrown in one of the abandoned wells, and the well was then filled with sand. This shows us that in our shariah, we show respect even to the bodies of those whom the Muslim army has killed. We don't just let them rot in the sun — even though, we don't give them the same funeral procedure as we do for Muslim martyrs. (This is the custom of the world — your dead are treated a million

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<sup>174</sup> Note this is the first time the shariah of shaheed came down, of what do you do for a shaheed: (i) You don't pray salat al-janazah. (ii) You don't wash the body — the shaheed's wounds are not washed because the Prophet ﷺ said when a shaheed is resurrected, the scent of his blood will be the scent of musk. (iii) The shaheed is buried where he dies — this is the sunnah for the shaheed, so all those who died in Badr were buried at Badr. (iv) You bury a shaheed in the clothes he was wearing.

times better than your opponent's. So the mushriks who died, they were given a different type of burial.) There was only one body that could not be buried, and that was Umayyah ibn Khalaf's, as we mentioned last week.

On the third day, as the Prophet ﷺ was departing away from Badr, he diverted the caravan from the way back to Madinah and stopped at the well where all of those bodies had been buried. And he called them out by name one by one, "O Utbah ibn Rabi'ah, O al-Walid ibn Utbah, O Abu Jahal," et al., and said, "Have you found what your lord has promised you to be true? As for me, I have found the promise of Allah to be true." He ﷺ mentioned all the leaders of the Quraysh one by one and gave this rhetorical question. And Umar RA said to him ﷺ, "Ya Rasulallah, how can you speak to bodies that have no soul?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "I swear by the One in whose Hands is my soul, you are not able to hear me now any better than they can. But they cannot respond to me" (i.e., they can hear me very clearly) — this hadith is in Sahih Muslim. One of the narrators, Qatada the Student of Ibn Abbas, explained this hadith by saying, "Allah brought them back to life in order that they could hear the Prophet ﷺ speak, and in order that they could be humiliated and insulted upon their injuries, and they could be a source of regret and guilt for them."

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### **Tangent: Can the Dead in the Grave Hear the Speech of the Living?**

Q: Can the dead in the grave hear or not? Can he know a visitor is at his grave? This is a huge theological question that even the sahaba differed over. And this incident of Badr is one of the most important evidences used by both sides — it's an authentic evidence; everybody knows it is there; the interpretation is the issue.

One camp says the dead can hear, the other says they cannot. And both opinions have sahaba, tabi'un, and great scholars supporting them.

It is said that Ibn Umar RA would say the person in the grave can hear the one visiting him. (And he even went further to say that that [dead] person will be punished by hearing his [living] relatives [wail](#) over him.)

But Aisha RA believed the dead cannot hear the person outside.

### **Quranic Verses**

1. Aisha RA quotes the Quran, "You will not be able to make the one in the grave hear you" [Quran, 35:22].
2. And there are other Quranic evidences as well: "You cannot make the mawta (موتى - the dead) hear. Nor can you make the deaf person hear the call when they turn their backs and walk away" [Quran, 30:52].
3. Also in another verse, Allah says, "You certainly cannot make the dead hear. Nor can you make the deaf hear the call when they turn their backs and walk away" [Quran, 27:80].

So one can say it seems very explicit from the Quran that the dead cannot hear.

### Ahadith

What about the hadith? A number of ahadith seem to suggest that the dead can hear — hence the conflict and controversy.

1. There is a long hadith in Sahih Bukhari wherein the Prophet ﷺ mentions what happens to the soul when it dies. One phrase in it is of relevance to us. He ﷺ said, "The person in the grave [hears the footsteps of those who have come to bury him as they return](#)." Pretty clear and explicit.
2. Another evidence that is used is the famous hadith in Bukhari and Muslim that the Prophet ﷺ visited Baqi' al-Gharqad and he said salam to the people of the grave, "Assalamu'alaykum."
3. Another evidence that is used is the mutawatir hadith wherein the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever sends salam upon me, Allah will send an angel to tell me that they have given salam."
4. Another hadith, "Whoever passes by the grave of anyone they knew and says salam, the person in the grave shall recognize who said salam and he shall return his salam." But this is a weak hadith — it's not mentioned in the [Six Books](#); rather, it's mentioned in some of the more obscure books, e.g., Ibn Hibban (ابن حبان), Ibn Asakir's (تاريخ دمشق) Tarikh Dimashq (ابن عساكر).

And there is another evidence that is used, which is NOT a hadith, but rather, what Amr ibn al-As<sup>[175]</sup> said to his children when he was on his deathbed: "When you bury me, stay at my grave for the length of time it takes to slaughter an animal and distribute the meat (i.e., a fixed unit of time)." Why? He said, "Your presence will calm me down, and then I will be able to answer the [messengers of my Lord](#) (i.e., منكر ونكير - Munkar and Nakir)."

### Opinion 1: The Dead Can Hear

Taking all of the above into account, the majority position, including of al-Nawawi (ابن قيم), Ibn Kathir (ابن كثير), Ibn Taymiyyah (ابن تيمية), Ibn Hazm (ابن حزم), Ibn al-Qayyim (ابن قيم), al-Suyuti (السيوطي), and Allama al-Shanqiti (الشنقيطي), is that the dead CAN hear those who visit their grave (note: ONLY those who visit, NOT anybody in the world). According to this group, if you say salam to the grave, the person in the grave will be aware that so-and-so is sending salam. Their main evidence is the incident of Badr where the Prophet ﷺ said, "They can hear me just as well as you can" — this is the most explicit evidence that all these scholars use. How does this camp interpret verses in the Quran that say the dead cannot hear?

1. They say the meaning of 'hear' [in those verses] is not a physical hearing, but rather, a hearing that will benefit. And they have an evidence for this: They quote the verse

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<sup>175</sup> Amr ibn al-As is one of the last three sahaba to make Hijrah before the Conquest of Makkah [see [episode 72](#)].



where Allah SWT says, "The only people that you can make to hear are those who will believe in Our Signs" [see Quran, 27:81]. What is the 'hearing' here? Those who follow Islam. Not the physical hearing.

2. They say 'the dead' mentioned in the Quran is not a physical death, but rather, a spiritual death. "Al-mawta" in verses [27:80] [30:52] refers to one who is a kafir. And they have evidence for this as well: They quote the verse where Allah SWT says, "Can those who had been dead —to whom We gave life and a light with which they can walk among people— be compared to those in complete darkness from which they can never emerge?" [Quran, 6:122]. The meaning of death and life here is kufr and Islam. Allah calls the kafir 'mayyit.' So this camp interprets this verse as, "You cannot make the kafir hear you." (But the problem that comes with this interpretation is that in verse [35:22], Allah SWT very explicitly says, "You [O Prophet] can never make those in the GRAVES hear [your call].")

### Opinion 2: The Dead Cannot Hear

On the other camp, we have Aisha RA, Umar RA, Qatada the Student of Ibn Abbas, al-Bayhaqi (البيهقي), al-Shawkani (الشوكاني), al-Albani (الألباني), Ibn Atiyyah (ابن عطية), Ibn al-Jawzi (ابن الجوزي), Ibn Qudama (ابن قدامة), al-Suhayli (السهيلي), al-Qadi Abu Ya'la al-Hanbali (القاضي أبو يعلى الحنبلي), et al., who said Allah \*brought them back to life\* so they could hear. How do you reinterpret all of the ahadith that seem to suggest the dead can hear?

1. They say while it is true that 'mawta' can refer to the kafir, in these verses it refers to the dead, because of verse [35:22] that mentions "graves."
2. As for the other camp's point of saying the Quran talks about hearing of benefit, this can be refuted through verse [35:14], "When you call them (i.e., the false gods) they can't even hear you; even if they could, they don't have the power to respond."<sup>[176]</sup>
3. As for the incident of Badr, they say this is the strongest evidence against the other camp. How so? They say Umar RA questioned, "How can these people hear when they are dead?" And the Prophet ﷺ did not correct him, but rather, made an exception. He ﷺ said, "O Umar, \*right now\* \*this group\* can hear me just as well as you can." — An exception in time, place, and people. He didn't say, "O Umar, why are you asking? Don't you know the dead can hear?" This clearly shows Umar RA understood the Quran correctly — and the Prophet ﷺ is not correcting the 'misunderstanding'; because it is not a misunderstanding.
4. [The issue of the footsteps](#): Once again, the Prophet ﷺ is making an exception in time and place. This is NOT any person who visits him. This is at the time of burial. We know from authentic ahadith that the [ruh \(soul\) reunites in the body](#) to respond to [Munkar and Nakir](#). So the Prophet ﷺ is basically telling us that: at that point in time, the footsteps of those who walk back will be heard. Not conversations, but rather, the footsteps only.
5. As for the issue of the Prophet ﷺ going to Baqi' and saying salam, they say it's a salam of du'a, and not a salam of greeting. In our daily lives, we use the phrase "may peace be upon you" as both a du'a and a greeting. But in this particular case —this

<sup>176</sup> Side note: Recall all the false gods that the Arabs used to worship in the times of Jahiliyyah were [humans in the beginning](#). E.g., al-Lat, al-Uzza, Manat.

camp of scholars say— it's only a du'a and not a greeting. So according to them, this hadith doesn't seem to suggest at all that the dead can hear.

6. As for the hadith of the dead recognizing the one who says salam to him, it is a weak hadith, and pretty much every scholar of hadith says it is weak.
7. As for Amr ibn al-As's wasiyyah<sup>[177]</sup> to his children, it is \*his\* interpretation; the Prophet ﷺ did not tell him to do it.
8. As for the ahadith of the Prophet ﷺ that say the angels come and give him ﷺ salams (the angels deliver his ummah's salams to him in his grave ﷺ), the very fact that an angel must convey the salam indicates that he ﷺ cannot hear [the speech of the living anymore]. If the Prophet ﷺ could hear directly, he wouldn't need the angels to go tell him.

### Sh. YQ's Opinion

2012: It does seem to be that the dead CANNOT hear. And Allah knows best. But we shouldn't be too strict about this issue because some of the sahaba held the other opinion. And it's true to say that many scholars held the position that the dead can hear the one who visits them.

2019 (Sh. YQ changed his opinion - <https://youtu.be/4l5Go8S--Q4?t=2831>): I find myself very sympathetic to Ibn Taymiyyah's position overall, because the Quran does not negate the hearing of the dead unequivocally. If you look at the verses of the Quran (when they talk about how the dead cannot hear), they are dealing with hidayah<sup>[178]</sup>. So it does appear that when Allah is saying the dead cannot hear, what He is negating is the hearing that is beneficial (i.e., hearing of the qalb / قلب - hearing of the heart). And all of these evidences put together, the message that we are getting is, as Ibn Taymiyyah says in Majmu' al-Fatawa (مجموع الفتاوى), Volume 5, page 366: "All of these traditions and other than them indicate that the mayyit<sup>[179]</sup> CAN hear the speech of the living. But this doesn't mean every mayyit hears every speech of the visitor that comes to him. (Just like in this world where sometimes the living don't hear the speech of the other living.) For it is possible that Allah can allow some of them to hear in some circumstances, and not in others. It is possible that the mayyit might be busy with something else (either good or bad), so that when the visitor comes, he is unaware." So there is no guarantee that when the living visit the mayyit, they will be noticed and heard every single time. But overall, it is clear that it does happen (i.e., the dead can sometimes hear). [The incident of] Badr is not an exception. Therefore, argument can be made that the dead are aware of the visitations of the living (to the vicinity of their grave), and they can hear the salam, and are aware of the salam if Allah wills (i.e., not every single time). And Allah knows best.

The main point is that this is a theoretical issue. No action is derived from this. By unanimous consensus, you DON'T ask the person in the grave for your needs.

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<sup>177</sup> Wasiyyah (وصية) - will.

<sup>178</sup> Hidayah (هداية) - guidance.

<sup>179</sup> The mayyit (ميت) - the dead.

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## The Spoils of War

Back to the Battle of Badr. Another thing that took place in these 3 days before the Muslims returned to Madinah was the issue of ghanima<sup>[180]</sup>. And we know from the Quran and sunnah that the previous ummahs were not allowed to keep ghanima; they had to give it up. Allah has not made ghanima halal for any ummah except for our ummah. (In fact, in the Old Testament —and the hadith affirms this— it is said that when the army of Bani Israel captured the items from war and whatnot, they would make a big pile, and Allah AWJ would send down a lightning bolt to burn the whole pile in front of them to affirm that it has been accepted from them.)

When the Muslims finished the Battle of Badr, there was a lot of ghanima, and they wondered what to do. Some discussion broke up amongst the sahaba — because in the course of the battle, the sahaba had split up into a number of groups, and each group was claiming some privilege over the other group. One group said, "We were the ones who collected the booty from the battlefield, so we should get it." Another group said, "We were the ones who pursued the Quraysh as they ran away to make sure they wouldn't come back. And had we not been pursuing, you couldn't have collected." A third group said, "We were surrounding the Prophet ﷺ as a precaution that they wouldn't attack. And the only reason we stayed next to him was to protect him. So how could you deprive us? Rather, we deserve it as well." Note this wasn't a fight or a debate — it was a discussion. And it's said Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas came with a beautiful sword he had taken from the person he had killed, and said to the Prophet ﷺ, "O Messenger of Allah, give this sword to me, for by Allah, I used it in the battle."

And so Allah revealed the first verses of Surah al-Anfal, literally on the battlefield:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَنْفَالِ قُلِ الْأَنْفَالُ لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

"They ask you [O Prophet] regarding the spoils of war. Say, 'Their distribution is decided by Allah and His Messenger. So be mindful of Allah, settle your affairs, and obey Allah and His Messenger if you are [true] believers'" [Quran, 8:1].

So Allah is reminding them that greed should not be the primary incentive. Don't break up your brotherhood. Allah's pleasure is more important than this wealth.

Then the Quran goes on and says the war booty can indeed be distributed. The details of fiqh of distribution are complicated and beyond the scope of this halaqa, but in a nutshell, we learn from verse [8:41] that:

$\frac{1}{5}$  of it is put aside; and this  $\frac{1}{5}$  is divided into 5 shares:

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<sup>180</sup> Ghanima (غنيمة) - spoils of war.

1. The Prophet ﷺ — This was unique for him in his lifetime. After his death, then obviously, this is not there.
2. The Ahl al-Bayt — In Sunni fiqh, we respect them and even give them this 1/3 of the 1/3. (Note the Sunni's definition of Ahl al-Bayt is broader than the Shia's definition of Ahl al-Bayt.)
3. Orphans.
4. Poor people.
5. Travelers and wayfarers who don't have any money.

So 4% each — and this gives a total of 20%. The rest of the 80% is given back to the army. And in the Battle of Badr, every single person was given an equal share. This was early Islam. (Later on, in the Battle of Khandaq onwards, the Prophet ﷺ changed this. He gave the one with an animal [horse / camel] three times the amount than those who didn't have an animal. The infantry and cavalry were differentiated in their share of ghanima. [See also: [episode 61](#).])

And in the Battle of Badr, there were 9 people who got a share of the booty even though they were not on the battlefield. Every one of them had a legitimate excuse. The main person being Uthman ibn Affan RA. He got the same amount as all of the other Badriyun, and he is considered a Badri even though he didn't participate in the Battle of Badr. Why? Because his wife Ruqayyah (رقية) (i.e., the daughter of the Prophet ﷺ) had fallen severely sick. In fact —they didn't know this at the time, but— she was going to die. Uthman wanted to participate in the battle, but the Prophet ﷺ told him to take care of Ruqayyah. So he remained behind. And she passed away the day the Prophet ﷺ returned back from Badr (as we will discuss later). She was buried on the same day the Prophet ﷺ returned back from Badr.

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## The Prisoners of War

Another issue that took place in those three days they stayed at Badr was about the prisoners of war (POWs). What exactly is to be done with the 73-74 prisoners? Once again, this is the first time the Muslims have taken prisoners, and they don't know what is to be done. In Sahih Bukhari, we learn that the Prophet ﷺ surveyed all of the prisoners and said, "If Mut'im ibn Adi were alive right now<sup>[181]</sup> and he spoke to me to free all of these natna<sup>[182]</sup>, I would have freed them all for him." Now they are about to collect a fortune from these 70+ people — literally, it would be millions of dollars [in our time]— yet the Prophet ﷺ was willing to let them go had Mut'im was alive and asked him to free them. This is a statement that has truly profound implications.

Why did the Prophet ﷺ utter this phrase?

Mut'im is already dead. But recall Mut'im was one of those who fed the Banu Hashim when they were boycotted, he helped break the Boycott, and he gave protection to the

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<sup>181</sup> He just died a few months ago.

<sup>182</sup> Natna (نتنى) - filthy / dirty people.

Prophet ﷺ when Abu Lahab revoked his protection. And so with this statement at Badr, the Prophet ﷺ is repaying the favor<sup>183</sup>, even though Mut'im was a kafir.

We learn here that there are those who are not Muslims but they have good hearts. They don't have good hearts in tawhid, but they have good hearts in mercy, in humanity, in tribalism, and in standing for truth. Mut'im did not approve of Islam as a religion, but he did not approve of the zulm of the Quraysh against the Muslims either. So the Prophet ﷺ took advantage of this, appreciated it, and repaid him back. Similarly in our times, there are those non-Muslims who don't agree with Islam theologically, but they stand for truth and freedom, and they don't want the Islamophobes — so it is our job to honor them, to respect them, to reach out to them to work together for a better society — just as the Prophet ﷺ did.

Now the issue came what is to be done with the prisoners of war. This was a very traumatic issue because, on the one hand, these very people have just tried to kill them. So the Prophet ﷺ asked the sahaba, and in particular, he asked his two wazirs<sup>184</sup>: Abu Bakr and Umar. And Abu Bakr RA said, "They are our relatives and blood [after all], so show mercy." Umar RA said, "As for me, I think you should give Aqil to Ali and he will execute him, and so-and-so to me and I will do my job, so we don't leave any of them. They tried to kill us; we should do the same to them." At this, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Verily, Allah makes some hearts so soft they are softer than milk, and others He makes them so hard they are harder than stones. As for you, O Abu Bakr, you have a resemblance of Ibrahim and Isa AS. Ibrahim said (to Allah SWT), 'If they follow me, they are of me; and if they disobey me, then O Allah, You are Forgiving and Merciful' [see Quran, 14:36]. Isa said, 'If You punish them, they are Your servants, but if You forgive them, You are the Almighty, the All-Wise' [see Quran, 5:118]. And O Umar, you are like Nuh and Musa AS. Nuh said, 'Don't leave a single house of kafirs on earth' [see Quran, 71:26]. And Musa said, 'Make their hearts hard so that they never have Iman until they see the Punishment come down on them' [see Quran, 10:88]." And the Prophet ﷺ agreed to the suggestion of Abu Bakr.

Umar RA narrated this hadith: The next day (i.e., the second day of camping at Badr after the battle) he found the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr RA crying under a tree. So he asked, "What is causing you to cry, O Messenger of Allah? For by Allah, if I understand, then I will cry with you. And if I don't understand, I will force myself to cry just to be with you." And so the Prophet ﷺ recited those verses of Surah al-Anfal in which Allah says, "It is not desirable for a Messenger to have prisoners of war until he establishes power in the land" [Quran, 8:67]. And Allah mentioned that one of the reasons why some of the sahaba (not Abu Bakr, but some other sahaba) wanted to take ransom was for worldly gain — He SWT said, "You wanted the dunya, but Allah wants the akhira [for you]" [Quran, 8:67]. And then Allah said, "Were it not for the fact that Allah had already allowed this to happen, a Punishment would have come down on you" [see Quran, 8:68]. So this is what caused the Prophet ﷺ to cry.

Of course, as we know, later on, the shariah came down to give the khalifa the choice of what to do (with POWs). But at this time, for the Battle of Badr, Allah said it was not the best decision to keep prisoners of war — but now that you have done it, then let it go. And

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<sup>183</sup> This is like the 21-gun salute in our times.

<sup>184</sup> Wazirs (وزير) - vizier[s].

this leads us to a very deep theological and Usul al-Fiqh issue which we really don't have the time to discuss in a lot of detail but one of our brethren insisted that we talk about this in some details, so let us spend a few minutes on this issue. And that is the issue of does the Prophet ﷺ have independent ijtihad (اجتهاد - independent reasoning)?

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### Is the Prophet ﷺ Allowed to Exercise His Own Opinion?

Is the Prophet ﷺ able to exercise his own opinion? Or does everything he says emanate directly from Allah SWT? This is an issue that the scholars of Usul al-Fiqh have been discussing from the earliest of Islam. There are obviously, as usual, more than 2 opinions. But there are 2 primary opinions:

1. The first opinion (minority) is that everything the Prophet ﷺ says is directly wahy. And the scholars who hold this opinion mention that Allah says in the Quran, "Everything he (the Prophet ﷺ) says is wahy that comes to him" [see Quran, 53:3-4].

2. The vast majority of Sunni scholars say it's very clear that Allah gave the Prophet ﷺ the right to do ijtihad (اجتهاد). And Allah would sometimes correct it and sometimes let it pass. And in both cases, his ijtihad was binding for the sahaba to follow. Thus, the key point is whatever the Prophet ﷺ commanded, the sahaba had to follow. Regardless of whether you say it came from Allah or it came from him, all scholars unanimously agree that whatever he commands you to do, you must follow it. As for verse [53:3-4], even by the context, it is very clear that the word 'wahy' in the verse is a reference to the Quran. It's very clear that the Prophet ﷺ was a human being — for the 40 years before the wahy, he spoke as a human, and even after the wahy began, he still remained a human being. He said in an authentic hadith, "I am a human being, I forget as you forget." In another hadith, he said, "I get angry sometimes" — showing his humanity. So it's clear that, at times, he can make ijtihad regarding an issue, and this issue later on is sometimes corrected by Allah, or he himself corrects it.

i) Of them the example is given of the incident of Badr where he made an ijtihad regarding what to do with the prisoners of war. And this is not a purely secular matter. This is a semi-religious / semi-secular matter. And Allah told him it wasn't the best decision.

ii) Also the example of [cross-pollination as recorded in Sahih Muslim](#). The Prophet ﷺ made such-and-such a suggestion to the farmers, and they followed the advice. But then, the result did not turn out as expected. To which, [the Prophet ﷺ said](#), "If I tell you something from the matter of the deen, then I am the Messenger of Allah. But if I tell you something from the matter of this world, then you know your worldly affairs better than I do." And this clearly shows that the Prophet ﷺ sometimes spoke from his own ijtihad.

And it appears that sometimes, even in matters of shariah, he ﷺ made his own ijtihad. And Allah gave him the right to do that.

iii) For example, the issue of the prohibition of going to the graves. He himself said later on, "[I used to forbid you from visiting graves](#), but now, go ahead and visit them." And

there does not seem to be any wahy from Allah to change this. Rather, it seems he himself felt that this was now okay to go visit graves.

iv) Another example that is even more explicit: He said, "[I was about to forbid you al-ghila](#)<sup>[185]</sup>, but then I saw the Romans and Persians do it and it does not affect their child. Therefore, go ahead and do it."

v) Also, the issue of hypocrites during Tabuk [9 AH] in which [he forgave the hypocrites](#). But then Allah revealed in Surah al-Tawbah, "May Allah pardon you [O Prophet]! Why did you give them permission?" [Quran, 9:43].

vi) [The hadith of Fatima bint Qays](#) (فاطمة بنت قيس). She was a young lady that many people were interested in marrying after her husband died a shaheed. And she didn't have a house to live, so the Prophet ﷺ said, "Go to Ummi Sharik (أم شريك)'s house, wait until your iddah (عدة) finishes, then I will see who you should marry." But then, later, he sent her another message, "A lot of my young sahaba visit Ummi Sharik's house<sup>[186]</sup>. So don't be in her house. Because maybe my young sahaba will see you when they shouldn't see you. So go to your cousin Ibn Ummi Maktum (ابن أم مكتوم) as he is blind."

vii) Also, in Hajj, he ﷺ did Hajj Qiran (قران), and later, he said if he knew better, he would have done Hajj Tamattu' (تمتع) [see [episode 100](#)].

viii) Also, in the incident of Uhud [3 AH], when he was severely injured, he said, "How can Allah ever forgive you (mushriks)?" [see [episode 49](#)]. And what did Allah reveal in the Quran in response to this phrase? This is a very strict verse:

لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَوْ يُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ  
وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

"You [O Prophet] have no say in the matter. It is up to Allah to turn to them in mercy or punish them, for indeed, they are wrongdoers. Everything in the heavens and earth belongs to God. He forgives whoever He will and punishes whoever He will: God is Most Forgiving and Merciful" [Quran, 3:128-129].

ix) Also, he ﷺ made a du'a about Muawiyah (which we cannot get into now because it is going to be too long).

x) A very explicit shar'i ruling, mutawatir, Bukhari and Muslim: When the Prophet ﷺ conquered Makkah [8 AH], he said, "Every single tree in Makkah is Haram. Nobody should pluck a leaf from Makkah" — but right then and there, his uncle said, "Please make an exception for idhkhir<sup>[187]</sup>, because we use it for spices" — and so, the Prophet ﷺ made an exception, "Okay, except for idhkhir." We can say this is an honor that Allah gave to the Prophet ﷺ — that He granted the Prophet ﷺ the right to do tashri'<sup>[188]</sup>. Some say this is

<sup>185</sup> Al-ghila (الغيلة) - being intimate with your wife when she is in the period of breastfeeding a child, i.e., for a year or so after delivery.

<sup>186</sup> Maybe every few days she would have a feast or something; we don't know the whole story.

<sup>187</sup> Idhkhir (إذخر) - lemongrass.

<sup>188</sup> Tashri' (تشريع) - legislation.

disrespectful, but we say it's the exact opposite. The Prophet ﷺ is human, but he is the Messenger of Allah, so he is allowed to right then and there say, "Except for idhkhir." And to this day, every book of fiqh says you cannot pluck any leaf in Makkah except for idhkhir.

And there are 50 or more examples of the Prophet ﷺ exercising ijtiḥad — some of them secular, some of them somewhat secular-religious, some of them purely religious, and some of them even theological. He is a human being, but Allah made obedience to him obligatory. So whatever he says about the matters of our religion, we are obliged to obey. If he makes an exception etc., it's completely permitted for him to do so, and it is our obligation to hear-and-obey.

Very simplistically: Every ijtiḥad of the Prophet ﷺ is binding upon us, except when Allah sent down wahy to correct / change his ijtiḥad. And we follow his ijtiḥad because there are over 60 verses in the Quran that tell us to do so.

Sh. YQ's note: "This is a seerah class. Don't derive laws from anything I say."