041. The Battle of Badr 6

Harshness vs. Mercy in the Early Madani Phase

So we mentioned that Allah SWT revealed a verse about the prisoners of war that the harsher treatment would have been better than clemency / mercy at this time. What is the wisdom behind this?

1. Allah says, "It is not appropriate that any prophet has prisoners of war until he establishes his authority in the land" [see Quran, 8:67]. Forgiveness when it's done out of weakness is not considered to be effective; whereas forgiveness at power is the most effective — it's the most genuine forgiveness.

Thus, Allah is hinting that at this stage of weakness where you have the lower hand, it would have been better to execute the POWs to get to the upper hand.[1]

Allah is saying you are still humiliated and oppressed — so you should not have forgiven your enemies at this stage. "It is not appropriate that any prophet has prisoners of war until he establishes his authority in the land" [Quran, 8:67] — which means, yes, the ideal is to forgive, but when is the forgiveness done? When you are powerful.

Look at the practical element of our religion.

2. Another wisdom of not forgiving at this stage was that —and this is exactly what happened—: For every two POWs that you save, maybe one will come back to fight you. And indeed, that's exactly what happened: Some of the prisoners who were freed after Badr, they came back to fight the Muslims in the Battle of Uhud [3 AH], the Battle of Ahzab [5 AH], etc.

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[1] In today's and next week's lessons, we will explicitly discuss the pragmatism of Islam compared to other systems that preach tolerance and love but often fail to practice these ideals. Doctrines like 'turn the other cheek' and 'always forgive' are simply unrealistic for any country, society, or people to maintain. Such teachings are not viable for society because perpetual forgiveness invites exploitation. Historically, no nation claiming to follow these doctrines has ever fully adopted them, demonstrating their impracticality. While these ideals may occasionally work on an individual level, they are ineffective on a broader societal scale. Conversely, Islam teaches forgiveness and mercy as general principles but also emphasizes the importance of justice and firmness when necessary. This balanced approach sends a clear message: do not take advantage of us. This pragmatic reality makes Islam more realistic and effective in dealing with the complexities of human interactions and societal needs.

3. A third wisdom, which Umar RA himself alluded to when he basically said to the Prophet ﷺ to give everybody their own tribesmen to execute, was that it was to demonstrate to the mushrikun that, "We are more loyal to Allah than we are to tribalism"—a concept that took years for the Quraysh to understand.[2]

Nonetheless, Allah SWT accepted the ijtihad of the Prophet ﷺ, and the 70 prisoners were taken back to Madinah. However, on the way back, two prisoners were executed. Out of the 70, 2 of them were not spared. The general rule in Islam is that prisoners of war (POWs) are not executed; but on occasion, they might be. Some scholars say this is the only time POWs were ever executed under the Prophet ﷺ. And these two were al-Nadr ibn al-Harith and Uqba ibn Abi Mu'ayt:

The Mocker of the Quran: Al-Nadr ibn al-Harith

As for al-Nadr ibn al-Harith (النضر بن الحارث): Ibn Ishaq said he was of the shayatin of the Quraysh. And it's said that over 8 verses in the Quran were revealed about him. He was of those who before the coming of Islam had lived abroad in al-Hirah (الحيرة), the capital of the Lakhmid Dynasty in Iraq. So he had an outside education. When the Quran began to be revealed, he became the most sarcastic commentator of the Quran. And he would say, "What are these fables / stories? I can give you better fables." And it's said every single reference in the Quran to somebody saying, "These are fables..." [e.g., Quran, 8:31, 25:5] is a reference to al-Nadr. And Allah revealed in the Quran, "Who does more injustice than the one who says, 'I can reveal as Allah reveals'?" [Quran, 6:93] — this is al-Nadr who said "I can reveal as Allah reveals." And it's said when the people would come around the Prophet ﷺ to listen to him, al-Nadr would come and say, "Leave this man! I can tell you better stories," and he would narrate stories of the ancient Persian kings, etc.

Also, al-Nadr and Uqba were the ones who decided to travel to Yathrib and ask the Jews trick questions to trick the Prophet ﷺ with, because of which Surah Yusuf[3] was revealed [see episode 14]. They traveled all the way just to trap the Prophet ﷺ. And they came back so happy and proud, "Now we have him trapped! For sure he cannot answer! And that will show he is a liar!" But of course, as we have seen, the Prophet ﷺ answered all the questions correctly.

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[2] Even in the Incident of Hudaybiyyah (which would take place a few years later), when Suhayl ibn Amr (who at the time was not yet a Muslim) came to negotiate with the Prophet ﷺ, he looked around and said: "O Muhammad, do you really think this motley crew (i.e., these Muslims) will be able to unite and fight against the Quraysh?" i.e., Suhayl literally could not understand what united the Muslims all of whom came from different backgrounds and tribes. And at this, Abu Bakr RA got extremely angry and he uttered a literal type of curse word to Suhayl, even though, as we know, Abu Bakr is usually the most humble and peaceful person — but this statement of Suhayl made him so angry that he cursed him in a vulgar language.

[3] Or according to another opinion, Surah al-Kahf.

The End of Uqba ibn Abi Mu'ayt

As for Uqba ibn Abi Mu'ayt, he was one of the most vile and evil people. He physically carried the carcass when the Prophet ﷺ was in sajdah [see episode 15]. Recall Abu Jahal taunted, "Who will get it [i.e., the carcass]?" — and Ibn Ishaq narrated, "The most despicable of them stood up"—and that is Uqba ibn Abi Mu'ayt. Can you imagine, a nobleman who has slaves, who is a rich person, spoiling his garment with a stinking rotting dead animal, just to throw it on the back of somebody? He was also the one who physically tried to choke the Prophet ﷺ to death while he ﷺ was praying [see episode 15]. And Abu Bakr RA came to save him and said to the Quraysh, "Will you kill a man just because he says, 'Allah is my Lord'?!"

When Uqba was brought out to be executed, he said, "Why me out of all of them?" And Ali RA said, "Because of your animosity to Allah and His Messenger." And it is said Ali was the one who killed him. In Seerah Ibn Ishaq, it is mentioned that right when he was about to be killed, he begged for his life, "O Muhammad, who will take care of my children?" And the Prophet ﷺ gave a very enigmatic response, "The Fire." Then he was executed by Ali. What did the Prophet ﷺ mean by this? Two interpretations:

1. Don't worry about your children, you have to worry about the Fire.

2. If they follow your footsteps, they will join you in the Fire.

Here, he is groveling for forgiveness and begging for his own children, but where was his own sympathy when the Prophet's ﷺ daughter had to come and save the Prophet ﷺ in sajdah? [see episode 15]

Our religion shows harshness when it is due, and mercy when it is due. For people like Uqba and al-Nadr, the message needed to be given that not all kuffar are the same. These two are, as Ibn Ishaq says, the shayatin of the Quraysh. So for them, the message is given: there is no clemency / forgiveness. And frankly, these people were to the level of all of the others who were killed (Umayyah, Abu Jahal, et al). And for some wisdom that Allah knows[4], they survived during the war, and they were the only POWs executed at the command of the Prophet ﷺ.

The Victory of the Muslims

The Prophet ﷺ left from the Plains of Badr on Monday, the 20th of Ramadan. And the Muslims in Madinah were waiting patiently to find out what had happened. The rumors had come, but they couldn't firmly believe it until Zayd ibn Harithah, the 'adopted son' of the Prophet ﷺ, returned. The Prophet ﷺ sent him on his own camel, al-Qaswa (القصواء), which everyone recognized, as a sign that Zayd was telling the truth. And they all saw Zayd

[4] Perhaps to demonstrate a special death for them.

shouting in excitement, "Allahu'akbar!" And he started mentioning the names of all those who had been killed in Badr. And it was a list of every single famous person of the Quraysh.

When the Muslims heard this, they became happy.

However, when the neo-munafiqun heard it, they started mumbling and whispering amongst themselves, "Clearly Zayd has gone crazy. Muhammad has been killed, and Zayd has taken his camel and now he is delirious and babbling," etc. — because these neo-munafiqun couldn't believe that the news was actually true. So they began saying the Prophet ﷺ was dead.[5]

And subhan'Allah, the phenomenon of nifaq is about to begin now. And such is the way with the munafiqun — they will leave no opportunity except that they will attack Islam and the Prophet ﷺ.

The Death of Ruqayyah, the Daughter of the Prophet ﷺ

There is one footnote of sad news: As Zayd ibn Harithah was coming into the city chanting takbir, Uthman ibn Affan was burying Ruqayyah (رقية) RA, the daughter of the Prophet ﷺ, who had just passed away. Uthman heard the takbir while in Baqi' just as he finished burying Ruqayyah. So he asked, "What is going on? What is this takbir?" — and he was told that the Battle of Badr had been a success.

Wallahi, if you think about it, the Battle of Badr, up until this point, is the happiest occasion ever in Islam. Yet still, Allah willed on that day a tragedy struck in the very household that deserves the most joy, and that is the household of the Prophet ﷺ.[6] It's as if Allah is showing that no matter how happy you are, this world is going to be a world of testing and a world of trial. It's a temporary abode. And life and death does not stop for anybody. This is the reality of the life of this world. As the Prophet ﷺ said, "Every one of us has a long list [of what we want to do], but death comes and draws a line in that list wherever it is." So through this death, it's as if our Prophet ﷺ himself is being shown[7] that even during this time of happiness, realize that the ultimate happiness is in the Next life; not this world.

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[5] Ironically, as we will come to, the exact same reaction happened in Makkah too when the first crier came back. So both camps were in a type of disbelief.

[6] Side note: The order of the daughters of the Prophet ﷺ, we don't know. Some say Ruqayyah was the 1st, some say the 2nd, and some say the 3rd. But for sure she was the first to die. After her, Uthman RA married Ummi Kulthum bint Muhammad (أم كلثوم بنت محمد).

[7] And through him, every one of us is also being shown.

Prisoner of War: Suhayl ibn Amr

So Zayd ibn Harithah came back and the news spread amongst the people of Madinah, and they all gathered together to wait for the Prophet ﷺ to come. And the Prophet ﷺ arrived back the same day, with the 70 prisoners, took them to the Masjid of the Prophet ﷺ, and told each person who captured them to look after them.

And the chieftains of the Quraysh among the prisoners were hosted by the Prophet ﷺ himself. Never in the history of mankind has this ever happened, that the chieftain of the other army is being taken care of by the leader of the other army. Suhayl ibn Amr (سهيل بن عمرو) was of the foremost among the leaders of the Quraysh.

Sawda, the wife of the Prophet ﷺ, something happened here that caused her to regret what she had done: She was with the mother of those who killed Abu Jahal —she was in their house— and when she heard the Quraysh had surrendered and the Prophet ﷺ had come back to Madinah, she rushed back home and barged into her own house, and there in the corner of her own room, she saw Suhayl ibn Amr with his hand tied up, sitting as a prisoner; and when she saw the leader of the Quraysh with his hand tied up like this, she said to him —and she narrated this herself—: "O Abu Yazid (أبو يزيد), you surrendered like this? Why didn't you die an honorable death rather than live like a prisoner?"—instantaneously, she just 'reverted' to the old Jahiliyyah days; she feels disgraced that the leader of the Quraysh is sitting as a prisoner. And when she narrates this story, she says, "I didn't even realize what I said until I heard the Prophet ﷺ next to me saying, 'O Sawda, you are stoking / encouraging him to fight against Allah and His Messenger? (i.e., Do you realize what you are saying?)'" And Sawda made an excuse for herself, "Ya Rasulullah! Wallahi, I lost sense of what I was saying when I saw him sitting like this. I couldn't control myself." And the Prophet ﷺ accepted the excuse.

This shows us over and over again the humanity of the Companions. This is a very major blunder, and yet the Prophet ﷺ didn't criticize her. Every one of us — sometimes we make mistakes of judgment, mistakes of emotion, mistakes of anger, etc. If the Prophet ﷺ can forgive a mistake that outwardly is a type of kufr, then surely we can forgive one another for shortcomings that are lesser in gravity. Indeed, in her emotions, Sawda RA lost control of her rationality. And there are many other examples like this as well: E.g., in the hadith of the man who was dying in the desert — when he later found his lost camel, he blurted out a statement out of joy: "O Allah, You are my servant, and I am Your Rabb!" When the Prophet ﷺ was narrating this hadith, even he ﷺ smiled at the man's madness, and he made an excuse for him. The Prophet ﷺ said, "He made a mistake because he was deliriously happy." The point is, when anyone we know makes a mistake out of emotion, anger, etc., and then recognizes the mistake, we should just move on as the Prophet ﷺ did.

Muslims' Treatment of the Prisoners of War

The Prophet ﷺ, as we mentioned, gave every POW to the one who captured him. And he said, "I command you to treat them with kindness." And Ibn Ishaq mentions many stories about how kindly they were treated. One of them, Abu Aziz (أبو عزيز), the brother of Mus'ab ibn Umayr, said he was assigned to a group of Ansar. And he said whenever they sat down to eat, they would give him the bread and meat, and they would take the dates and water. Why? He himself says, "Because the Prophet ﷺ told them to treat the prisoners with kindness. But out of embarrassment, I would put the bread back in front of them; but they would put it back in front of me." And this is the beauty of Islam: Strictness in the time of strictness, but the general rule is mercy and kindness. And this is an unparalleled treatment of prisoners of war ever.[8] Our shariah gave these rights to prisoners when no other culture on earth acknowledged such rights; prisoners were treated royally, and they were given better food than their captors. Just imagine, which ruler has ever taken a prisoner of war and let him live in his own house? This is the reality of our religion. And we say this in light of what happened to al-Nadr and Uqba. This is what makes Islam such a beautiful, practical, realistic religion.

Then the Prophet ﷺ sent the message to the Quraysh, "These are the prisoners that we will ransom off." There are different narrations given about the price on the prisoners of war. And insha'Allah, the correct opinion is that every prisoner was given a price suitable for him. The rich had to pay more; the poor prisoners paid a lower ransom, so much so the poorest could go back without paying anything. Note the Prophet ﷺ knew every one of them personally, so he knew how much money they roughly had as well.

Prisoner of War: Al-Abbas, the Uncle of the Prophet ﷺ

The Ansari who 'captured' al-Abbas came to the Prophet ﷺ and told him, "Ya Rasulullah, I will gift al-Abbas to you." But the Prophet ﷺ said, "No. Rather, do not decrease his ransom by even one coin." And that Ansari got a very high price, i.e., 4,000 dirhams. Not only that, the Prophet ﷺ told him al-Abbas should also pay the ransom of Aqil (عقيل) and Nawfal (نوفل) who were both his nephews.[9]

There is an interesting hadith in the Musnad of Imam Ahmad: Al-Abbas came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "Ya Rasulullah, I am a Muslim, so why are you putting a ransom on me?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah knows your situation (i.e., we have to judge you on the outer reality). If what you say is true, Allah will give you something better. But we have to judge you by your actions — and you fought us, so you must pay your ransom." And Abbas himself said later on that Surah al-Anfal verse 70 was revealed because of him:

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[8] And that is why, by the way — why were the Geneva Conventions given? It's because mankind realizes we need to treat prisoners decently.

[9] Aqil is the second son of Abu Talib after Talib; and after him is Ja'far, and then Ali. Nawfal is the son of al-Harith the oldest son of Abdul Muttalib.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُل لِّمَن فِي أَيْدِيكُم مِّنَ الْأَسْرَىٰ إِن يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ خَيْرًا يُؤْتِكُمْ خَيْرًا مِّمَّا أُخِذَ مِنكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

"O Prophet, say to whoever is in your hands of the captives, 'If Allah knows [any] good in your hearts, He will give you [something] better than what was taken from you, and He will forgive you; and Allah is Forgiving and Merciful'" [8:70].

Abbas told the Prophet ﷺ, "I don't have any money." But what did the Prophet ﷺ say in response? "Where is that money you and Umm al-Fadl (أم الفضل) (i.e., your wife) hid on such-and-such a day? That you went out and buried it? And you said to Umm al-Fadl, 'If I ever die, this will go to al-Fadl (الفضل), this will go to Abdullah (عبد الله), and this will go to Qutham (قثم)'?" So immediately, Abbas said, "I swear by the One who has sent you with the Truth that you are the Messenger of Allah. For no one knew about this other than me and Umm al-Fadl." And Abbas used to say later on in life, commenting on verse [8:70], "Wallahi, I wish the Prophet ﷺ had taken more from me [during Badr's ransom], because what Allah SWT gave me in return is much more than what He took." And he said, "I had to give 20 uqiyyahs[10] [during Badr's ransom], and instead of this 20 uqiyyahs, now I have 20 slaves, each one of them is a businessman trading; and I get the profits of 20 businessmen underneath me."

The point is that Al-Abbas therefore paid his full ransom along with the ransom of his two nephews.

Prisoners of War: Teaching Children How to Read and Write as the Ransom

It is also reported authentically in the Musnad of Imam Ahmad that some captives had no money, but they could read and write — and so the Prophet ﷺ told them they could go free if they taught the children of the Ansar how to read and write. The Prophet ﷺ wanted to spread literacy in a society that, at the time, didn't care about literacy. Islam was a civilizational force for the Arabs: It came to a group that didn't care about culture, history, science, reading, writing, etc., and it raised them up to be the leaders of the world. It is truly profound.

Prisoner of War: Abu al-As, the Husband of Zaynab bint Muhammad

Abu al-As ibn al-Rabi' (أبو العاص بن الربيع) was the husband of Zaynab bint Muhammad. Thus he was the son-in-law of the Prophet ﷺ. Zaynab RA is most likely the eldest daughter of the Prophet ﷺ.[11]

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10 Which is an amount of silver.

11 Side note: Abu al-As's mother was Hala (هالة), the older sister of Khadija RA. So Khadija RA is Abu al-As's aunt. The marriage between Abu al-As and Zaynab took place in the days of Jahiliyyah. And Abu al-As was a loving husband.

Abu al-As was fighting against the Muslims in Badr, and so the ransom was sent for him as well. It's said when the ransom came, Zaynab, to make up the whole quantity, she gave some of her jewelry; and one item of that jewelry was a necklace that Khadija RA used to wear that she had gifted to Zaynab at the time of her wedding. When the Prophet ﷺ saw this very necklace being sent as ransom, his heart melted — it brought back the memories of Khadija RA.[12] So when the Prophet ﷺ saw the necklace, he requested to those who captured Abu al-As, "If you feel it is appropriate, can you set him free without this item?" And who is going to say no to the intercession of the Prophet ﷺ? So he was sent back without this ransom. And we will discover in a while why this happened.

Prisoner of War: Amr ibn Abi Sufyan

Another story was the ransom of Amr ibn Abi Sufyan (عمرو بن أبي سفيان).[13] Abu Sufyan was told to ransom his son Amr. And when he heard this, he said, "Do they expect me to give up my money (to ransom Amr) along with my blood (another son, Hanzala [حنظلة], who died in Badr)? Let him (Amr) remain in their (the Muslims') hands — he will stay there as long as they want (i.e., I am not going to pay money for my son)." And subhan'Allah, it is amazing here to see that the only reason he could have done this was that, deep down inside, he knew that the Muslims would not kill / torture / persecute his son. The irony is, no matter how much he hated Islam and the Prophet ﷺ, he knew his son was in safe hands. That's why he could say, "Let him remain there." He knew the Muslims would take good care of him.

But later, he did a very evil deed to get his son back, which goes against the principles of Islam and Jahiliyyah. Many months later, one of the elderly people of Madinah —an Ansari by the name of Sa'd ibn al-Nu'man (سعد بن النعمان), who has nothing to do with Badr or anything— came to do business in Makkah and do tawaf and Umrah. And we said many times already that Makkah is a Haram. And this is a law that even the Quraysh themselves upheld at all times. But when this Ansari came, Abu Sufyan kidnapped him in broad daylight and said to the Muslims, "I will not release him until you release my son!" And so the tribe of Sa'd ibn al-Nu'man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "O Messenger of Allah, this-and-this has happened," so the Prophet ﷺ released the son of Abu Sufyan without a ransom. And again, we see the double standard of the Quraysh: They went crazy when some of the sahaba made a mistake and killed someone during the Sacred Month; but when their chieftain kidnaps someone in broad daylight in front of the Ka'bah, no one utters a word. Nonetheless, we see the air of pragmatism here: The Prophet ﷺ deals with them despite the fact that it is open zulm. Because — what is the fault of Sa'd ibn al-Nu'man? So the Prophet ﷺ released the son of Abu Sufyan and swapped the two prisoners.

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12 Recall even the footsteps of Hala would almost bring the Prophet ﷺ to tears. And Aisha RA would get jealous when Hala visited the Prophet ﷺ — because she could see the effects of Khadija's memory on the face of the Prophet ﷺ.

13 Note: Abu Sufyan was of course the leader of the caravan. And right now, he is the undisputed leader of the Quraysh. So he has been traumatized the most, since now, all the pressure is on him. In trying to save his camels and the caravan, disaster befell Makkah.

Prisoner of War: Abu Aziz, the Brother of Mus'ab ibn Umayr

Another story is that of Abu Aziz ibn Umayr (أبو عزيز بن عمير) who became very happy when he saw his brother Mus'ab ibn Umayr RA. But Mus'ab RA told the Ansari who captured his brother, "Make sure he doesn't escape, because his mother is very wealthy, and she will pay 'top dollar' for him." So his brother says, "Ya akhi (أخي - my brother), this is how you treat me?" But Mus'ab says, "هذا أخي دونك (this [Ansari] is my brother, not you)."

Mercy: Freeing the Rest of the Prisoners

For those who couldn't afford any ransom and were also illiterate, they were all sent back without any ransom, e.g., al-Muttalib ibn Hantab (المطلب بن حنطب), Sayfi ibn Abi Rifa'ah (صيفي بن أبي رفاعة), Abu Azzah al-Jumahi (أبو عزة الجمحي), et al. This shows us again the pragmatism of the Prophet ﷺ.

It's said Abu Azzah came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "O Messenger of Allah! You know that I don't have a powerful family. You know that I have no sons. I only have daughters. I have no money. And I have a large family. So be generous with me." So the Prophet ﷺ freed him with one condition, "You are never allowed to fight against us again. Go back, and never fight against us." So Abu Azzah agreed to this, he went back to Makkah, and he wrote a beautiful poem, which is recorded in Ibn Ishaq, praising the generosity of the Prophet ﷺ.

And many of the prisoners of Badr eventually accepted Islam, either before the Conquest [8 AH] or immediately after. E.g., Nawfal ibn al-Harith, al-Abbas, Aqil ibn Abi Talib, Suhayl ibn Amr, et al. This shows us the wisdom that, yes, sometimes, strictness will be shown, but the general rule is mercy.

After-Effects of the Battle of Badr

Now, what was the effect of the Battle of Badr in Makkah and Madinah?

1. All the pagans that remained in Madinah realized they had to abandon their paganism. So the last remnants of idolatry in Madinah vanished. And so paganism disappeared. Slowly, more and more people converted, and eventually [out of social pressure], they all converted. However, at the conversion of these pagans, a new trend began, and that is nifaq[14]. There was no nifaq before and during the Battle of Badr. Nifaq is a post-Badr phenomenon. And it's said that Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul (عبد الله بن أبي بن سلول), the leader of the hypocrites who was the eldest chieftain of the tribes of Yathrib, when he heard Zayd ibn Harithah saying all of the names, he said, "It appears the matter has now

[14] Nifaq (نفاق) - hypocrisy.

been settled (i.e., I am never going to be the leader[15]; Islam is supreme and Muhammad is here to stay)." Thus, he outwardly accepted Islam. And we know from the Quran that he never truly embraced Islam. He remained a hypocrite until the end of his life.

2. Regarding Abu al-As ibn al-Rabi' the husband of Zaynab RA: One month after the Battle of Badr, the Prophet ﷺ sent two Companions to a certain place outside of Makkah, and he told them to wait there for a few days and they would get a visitor, so bring that visitor to Madinah. And it turns out Zaynab RA was that visitor. The deal was that Abu al-As was freed with the condition that he send Zaynab back to the Prophet ﷺ. So basically, instead of monetary ransom, his ransom was sending the daughter of the Prophet ﷺ back to the Prophet ﷺ.[16] When Abu al-As came back to Makkah, rumors began to spread that Zaynab might be going back to the Prophet ﷺ. How did this rumor spread? Allah knows best. The Prophet ﷺ did not say this, but people knew Abu al-As did not pay his ransom, so perhaps they guessed this was the case. Hind the wife of Abu Sufyan, she visited Zaynab and said, "I've heard that you are about to go back to your father. There's no need for you to leave — but if you are going to do that, then tell me beforehand, so that I can prepare your baggage for you, because women know what women need more than men know." Now, why do you think she is making such a generous offer? Because she has a plan that Zaynab should never leave. Why? Because then they will still have a hostage, i.e., the daughter of the Prophet ﷺ, in their midst. So Hind tells her that if she ever plans to leave, "I will help pack your stuff." Zaynab was very tempted to take her up on that offer, but then she said, something didn't feel right, and therefore, she didn't mention it to her when she decided to leave. When she finished preparing, her brother-in-law (Abu al-As's brother) by the name of al-Kinana (الكنانة) took her outside of the city. And this was pre-agreed. Abu al-As did not want to take her himself because he felt too humiliated to do so.

So Kinana, in broad daylight, takes Zaynab's bags, puts them on his camel, puts Zaynab on the camel, and begins leading the camel outside of Makkah. This was of course not very wise. The news spreads across Makkah that Zaynab is leaving. And immediately, some of the Quraysh gathered an entourage to stop her from leaving. They surrounded Zaynab, and Kinana tried to protect her. It's said that at this time, Zaynab was pregnant with a child. A certain Qureshi by the name of Habbar ibn al-Aswad ibn al-Muttalib (هبار بن الأسود بن المطلب), he was the one who thrust a spear at the camel to try to stop them from going. The camel became scared, reared up, and Zaynab fell 15 ft from the camel, and she started to bleed then and there and suffered a miscarriage because of this.[17] And so Kinana jumped in front of her and said, "I swear by Allah! Anyone who approaches me will taste my sword and my bow and arrow! And you all know how good of a marksman I am!" So they didn't know what to do — it's a type of impasse, "What is to be done now?" Until finally, Abu Sufyan

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15 Before the coming of the Prophet ﷺ, Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul was hoping that Yathrib would unite under him.

16 Recall Zaynab was a Muslim since the Prophet ﷺ began preaching; and Abu al-As was a mushrik. At this point in the seerah, you could still be married to a mushrik — verses of prohibition weren't revealed yet. Abu al-As always treated Zaynab honorably and never prevented her from practicing Islam. And later on, in 6 AH, Abu al-As also embraced Islam [see episode 62].

17 Some people also say Zaynab RA was so severely wounded that this was one of the reasons she died an early death. And as we know, all of the daughters of the Prophet ﷺ died in his lifetime except for Fatima RA.

hears of what is going on, and he rushes on his horse and calms the situation. He promises them that Zaynab will stay, and tells them to leave. And he then tells Kinana, "You acted foolishly! Did you expect us to allow you to take Zaynab in broad daylight? Go back to the people, wait some while, and when the people stop talking about this issue, then quietly hand her over to her father. We have no reason to keep this lady here." Abu Sufyan is being pragmatic. He is trying to say, "Don't humiliate us. Go quietly when no one is looking." And so that's exactly what happened. In the middle of the night a few days later, once again, Kinana took her out, gave her over to the two sahaba, and they took her to Madinah.

And it shows us again as we've said from the very beginning: There's always good people in every society. Here is Kinana, not a Muslim, but he is an honorable man. This incident also shows the intelligence of Abu Sufyan — he really is a wise politician.

(Sh. YQ then diverts to a completely unrelated tangent about Pakistan's history: This man, Habbar ibn al-Aswad ibn al-Muttalib, his grandson was amongst those who participated with Muhammad ibn Qasim (محمد بن القاسم) in the conquest of Sindh. And eventually, this grandson, his progeny, founded a dynasty that was called the Habbari Dynasty. And this dynasty ruled over Makran and Sindh for over 200 years, and they minted coins in what is now Pakistan. And there are cities in Sindh that were founded by the Habbarids, e.g., Mansura[18]. Mansura is one of the ancient cities that the Arabs founded.) And Shaykh's tangent goes on.

[18] Not to be confused with Mansoura of Egypt.

042. The Battle of Badr 7

The Quraysh After the Battle

Ibn Kathir narrates incidents in Makkah after Badr. The first of the soldiers to return from Badr was al-Haysaman ibn Abdullah al-Khuza'i (الحيسمان بن عبد الله الخزاعي). They saw him in a bloodied state, wounded, so they asked him, "What is the matter?" He answered, "Utbah has been killed, Shaybah has been killed, Abu al-Hakam has been killed, Umayya ibn Khalaf has been killed, Zum'a ibn al-Aswad (زمعة بن الأسود) has been killed," etc., — he listed a who's who of the Quraysh and said they all had been killed. He kept on naming, until finally, they thought, "This guy has gone mad — he must have gone crazy! He is listing everybody it's not possible!" Until finally, the news reached Safwan ibn Umayyah (صفوان بن أمية), the son of Umayyah ibn Khalaf, who was sitting with his back to the Ka'bah. When the news reached him, he said, "This is simply impossible! This man has gone crazy! Go ask him, where is Safwan ibn Umayyah?" — he was referring to himself, i.e., he was trying to prove that Haysaman had gone crazy. So someone asked Haysaman, "O Haysaman, what happened to Safwan ibn Umayyah?" — it's, of course, a trick question. Haysaman replied, "Safwan is sitting right over there — and I saw with my own eyes how they killed his father and brother." This made them realize Haysaman had not gone crazy, and he was telling the truth. And slowly but surely, the rest of the army came back.

Therefore, after Badr, there was a time of great depression and grieving in Makkah.

And it was as if Allah saved one of the best for the very last — that is, the death of Abu Lahab:

The End of Abu Lahab

The last senior person left —who was of the scum of Makkah— was Abu Lahab. As we mentioned many times, those who had an ounce of dignity and decency, many times, Allah SWT saved them. Abu Sufyan, Suhayl ibn Amr, et al., are all examples of this — they were saved and would embrace Islam later on.

When Abu Lahab[19] heard the news of the death of Abu Jahal et al., he could not believe this and said, "I will ask Abu Sufyan myself! I don't believe these deserters!" Finally, Abu Sufyan returned, so they met at the house of al-Abbas who was a prisoner of war. (Al-Abbas, of course, is tied up in Madinah; and at home are his wife and servant. Abu Lahab is al-Abbas's older brother; and he is at al-Abbas's house. So Abu Sufyan comes over there to inform him of what had happened.) Abu Lahab said, "Tell me exactly what happened." Abu Sufyan said, "By Allah, as soon as we met the Muslims, it was as if they overpowered us without us doing anything. They killed as they pleased, and took prisoners as they pleased. And despite all that happened, I cannot criticize our side. For by Allah, I

[19] Recall Abu Lahab did not participate in Badr as he hired someone to go in his place.

saw a group of men with white faces, riding horses that were black and white, hovering between the heavens and the earth, none of us could overpower them." And at this, Abu Lahab broke down with depression.

Al-Abbas's slave was a Muslim, and he was listening in. Upon hearning this news, he jumped up with joy and said, "By Allah! Those were the angels helping the Muslims!" Now Abu Lahab, when he saw this slave rejoicing at the defeat of the Quraysh, he lost it. He jumped up, threw the slave to the ground, and he pummeled him to near death. And the slave couldn't really defend — any attempt to defend himself would only worsen his fate later on. So Ummi al-Fadl comes out and tries to stop Abu Lahab from killing the slave; but then he turns on her and begins beating her as well. This is a man who has truly lost it. So she responds back with, "So when the sayyid (Abbas[20]) is gone, this is what you do to his household?!" i.e., "What kind of leader are you?" This made Abu Lahab feel so ashamed he fled with humiliation and guilt.

After this, he was afflicted with a type of disease[21], and he was not seen after this — he died shortly after. So Allah AWJ got rid of the very last of the evil batch of the Quraysh, that is Abu Lahab.

"No Wailing"

Ibn Ishaq mentions Makkah was enveloped with the wailing voices of the women. Every household was wailing.[22] When Abu Sufyan heard all of this, he convened a gathering and told them, "From now on, no one shall wail. We don't want the Muslims to gain pleasure from our wailing." And Ibn Hisham mentions: One night, al-Aswad ibn al-Muttalib (الأسود بن المطلب - distant uncle of the Prophet ﷺ who had lost all three of his sons at Badr) heard a woman wailing, so he became happy and said, "Go and ask her, has the ban been lifted? So that I can wail over my son Zum'a[23]?" But it turned out she was wailing over a lost camel — and you were allowed to wail over anything other than Badr.

Ibn Kathir mentions this was a further means that Allah used to Punish them. Before this, they would derive much comfort in wailing over their dead, and it would make their pain more bearable — but by Abu Sufyan preventing the wailing, Allah was using this to make their grief even more. Now they are forced to bottle up their grief, not even allowed to cry as they were used to crying.

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[20] Tangent: It appears al-Abbas was a nominal Muslim up until the Battle of Badr —he had said he was a Muslim— but that real Iman had not entered until the Prophet ﷺ told him where his secret stash of money was. His wife and slave had embraced Islam from before — and it's said that his wife Umm al-Fadl was the second lady after Khadija RA to embrace Islam. After the Battle of Badr, al-Abbas became a Muslim, and he began sending reports to the Prophet ﷺ, as he would do in the Battle of Uhud.

[21] The books of seerah mention various diseases; some say a type of worm came to him.

[22] And indeed, the dream of Atikah said every house would be hit by a boulder.

[23] His youngest whom he loved most.

The Romans vs. the Persians

In Tirmidhi, it's mentioned that on the same day as the Battle of Badr, many hundreds of miles away, the Byzantine Romans and the Sassanid Persians were fighting. And in a twist of fate that was completely unexpected, the Persians were viciously defeated despite the fact that the Romans were going down for a while. — They had had a major war a few years before this; and Allah had revealed the first verses of Surah al-Rum[24] in which He SWT told the Muslims:

الم
غُلِبَتِ الرُّومُ
فِي أَدْنَى الْأَرْضِ وَهُم مِّن بَعْدِ غَلَبِهِمْ سَيَغْلِبُونَ
فِي بِضْعِ سِنِينَ ۗ لِلَّهِ الْأَمْرُ مِن قَبْلُ وَمِن بَعْدُ ۚ وَيَوْمَئِذٍ يَفْرَحُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ
بِنَصْرِ اللَّهِ ۚ يَنصُرُ مَن يَشَاءُ ۖ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ

"Alif, Lam, Meem. The Byzantines have been defeated in the nearby land. But they, after their defeat, will overcome within a few years. To Allah belongs the command before and after. And that day, the believers will rejoice in the victory of Allah. He gives victory to whom He wills, and He is the Exalted in Might, the Merciful" [30:1-5].

So, "The Romans (Byzantines) have been defeated" refers to a battle that has already taken place, and indeed, they were defeated. But then Allah says, "After this defeat, they will be the victors *in a few years*." Subhan'Allah, this is one of the most explicit prophecies in the whole Quran. Moreover, "On that day, the believers will be rejoicing in the victory of Allah."

When this Surah came down, Ubay ibn Khalaf (أبي بن خلف) mocked Abu Bakr RA and said, "Do you really think the Romans will beat the Persians after this vicious defeat?" And indeed, it was impossible to envision this at the time. Allah foretold something truly unbelievable that the Romans would be victorious over the Persians. So Ubay said, "Do you really think it will happen?" Abu Bakr said, "Yes, of course." So Ubay said, "Let us bet" — and they agreed on a wager. And Ubay asked, "How many years?" So based on the phrase used in the Quran, "bid'i sinin[25]," Abu Bakr RA said, "Six years." But six years passed, and the Romans didn't win, so Abu Bakr had to pay up.[26]

Now, Ubay dies in the Battle of Badr, and on the very same day as the Battle of Badr, the Romans were victorious. And we know this from non-Muslim sources as well.[27] So we know for a fact that on the very same day as the Battle of Badr, Heraclius launched a fierce offensive against Khosrow II. And by the qadr of Allah, two of Khosrow's generals defected, and one of his family members plotted against Khosrow II — thus internally, the Persian

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[24] Surah al-Rum came down perhaps in the 6th / 7th year of the dawah, i.e., middle of Makkan period.

[25] Bid'i sinin (بضع سنين) - a few years.

[26] Side note: You cannot use this incident to justify gambling.

[27] By the way, this is an interesting point to note that Islamic seerah coincides perfectly with Western events when you read them. Showing the seerah has been preserved to a great extent. Those people who doubt the preservation of hadith, sunnah, etc., have to realize that every Islamic incident can be linked to its equivalent in non-Muslim sources.

army was mashed up. And he suffered a resounding defeat. Thousands of miles away, the Battle of Badr was happening, and the Muslims won. Allah foretold this so many years before — and the Muslims did not even find out on the day of Badr about the victory of the Romans, because it was going to take 2 weeks for the news to reach them. And, of course, by that time, it was too late — Abu Bakr had lost the bet & Ubay was already dead.[28]

The Status of the People of Badr

As we mentioned, Jibril AS came down himself and asked the Prophet ﷺ, "How do you view the People of Badr?" and the Prophet ﷺ said, "We view them as the best of us." Jibril AS said, "Similarly, we view the angels who participated in Badr as the best of us" — so Allah sent Jibril down to inform us of the status of the People of Badr. In Sahih Bukhari, Imam Bukhari wrote a whole book on the blessings of the People of Badr. And one of them is about a sahabi named Harithah ibn Suraqa (حارثة بن سراقة). He died a shaheed —it's said he was one of the first shaheeds in the Battle of Badr— he was killed by a stray arrow that came out of nowhere. Harithah's mother came from the Ansar, and she asked the Prophet ﷺ, "Tell me about my son. Is he in Jannah?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "My dear aunt, it is not a Jannah he is in; he is in many Jannahs, and he is in al-Firdaws al-A'la."

One of the main things that is used to show the status of the Badriyun[29] is the incident of Hatib ibn Abi Balta'ah (حاطب بن أبي بلتعة) RA:

As we will see in episode 77, in the Conquest of Makkah [8 AH], Hatib betrayed the trust of the Prophet ﷺ by sending the information about the advent of the Muslims (a letter) to the Quraysh, warning them, "The Muslims are coming! Prepare!" The Conquest of Makkah was meant to be a total surprise, but Hatib tried to leak the information to the Quraysh. And Jibril AS came and told the Prophet ﷺ, "Such-and-such a lady (Hatib's messenger) has a letter (that will tell the Quraysh of your plan) — go and search her." So Ali and Abbas went, brandished their swords, and found the letter in the lady's hair, and it said, "From Hatib ibn Abi Balta'ah to Quraysh. Beware! The Muslims are coming!" So it was treason. Umar RA fumed at this and said, "Ya Rasulullah, give me the word and I will execute him!" But the Prophet ﷺ called Hatib and asked him, "Why did you do this?" Hatib said, "Ya Rasulullah, I have no desire to love kufr over Islam — but all of you, you have your izzah and protection; as for me, I am a nobody. And my family and belongings are still in Makkah. And I knew Allah would protect you. But by giving this letter, I hoped they (the Quraysh) would spare my family." So Hatib is worried about his family that the Quraysh might kill them once they hear of the advent of the Muslims (so he wanted to establish a favor to the Quraysh by being the one to inform them of this). At this, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Hatib is telling the truth." Umar RA once again said, "Ya Rasulullah, allow me to cut his

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[28] Side note: It is said in a ***weak*** hadith that when the Prophet ﷺ heard this, he said to Abu Bakr, "Why did you say 6? 'Bid'i [بضع]' can mean up till 9." The Arabic "few" means 3 to 9 — so it appears Abu Bakr took the middle, 6. And it was in fact 8½ years after the bet that the Battle of Badr and the Roman's victory happened.

[29] Badriyun (بدريون) - Participants of [the Battle of] Badr.

head off."[30] But the Prophet ﷺ rebuked Umar and said, "Ya Umar, how do you know that Allah AWJ, perhaps He looked at the People of Badr, and He said to them, 'Do as you please, because you had been forgiven.'" In other words, the Prophet ﷺ used the status of Badriyun to protect Hatib's life.

This shows us that the sahaba who fought in the Battle of Badr are considered to be of the elite of the sahaba. And that is why many of our classical scholars took the time to list every single sahabi who participated in Badr, out of respect and honor. The list is found in Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Hisham, Ibn Kathir, etc.

After-Effects of the Battle of Badr

The after-effects of the Battle of Badr:

1. It established beyond a shadow of a doubt that the Muslims have a political presence — a legitimate political entity. They are a separate and independent state, and the Quraysh now have to deal with them as a tangible reality.

2. The Battle of Badr was the greatest demoralizing factor for the Quraysh. If you look at the seerah, this was the single greatest shock in the entire seerah — everything else is trivial compared to the Battle of Badr. Why? Because in Ahzab etc., the Quraysh already knew that the Muslims were a serious threat — but at Badr, they genuinely thought they were going to eliminate them off the face of the earth. There was no concept that the Muslims had any potential for victory. Further, the people who died at Badr were many of the elite of the Quraysh.

3. The Battle of Badr brought out for the first time internal treachery within Madinah, and that is on two fronts — (i) the munafiqun, (ii) the Jews. Up until that point in time, there was no genuine animosity; but after the Battle of Badr, this was going to change.

Tafsir of Surah al-Anfal [8]

We learn that this Surah came down on the Plains of Badr, literally when the Muslims were still camped.

يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلْأَنفَالِ ۖ قُلِ ٱلْأَنفَالُ لِلَّهِ وَٱلرَّسُولِ ۖ فَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَأَصْلِحُوا۟ ذَاتَ بَيْنِكُمْ ۖ وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥٓ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ

1. They ask you about the anfal (war booty). Tell them, "Anfal belongs to Allah and His Messenger. So fear Allah, and amend that which is between you. And obey Allah and His Messenger, if you are believers."

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30 Some say the first time Umar requested to execute Hatib, it was for the crime of nifaq; and the second time after it was clear Hatib wasn't a munafiq, it was for the crime of treason.

إِنَّمَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ ٱللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَـٰتُهُۥ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَـٰنًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ
ٱلَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَـٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ
أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا ۚ لَّهُمْ دَرَجَـٰتٌ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ

2-4. Verily, the believers are those who when Allah is mentioned, their hearts become fearful, and when his ayat is recited, their Iman goes up, and they put their trust in Allah, the ones who pray, and who give their money. These are the true believers. They are the ones who have their ranks with Allah, and forgiveness, and noble provision.

— Allah is reminding the Muslims of the real goal: It's not the money or anfal; it's Iman in Allah (taqwa, salah, dhikr, etc.). And a sign of real Iman is when Allah's Name is mentioned, your heart trembles; and when Allah's ayat is recited, your Iman goes up.

كَمَآ أَخْرَجَكَ رَبُّكَ مِنۢ بَيْتِكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِّنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَكَـٰرِهُونَ

5. It is just as if your Lord caused you to leave your houses for the Truth, even though a group of the believers did not like this.

— What is the reference here? The reference here is when the sahaba discovered that it was the army instead of the caravan, there was some hesitation. And notice here, even though Allah is criticizing some of these sahaba, at the same time, He describes them as "Mu'minun (believers)" — and it is a high term, better than just "Muslimin." This is a consolation to them, that, yes, they made an error, but they still have Iman. And Iman is a praise.

يُجَـٰدِلُونَكَ فِى ٱلْحَقِّ بَعْدَ مَا تَبَيَّنَ كَأَنَّمَا يُسَاقُونَ إِلَى ٱلْمَوْتِ وَهُمْ يَنظُرُونَ

6. They were arguing with you even after the truth was made clear to them. They were so terrified, it was as if they were about to be killed while they were looking at their executioner.

— Notice Allah SWT mentions that they were so terrified. Yet that terror did not negate their Iman. So it's possible for the believer to be a little bit scared, or very scared — as we said in episode 37.

وَإِذْ يَعِدُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ إِحْدَى ٱلطَّآئِفَتَيْنِ أَنَّهَا لَكُمْ وَتَوَدُّونَ أَنَّ غَيْرَ ذَاتِ ٱلشَّوْكَةِ تَكُونُ لَكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ أَن يُحِقَّ ٱلْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَـٰتِهِۦ وَيَقْطَعَ دَابِرَ ٱلْكَـٰفِرِينَ

7. Remember, Allah had promised you one of the two would be yours. And you wanted the one that was less harmful, that was not armed (i.e., the caravan), to be yours. But Allah wanted to establish the Truth with His Words, and to eliminate the kafirin (disbelievers).

— Remember the first day of Badr, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah has promised me victory no matter who we meet." And when there was a bit of a doubt (is it army? is it caravan?), the Prophet ﷺ announced to them, "My Lord has promised me one of the two shall be mine." So Allah reminds them of this promise. They wanted the dunya, but Allah wanted something else. This is not a criticism; Allah AWJ is explaining to them that their shortsightedness is different than His long-term Wisdom. He had bigger plans:

لِيُحِقَّ ٱلْحَقَّ وَيُبْطِلَ ٱلْبَـٰطِلَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ ٱلْمُجْرِمُونَ

8. So that the Truth can be made clear, and the batil (falsehood) can be destroyed, even if the sinners do not like this.

إِذْ تَسْتَغِيثُونَ رَبَّكُمْ فَٱسْتَجَابَ لَكُمْ أَنِّى مُمِدُّكُم بِأَلْفٍ مِّنَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ مُرْدِفِينَ

9. [Remember] when you cried out to your Lord for help, He answered, "I will reinforce you with 1,000 angels — followed by many others."

— Allah reminds when the Prophet ﷺ begged and made du'a, He responded with 1,000 angels.

وَمَا جَعَلَهُ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ بِهِۦ قُلُوبُكُمْ ۚ وَمَا ٱلنَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

10. And Allah made this a sign of victory and reassurance to your hearts. Victory comes only from Allah. Surely, Allah is Almighty, All-Wise.

— Allah says: I didn't need to tell you you're going to win, but I told you to comfort you.

إِذْ يُغَشِّيكُمُ ٱلنُّعَاسَ أَمَنَةً مِّنْهُ وَيُنَزِّلُ عَلَيْكُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً لِّيُطَهِّرَكُم بِهِۦ وَيُذْهِبَ عَنكُمْ رِجْزَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ وَلِيَرْبِطَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتَ بِهِ ٱلْأَقْدَامَ

11. [Remember] when He caused drowsiness to overcome you, giving you serenity. And He sent down rain from the sky to purify you, free you from satan's whispers, strengthen your hearts, and make [your] steps firm.

— And again, Allah reminds the believers of the favors: They have a battle yet Allah allowed them to sleep, He sent down the perfect amount of rain to cleanse them spiritually and physically, and He got rid of the evils of shaytan from them and made the ground firm for them.

إِذْ يُوحِى رَبُّكَ إِلَى ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ أَنِّى مَعَكُمْ فَثَبِّتُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ۚ سَأُلْقِى فِى قُلُوبِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ٱلرُّعْبَ فَٱضْرِبُوا۟ فَوْقَ ٱلْأَعْنَاقِ وَٱضْرِبُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ كُلَّ بَنَانٍ
ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ شَآقُّوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ ۚ وَمَن يُشَاقِقِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ
ذَٰلِكُمْ فَذُوقُوهُ وَأَنَّ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ

12-14. [Remember, O Prophet,] when your Lord revealed to the angels, "I am with you. So make the believers stand firm. I will cast horror into the hearts of the disbelievers. So strike their necks and strike their fingertips." This is because they defied Allah and His Messenger. And whoever defies Allah and His Messenger, then [know that] Allah is surely severe in Punishment. That [worldly Punishment] is yours, so taste it! Then the disbelievers will suffer the torment of the Fire.

— Allah tells the angels, "I am with you, so strengthen those who have believed" — Ibn Abbas and others said "strengthen" here means the angels only complete what the believers are doing [as we said in episode 39]. And then Allah SWT says: "I will cast horror into the hearts of the disbelievers; so strike their necks and strike their fingertips / every joint." Why is there such harshness towards these disbelievers? — Because they shaqqa / opposed Allah and His Rasul. Shaqqa (شاق) means "to do everything you can to prevent" — so these people aren't just disbelievers — it's one thing to be a kafir, but these are those who wanted Islam to be destroyed. And whoever does this will find that Allah is severe in Penalty.

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِذَا لَقِيتُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ زَحْفًا فَلَا تُوَلُّوهُمُ ٱلْأَدْبَارَ
وَمَن يُوَلِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ دُبُرَهُۥٓ إِلَّا مُتَحَرِّفًا لِّقِتَالٍ أَوْ مُتَحَيِّزًا إِلَىٰ فِئَةٍ فَقَدْ بَآءَ بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَمَأْوَىٰهُ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ

15-16. O believers! When you face the disbelievers in battle, never turn your backs to them. And whoever does so on such an occasion —unless it is a maneuver or to join their own troops— will earn the displeasure of Allah, and their home will be Hell. What an evil destination!

— Allah says you should never turn your back to the enemy — unless there are legitimate reasons, as mentioned in the ayah. However, scholars say these ayat were abrogated by the end of the Surah. So the ideal / asl[31] is revealed first, and then Allah gives a concession. See verses 65-66.

فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَـٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ ۚ وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَـٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ رَمَىٰ ۚ وَلِيُبْلِيَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْهُ بَلَآءً حَسَنًا ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ
ذَٰلِكُمْ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مُوهِنُ كَيْدِ ٱلْكَـٰفِرِينَ

17-18. And you [believers] did not kill them, but it was Allah who killed them. And you threw not [O Prophet] when you threw, but it was Allah who threw, rendering the believers a great favor. Surely, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. As such, Allah frustrates the evil plans of the disbelievers.

— Allah says, "You (believers) didn't kill them, Allah killed them," "You (O Prophet) didn't throw when you threw, but it was Allah who threw" — and we explained this before. And there is also a beautiful point of qadr here: Allah affirmed that the Prophet ﷺ did throw (i.e., when He SWT said "when you threw") — thus, this affirms the Ahl al-Sunnah's position that we have free will. If Allah had omitted "when you threw" and had instead said "You didn't throw, but it was Allah who threw," it would have meant we have no will —we are like robots— and this is not the belief of Ahl al-Sunnah. We Ahl al-Sunnah don't believe that humans are helpless beings forced to act in a particular manner like robots. And neither are we the opposite, which is denying qadr. Ahl al-Sunnah is in the middle. And this ayah is an evidence that Ahl al-Sunnah uses. Why? Because — did the Prophet ﷺ throw? Yes. And did he have the intention to throw? Was he called the thrower? Yes. So the Prophet ﷺ did throw — but the effects of the throw, Allah AWJ was the one who caused it to go over all of the Quraysh.

إِن تَسْتَفْتِحُواْ فَقَدْ جَآءَكُمُ ٱلْفَتْحُ ۖ وَإِن تَنتَهُواْ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ وَإِن تَعُودُواْ نَعُدْ وَلَن تُغْنِىَ عَنكُمْ فِئَتُكُمْ شَيْـًٔا وَلَوْ كَثُرَتْ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

19. If you [Makkans] 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.

— Here, Allah references the incidents in which the Quraysh asked for victory, i.e., when Abu Jahal made du'a —once at the Ka'bah, and the second time facing the army—: "O Allah! Whichever of the two of us has broken away more from the traditions of his fathers and has broken kinship more, then help the other." And as we said, in reality, he was making du'a against himself. In this verse, Allah is saying, 'Your du'a has been responded to. But if

[31] Asl (أصل) - basic ruling.

you stop, it's better for you; if you come back, We will come back. All of your money and power will not help you even if it is a lot, because Allah is with the believers.'

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَلَا تَوَلَّوْا۟ عَنْهُ وَأَنتُمْ تَسْمَعُونَ
وَلَا تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوا۟ سَمِعْنَا وَهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ
إِنَّ شَرَّ ٱلدَّوَآبِّ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلصُّمُّ ٱلْبُكْمُ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ
وَلَوْ عَلِمَ ٱللَّهُ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا لَّأَسْمَعَهُمْ ۖ وَلَوْ أَسْمَعَهُمْ لَتَوَلَّوا۟ وَّهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ

20-23. O believers! Obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not turn away from him while you hear [his call]. Do not be like those who say, "We hear," but in fact they are not listening. Indeed, the worst of all beings in the Sight of Allah are the [willfully] deaf and dumb, who do not understand. Had Allah known any goodness in them, He would have certainly made them hear. [But] even if He had made them hear, they would have surely turned away heedlessly.

— Allah says that the people who have been blessed with vision, hearing, reason, and intelligence but don't use it properly, they are the worst in the Eyes of Allah.

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱسْتَجِيبُوا۟ لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ ۖ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ ٱلْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهِۦ وَأَنَّهُۥٓ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ

24. O believers! Respond to Allah and His Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life. And know that Allah stands between a person and their heart, and that to Him you will all be gathered.

— Allah calls the believers to fight against the Quraysh. The call here is primarily the call for qital (قتال). And generally speaking, qital is "death," but here, Allah says, "Come to the call that will give you ***life***." Why? Because in this qital is the life of Islam. Think about it. We would not be here today if the sahaba hadn't done what they did then. Then Allah SWT says, "Know that Allah can come between a man and his heart" — meaning what? Both meanings are here: (1) If your heart is weak, turn to Allah to strengthen it; (2) If you feel your heart to be strong, don't be deluded that it might not go astray — turn to Allah for strength. Even between you and your own heart, Allah SWT can intervene. And that's why our Prophet ﷺ would make du'a to Allah: "O the One Who moves the hearts back-and-forth, make my heart firm in Your worship."

وَٱتَّقُوا۟ فِتْنَةً لَّا تُصِيبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ مِنكُمْ خَآصَّةً ۖ وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ

25. Beware of a trial that will not only affect the wrongdoers amongst you. And know that Allah is severe in Punishment.

— What is the reference here? Some say this is a reference to the future battles: Don't be deceived into thinking it's all going to be an easy stretch from here. Others say the meaning here is: Never feel that life will stop being full of fitan[32]. There is always going to be trials and tribulations no matter how long you live.

32 Fitan (فتن) - trials / tribulations.

وَٱذْكُرُوٓا۟ إِذْ أَنتُمْ قَلِيلٌ مُّسْتَضْعَفُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ تَخَافُونَ أَن يَتَخَطَّفَكُمُ ٱلنَّاسُ فَـَٔاوَىٰكُمْ وَأَيَّدَكُم بِنَصْرِهِۦ وَرَزَقَكُم مِّنَ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

26. Remember when you had been vastly outnumbered and oppressed in the land, constantly in fear of attacks by your enemy, then He sheltered you, strengthened you with His help, and provided you with good things so perhaps you would be thankful.

— "Remember when you were few and oppressed" — Allah is saying the Muslims were weak in Makkah, worrying for their lives. Then what happened? Allah gave them comfort (Madinah), and helped them with His victory (Badr), and gave them good things[33], so that they may thank Allah SWT.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَخُونُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلرَّسُولَ وَتَخُونُوٓا۟ أَمَٰنَٰتِكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ
وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّمَآ أَمْوَٰلُكُمْ وَأَوْلَٰدُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ عِندَهُۥٓ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ
يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِن تَتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّكُمْ فُرْقَانًا وَيُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ ذُو ٱلْفَضْلِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ

27-29. O believers! Do not betray Allah and the Messenger, nor betray your trusts knowingly. And know that your wealth and your children are only a test and that with Allah is a great reward. O believers! If you are mindful of Allah, He will grant you a standard [to distinguish between right and wrong], absolve you of your sins, and forgive you. And Allah is the Lord of infinite bounty.

— Some say this is a reference to later incidents. Realize as well, by the way, that a lot of times, Allah revealed verses and then they were applied later on — the exact meaning was not known at the time of revelation. In any case, the meaning of verses 27-29 is generic and it applies for every single incident.

وَإِذْ يَمْكُرُ بِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لِيُثْبِتُوكَ أَوْ يَقْتُلُوكَ أَوْ يُخْرِجُوكَ ۚ وَيَمْكُرُونَ وَيَمْكُرُ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ خَيْرُ ٱلْمَٰكِرِينَ

30. And [remember, O Prophet,] when the disbelievers conspired to capture, kill, or exile you. They planned, but Allah also planned. And Allah is the best of planners.

— "Remember when those who disbelieved plotted against you," i.e., on the night of the Hijrah. And, "They plotted, but Allah also planned. And Allah is the best of planners."

وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتُنَا قَالُوا۟ قَدْ سَمِعْنَا لَوْ نَشَآءُ لَقُلْنَا مِثْلَ هَٰذَآ ۙ إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّآ أَسَٰطِيرُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ
وَإِذْ قَالُوا۟ ٱللَّهُمَّ إِن كَانَ هَٰذَا هُوَ ٱلْحَقَّ مِنْ عِندِكَ فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا حِجَارَةً مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ أَوِ ٱئْتِنَا بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ
وَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَأَنتَ فِيهِمْ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ

31-33. Whenever Our Revelations are recited to them, they challenge [you], "We have already heard [the recitation]. If we wanted, we could have easily produced something similar. This [Quran] is nothing but ancient fables!" And [remember] when they prayed, "O Allah! If this is indeed the Truth from You, then rain down stones upon us from the sky or overcome us with a painful Punishment." But Allah would never Punish them while you [O Prophet] were in their midst. Nor would He ever Punish them if they prayed for forgiveness.

— "Remember, when they heard Our verses, they said, 'We've heard enough! We can do the same, and these are just fables!'" Who said this? Al-Nadr ibn al-Harith — Allah is quoting him directly. Now, we don't know exactly, but it is not too unreasonable to assume this ayah came down while al-Nadr was still a prisoner of war. And the next ayah also

[33] The dates, water, etc., of Madinah.

applies to al-Nadr: "Remember when they said, 'O Allah! If this should be the Truth, why don't you send a rain of rocks to destroy us, or send us a Punishment?'" And as we know, this (the Battle of Badr) was the Punishment. So it's as if Allah is reminding al-Nadr through the Quran, 'Remember what you said? Here is the Punishment you asked for.'[34] And further, al-Nadr was told, 'How could We Punish you while the Prophet ﷺ was amongst you (in Makkah before the Hijrah)?' And further, Allah SWT said, "Nor would Allah ever Punish them if they prayed for forgiveness" — there are around 17 opinions with regards to the meaning of "prayed for forgiveness" in this verse — and Allah knows best, but the strongest opinion seems to be: 'When there are still some amongst the Quraysh who shall embrace Islam and be forgiven, how can Allah Punish them.' So "prayed for forgiveness" here means "some of them will ask Allah for forgiveness [in the future]." Allahu a'lam.

وَمَا لَهُمْ أَلَّا يُعَذِّبَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَهُمْ يَصُدُّونَ عَنِ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ وَمَا كَانُوٓا۟ أَوْلِيَآءَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنْ أَوْلِيَآؤُهُۥٓ إِلَّا ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ
وَمَا كَانَ صَلَاتُهُمْ عِندَ ٱلْبَيْتِ إِلَّا مُكَآءً وَتَصْدِيَةً ۚ فَذُوقُوا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ

34-35. And why should Allah not Punish them while they hinder pilgrims from the Sacred Mosque, claiming to be its rightful guardians? None has the right to guardianship except those mindful [of Allah] — but most pagans do not know. Their prayer at the Sacred House was nothing but whistling and clapping. So taste the Punishment for your disbelief.

— Allah mocks their prayer at the Ka'bah: The only thing they do around the Ka'bah is to whistle and clap — that was their 'salah.'

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَٰلَهُمْ لِيَصُدُّوا۟ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَسَيُنفِقُونَهَا ثُمَّ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَةً ثُمَّ يُغْلَبُونَ ۗ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ يُحْشَرُونَ
لِيَمِيزَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْخَبِيثَ مِنَ ٱلطَّيِّبِ وَيَجْعَلَ ٱلْخَبِيثَ بَعْضَهُۥ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ فَيَرْكُمَهُۥ جَمِيعًا فَيَجْعَلَهُۥ فِى جَهَنَّمَ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْخَٰسِرُونَ

36-37. Surely, the disbelievers spend their wealth to hinder others from the Path of Allah. They will continue to spend to the point of regret. Then they will be defeated and the disbelievers will be driven into Hell, so Allah may separate the evil from the good. He will pile up the evil ones all together and then cast them into Hell. They are the [true] losers.

— "Those who disbelieve spend their money to stop people from coming to the Way of Allah" — this refers to the Quraysh who donated the biggest money they ever did towards the army to fight the Muslims at Badr.

قُل لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ إِن يَنتَهُوا۟ يُغْفَرْ لَهُم مَّا قَدْ سَلَفَ وَإِن يَعُودُوا۟ فَقَدْ مَضَتْ سُنَّتُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ

38. Tell the disbelievers that if they desist, their past will be forgiven. But if they persist, then they have an example in those destroyed before them.

— "If you stop, Allah will forgive what has happened, but if you come back to fight, then there are the examples of those who have gone by" — so Allah is saying look at the previous nations[35] that have come, challenged Allah, and been destroyed.

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[34] Again, this is Sh. YQ's tafsir, that these verses were read to al-Nadr before he was executed.

[35] Ad, Thamud, Fir'awn, etc.

وَقَٰتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ ٱلدِّينُ كُلُّهُۥ لِلَّهِ ۚ فَإِنِ ٱنتَهَوْا۟ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ
وَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَوْلَىٰكُمْ ۚ نِعْمَ ٱلْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ ٱلنَّصِيرُ

39-40. Fight against them until there is no more fitna — and [your] devotion will be entirely to Allah. But if they desist, then surely, Allah is All-Seeing of what they do. And if they do not comply, then know that Allah is your Protector. What an excellent Protector, and what an excellent Helper!

— Ibn Abbas said "fitna" here means "shirk."

وَٱعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُم مِّن شَىْءٍ فَأَنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُۥ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَٱلْيَتَٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَٰكِينِ وَٱبْنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ إِن كُنتُمْ ءَامَنتُم بِٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا يَوْمَ ٱلْفُرْقَانِ يَوْمَ ٱلْتَقَى ٱلْجَمْعَانِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

41. Know that whatever spoils you take, one-fifth is for Allah and the Messenger, his close relatives, orphans, the poor, and [needy] travelers, if you [truly] believe in Allah and what We revealed to Our servant on that decisive Day when the two armies met [at Badr]. And Allah is Most Capable of everything.

— ⅕ of the booty goes to the state, ⅘ to the army, as we said [see episode 40].

إِذْ أَنتُم بِٱلْعُدْوَةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَهُم بِٱلْعُدْوَةِ ٱلْقُصْوَىٰ وَٱلرَّكْبُ أَسْفَلَ مِنكُمْ ۚ وَلَوْ تَوَاعَدتُّمْ لَٱخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِى ٱلْمِيعَٰدِ ۙ وَلَٰكِن لِّيَقْضِىَ ٱللَّهُ أَمْرًا كَانَ مَفْعُولًا لِّيَهْلِكَ مَنْ هَلَكَ عَنۢ بَيِّنَةٍ وَيَحْيَىٰ مَنْ حَىَّ عَنۢ بَيِّنَةٍ ۗ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَسَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

42. [Remember] when you were on the near side of the valley, your enemy on the far side, and the caravan was below you. 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. Surely, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

— Allah says, "Even if the two of you[36] agreed to a battle, you wouldn't have done it" — meaning the battle happened because Allah wanted it. "Allah AWJ accomplished it so that a matter already decreed would take place — so that those who perish would perish upon evidence, and those who live would live upon evidence" — meaning those who die, they have seen the reality; and those who live, they have seen the reality.

إِذْ يُرِيكَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ فِى مَنَامِكَ قَلِيلًا ۖ وَلَوْ أَرَىٰكَهُمْ كَثِيرًا لَّفَشِلْتُمْ وَلَتَنَٰزَعْتُمْ فِى ٱلْأَمْرِ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَلَّمَ ۗ إِنَّهُۥ عَلِيمٌۢ بِذَاتِ ٱلصُّدُورِ
وَإِذْ يُرِيكُمُوهُمْ إِذِ ٱلْتَقَيْتُمْ فِىٓ أَعْيُنِكُمْ قَلِيلًا وَيُقَلِّلُكُمْ فِىٓ أَعْيُنِهِمْ لِيَقْضِىَ ٱللَّهُ أَمْرًا كَانَ مَفْعُولًا ۗ وَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ ٱلْأُمُورُ

43-44. [Remember, O Prophet,] when Allah showed them in your dream as few in number. Had He shown them to you as many, you [believers] would have certainly faltered and disputed in the matter. But Allah spared you [from that]. Surely, He knows best what is [hidden] in the heart. Then when your armies met, Allah made them appear as few in your eyes, and made you appear as few in theirs, so Allah may establish what He had destined. And to Allah [all] matters will be returned [for judgment].

— "Remember when Allah showed in your dream they were few in number" — this is referring to the dream that the Prophet ﷺ had which Allah gave to make him optimistic. Note verse 43 is talking about the dream, and verse 44 is about the actual battlefield. In the Mu'jam of al-Tabarani, it is mentioned that when the sahaba saw the Quraysh on the battlefield for the first time, they were shocked at how few the Quraysh were, and one asked,

[36] The Muslims and the Quraysh.

"Do you think they are 70?" Another said, "No, I think they are 100!" even though they were 1,000. So Allah is reminding them that He made it so the army looked few in your eyes on the actual battlefield.

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِذَا لَقِيتُمْ فِئَةً فَٱثْبُتُوا۟ وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ
وَأَطِيعُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَلَا تَنَـٰزَعُوا۟ فَتَفْشَلُوا۟ وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ ۖ وَٱصْبِرُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلصَّـٰبِرِينَ

45-46. O believers! When you face an enemy, stand firm and remember Allah often so you may triumph. Obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute with one another, or you would be discouraged and weakened. Persevere! Surely, Allah is with those who persevere.

— One of the ways to overcome fear is by remembering Allah (i.e., doing dhikr). One of the ways to gain Allah's victory is by remembering Allah. And internal fighting amongst Muslims is a sign of defeat. And it is interesting to note that in the Battle of Uhud[37], Allah will mention[38] the cause of the Muslims' defeat as exactly 'tanaza'tum'[39] — the exact same verb is used. So Muslims fighting one another is one of the biggest causes of defeat. And historically, this is so true.

وَلَا تَكُونُوا۟ كَٱلَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا۟ مِن دِيَـٰرِهِم بَطَرًا وَرِئَآءَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ

47. Do not be like those [pagans] who left their homes arrogantly, only to be seen by people and to hinder others from Allah's Path. And Allah is Fully Aware of what they do.

— "Don't be like those who left their houses arrogantly wanting to be seen by people" — and indeed, the Quraysh left their houses with pride.

وَإِذْ زَيَّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنُ أَعْمَـٰلَهُمْ وَقَالَ لَا غَالِبَ لَكُمُ ٱلْيَوْمَ مِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَإِنِّى جَارٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ فَلَمَّا تَرَٰٓءَتِ ٱلْفِئَتَانِ نَكَصَ عَلَىٰ عَقِبَيْهِ وَقَالَ
إِنِّى بَرِىٓءٌ مِّنكُمْ إِنِّىٓ أَرَىٰ مَا لَا تَرَوْنَ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ ٱللَّهَ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ

48. 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!"

— Allah mentions the story of Iblis in the form of Suraqa, of when he made their deeds pleasing to them and said, "I will be your protector." But when the two armies met, Iblis fled and said, "I see what you do not see (i.e., the angels), and I fear Allah!"

إِذْ يَقُولُ ٱلْمُنَـٰفِقُونَ وَٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ غَرَّ هَـٰٓؤُلَآءِ دِينُهُمْ ۗ وَمَن يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

49. [Remember] when the hypocrites and those with sickness in their hearts said, "These [believers] are deluded by their faith." But whoever puts their trust in Allah, surely, Allah is Almighty, All-Wise.

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[37] 3 AH - episode 50.
[38] In Surah Ali Imran.
[39] Tanaza'tum (تنازعتم) - you argued with one another.

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ إِذْ يَتَوَفَّى ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۙ ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَـٰرَهُمْ وَذُوقُوا۟ عَذَابَ ٱلْحَرِيقِ
ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّـٰمٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ
كَدَأْبِ ءَالِ فِرْعَوْنَ ۙ وَٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَفَرُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِ ٱللَّهِ فَأَخَذَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَوِىٌّ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ
ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَمْ يَكُ مُغَيِّرًا نِّعْمَةً أَنْعَمَهَا عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا۟ مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ ۙ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ
كَدَأْبِ ءَالِ فِرْعَوْنَ ۙ وَٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَـٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ فَأَهْلَكْنَـٰهُم بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَأَغْرَقْنَآ ءَالَ فِرْعَوْنَ ۚ وَكُلٌّ كَانُوا۟ ظَـٰلِمِينَ

50-54. If only you could see when the angels take the souls of the disbelievers, beating their faces and backs, [saying,] "Taste the torment of burning! This is [the reward] for what your hands have done. And Allah is never unjust to [His] creation." Their fate is that of the people of Pharaoh and those before them — they all disbelieved in Allah's Signs, so Allah seized them for their sins. Indeed, Allah is All-Powerful, severe in Punishment. This is because Allah would never discontinue His favor to a people until they discontinue their faith. Surely, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. That was the case with Pharaoh's people and those before them — they all rejected the Signs of their Lord, so We destroyed them for their sins and drowned Pharaoh's people. They were all wrongdoers.

— Allah mentions Pharaoh — and it is fitting because it was at this point in time the pharaoh of this ummah (Abu Jahal) had just been killed.

إِنَّ شَرَّ ٱلدَّوَآبِّ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ
ٱلَّذِينَ عَـٰهَدتَّ مِنْهُمْ ثُمَّ يَنقُضُونَ عَهْدَهُمْ فِى كُلِّ مَرَّةٍ وَهُمْ لَا يَتَّقُونَ
فَإِمَّا تَثْقَفَنَّهُمْ فِى ٱلْحَرْبِ فَشَرِّدْ بِهِم مَّنْ خَلْفَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ
وَإِمَّا تَخَافَنَّ مِن قَوْمٍ خِيَانَةً فَٱنۢبِذْ إِلَيْهِمْ عَلَىٰ سَوَآءٍ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلْخَآئِنِينَ

55-58. Indeed, the worst of all beings in the Sight of Allah are those who persist in disbelief, never to have faith — [namely] those with whom you [O Prophet] have entered into treaties, but they violate them every time, not fearing the consequences. If you ever encounter them in battle, make a fearsome example of them, so perhaps those who would follow them may be deterred. And if you [O Prophet] see signs of betrayal by a people, respond by openly terminating your treaty with them. Surely, Allah does not like those who betray.

— Allah references the Conquest of Makkah [8 AH]: If you have reason to fear that the other party is going to break a treaty, you must ***publicly*** announce that the treaty is annulled. "Verily, Allah does not love the traitors" — it's so explicit here. You are never allowed to break a treaty by surprise. A Muslim must honor his word even in times of war.[40]

وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ سَبَقُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ لَا يُعْجِزُونَ
وَأَعِدُّوا۟ لَهُم مَّا ٱسْتَطَعْتُم مِّن قُوَّةٍ وَمِن رِّبَاطِ ٱلْخَيْلِ تُرْهِبُونَ بِهِۦ عَدُوَّ ٱللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ وَءَاخَرِينَ مِن دُونِهِمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُهُمْ ۚ
وَمَا تُنفِقُوا۟ مِن شَىْءٍ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ يُوَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ

59-60. Do not let those disbelievers think they are not within reach. They will have no escape. Prepare against them what you [believers] can of [military] power and cavalry to deter Allah's enemies and your enemies as well as other enemies unknown to you but known to Allah. Whatever you spend in the cause of Allah will be paid to you in full, and you will not be wronged.

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40 Side note: Treason is never allowed, but deception is allowed in war. And deception is not treason. There's a big difference. [See also: episodes 59 & 76].

وَإِن جَنَحُوا۟ لِلسَّلْمِ فَٱجْنَحْ لَهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ
وَإِن يُرِيدُوٓا۟ أَن يَخْدَعُوكَ فَإِنَّ حَسْبَكَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ هُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَيَّدَكَ بِنَصْرِهِۦ وَبِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

61-62. If the enemy is inclined towards peace, make peace with them. And put your trust in Allah. Indeed, He [alone] is the All-Hearing, All-Knowing. But if their intention is only to deceive you, then Allah is certainly sufficient for you. He is the One Who has supported you with His help and with the believers.

— This is a very important verse. The asl in Islam is not war. The reason we go to war is لتكون كلمة الله هي العليا (to make supreme the Word of Allah). And if the enemy is not preventing us from this, and they are willing to have peace, then Allah is saying, "You as well lay down your arms and have peace." And this is what the Prophet ﷺ will do in Hudaybiyyah [6 AH], as we will see.

So a lot of the Islamic political science is now being told in Badr. The Muslims are now becoming a real political entity, so Allah is laying out some of the foundations.

وَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ ۚ لَوْ أَنفَقْتَ مَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مَّآ أَلَّفْتَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ أَلَّفَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

63. He brought their hearts (hearts of the believers) together. Had you spent all the riches in the earth, you could not have united their hearts. But Allah has united them. Indeed, He is Almighty, All-Wise.

— This is a beautiful verse that we all know, pertaining primarily to how Allah SWT brought together the hearts of the Aws and the Khazraj.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِىُّ حَسْبُكَ ٱللَّهُ وَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

64. O Prophet! Allah is sufficient for you and for the believers who follow you.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِىُّ حَرِّضِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى ٱلْقِتَالِ ۚ إِن يَكُن مِّنكُمْ عِشْرُونَ صَٰبِرُونَ يَغْلِبُوا۟ مِاْئَتَيْنِ ۚ وَإِن يَكُن مِّنكُم مِّاْئَةٌ يَغْلِبُوٓا۟ أَلْفًا مِّنَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ
ٱلْـَٰٔنَ خَفَّفَ ٱللَّهُ عَنكُمْ وَعَلِمَ أَنَّ فِيكُمْ ضَعْفًا ۚ فَإِن يَكُن مِّنكُم مِّاْئَةٌ صَابِرَةٌ يَغْلِبُوا۟ مِاْئَتَيْنِ ۚ وَإِن يَكُن مِّنكُمْ أَلْفٌ يَغْلِبُوٓا۟ أَلْفَيْنِ بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ مَعَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ

65-66. O Prophet! Motivate the believers to fight. If there are twenty steadfast amongst you, they will overcome two hundred. And if there are one hundred of you, they will overcome one thousand of the disbelievers, for they are a people who do not comprehend. Now Allah has lightened your burden, for He knows that there is weakness in you. So if there are a hundred steadfast amongst you, they will overcome two hundred. And if there be one thousand, they will overcome two thousand, by Allah's Will. And Allah is with the steadfast.

— Here is where the concession is given. Initially, it was 20 to 200, 100 to 1,000 (a ratio of 1:10), i.e., if the ratio is at least 1:10, you will win (Allah promised you victory), therefore, you have no excuse to turn and flee. But in the next verse (verse 66), Allah made it easier, because He knows we are weak: "If there are 100 who are strong / patient amongst you, you will defeat 200; if there are 1,000, you will defeat 2,000," i.e., the ratio goes down to 1:2. Thus if the Muslim army is ½ the army of the non-Muslims, then you are not allowed to flee. The majority of madhahib are on this. So if there's 1,000 vs. 2,000, you can't flee, as Allah promises victory.

مَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَن يَكُونَ لَهُۥٓ أَسۡرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ يُثۡخِنَ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ تُرِيدُونَ عَرَضَ ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَٱللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ٱلۡأٓخِرَةَۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٞ
لَّوۡلَا كِتَٰبٞ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ سَبَقَ لَمَسَّكُمۡ فِيمَآ أَخَذۡتُمۡ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٞ
فَكُلُواْ مِمَّا غَنِمۡتُمۡ حَلَٰلٗا طَيِّبٗاۚ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ

67-69. It is not fit for a prophet that he should take captives until he has thoroughly subdued the land. You [believers] settled with the fleeting gains of this world, while Allah's aim [for you] is the Hereafter. Allah is Almighty, All-Wise. Had it not been for a 'kitab' from Allah, you would have certainly been disciplined with a tremendous Punishment for whatever [ransom] you have taken. Now enjoy what you have taken, for it is lawful and good. And be mindful of Allah. Surely, Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

— "It's not appropriate for any prophet to take POWs until he establishes power." The Muslims, by large, also wanted the ransom because it brought them a lot of money. 4,000 dirhams was a lot of money — that was like a fortune. Even Abu Sufyan said, "I've lost a son, you think I'm going to lose my money as well? Let him stay there," i.e., he did not want to pay the ransom because it would literally make him bankrupt. And Abbas, down to the last penny. It was a large sum for them. So the Muslims wanted this. But Allah said, 'You wanted this, but Allah wanted something else.' Further, Allah says, "Were it not for a 'kitab' from Allah." [Pause here.] What is this 'kitab' from Allah? There are a number of interpretations: (1) "Were it not for the fact that Allah had already decreed that you would choose to extract ransom from your prisoners instead of executing them," or (2) "Were it not for the fact that Allah had decreed that anybody who does something without knowledge will be forgiven," or (3) "Were it not for the fact that Allah had allowed for your ummah prisoners of war and war booty (which He never allowed for any previous ummahs)." One of these three interpretations. [Resuming.] So, "Were it not for a 'kitab' from Allah, you would have been Punished," i.e., some decree from Allah prevented this Punishment. And now that this decree has come, "Go ahead and enjoy what you have taken."

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ قُل لِّمَن فِي أَيۡدِيكُم مِّنَ ٱلۡأَسۡرَىٰٓ إِن يَعۡلَمِ ٱللَّهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمۡ خَيۡرٗا يُؤۡتِكُمۡ خَيۡرٗا مِّمَّآ أُخِذَ مِنكُمۡ وَيَغۡفِرۡ لَكُمۡۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٞ

70. O Prophet! Tell the captives in your custody, "If Allah finds goodness in your hearts, He will give you better than what has been taken from you, and forgive you. For Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

— Abbas used to swear by Allah that this ayah was revealed for him: "If Allah knows in your heart any good, He shall give you better than what He has taken away, and He will forgive you." After this, Abbas said, "I wish I had more money to give away after Badr, because everything I gave, I got 10 times more back." (Note of course this ayah isn't just for Abbas — it's primarily for people like him.)

وَإِن يُرِيدُواْ خِيَانَتَكَ فَقَدۡ خَانُواْ ٱللَّهَ مِن قَبۡلُ فَأَمۡكَنَ مِنۡهُمۡۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٞ

71. But if their intention is only to betray you [O Prophet], they sought to betray Allah before. But He gave you power over them. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

— Allah says, "If those prisoners want to betray you, then they have already betrayed Allah; and Allah has given you power over them" — meaning they tried to trick and kill you but they could not win then, and they are not going to win now. And by the way, one or two of the prisoners of war will indeed betray the trust of the Prophet ﷺ after this, as we will see in Uhud [3 AH] — and Allah is foretelling here that: Don't worry, you will catch them and you will have power over them.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَهَاجَرُواْ وَجَٰهَدُواْ بِأَمۡوَٰلِهِمۡ وَأَنفُسِهِمۡ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَاوَواْ وَّنَصَرُوٓاْ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ بَعۡضُهُمۡ أَوۡلِيَآءُ بَعۡضٖۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَلَمۡ يُهَاجِرُواْ مَا لَكُم مِّن وَلَٰيَتِهِم مِّن شَيۡءٍ حَتَّىٰ يُهَاجِرُواْۚ وَإِنِ ٱسۡتَنصَرُوكُمۡ فِي ٱلدِّينِ فَعَلَيۡكُمُ ٱلنَّصۡرُ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ قَوۡمِۭ بَيۡنَكُمۡ وَبَيۡنَهُم مِّيثَٰقٞۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ بَصِيرٞ

72. Those who believed, Emigrated, and strove with their wealth and lives in the Cause of Allah, as well as those who gave them shelter and help — they are truly guardians of one another. As for those who believed but did not Emigrate, you have no obligations to them until they Emigrate. But if they seek your help [against persecution] in faith, it is your obligation to help them, except against people bound with you in a treaty. Allah is All-Seeing of what you do.

— After Badr, the commandments came down that every last Muslim in Makkah had to Emigrate to Madinah, no excuse. "Those who believe, Emigrate, and fight in the Way of Allah (Muhajirun), and those who gave shelter and aid (Ansar) — these two are the helpers, one of the other. Those who believe but did not Emigrate (Muslims in Makkah), you have no responsibility / guardianship over them, except if they Emigrate" — so the Muslims remaining in Makkah have no legal protection from the Islamic state. But Allah says, "If they ask you for help, then help them, except if you have a treaty with others." This ayah is especially important in the modern political world that we live in. There are many Muslims who are begging us for help. And we help them as much as we can — with du'a all the time unconditionally; and as for physical and financial help, we need to see our political situation. If we have a covenant with a group, and we are being asked for help by Muslims elsewhere that contradict this covenant, then we are not obliged to help them, based on this ayah. So we help with du'a, spreading their plight, advertising their issues, etc. — but in terms of physically and financially helping, we need to see our own situation as well. And this ayah is very clear. There is an excuse for political reasons.

وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ بَعۡضُهُمۡ أَوۡلِيَآءُ بَعۡضٍۚ إِلَّا تَفۡعَلُوهُ تَكُن فِتۡنَةٞ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَفَسَادٞ كَبِيرٞ

73. As for the disbelievers, they are guardians of one another. And unless you [believers] act likewise (i.e., unless you ally with the other believers), there will be great oppression and corruption in the land.

— The disbelievers might have their differences, but they will all unite against you. Very clear in modern times — everyone is united against Muslims. And Muslims need to act likewise — we have to unite.

وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَهَاجَرُواْ وَجَٰهَدُواْ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَاوَواْ وَّنَصَرُوٓاْ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنُونَ حَقّٗاۚ لَّهُم مَّغۡفِرَةٞ وَرِزۡقٞ كَرِيمٞ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ مِنۢ بَعۡدُ وَهَاجَرُواْ وَجَٰهَدُواْ مَعَكُمۡ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ مِنكُمۡۚ وَأُوْلُواْ ٱلۡأَرۡحَامِ بَعۡضُهُمۡ أَوۡلَىٰ بِبَعۡضٖ فِي كِتَٰبِ ٱللَّهِۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيۡءٍ عَلِيمُۢ

74-75. Those who believed, Migrated, and struggled in the Cause of Allah, and those who gave [them] shelter and help, they are the true believers. They will have forgiveness and an honorable provision. And those who later believed, Migrated, and struggled alongside you, they are also with you. But only blood relatives are now entitled to inherit from one another, as ordained by Allah. Surely, Allah has [full] knowledge of everything.

— Note that in early Islam, your time of embracing Islam gave you your rank in Islam. This verse references this point. The earlier you embraced Islam, the higher up you were in Islam. And the later you embraced, the lower your rank was.

— It is said that this verse annulled one of the clauses of the Constitution of Madinah, which stipulated that the Muhajirun and the Ansar would inherit from one another. Allah SWT says in this verse that families are closer when it comes to inheritance — "The ties of blood are stronger in the Book of Allah [than the ties of muakha]."

043. Events between Badr & Uhud

We have spent seven lessons on the Battle of Badr. Today, we will discuss some of the incidents that happened between the Battle of Badr [2 AH] and the Battle of Uhud [3 AH].

Another Aftermath of the Battle of Badr: Assassination Attempt on the Prophet ﷺ

The first incident is one of the most interesting assassination attempts on the life of the Prophet ﷺ. Ibn Hisham writes: Safwan ibn Umayyah, the son of Umayyah ibn Khalaf, whose father and brother had just died in Badr, he was sitting with his cousin Umayr ibn Wahab al-Jumahi[41]. Umayr's son was in Madinah as a POW, and Umayr didn't have / didn't want to pay the ransom. And Safwan began ridiculing and criticizing and saying evil things about the Prophet ﷺ and the 'problems' that 'this new religion' had caused. To which Umayr responded, "Wallahi, were it not for the fact that I owe so-and-so some money, and that I have a family to take care of, I would personally volunteer to go to Madinah and execute Muhammad myself; for they have destroyed my family, and my son is right now a prisoner with them!" He wants to assassinate the Prophet ﷺ, but he is saying he has a family and a debt to take care of. So Safwan took this golden opportunity[42] and said, "What if I take care of your debt, and I promise to take care of your family to the extent that everything that I give my family, your family will get the same. Will you then agree [to assassinate Muhammad]?" Umayr said, "In that case, yes. But don't tell a single soul — keep this conversation between the two of us."

Immediately, Umayr went back home, sharpened his sword, and he saturated it with poison. And he left Makkah without telling anyone where he was going — he made his way alone to Madinah. When he reached Madinah, he disguised himself — he covered his face as normal travelers would. His sword was hanging from his neck, and he made his way straight to the masjid. When Umar ibn al-Khattab RA saw him, he recognized him from the eyes and said, "This dog, enemy of Allah! By Allah, he has come for some evil intent!" — Umar RA was speaking from a distance, and he then immediately went to the Prophet ﷺ and informed him, "Umayr ibn Wahab is here in the city and he is looking for you." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Bring him to me." So Umar RA immediately took his sword to meet Umayr, and he brought him to the masjid. The Prophet ﷺ allowed Umayr to come in, and he instructed Umar RA, "Watch every move of his, because this filthy person cannot be trusted."

So Umar and Umayr both walk in, and Umar has his hand on his sword waiting to defend the Prophet ﷺ if need be. When Umayr entered, he greeted the Prophet ﷺ with their greeting: "In'am sabaha[43]." The Prophet ﷺ responded, "Allah AWJ has given us a better greeting — it is the greeting of the people of Jannah, it is the salam" — even here the

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41 The scout of the Quraysh who said to Abu Jahal on the morning of the Battle of Badr, "I don't think you will be able to kill anyone amongst the Muslims until they kill at least one of you. And if 300 of you die, then what pleasure will you gain for winning?"

42 His father was a rich man.

43 In'am sabaha (انعم صباحا) - good morning.

Prophet ﷺ is giving dawah. Umayr said, "This is something new to me." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Why have you come?" Umayr said, "In order to negotiate the ransom of my son, and that you send him back with me. [Until we negotiate,] be good with him." The Prophet ﷺ said, "If that is the case, what is this sword around your neck?" Umayr said, "This sword here? What good did it do us at Badr?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Tell me the truth — why did you come, O Umayr?" But Umayr insisted, "I have told you: for my son."

Now, the Prophet ﷺ reveals the truth (Jibril AS must have come to tell him) — he ﷺ said: "Rather, you and Safwan were sitting alone in the Hijr[44] and you mentioned your losses at Badr, and you said, were it not for your debt and your family, you would personally go and kill Muhammad. So Safwan offered to take care of your debts and your family so that you may come to kill me. — But Allah has come between you and your plans." And it was at this moment that Umayr realized the Prophet ﷺ was a true prophet — because there was no way the Prophet ﷺ could have discovered this; Umayr did not tell anybody, not even his wife knew where he was going; he traveled the main, fastest road; had any traveler been faster, he would have known; there was no way the Prophet ﷺ would have known unless Allah told him; so Umayr immediately blurted out, "I testify that you are the Messenger of Allah."

We mentioned this many times: Some of Islam's worst enemies were sincere in their animosity. Deep down, they didn't know Islam to be true. Some did, e.g., Abu Jahal — but many did not — and they opposed Islam genuinely believing it to be false. Sometimes, it took a blatant miracle as in the case of Umayr to shake them out of their disbelief. And this reminds us as well of the conversion of the magicians of Pharaoh: It took them a miracle to believe in Musa AS [see Quran, 7:104-122]. If this is the case with the people who interacted directly with the prophets of Allah, what about the people around us? Modern non-Muslims genuinely believe that what they are saying is true — they have been brainwashed. Therefore, this causes us to pause as well in how we deal with them. And in general, gentleness wins over harshness. Here is Umayr literally waiting to come within stabbing distance — and then within 5 seconds, he testifies the kalimah. Subhan'Allah.

Then he said to the Prophet ﷺ, "We used to reject you when you told us that wahy would come from the skies. But this issue — no one knew of it except me and Safwan. And there is no way you could have been informed of it except from Allah SWT. So I thank Allah who has caused me to see the Truth and guided me to Islam."

So the Prophet ﷺ said to Umar, "Teach your brother about the religion, help him to memorize the Quran, and free his captive." Subhan'Allah, one second he was willing to kill the Prophet ﷺ, the next second he gets every blessing imaginable, including his son, for free. We also see the importance of the Quran; the first advice he is given is to learn the Quran. And it was the sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ to assign a teacher to any new convert. The first thing we must do when somebody converts to our faith is pair them with an established knowledgeable Muslim.[45]

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44 Right outside of the Ka'bah.

45 It's easy to do, and insha'Allah we can do it in the future.

So Umayr remained in Madinah for some time learning Islam until he decided to go back. Before he leaves, he tells the Prophet ﷺ, "Ya Rasulullah! I used to strive to extinguish the flame of Allah and torture those who embrace Islam, so now I ask your permission to call people to Islam as I tried to push them away. And I used to irritate you and your Companions, now let me go back and defend you!"

So now he wants to make up for what he has done. And of course, he is a big name of the Quraysh —pure-blooded Qureshi— so there is no danger to his personal life. Meanwhile in Makkah, Safwan, after two weeks, began to spread the news that, "A big surprise and good news will come to you!" — he built up the hype. But then, upon Umayr's return, he finds out that Umayr has in fact accepted Islam. As soon as he finds out and confirms it, he makes a vow to Allah that he will never have anything to do with Umayr again (e.g., will never look at him, speak to him, be under the same roof as him).

And Ibn Ishaq writes that many people converted to Islam at the hands of Umayr. Now, why didn't these people convert when the Prophet ﷺ was preaching to them in Makkah for 13 years? This, again, shows us that: There is always a personal or family factor. When Umayr converts, maybe another cousin of his, maybe another nephew of his, converts — there is always something that comes closer to home. Not that Umayr is preaching to new people — it's the same people. But again, this is the way; Islam takes a while. And this is one of the most naive assumptions that many of us have, that, "I just talk 5 minutes and they are all going to convert!" — no, it doesn't work that way. A person has been raised in a certain philosophy, a certain way of life; sometimes it takes decades for them to really think things through. Here we have an example of this.

Umayr eventually makes Hijrah to Madinah —perhaps even before Uhud[46]— and then comes back to Makkah in the 8th year of the Hijrah during the Conquest of Makkah. As we will see in episode 80, at the time of the Conquest, his cousin Safwan was still a pagan. And Safwan assumed the Prophet ﷺ would never forgive him, so he fled Makkah. Umayr and Safwan hadn't spoken since Umayr had converted — so once the Muslims completed the Conquest, Umayr searched, "Where is Safwan?" He found out Safwan had fled. So Umayr asked, "Ya Rasulullah! Please, can I ask you to offer a special protection for Safwan?" And the Prophet ﷺ would never refuse a request, so the Prophet ﷺ said, "You have my aman[47]." Umayr went and found where Safwan was hiding, and he convinced him to come back until finally he agreed. They came back and Safwan said the shahada in front of the Prophet ﷺ. Look at the amazing qadr of Allah — these two cousins first planned to assassinate the Prophet ﷺ, and here they are now Muslims at the hands of the Prophet ﷺ.

46 We're not sure exactly when.
47 Aman (أمان) - protection.

Criticisms of the Non-Muslims in Our Time

There is another story indirectly linked to Badr, and that is the story of the Banu Qaynuqa. But before we begin this, we need to pause for a little bit of background and a disclaimer.

With regards to the seerah, those who wish to criticize Islam, they try to criticize it based on a number of grounds:

1. The personal morality of the Prophet ﷺ, e.g., with regards to marriage to Aisha RA, the story of Zaynab, caravan raiding, the incident of the 'satanic verses,' etc.

2. The other angle is the political dealings of the Prophet ﷺ. And when it comes to politics, the number one controversial matter is with regards to how he ﷺ treated the Jewish tribes. It's the most sensitive and politically charged issue. (And there are others as well, which we will come to one by one, e.g., the assassination of Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf, etc.)

Therefore, this is a topic that requires thorough attention and sensitive understanding —if you like— of why this is problematic. And of course, one of the main reasons it's problematic is because the Prophet ﷺ is accused of antisemitism; he is accused of a mini-holocaust. In our times, every single instance of harming Jews, sometimes even if it is politically motivated, is automatically linked to the Holocaust.

And we need to defend the Prophet ﷺ fairly and squarely, i.e., we are not allowed to sugarcoat or invent false ways to defend him. We need to let the sources speak for themselves. We are not apologetics — we firmly believe that the truth is always the best — honesty is the best policy. Our job is to tell it like it is. We have to point out that it's a sensitive topic. We need to be aware that this is politically charged in light of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. And we also have to point out that, look, anybody who has an agenda or a disease in the heart will always be able to find something negative. In fact, you don't even have to have a disease in the heart — sometimes it's just possible to see the glass half empty when it's clearly half full. You just want to emphasize it is half empty and you are not telling a lie. The classic case is the woman who complained about her husband:

Hadith in Sunan Abi Dawud[48]: Abu Sa'id al-Khudri reports that a woman came to the Prophet ﷺ while we were sitting with him. She said, "My husband Safwan ibn Muattal (صفوان بن المعطل) beats me when I am praying and orders me to break my fast when I am fasting. And he does not say his Fajr prayer until the sun rises." Abu Sa'id goes on to add, "Safwan was among those present there and the Prophet ﷺ asked him to explain his conduct in the context of her complaint." He explained thus, "O Messenger of Allah! As for her complaint about being beaten for praying, she recites not one but two (long) surahs (in every rak'at or unit) and I restrain her from so doing." The Prophet ﷺ said, "One surah is enough." Safwan further explained, "As for being compelled to break her fast, the truth of it is that she goes on fasting (non-stop, supererogatory fasts), and young as I am, I cannot

[48] https://sunnah.com/abudawud:2459

restrain myself (long enough without intercourse)." The Prophet ﷺ said, "No woman can fast (supererogatorily) without her husband's permission."

After that, he accounted for Fajr prayer after sunrise, saying, "We come from a family notorious for late rising (only after sunrise)." To this, the Prophet ﷺ said, "O Safwan! Pray when you wake up from sleep."[49]

As Muslims, Are We Required to Discriminate Against Jews?

Now, before we begin, in regards to the claim that the Prophet ﷺ discriminated against the Jews — this claim is so shallow, and no serious person can say this. All you need to do is look at Islamic history: There were large pockets of Jews living very peacefully in Muslim lands all the way up until the creation of Israel in 1947. The Jews lived in Iraq, Yemen, Tunisia, Morocco, etc. Every time the Jews were expelled and persecuted in Christian lands, they always found safe refuge in Muslim lands. This is historically absolutely true. From the time of the Umayyads, the Abbasids, up until the expulsion from Spain. How did Jews end up in Morocco when they were expelled from Spain? They went to Morocco by the tens of thousands; the sultan literally sent his ships to the Jews and said, "Come to our lands." There was no sense of animosity and hatred. And it is so true to say that almost all of the animosity and hatred that we see now comes from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In pre-Israel, the Jews lived in full harmony with their Muslim neighbors. And indeed, Muslims

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[49] Transcriber's tangent: This hadith brings out certain important facts worthy of careful note by one and all:

1. The husbands have no right to stop their wives from saying obligatory prayers. However, it is incumbent on a woman to have due regard for the needs of her husband and should not make her daily obligatory prayers too long to interfere with her normal household duties. As for the supererogatory prayers, she should not say them without permission of the husband, nor fast supererogatorily without his express leave. Promptly attending to his needs is more important for her.

2. Safwan ibn Muattal was a wage earner watering the fields of farmers during the greater part of the night. Spending the nights in such hard toil and going to bed in the early hours of the morning made waking up in time for Fajr prayers (before sunrise) a difficult job. (Late-rising which he attributes to the family trait appears to be due to the family occupation — hard work in sleepless nights).

Safwan ibn Muattal is a high-ranking Companion and it is unthinkable that he was careless about his Fajr prayers. It is most likely that occasionally when he went to bed very late and nobody awakened him for Fajr prayer, he could wake up only after sunrise, not saying his prayers in time. It was for this reason that the Prophet ﷺ asked him to say his Fajr prayer whenever he woke up. Had he been careless about prayer and a regular defaulter in the knowledge of the Prophet ﷺ, he would have been wroth with him and admonished him severely.

and Jews have much more in common than Muslims and Christians, and than Jews and Christians. Jewish halakha (Jewish laws) overlaps with Islamic shariah in 70% of its laws.

All you need to look at, historically, is the most important Jewish figures. Throughout Islamic centuries, there were always Jews living in Islamic lands:

1. Saadia Gaon (man) was one of the greatest Jewish thinkers who lived in Baghdad in the 7th century.

2. The single greatest mind of Judaism was Musa ibn Maymun (موسى بن ميمون - Moses Maimonides). To him they owe their creed, their most basic law books, their most important commentaries, etc. — it's like their Ibn Taymiyyah. Recently, there was a book that came out that said Musa ibn Maymun was actually a practicing Muslim, i.e., he embraced Islam as a way of life. Why? Because in his youth —and this is true— he actually studied in the madrasahs, and he studied as a Muslim, i.e., he dressed like a Muslim, prayed with them, and studied at the universities among Muslims. He was a Jew, but he grew up in Andalusia and he entered the culture of Islam. This is why his greatest books are in Arabic, and they had to be translated into Hebrew. And he later moved to Egypt and became the personal doctor to Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi (صلاح الدين الأيوبي - Saladin) and so his fame increased even more. And he became the grand rabbi in Egypt. Whether he was actually a Muslim or not is beside the point — he for sure lived as a Muslim for a period of time.

3. One of the most interesting figures of Judaism, who also had a lot to do with Islam, was Sabbatai Zevi. A large group of Jews thought *he* was the chosen messiah. The movement was the largest messianic movement in the history of Judaism. But then what happened? He converted to Islam towards the end of his life. And the sultan of the Ottomans was much pleased with his conversion, he rewarded him by conferring on him the title [Mahmed] Effendi and appointing him as his doorkeeper with a generous salary. His wife Sarah and around 300 families among Sabbatai's followers also converted to Islam. These new Muslims thereafter were known as Dönmeh (Converts). And to this day, there is a group of Turkish Muslims called Dönmeh which goes back to these Jewish people who followed Sabbatai Zevi and converted to Islam.[50]

So the point being: Who can argue that Islam discriminated against Jews?

And how can Islam be anti-Semite when the Arabs are Semite themselves?[51]

The main central point is that the reason the Prophet ﷺ treated the Jews of Madinah in a negative manner was ***not because they were Jews*** — rather, he did so ***because of what they did*** — ***not because of who they were*** — and there is a big difference between these points. They were punished because of their crimes and their violation of the treaties. It's very clear-cut.

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50 Side note: Their beliefs aren't Sunni Islam.
51 The descendants of Ibrahim AS are all Semites.

The Expulsion of the Banu Qaynuqa

The Banu Qaynuqa, according to al-Waqidi, they were expelled on the 15th of Shawwal in the 2nd year of the Hijrah. Thus 3½ weeks after the Battle of Badr.

What happened?

Here is one of our problems. We don't have that many details about any of the three Jewish tribes living in Madinah. Why is this the case? Because generally speaking, when you record history, you only mention the good points in great detail, and when it comes to the downs, you mention them generically in passing. Not because you want to hide something; but because it's human nature to focus more on the positives. As for the the negatives, there was no need for the early Muslims to preserve the sordid details; so they just glossed over it. Ibn Ishaq has less than a page about the Expulsion of the Banu Qaynuqa. He has a generic line that says, "The Banu Qaynuqa increased in their hostility against Islam." What did they do? We really don't have that much detail. What we do have are two specific things that indicate what was inside, that indicate that it was much worse. Ibn Ishaq mentions that after the Battle of Badr, the Banu Qaynuqa were saddened at the loss of the Quraysh and at the victory of the Muslims.

So the Prophet ﷺ went to the souq of the Banu Qaynuqa[52], and he gathered all of the Banu Qaynuqa together, admonished them about their attitude, and reminded them of the clause of the Constitution of Madinah: "You protect us, we protect you; we are all going to be together against external enemies." At this, one of their leaders stood up and said, "O Muhammad, don't be fooled by your recent victory. You fought a bunch of nobodies. Had you really been fighting men —men like us— you would have seen what the result would have been." (And the Banu Qaynuqa had around 700 fighting men, the biggest Jewish tribe in Madinah.) This is one of their leaders standing up straight to the Prophet's ﷺ face. It's quite clear this is not a happy situation to be in.

So the tension is increasing.

Then one incident occurred that lit the fuse completely. It was rather crude and vulgar. One of the ladies of the Ansar went to buy and sell some of her merchandise in the souq; she sold the merchandise and had a lot of money and she wanted to buy some gold. So she sat in front of a goldsmith, and the goldsmith began flirting with her, asking her to expose some of her awrah. And of course, she refused. So he made a motion to someone behind, and that man came and did something (perhaps put a peg into her burqa or something, or perhaps tied it up) such that when she stood up, her entire garments came down. And she was left there with nothing on. So she began screaming as the Jews around her began laughing and making fun of her. And she called out for help. So one of the Muslims who was there went up with his sword, and he chopped off the head of the one who did it in anger. Immediately —and remember this is their territory; ~20 minutes outside Madinah— the Banu Qaynuqa surrounded the Muslim man and killed him. When the news reached the Prophet

[52] They had the largest souq; and they were known for being goldsmiths.

ﷺ, he sent them a message that the treaty had been broken. Why? Because the Prophet ﷺ never surprised-breaking a treaty. Breaking a treaty in secret is not allowed in Islam [see episode 42]. You are not allowed to go against a treaty without telling the other party that the treaty is annulled. And Allah says this in the Quran, Surah al-Anfal [8] verse 58, "If you [have reason to] fear from a people betrayal, throw [their treaty] back to them, [putting you] on equal terms. Indeed, Allah does not like traitors" [8:58]. So you have to tell them the treaty is annulled.

Now, the Banu Qaynuqa did not expect the Prophet ﷺ to do anything — perhaps out of confidence in their numbers and their fortresses[53]. Yet the Prophet ﷺ immediately marched against them. And when they heard he was coming, they ran into their fortresses and locked themselves up. Note the Muslims did not have the mechanisms right now to break a fortress. So what did they do? They laid siege and cut off the supplies. And for half a month the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims surrounded them until finally, the Banu Qaynuqa surrendered. The Prophet ﷺ ordered that all of the men be gathered together and tied up — and then decide what is to be done with them.

In the days of Jahiliyyah, the Banu Qaynuqa had two main representatives / allies from Yathrib (old Madinah): (i) Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul, the leader of the hypocrites; and (ii) a sahabi, Ubadah ibn al-Samit (عبادة بن الصامت). So they reached out for help to these two people. They said, "You were our allies! Help us out now!" (Recall the Banu Qaynuqa had an alliance with the Khazraj. And Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul and Ubadah were both from the Khazraj.) As soon as they reached out, Ubadah ibn al-Samit went to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "O Messenger of Allah, I want to tell you that I am no longer their halif[54]. My wali is Allah and His Messenger; and I have cut off my ties from the Banu Qaynuqa." He is saying he is no longer on their side.

As for Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul, he marches straight to the camp where the Banu Qaynuqa are now prisoners, and he demands the Muslims to release them. He demands, "Do it or I will," and the sahabi in charge of guarding them, al-Mundhir ibn Qudama (المنذر بن قدامة) said, "If you dare do it, I will kill you." Abdullah ibn Ubayy doesn't want to lose his life, so he finds the Prophet ﷺ[55] and says, "Ya Muhammad![56][57] Be generous with my hulafa[58]!" and the Prophet ﷺ was silent. So he repeated, "Ya Muhammad! Be generous with my hulafa!" and the Prophet ﷺ was silent again, and turned away. At this, unbelievably, Abdullah ibn Ubayy took the Prophet's ﷺ armor by his hand, shoved his hand into his armor, held onto him, and said, "Be generous with my hulafa!" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Let

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53 Note the Jews had a different way of living; they lived in big fortresses. They learned the art of building thick walls and layering them. The Jews in Khaybar had this, and the Banu Qaynuqa had this as well. Every subtribe had their own fortress.

54 Halif (حليف) - ally.

55 This is all happening in the Banu Qaynuqa area.

56 Note 1: Abdullah ibn Ubayy rarely called the Prophet ﷺ "Rasulullah," even though Allah AWJ clearly said in the Quran, "Do not call the Messenger like you call one another" [see Quran, 24:63].

57 Note 2: It's still early in the game, and as of now, from the perspective of the Muslims, there was still hope for people like Abdullah ibn Ubayy, for them to become genuine / real Muslims. At this point, Abdullah ibn Ubayy is still not too blatantly "the leader of the munafiqun." Uhud is going to be the turning point.

58 Hulafa (حلفاء) - allies.

go of me." And Ibn Ishaq mentions it was clear the anger was visible on the Prophet's ﷺ face. — But Abdullah ibn Ubayy held on tighter and said, "No, I'm not going to let go." So the Prophet ﷺ says for the third time, "Woe to you, let go of me." And Abdullah ibn Ubayy swears by Allah, "I swear by Allah, I will not let go until you promise you will treat my hulafa in a generous manner! These 700 men[59], they protected me from the white and the black (i.e., mankind), and now you think you will get rid of them in one day?" He is saying they helped him so now he needs to help them. And he also says, "By Allah, I am scared of al-dawa'ir[60] happening to me if they are mistreated." So when he was holding on so long, the Prophet ﷺ said, "I give them to you," i.e., "I promise to spare their lives." By the way, Abdullah ibn Ubayy was insisting they be spared, but the Prophet ﷺ never said he would kill them.

In the end, the Prophet ﷺ promised Abdullah ibn Ubayy to spare their lives. The final verdict came that the Prophet ﷺ gave them three days to pack their bags and leave their homes. They begged and pleaded for more than three, but they were not given this. They went to Ubadah ibn al-Samit to try one more time, but he said, "Don't come to me. I wouldn't even have given you three days." And in those three days, Abdullah ibn Ubayy tried to remove the ban, but the Prophet ﷺ did not give him that. Ubadah ibn al-Samit was the one who took charge of making sure that after three days they had actually left. Now obviously, when they left, they left a lot of property. They took the gold obviously, but they couldn't take everything. They had to choose what they were going to take. So they took what they considered the most essential, and they left a lot of wealth. And of course, this wealth came to the Muslims.

So you understand that for those whose hearts is a disease, you can easily interpret this in its own way; and for those who see things as they are, you can clearly see that these Jews, they themselves messed up and they were indeed a threat to the Muslims — so the Prophet ﷺ had to act. And at this, Allah revealed Surah al-Ma'idah [5] verses 51-56:

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَتَّخِذُوا۟ ٱلْيَهُودَ وَٱلنَّصَـٰرَىٰٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ ۘ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُم مِّنكُمْ فَإِنَّهُۥ مِنْهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّـٰلِمِينَ

51. O believers! Take neither Jews nor Christians as awliya — they are awliya of each other. Whoever does so will be counted as one of them. Surely, Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people.

— This is an ayah that the Islamophobes love to misquote. But once you understand the context, everything that's 'dangerous' about it drops away instantly. Allah is saying, in such circumstances, don't take the Jews and the Christians as awliya (أولياء - protectors / guardians)[61].

فَتَرَى ٱلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ يُسَـٰرِعُونَ فِيهِمْ يَقُولُونَ نَخْشَىٰٓ أَن تُصِيبَنَا دَآئِرَةٌ ۚ فَعَسَى ٱللَّهُ أَن يَأْتِىَ بِٱلْفَتْحِ أَوْ أَمْرٍ مِّنْ عِندِهِۦ فَيُصْبِحُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَآ أَسَرُّوا۟ فِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ نَـٰدِمِينَ

52. You see those with sickness in their hearts racing for their guardianship, saying [in justification], "We fear a turn of fortune will strike us." But perhaps Allah will bring about

59 300 were armed, 400 were not armed.
60 Al-dawa'ir (الدوائر) - bad luck.
61 Awliya (أولياء) - protectors / guardians.

[your] victory or another favor by His command, and they will regret what they have hidden in their hearts.

— Allah quotes Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul here: He said, "We are worried about bad luck." So this ayah is a quotation directly from him.

In the next verses Allah praises Ubadah ibn al-Samit:

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَهُمْ رَٰكِعُونَ
وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ ٱللَّهِ هُمُ ٱلْغَٰلِبُونَ

55-56. Your only guardians are Allah, His Messenger, and fellow believers — who establish prayer and pay zakat with humility. Whoever allies themselves with Allah, His Messenger, and fellow believers, then it is certainly Allah's party that will prevail.

— And indeed, Ubadah ibn al-Samit said, "I choose Allah and His Messenger and the believers."

So this series of verses deals with the Expulsion of the Banu Qaynuqa.

Wisdoms From the Incident

Some wisdoms we can glean from the incident:

1. The Banu Qaynuqa were the first Jewish tribe to be punished and it was the least harsh of the three. The punishment for the Banu Nadir after the Battle of Uhud is going to be even harsher; and then the punishment for the Banu Qurayza after the Battle of Ahzab is going to be the harshest, i.e., an execution. It makes sense to go gradual, that, "Look, O second tribe! You have already seen what happened to the first one!" And similarly for the third tribe, "You have seen what happened to tribe 1 and 2!"

2. Another benefit that we gain is the proper understanding of verse 51 of Surah al-Ma'idah. Islamophobes in our time like to take an English translation and say, "Look! The Quran says, 'Do not take the Jews and Christians as friends'!" — whereas the Arabic word 'awliya (أولياء)' does not mean 'friends.' And one needs to look at the context of revelation as well. These (the Banu Qaynuqa) are people who have mocked Allah and His Messenger; so Allah is saying, 'Don't take these types of people as your awliya.' In this type of situation, you have to choose sides — when the Prophet ﷺ is on one side and the group who hates Allah's Messenger is on the other side, obviously you choose the side of the Prophet ﷺ.

3. Aisha RA used to say, "Wallahi, the Prophet ﷺ never took revenge for something personal" — and this is truly evident when Abdullah ibn Ubayy was personally rude to the Prophet ﷺ and yet the Prophet ﷺ didn't lay a finger on him; in fact, he gave him what he requested.

4. [Now, did the Prophet ﷺ change his mind for Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul? Or was the verdict of expulsion in the Prophet's ﷺ intention anyway and eventually he just

said it to appease Abdullah ibn Ubayy? No one knows. But—] whichever the case might be, there was clear wisdom in publicly granting Abdullah ibn Ubayy what he wanted. Why? Because still there was hope for Abdullah ibn Ubayy [to become a genuine Muslim]. This is still 2 AH — barely a year and three months since the Prophet ﷺ came. Abdullah ibn Ubayy was one of the most respected figures before Islam, and there are still many Ansar who look up to him. Thus there is wisdom in conceding some things to him, and that is to minimize the damage / harm.

5. The true colors of the munafiqun are showing now. Slowly, we see who these people are.[62]

Q&A

1. Note the books of seerah do not mention where Umar RA and the other sahaba were when Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul was crude to the Prophet ﷺ. One hypothesis is even the sahaba were confused when someone as senior as Abdullah ibn Ubayy was having a word of war with the Prophet ﷺ. And, he was not being physical, he was just being rude — so perhaps the sahaba themselves did not know what was to be done — because maybe by them intervening, it would have made the situation worse. And of course, if the Prophet ﷺ had said, "Do something," they would have instantly done it.

2. Hadith in Bukhari: Once, one of the evil tribal leaders of the Bedouins came to the Prophet ﷺ, and the Prophet ﷺ talked to him like normal — but after he left, the Prophet ﷺ said, "What an evil man he is." Aisha RA said, "Ya Rasulullah, you were just smiling and laughing with him! [i.e., How can he be evil?]" The Prophet ﷺ said, "O Aisha, have you ever known me to be crude? [i.e., What did you want me to do?] Verily, the worst people in the Eyes of Allah are those whom the people are forced to smile at even as their hearts curse."

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62 Still, they are not called munafiqun, by the way. Yes, nifaq began after Badr [2 AH], but it was manifested at Uhud [3 AH] when they turned around and did not fight — as we will see.

044. Assassination of Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf

Between Badr and Uhud, a number of small expeditions took place — each had its own reasons and issues and benefits:

Expedition of Qarqarat al-Kudr

The first of these incidents is called the Expedition of Qarqarat al-Kudr (قرقرة الكدر), named after the place where it occurred. Some of the neighboring mushrik tribes of Madinah wanted to take revenge on the Muslims because their business had been cut off[63]. Therefore, only seven days after the Battle of Badr, some of the tribes of the Banu Salim (سليم) and Ghatafan (غطفان)[64] detached a small entourage of 200 people to attack Madinah.

When the Prophet ﷺ heard this, he launched an offensive against them. And when the pagans saw the Muslims, they fled even though quantity-wise, they were more than the Muslims. And what's more, they left all of their tents, belongings, and animals. So the Muslims basically acquired most of their animals, and this was a huge surplus for them, so much so that it's said every Muslim who participated got two camels.

And it's said that when the sahaba reached their vicinity, the first person they found was an Abyssinian slave named Yasar (يسار), and they captured him — others had fled. So Yasar was left with the Muslims. And he converted to Islam after a while, after seeing how good the Muslims were. So the sahabi who captured him said to the Prophet ﷺ, "Ya Rasulullah, he is yours." And the Prophet ﷺ never kept a male slave, so he was freed. But Yasar chose to remain with him as a servant — so Yasar became one of the servants of the Prophet ﷺ.

And as usual, it was a sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ that he would camp for 3 days after any battle[65] — so he camped over there. And in explaining why the pagans fled, he ﷺ told the sahaba —and this hadith is in Bukhari—: "I have been helped by Allah that my enemies are terrified of me even if I am at a month journey away"—this is one of the ways Allah helped the Prophet ﷺ; that just by seeing and hearing of the Muslims, the enemies would flee and run away.

Sariyya of Sawiq

The second expedition was the Sariyya of Sawiq (سويق), and this occurred around 2 or 3 months after Badr, probably in the early part of Dhu al-Hijjah.

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63 Cut off as an indirect result of the Battle of Badr — because now the caravan of the Quraysh has to divert its route

64 i.e., Two very large tribes of Arabia. Ghatafan was one of the largest in Arabia.

65 This was a sunnah established from Badr.

The reason for this battle was: Abu Sufyan had made a promise to Allah that he would not take a bath until he avenged Badr. He would not take a bath even from janaba![66] He remained in that state for months, and finally, he really had to do something; so he gathered around 150-200 of the Quraysh and launched an offensive. The Banu Nadir (another Jewish tribe in Madinah) gave him protection, food, supplies, and water. This is now blatant treachery, because one of the clauses of the Constitution was, "You will not help the Quraysh against us (Muslims)," and also, "If we are externally attacked, the two of us will act as one." And yet, here, the Banu Nadir hosted the small entourage of Abu Sufyan before the entourage attacked Madinah. This was a grave act of betrayal.

And then, Abu Sufyan launched an offensive into one of the date gardens of Madinah, and he killed two Ansaris, burned down the garden, etc. This is blatant terrorism. When the Muslims find out, they attack the army of Abu Sufyan. And in the rush to flee, once again, just like what happened in Qarqarat al-Kudr, the Quraysh left their belongings.

So why is this expedition called Sawiq? What is sawiq? It is dried porridge, a food known for its longevity. You mix barley and milk and butter and honey and then dry it. It is packets of food that the Arabs used to eat on long journeys. When Abu Sufyan and his entourage saw the Muslims coming, they fled on their camels; and in order to lighten the load, they cut off the bags of sawiq. And so the Muslims were able to capture a lot of this sawiq, even though they were not able to harm Abu Sufyan.

So Abu Sufyan and his entourage returned to Makkah; and now at least he could take a bath because he killed two Ansaris.

Sariyya of Qarada

Yet another incident that took place was the Sariyya of Qarada (قردة).[67] The Sariyya of Qarada took place a few months before the Battle of Uhud, most likely in Rabi' al-Awwal of the 3rd year; and this was an important stepping stone to the actual Battle of Uhud.

What happened was: The Quraysh were preparing the annual caravan — they had a meeting, "What can we do about the caravan?", "Which route should it take?" etc. Badr had shown them they cannot take the standard route. Safwan ibn Umayyah was placed in charge of this year's caravan.

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66 Note: This shows that taking a bath after janaba was in the custom of the Quraysh as well, which must have come from Ibrahim AS.

67 Recall sariyya means the Prophet ﷺ did not participate. Whereas a ghazwa is what the Prophet ﷺ participated in. Sariyya is any expedition that the Prophet ﷺ commanded but did not participate in; and there are hundreds of sariyya, as we have discussed.

So he gathered the Quraysh and said, "Muhammad and his Companions have blocked our passages; if we take the sea route (close to the ocean), most of them[68] have already given their allegiance to Muhammad, and are upon his religion.[69] So what do we do? If we remain here, we will not go on any journey, we will not interact with the Syrians, we will not get any money, and our money will dwindle down to nothing. And our life depends on Rihlat al-Shita'i wa al-Sayf." One of the elders, al-Aswad ibn al-Muttalib said, "Let us go through the Iraq passage." So, north-eastwards, then double back down towards the route again to make their way up to Syria. This shows how desperate they were getting, and how much of a success Badr was for the Muslims. So they had to find someone who knew the route, and they loaded up the caravan, and as we said, this time, the leader was Safwan ibn Umayyah. And effectively, this was Badr Part II — Allah SWT had willed that all of this money go directly into the hands of the Muslims.

How so? The Prophet ﷺ heard of this —even though it was supposed to be top secret— and he sent an expedition against them. How did he hear of it? It is mentioned that one of the elite of the Quraysh who knew about the new travel route plan, he was drinking wine with Salit ibn al-Nu'man (سليط بن النعمان), who was a secret Muslim in Makkah; and he boasted, "The Quraysh have a plan that no one will be able to outsmart! We will take this-and-this route to get to Syria!" And as soon as Salit heard this, he informed the Prophet ﷺ of it. And this is 100 camels full of booty, silver, and whatnot — and it's just a caravan, not an army, so it's a sitting duck — easy prey. The Prophet ﷺ sent Zayd ibn Harithah to intercept the caravan; and the entire caravan, with all of the camels, and >50,000 dirhams, plus the leather, and all of the other goods, came into the hands of the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims. Pause here. Recall Allah AWJ had promised the Muslims back at Badr, "I'll give you one of the two" [see Quran, 8:7] — but if we look at it, in fact, Allah gave them *both*. Subhan'Allah. How so? In Badr, the Muslims got what they didn't want (i.e., the 1,300-strong Quraysh army); and through the Sariyya of Qarada, Allah gave them what they wanted, "the unarmed one" [Quran, 8:7]. — And in this sariyya, there were no casualties.

This made the Quraysh so desperate that it led up to the Battle of Uhud.

The Assassination of Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf

Let us now get to one of the most controversial issues, and that is the assassination of Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf (كعب بن الأشرف). It is one of the most sensitive issues of the seerah and deserves some special attention. So who is Ka'b? And what is so sensitive about this issue?

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[68] i.e., The tribes along the coast.

[69] Side notes: This clearly shows Islam is spreading. The Muslims have not attacked the people on the coastal line, yet according to Safwan, most of them have converted to Islam and are now Muslims. And it is also important to note that, as we said, when it comes to Madinan seerah, the biographers of the Prophet ﷺ recorded mainly battles; so you have to extract a wealth of information from this type of sentence that just comes in the middle. E.g., from the statement of Safwan, we learn that the Madinan phase wasn't just battles; Islam is spreading so much so that most of the coastal regions are now upon Islam — people are converting through dawah, interacting with the Muslims, etc.

Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf was the son of an Arab father and a Jewish mother. His father was a pure Arab, a pagan from the tribe of the Banu Nabhan (بنو نبهان); and his mother was of the Jews of the Banu Nadir. His father had committed murder in the days of Jahiliyyah, so he had to flee from his own people, and so he fled and was adopted by the Banu Nadir of Yathrib. And they allowed him to marry one of their women, and from this marriage, Ka'b was born. So Ka'b is basically a full Arab and a full Jew (in Judaism, religious identity is inherited from the mother) — so he has the nasab[70] of the Arabs and also the religion, education, and nobility that the Banu Nadir has. And he becomes one of the leaders of the Banu Nadir. He was known for many things:

1. He was a very rich man — he had his own fortress
2. He was one of the most handsome people in Yathrib
3. He was known for his poetry

And his animosity to Islam was demonstrated from very early on. When the qibla was changed, it was Ka'b who said, "Why did they change the qibla?" And Allah quotes Ka'b in the Quran [see Quran, 2:142]. And when the commandment for zakat was revealed, Ka'b went to his friends who had converted from the Ansar, and said, "Do not give any of your money, because I am worried you will become poor. And don't be hasty in getting rid of your wealth, for you don't know what will happen to this man (the Prophet ﷺ)." At this, Allah revealed, "Surely, Allah does not like whoever is arrogant, boastful, those who are stingy, promote stinginess among people, and withhold Allah's bounties" [Quran, 4:37].

And many other things are mentioned. At the Battle of Badr, when the two criers came back to Madinah, as Ka'b heard the news, he mockingly said, "If Muhammad has really killed all of these people —and they are from the noblest of Arabs— then it is better for us to be inside the earth than outside of it (i.e., it's better to be dead than alive)!" Subhan'Allah, it is as if he pronounced a verdict against himself — because indeed, that is precisely what happened — he will die in a while.

When the victory of Badr was manifested in front of Ka'b, he undertook a secret expedition to Abu Sufyan in Makkah. He and some of the Banu Nadir went to Makkah and formed an alliance with Abu Sufyan against the Prophet ﷺ. What are the details of this alliance, we have no idea. None of the books of seerah mentioned — but what could it be other than a plan to surprise attack the Muslims?

And, it's also said that one of the last things Abu Sufyan asked him during that meeting was, "I ask you by Allah! Which of the two religions is closer and more beloved to Allah? Our religion or the religion of Muhammad?"[71] Ka'b said, "You are more rightly guided than them."

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[70] Nasab (نسب) - lineage.

[71] Remember, the pagans felt an inferiority complex towards the Jews because they were a people of civilization.

And Allah references Ka'b's response in the Quran, in Surah al-Nisa (سورة النساء):

انظُرْ كَيْفَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ ۖ وَكَفَىٰ بِهِ إِثْمًا مُّبِينًا
أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْجِبْتِ وَالطَّاغُوتِ وَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَٰؤُلَاءِ أَهْدَىٰ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا سَبِيلًا

"See how they fabricate lies against Allah — this alone is a blatant sin. Have you [O Prophet] not seen those who were given a portion of the Scriptures yet believe in jibt (جبت) and taghut (طاغوت) and reassure the disbelievers that they are better guided than the believers?" [4:50-51]

— Allah is quoting Ka'b here. This is exactly what he said in the private conversation with Abu Sufyan.

He then returns to Madinah after having formed this secret alliance — it is supposed to be a secret, but Allah has told the Prophet ﷺ of it.

He has written a lot of poetry against the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims. The last straw however was when he started writing sensual poetry about Muslim ladies out of mockery, as a satire. And it mentioned them by name. This is obviously crossing the line.

According to Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Hisham, and al-Waqidi, Ka'b was assassinated some time between the Battle of Badr and the Battle of Uhud. However, other scholars such as Muqatil ibn Sulayman (مقاتل بن سليمان), al-Baghawi, and al-Salihi who wrote a 12-volume book on seerah[72], said he was killed after the Battle of Uhud. And all of them add one more reason why Ka'b was killed, which Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Hisham, and al-Waqidi didn't add, and that is his blatant assassination attempt against the Prophet ﷺ (which the Banu Nadir did). We all are familiar with the story of the Prophet ﷺ having been invited by the Banu Nadir for a poisoned meal, which occurred after Uhud. And according to al-Salihi and others, the guy behind that plot was Ka'b. It was his idea to poison the food. And according to these authorities, Ka'b was killed literally the night before the incident of Banu Nadir. So if we follow this version of events, it's even more clear why Ka'b faced retribution. But we will stick with Ibn Ishaq's version.[73]

In any case, the Prophet ﷺ stood up and said, "Who will take care of Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf? For he has transgressed[73.5] against Allah and His Messenger." Muhammad ibn Maslamah (محمد بن مسلمة) stood up and said, "I will do it, O Messenger of Allah." This sahabi was from the Aws. Recall before Islam, the Aws and the Banu Nadir were one. So of course, this is of Muhammad ibn Maslamah's wisdom that he didn't want a Khazraji to take on this mission, or else this would bring bad blood, because the Khazraj and the Banu Nadir already had problems from pre-Islam; whereas the Aws and the Banu Nadir didn't. So, as one of the seniors of the Aws, Muhammad ibn Maslamah volunteered in order to save the potential of the jahili civil war from being resurrected. According to Ibn Hisham, for three days after this, Muhammad ibn Maslamah stopped eating and drinking, until finally, somebody came to the Prophet ﷺ to tell him about this. The Prophet ﷺ visited him and asked, "What is the matter?" He said, "O Messenger of Allah! I promised you something, but then I realized I

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72 One of the largest seerah book ever written.

73 Side note: Al-Salihi said the *idea* of poisoning the food came from Ka'b — so this can reconcile with Ibn Ishaq's version.

might not be able to fulfill it!" He got so worried that in his anxiety, he stopped eating and drinking. Remember Ka'b is a rich man, well guarded, has his own fortress, etc. The Prophet ﷺ said, "All you need to do is try." Muhammad ibn Maslamah said, "In that case, O Messenger of Allah, allow me to say some thing (i.e., you have to allow me to say things that I don't mean)." And the Prophet ﷺ said, "Say as you like."

Muhammad ibn Maslamah then called upon Ka'b in his, let's say, office hours; and there were other people sitting there, so he said to Ka'b, "Look, I have something very private I need to talk to you with." So they went to a corner, and Muhammad ibn Maslamah said to Ka'b, "This man (the Prophet ﷺ) has come and caused us irritation for the last few years. And the Arabs are now all against us! On top of that, he is asking for our money; and he has put us through so much trouble and hardship!"[74] When Ka'b heard this, he felt so happy and said, "Wallahi, this is just the beginning! He will put you through much more hardship!" And they continued talking in this manner until finally, he said, "Well, now we are his followers, and we cannot forsake him until the situation turns a little. Until that time, I need you to loan me to pay him that money (i.e., zakat)." Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf, one of the ways he got rich was by lending people money, and everybody knew it; and in his eyes, that's why Muhammad ibn Maslamah is here asking for a loan. And of course, a loanee has to offer a mortgage — but Muhammad ibn Maslamah said, "I don't have anything to give, and that's why I'm here!" So Ka'b said, "Okay, leave your wife in my house," but Muhammad ibn Maslamah said, "By Allah, you are the most handsome of men, and you expect me to trust a woman in your presence?" Ka'b took the bait, he was flattered, and said, "Okay, then leave your sons with me." Muhammad ibn Maslamah said, "My sons? So they will grow up for the rest of their lives with their friends teasing them, 'You were the mortgage that your father had to give'? This is a permanent dishonor! I can't give you my sons." Ka'b said, "What then?" Muhammad ibn Maslamah said, "What if I bring you my weapons? And you know we need these weapons now (because of all of these wars that are going on), so I am desperate to get them back, so this is a very urgent mortgage that you will possess." Ka'b said, "Great idea! Bring your weapons!" And of course, you understand the tactic here: Muhammad ibn Maslamah can show up armed to the hilt and there will be no suspicion. There's a gray area as to what exactly happened, but it seems two or three of the other sahaba —e.g., Silkan ibn Salama (سلكان بن سلامة), a.k.a., Abu Na'ila (أبو نائلة)— had also gotten loans from Ka'b along the similar lines; that once the idea of weapons came up, two or three other sahaba came and said, "Look, you gave him money for weapons, let's do the same — we also need the money." And Ka'b agreed to all of this.

Then Abu Na'ila set a particular time, "Look, we have to do this in secret, we don't want anybody to see us; so let's come at such-and-such a time at night, and we will give all of this to you." According to al-Waqidi, this took place on the 14th of Rabi' al-Awwal in the 3rd year of the Hijrah. The books of seerah mention that there were no clouds in the sky, and the moon was full. The Prophet ﷺ walked with them to Baqi' al-Gharqad, and at the very end, he said, "May Allah help you in your mission." So they went to Ka'b's castle which was on the outskirts of Madinah, and called upon Ka'b to come outside. It's said he had just married another wife, and he was lying in his bed when he heard the call. He stood up to go, but his wife held on to him and said, "Where are you going at this time?" He said, "Abu Na'ila

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74 You can see why Muhammad ibn Maslamah had to ask for special dispensation from the Prophet ﷺ.

and Muhammad ibn Maslamah, they have come to give me some of their goods." She said, "Why are they coming at this time? This is not right. You are a man at war! And I am worried for you." But he said, "No, Abu Na'ila is my foster brother, and Muhammad ibn Maslamah, I have known him for a long time. I trust them both." So he basically dragged himself off of her and went down.

Muhammad ibn Maslamah had already told his companions what he was going to do, and that is that he would —through some ruse or tactic— hold on to Ka'b's head and have him in an arm grip, and then the others would do the deed. Now, they knew Ka'b was going to be armed because he was always heavily armed — he had one of the most expensive armors — that's what they were known for, to build and buy armors. They met outside, it was a beautiful night, and they began talking and gossiping as was the way in the days of Jahiliyyah, and Abu Na'ila said to his foster brother Ka'b, "I smell the sweetest perfume coming from you!" Ka'b said, "Yes, I have with me a young lady who is the most scented of all of the women of Arabia!" Abu Na'ila said, "Allow me to smell it!" Ka'b came closer. Abu Na'ila said, "Oh! It's coming from your hair! Let me smell it!" So Ka'b lowered his head, and at this, Muhammad ibn Maslamah held on to him, and the others did the deed. But it wasn't easy because of the armor he was wearing; and it's said one of them, al-Harith ibn Aws (الحارث بن أوس), was severely wounded by the others who were attacking. He was bleeding badly and had to limp back to Madinah. When the Prophet ﷺ met them, he put his saliva on the wound of al-Harith and it healed instantly.

So this was basically the end of Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf. And it is very obvious why this incident is problematic in light of modern times, and that is because the charge is given that this is a blatant assassination attempt that is justified by the Prophet ﷺ.

And it is an authentic incident — it's mentioned in Sahih Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Hisham, etc. Sahih al-Bukhari has a whole chapter on the killing of Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf.

A number of reasons are given as to why the assassination took place. It was not because Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf rejected Islam or ridiculed the Prophet ﷺ personally, but rather:

1. Main reason is the treaty he made with Abu Sufyan. This was clear treachery, violating the Constitution, and was a clear threat to the Muslims.

2. The poetry against the Muslims and specifically the Muslim ladies.

3. The direct attempt to assassinate the Prophet ﷺ (if we follow al-Salihi et al.'s version).

And of course, these reasons are very solid. The problem comes not that he wasn't a criminal, but in the manner with which he was gotten rid of — assassination. In modern days, technically, there would be a trial, etc. But frankly, this is one of our problems, that we are judging the political situation in the time of the Prophet ﷺ as if it happened in our time — we are judging him with our own laws and customs, and trying to retroactively look at the seerah in light of modern laws. But again, frankly, those were different societies, those were

different times; and the people who lived in those societies, they understood the dynamics of that society. And that's why — we go back to that interesting phrase of Ka'b's wife when she told him, "You are a man at war!" — even she understood that what her husband was doing is, "You (i.e., the Banu Nadir) are declaring war (against the Muslims)![75] And you are not safe!" She understood this, because the political landscape and customs and laws at the time were very different. Thus, there is no need for us to try to justify this incident in light of our laws.

The main point here is: At that time, the Prophet ﷺ was basically the government of Islam. His decree was political, religious, and legal, all in one. Therefore, he was the judge, and he was the ruler. Thus, it was legal for him to do what he did in that manner. He didn't do it in Makkah when he didn't have any political authority; he did it when he himself had actual political power. Thus, there is no need for us to 'defend' this action. It is what it is, and we don't need to try to sugarcoat it. In that time and place, it was completely justified.

And we also have to add here: In light of recent developments where our own country and government has now opened this door of targeted assassinations — if killing its own citizens knowingly, and sending drones against even a 16-year-old kid, are legal and constitutional, then very frankly, nobody who agrees with this tactic can find any problem with the story of Ka'b. You cannot have your cake and eat it too.

(Theory: Did Ka'b directly help Abu Sufyan when he attacked Madinah in the incident of Sawiq? It makes sense to think he did — he was of the leaders of Banu Nadir. Maybe it was Ka'b himself who helped Abu Sufyan in that attack on Madinah, and then a few weeks later, he traveled to Makkah to form a real alliance. Allah knows best. This is a theory; take it or leave it.)

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To summarize: This incident needs to be told as it is — it was a political incident that the Prophet ﷺ approved. And it was in accordance with the norms and political understanding of his time, and it was done because Ka'b was a genuine political threat — he had gone above and beyond merely rejecting Islam: he formed an alliance with the Quraysh, violating the Constitution. And the poetry he wrote was so revolting that simply crossed the line. For him to go to these levels — he knew what he got involved with. Even his wife understood the risks. Thus, we have no qualms in saying this is exactly what happened.

Transcriber's note: Norman Arthur Stillman (non-Muslim) is a renowned historian who specializes in the intersection of Jewish and Islamic culture and history. In the last few years, Stillman has been the executive editor of the Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World, a project that includes over 2,000 entries in 5 volumes. What did he say regarding this incident? According to Stillman, "Muhammad was acting in complete accordance with the norms of the Arab society of that period which demanded retaliation for a slight to a group's honor." This is coming from the highest possible academic.

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[75] Even though, up until that point, Ka'b himself did not participate in a battle against the Muslims.

Q&A

— The books of seerah mention that not just the Banu Nadir, but the other tribes all complained about this; but the Prophet ﷺ did not do anything about them, because he had in fact ordered it himself. The message was given. Ibn Ishaq said that not a single tribe (from amongst the enemies of Islam) felt safe afterward. And this was one of the reasons for the assassination; to send the message that, "You cannot get away with blatant treason."

045. Summary of Meccan Period

Just a recap & summary of the Makkan seerah [see episodes 3 - 29].

046. The Battle of Uhud Part 1

Factors That Drove the Battle of Uhud

Recall the incidents that took place after the Battle of Badr — in particular, Abu Sufyan's attack on Madinah, minor skirmishes, and the killing of Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf. We will now commence with the Battle of Uhud. The Makkans began planning for the Battle of Uhud immediately after the Battle of Badr. The loss and calamity of the Battle of Badr was the immediate cause of the Battle of Uhud. Unlike Badr, Uhud was the first full-out war. They were armed to the hilt. Why are they fighting? 4 reasons:

1. Religious — the Quraysh have developed a religious animosity to the Prophet ﷺ and Islam.

2. Social — revenge for their lost relatives. They have lost their leaders, and it was a huge embarrassment for them. Ikrimah, his father Abu Jahal died; Safwan, his father Umayyah died; so they all want revenge.

3. Economic — Madinah geographically intersects the caravan that goes from Makkah to Syria — the Muslims intercepted and blocked off all routes to Syria. The Quraysh's attempt at finding an alternative route has failed. And therefore, effectively, they cannot trade with Syria anymore, and this will literally destroy their economy. The Makkan economy was based on the pipeline between Syria and Yemen. The Quraysh were in charge of it and profited from it hugely. And if you cut off one side of the pipeline, the other side is not going to function. So they are in a desperate situation.

4. Political — the Prophet ﷺ is now becoming a political threat to them; the size of the Islamic republic is growing — many tribes are giving their allegiance to Islam.

Combining these reasons, the Quraysh felt a desperate need to launch an offensive against the Muslims.

Quraysh's Preparation for the Battle of Uhud

Ibn Ishaq tells us that as soon as Abu Sufyan returned to Makkah with the caravan of Badr and the news of the Battle of Badr returned as well, he immediately made up his mind at that point in time that he had to go and fight. Badr took place 17th Ramadan 2 AH; Uhud will take place Shawwal 3 AH. So an entire year of planning went into the Battle of Uhud. Abu Sufyan took with him Safwan ibn Umayyah and Ikrimah ibn Abi Jahal —both had lost their fathers— and knocked on every single door of the Quraysh household that contributed

to the caravan of Badr, and told them to return the profits they got from the caravan.[76] Allah references this in the Quran, in Surah al-Anfal:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُنفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ لِيَصُدُّوا عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَسَيُنفِقُونَهَا ثُمَّ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَةً ثُمَّ يُغْلَبُونَ ۗ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ يُحْشَرُونَ

"Surely, the disbelievers spend their wealth to hinder others from the Path of Allah. They will continue to spend to the point of regret. Then they will be defeated and the disbelievers will be driven into Hell" [8:36].

— It is interesting to note that this verse is in Surah al-Anfal which came down right after the Battle of Badr. So here, Allah is prophesying the Battle of Uhud.

The Quraysh decided they needed help. And being the business owners that they were, they had many tribes that were interested in keeping this economic pipeline intact. They reached out to the major tribes such as Kinana (كنانة) and Tihama (تهامة), and said, "Help us out with your money, people, armor, weapons, etc., whatever you can!" And the entire army came out to be 3,000.

So with the Battle of Uhud (3 AH), we see that the conflict is ***becoming*** Islam vs. Kufr. So, as we have seen, initially, the conflict was only between the Quraysh and the Prophet ﷺ (i.e., the Battle of Badr — 2 AH); and then, with every conflict, we will see that the circle widens, until finally, it will become all-out Islam vs. paganism in the Battle of Ahzab (5 AH). The animosity against the Prophet ﷺ will unite the Arabs for the first time; just like the religion of Islam united the Arabs for the first time. So, we can say that Islam came and made the Arabs into two camps: Those who opposed and those who accepted. Eventually, of course, those who accepted won over, and therefore, for the first time in human history, the Arabs united, under the Prophet ﷺ, after the Conquest of Makkah (8 AH).

On the 7th of Shawwal in the 3rd year of the Hijrah —literally a year and a few weeks after the Battle of Badr— the Quraysh set out from Makkah to Madinah. Typically, the journey would have taken 2 weeks; and if you wanted to speed up a little bit, it would be around 10 days; but in their eagerness to fight, they traversed this entire distance in only 7 days. The Quraysh gathered 3,000 men, 200 horses, and 700 armors for men.[77] This time, they also took many of their wives with them, including the famous Hind bint Utbah (هند بنت عتبة) the wife of Abu Sufyan. It is said up to 2 dozen of the women of the Quraysh participated — when you have women, you really have to fight. They would sing their poetry, and it was somewhat sensual in nature, they were encouraging the men to show their manhood, discouraging them from coming back empty-handed, etc. Abu Sufyan was the main leader of the army; on the right flank he put Khalid ibn al-Walid in charge; and on the left flank Ikrimah ibn Abi Jahal.

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[76] Recall the actual Badr caravan came back to Makkah safe and sound. And now Abu Sufyan is going to each and every person to get the money back.

[77] Note: Back then, the average person did not have weapons and armor. To invest in armor is a lot of money. Most people simply did not need it, so they didn't have it. Also realize, most of this armor is being imported from Syria, Yemen, etc., so it's even more expensive. Therefore, in the history of battles, one of the most prized items a victorious person would take from the enemy, is their armor, because it was a prized possession.

News Reaches the Prophet ﷺ

Immediately after the Quraysh army had left Makkah, al-Abbas[78] sent a trusted servant to the Prophet ﷺ in Madinah to give all the details about the army of the Quraysh: The army size, how many horses, how many arms, etc.

Now, why did Abbas delay sending this information until the army had actually left Makkah? Firstly, perhaps because the Quraysh themselves did not trust al-Abbas — after all, he had not shown his animosity against the Prophet ﷺ, unlike Abu Lahab. Or —and this is also a plausible theory— he just couldn't send anybody until the city was empty, or else they would know.

The servant he sent goes as fast as humanly possible to Madinah in 3 days. It was as fast as possible. The Quraysh did it in 7. So the clock is ticking. And the servant finds the Prophet ﷺ in Quba, and he hands the Prophet ﷺ the letter, and the Prophet ﷺ tells Ubay ibn Ka'b (أبي بن كعب) to read the letter. Ubay tells the Prophet ﷺ all the details; and the Prophet ﷺ says to Ubay, "Do not tell anybody about this news."

The Prophet ﷺ immediately rushes back to central Madinah and speaks to the leaders of the Ansar, in particular, Sa'd ibn al-Rabi' (سعد بن الربيع). After this, he sends out two or three spies to check on the Quraysh *before* he calls a general meeting.[79] This is very interesting. Did the Prophet ﷺ doubt al-Abbas? Of course not. He trusts his uncle. Yet still, this is very big news and it will affect everything, so you cannot operate on the presumption of maybe even a genuine mistake. E.g., what if the Quraysh has duped Abbas? So the Prophet ﷺ has to confirm the news. The spies go and actually see the 3,000 army close by, and they come back and say, "The Quraysh are grazing at such-and-such a pasture" — which is basically a day or two away from Madinah. So now everything falls into place.

So probably around 11th Shawwal, our Prophet ﷺ confirmed that the Quraysh are indeed close by. And it is said the Quraysh got to the outskirts of Madinah, according to some reports, on the 12th, or according to some other reports, 13th. So the Prophet ﷺ has a window of only ±48 hours to do something.

And therefore, he calls a large meeting of the Muslims.

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78 Tangent: Most likely, Al-Abbas ibn Abdul Muttalib converted after the Battle of Badr. It's said that Abbas said after the Battle of Badr while he was a captive, "They (the Quraysh) forced me to fight! I didn't want to fight! And I didn't do much in the battle anyway!" To which, the Prophet ﷺ said, "He (Abbas) is telling the truth. He didn't want to fight." So from this, we can infer that most likely, Abbas converted after Badr. And then, the Prophet ﷺ sent him back to Makkah as a secret Muslim, and he remained there up until almost the Conquest of Makkah in 8 AH.

79 Again, this shows us the meticulous care of the Prophet ﷺ — he was not someone who reacted emotionally. He did not just act on the whim or the spur. He is acting very cautiously. The Prophet ﷺ told us in many ahadith that, "Acting in predetermined thought is from Allah SWT; and acting in haste is from shaytan." And we should learn from this. The situation is indeed critical, but he doesn't panic. It is better to be sure than to cause panic and then find out that it was a false alarm.

The Dream of the Prophet ﷺ About the Battle of Uhud

There is a dream that has been narrated that the Prophet ﷺ saw.

According to Ibn Ishaq, the Prophet ﷺ told the sahaba about this dream before the battle; but according to Bukhari, he saw the dream in Makkah which he couldn't understand its interpretation until Uhud took place, and then he told the sahaba of the dream after the battle — and this seems to make more sense.

What is the dream?

The hadith is in Bukhari: the Prophet ﷺ said, "I saw in a dream that I had struck with my sword, but my sword broke — and this is what afflicted the Muslims at Uhud. Then I hit it again, and it came back as good as it ever was — and this was the victory that Allah gave to the Muslims and the coming together of the believers," i.e., after Uhud, there shall be victory.

Uhud was a disaster in many senses (as we will come to), but one of the negatives of Uhud was that the Muslims, for the first time, showed open disunity.

So the Prophet ﷺ is consoling the sahaba that after Uhud, they will gain unity and victory again.

And then he ﷺ continued narrating his dream, "I saw cows —and Allah is good— and this was the believers on the Day of Uhud."

In the Musnad of Imam Ahmad, it is added that the Prophet ﷺ said, "I saw myself wearing a protective armor, so I interpreted that to be Madinah" — the dream is telling him to stay with his armor, which means to stay in Madinah.

As we said, Bukhari's version has this taking place after Uhud, which seems to make more sense, i.e., the Prophet ﷺ is consoling the sahaba with his dream after he understood its interpretation.

Ibn Ishaq's version basically has him telling the sahaba of the defeat before the defeat, and this doesn't make much sense.

What is the meaning of cows? What does it symbolize? There is a lot of interpretations. Ibn Hajar says the symbolism of a cow is that of the shuhada[80] of Uhud. Why? Because a cow is an animal that is useful dead and alive. This is Ibn Hajar's interpretation; and Allah AWJ knows best — the Prophet ﷺ did not explain what is the interpretation of the cow.

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80 Shuhada (شهداء) - martyrs.

Breaking the News to the Muslims

Time was of the essence, the Makkans were already outside a day or two away. The Prophet ﷺ, after consulting with the leaders of the Ansar, he called a general gathering.[81] It so happened it was Friday anyway, so everyone was gathered, and on top of this, there was a janazah, and these weren't common, so everyone came for the janazah too; so everyone was there. Now the Prophet ﷺ tells them everything, and then he asks, "What do you think we should do?" He first gives his own opinion, "I see myself in a protected fortress," i.e., he is saying, "I think we should stay in Madinah," (as he saw in his dream).

As we mentioned, Madinah was a unique city, in that, it had natural protections. On east and west were volcanic rocks: the two harra — al-Harra al-Sharqiyyah (الحرة الشرقية) & al-Harra al-Gharbiyyah (الحرة الغربية) — no one would walk on them. On the north is the large Mountain of Uhud. Towards Quba in the south, there are pockets of date palms — and of course, when you have large date plantations, no army will march on that.

So the Prophet ﷺ suggested to stay in Madinah, and avail themselves to the natural fortification of the city. If the Quraysh army would have attacked, it would have resulted in street-to-street fighting; so the Muslims could have easily won, as they could have set up barricades, traps, etc., in the city. And amazingly, Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul agreed; not because he appreciated the Prophet ﷺ, but because it was the correct opinion. And he was the most seasoned warrior amongst them. He said, "Yes, this is the correct position. Madinah has never been successfully attacked from within (i.e., when we stayed as a city)." He admitted this — and again, not out of respect, but out of correctness of the opinion.

However, there was a group of younger Companions[82], they were eager for battle and said, "Why should we remain in our houses like cowards? Rather, we should go out like brave men and fight them on the battlefield!" And these were people who had regretted not participating in Badr. And they continued pressuring the Prophet ﷺ to go out, all the while the senior sahaba remained silent. Until finally, when the Prophet ﷺ felt that the majority were saying he should go out, he then agreed to this, and he went inside to wear his armor. And as soon as he went inside, the older sahaba opened up; and they began reproaching the younger sahaba, "The Prophet ﷺ told us his opinion at the beginning! And yet you persisted in suggesting the opposite until he agreed to your opinion! How could you have done this?!" And the younger sahaba felt very embarrassed at what had transpired, so they sent in Hamzah ibn Abdul Muttalib to the Prophet's ﷺ house to tell him, "We changed our minds." But when Hamzah entered in, the Prophet ﷺ had already put on his armor, he had fastened the straps, etc., so the Prophet ﷺ said, "It is not possible / befitting once a

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81 Notice this wisdom, subhan'Allah. The difference between a person of responsibility vs. sensationalist. The person who's thoughtful, if some big news comes, he will tell firstly to a core group, then he's going to widen the circle; whereas the sensationalist, he's just going to spread everything, spill the beans all at once. The Prophet ﷺ first told the core group around him, to get their counsel, and *then* he opened the floor for everyone. This is a part of hikmah (حكمة - wisdom) and leadership.

82 Many of whom, Ibn Ishaq says, will become shaheed, i.e., they are sincere in what they will say now.

prophet has worn his armor that he takes it off until he fights the enemy" [Musnad Imam Ahmad et al.] — i.e., it is too late.

Points of Benefit From the Incident

Subhan'Allah, so many benefits from this incident.

1. The status of shura[83] in the life of the Prophet ﷺ. He felt confident staying in Madinah, but he knows —like any good leader knows— that you need the people behind you; and you cannot just impose your will on them. And Allah says, "What is with Allah is far better and more lasting for those who believe and put their trust in their Lord, [those] who avoid major sins and shameful deeds... [those] who conduct their affairs by mutual consultation..." etc. [see Quran, 42:36-39], i.e., the way of dealing with matters is to have shura. Therefore, when the majority of Companions —according to the Prophet's ﷺ interpretation— is they want to fight outside Madinah, he gives in to the demand and puts on his armor.

2. Notice the wisdom of the older sahaba. (i) They accepted [or at least wanted to accept] the advice of the Prophet ﷺ; (ii) They did not argue with the younger sahaba in the presence of the Prophet ﷺ. The height of adab[84] here is amazing. They could have told the younger Companions then and there, "Can you be quiet, please? We have already made up our minds; he has already made up his mind," etc., but isn't it rude to have this bickering in front of the leader? In front of the Prophet ﷺ? They could have had this harshness — but out of respect for the Prophet ﷺ, they kept their mouth quiet until he ﷺ went out of earshot.

3. It is the sunnah of Allah that young men in particular are always overzealous and rash. Impetuousness, rashness, a little bit of arrogance and cockiness — generally speaking, it's in their nature. This is what makes them 'young men.' And this could work both ways: it could be overzealousness within the religion, it could be against the religion, it could be exaggeration that is not in the spirit of the religion but has a good intention, etc. And Allah mentions in the Quran, 'There were a group of 9 lads who were causing a lot of chaos in the land' [see Quran, 27:48] — they were the ones who did the 'prank' on the She-Camel of God. Also, the As'hab al-Kahf as well were young men [see Quran, 18:13] — they were a group of young men who had strong Iman in Allah SWT. It is human nature that young men, sometimes, they go in the positive direction (e.g., As'hab al-Kahf), sometimes, they go in the wrong direction even with good intentions (e.g., the young sahaba in this incident), and sometimes, they go in the wrong direction with bad intentions (e.g., the 9 lads of Thamud).

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83 Shura (شورى) - consultation.
84 Adab (أدب) - etiquette.

4. The fact that the Prophet ﷺ said he cannot take his armor off shows that there is a special shariah for the prophets. And we know this from other ayat and ahadith as well. They have a code that they operate by. We know of many such aspects that the Prophet ﷺ was able to do that we are not able to do. E.g., the Prophet ﷺ would fast for three days (±60 hours) without ever eating or drinking. When the sahaba tried to do it, they fainted — they couldn't do it; and the Prophet ﷺ said, "I am not like one of you." So he would do this, and he forbade the sahaba from doing it. And according to Ibn Taymiyyah, it was wajib for him ﷺ to pray tahajjud every single night, because Allah says in the Quran, "Stand all night [in prayer] except a little" [73:2]; whereas for the rest of us, it is not wajib. And why regarding the armor? Because taking it off could be interpreted to be defeat, hesitation, cowardice, etc. So it's not befitting for the prophets that once they have worn their armor, they take it off before they fight their enemies.

5. [We all know what's going to happen in the Battle of Uhud, and we will see that the opinion of the younger sahaba was not the best opinion, but] what is truly amazing —perhaps one of the most amazing things about the whole incident— is that once the decision has been made, the younger sahaba were not criticized after that for what happened. Nobody came back to them and said, "See? I told you so!" "Look now! Are you happy?!" etc. Nobody. Because, as Allah says in the Quran, "...And consult with them in [conducting] matters. Once you make a decision, put your trust in Allah" [3:159]. And our Prophet ﷺ said in a hadith, "None of you should say, 'If only I had done this, then such-and-such would have happened.' Rather, say, 'Whatever Allah has willed has occurred.' Because saying 'what if' opens up the door to shaytan." i.e., you start doubting, getting waswasa, etc. Therefore, once you make up your mind *properly*, no one should blame anybody else after that. So what does it mean to make up your mind properly? Two things: Islam tells us to (i) pray istikhara; and (ii) get istishara (advice) from people. Any time you have major decisions to make, do these two things. And suppose the outcome turns out to be a disaster, khalas, you did what you thought was best; so put your trust in Allah that He has something better planned — you just don't see it yet. And this is exactly what happened in the Battle of Uhud, as we will see.

6. Ibn Ishaq tells us that the Prophet ﷺ wore two suits of armor. This despite the fact that of course Allah has promised to protect him and he doesn't need armor at all. But he did this to show the ummah that if one wants to engage in any sort of endeavor, you have to engage in it properly. You don't act foolishly and say, 'Tawakkal ala Allah!' 'Allah will do everything!' etc. No. You have to do everything possible. And if that means arming yourself to the hilt before you go to the battle as he ﷺ did, then so be it. And Allah says in the Quran regarding battle, "Take your precautions" [4:71], and regarding going for Hajj, "Take [necessary] provisions [for the journey]" [2:197]. So whatever you are doing, make sure you do it with Allah in mind of course, but also you have the physical means necessary.

Muslims' Preparation for the Battle of Uhud

The Prophet ﷺ divided the army into three main groups:

1. The Muhajirun under the leadership of Mus'ab ibn Umayr (مصعب بن عمير)
2. The Aws under Usayd ibn Hudayr (أسيد بن حضير)
3. The Khazraj under al-Hubab ibn al-Mundhir (الحباب بن المنذر)

Because the situation was dire, they only had a handful of horses, and 100 suits of armor. And the Muslims, in the later afternoon of Friday, after the istishara, made their way to the Mountain of Uhud.

Blessings of the Mountain of Uhud

The Mountain of Uhud (جبل أحد - Jabal Uhud) is not just one mountain, it's a whole series of mountains. They are over 1 mile long and located to the north of Madinah.[85]

There are many ahadith about Uhud:

1. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Uhud is a mountain of Jannah." Some scholars say this means Uhud is a beloved mountain. Others say Uhud will be transported into Jannah.

2. In one hadith, when the Prophet ﷺ came back from an expedition, the first thing he saw was the Mountain of Uhud, and he said, "Uhud is a mountain that loves us, and we love it" [Bukhari]. So it's a sign of Iman to love Uhud.

3. It's narrated in Sahih Muslim that once, the Prophet ﷺ was climbing Uhud with Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman, and the mountain began to tremble; so the Prophet ﷺ tapped it with his feet and said, "Calm down, Uhud! For really there's only a nabi, a siddiq, and two shaheeds on you."

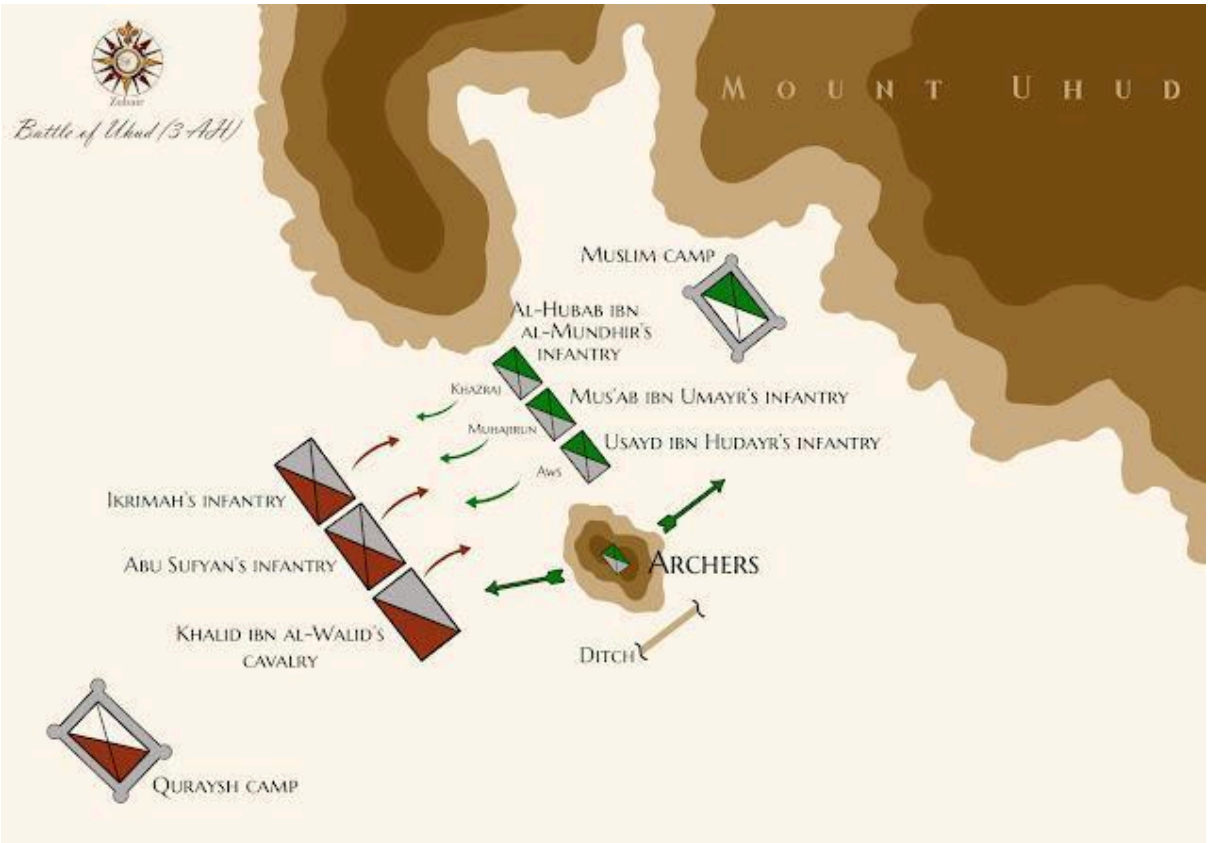
And Uhud is included inside the Haram. Recall Madinah is a Haram, and the boundaries of the Haram of Madinah (as reported in Bukhari) are between the two mountains Thawr and Ayr (north and south), and the two volcanic plains (east and west). Thawr is a small mountain north of Uhud, so Uhud is included inside the Haram.

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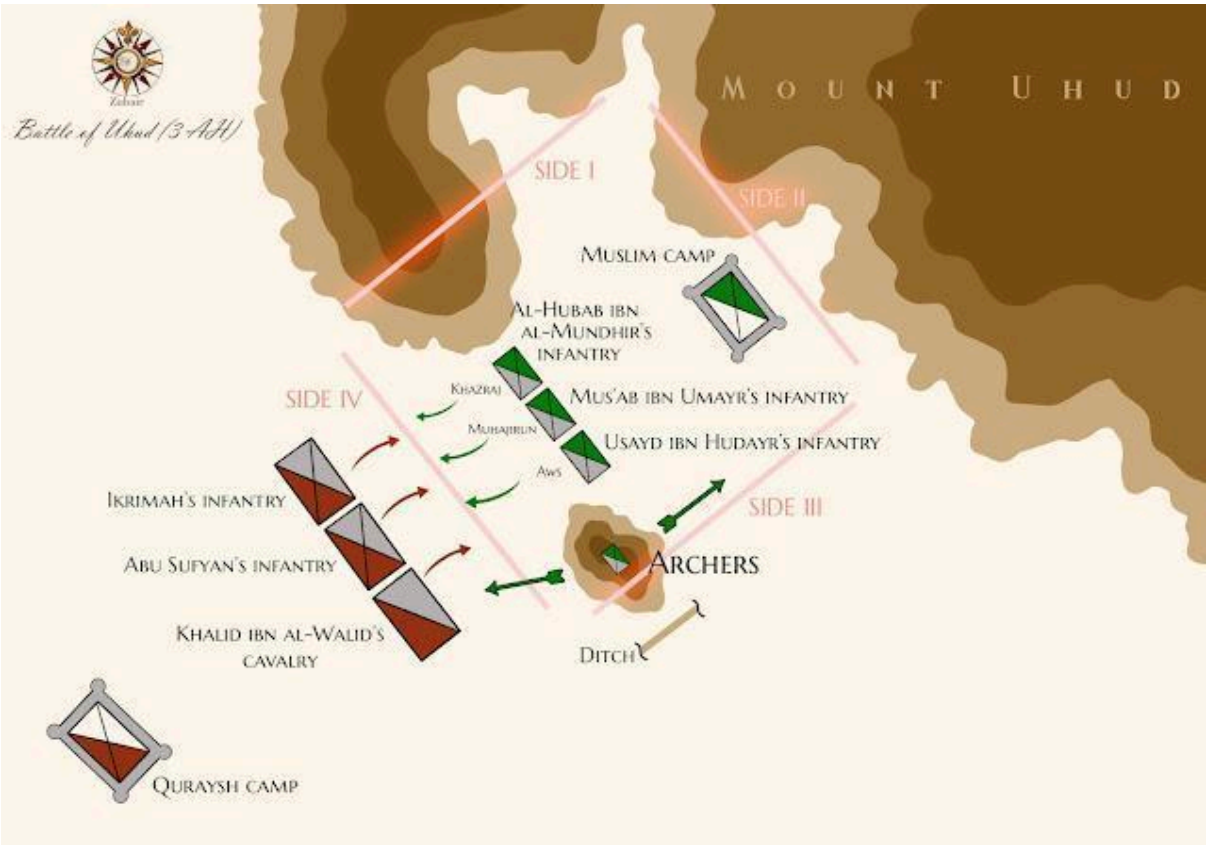
85 Tangent: These days by car it takes less than 10 minutes from the Masjid of the Prophet ﷺ to the mountains. Because of the increased inhabitants, the city of Madinah now goes all the way to the mountains — but of course, in the time of the Prophet ﷺ, there were big gaps — the city was very small, the entire core of the city fitted inside what is now the entire Masjid of the Prophet ﷺ. Thus Baqi' was outside the city. But now Madinah has become so big, so Baqi' and the Masjid of the Prophet ﷺ are basically right at the center.

Why Did the Prophet ﷺ Choose Uhud?

The question arises: Why did the Prophet ﷺ go to Uhud? Now that he's agreed to go out and fight, he needs to think about the best location to face the enemy. And there's only one of two options: Either meet the enemy in an open battlefield (which would have been a disaster, because there's 1:4 ratio) OR meet them in a constrained area that you know better than the enemy (there is an advantage because of the layout of the land). Thus by going to Uhud, the Prophet ﷺ is maximizing the effectiveness of a small army (700-1,000) against a large army (3,000). How so?



(Modified from Dr. Zubair Rashid's detailing)



There's only one narrow patch of land —a focused patch— where the enemy has to attack from (side IV); and the Prophet ﷺ is protected by three sides (side I, II, & III):

Side I & II: These two sides of Uhud are protecting him ﷺ.

Side III: This side is open but there's a small mountain, Jabal al-Ruma (جبل الرماة), and that's where he ﷺ puts the 50 archers — so a third side is now blocked.

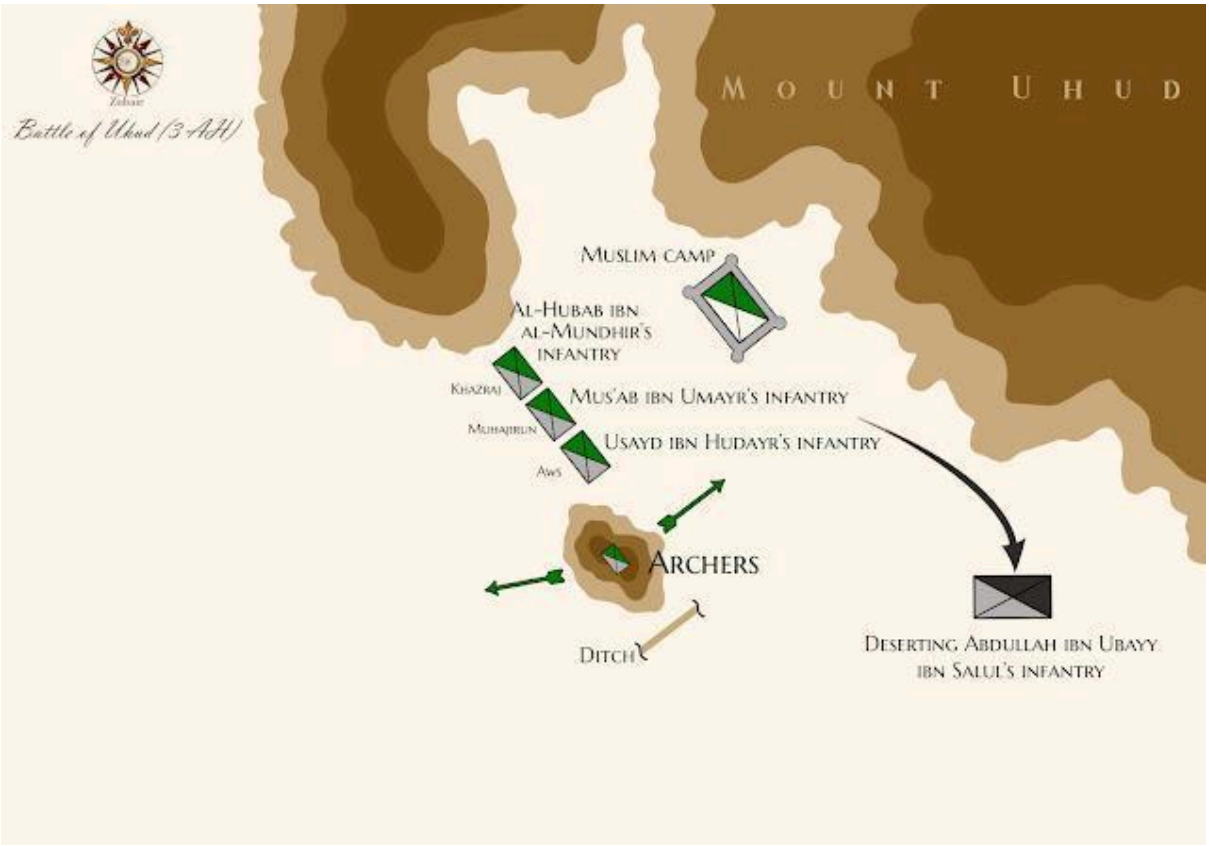
Side IV: Then there is one open side left where you can concentrate your troops, and the Quraysh are going to have to come from this narrow place.

And therefore, you have maximized the effectiveness of a small army against a large army. That's the advantage of Uhud.

The military genius of the Prophet ﷺ, to figure this out without having gone through any academic training or military academy, was truly amazing. Of course, Allah AWJ taught him; this is in his fitrah.

So the Prophet ﷺ chooses to go to Uhud. And he ﷺ marched out, as we said, on Friday, the 14th of Shawwal in the 3rd year of the Hijrah.

The Hypocrites Breaking Away



On the way to Uhud, Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul and his people slowly began retreating, and then went behind the army, until finally, they literally turned their backs and broke away from the army completely. When this happened, the sahaba rebuked them, "Where are you going?" Abdullah ibn Ubayy said, "He (the Prophet ﷺ) listened to some youth, and did not take my advice. Why should we risk our lives when he hasn't listened to us?" So this is the first time he is really showing his colors. And subhan'Allah, one of the main benefits of Uhud —which Allah Himself mentions in the Quran [3:179]— is that Allah wanted to demonstrate the reality of the hypocrites. The Muslims, up until this point, were innocently unaware of how evil the hypocrites were. And they needed to know how evil the hypocrites were in order to make sure they were not stung from the same hole twice. So Allah is saying that He SWT is doing this to, "...separate the filthy from the pure" [Quran, 3:179]. This was one of the main points of Uhud. In this series of incidents, the true colors of the hypocrites were shown.

Abdullah ibn Amr ibn Haram (عبد الله بن عمرو بن حرام - the father of the famous Jabir ibn Abdillah [جابر بن عبد الله]), when he sees Abdullah ibn Ubayy going away, he runs to him on his horse and says to him, "I remind you to fear Allah SWT, and not leave your Prophet or the people at this time when the enemy is about to attack. Did you not promise him that you would protect him and defend him like you defend your own families?" — he is referencing the Constitution of Madinah. So he reminds him of Allah and of human morality. And Abdullah ibn Ubayy responded, "If we knew they would fight, we would go with you (we

would not leave), but we don't think they are going to attack." And Allah SWT explicitly quotes Abdullah ibn Ubayy in the Quran and calls him a liar; that he knew full well what was going to happen, but he invented an excuse and thought he could get away with it. In verses 166-167, Allah said:

وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعَانِ فَبِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَلِيَعْلَمَ ٱلَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا۟ ۚ وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا۟ قَٰتِلُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ أَوِ ٱدْفَعُوا۟ ۖ قَالُوا۟ لَوْ نَعْلَمُ قِتَالًا لَّٱتَّبَعْنَٰكُمْ ۖ هُمْ لِلْكُفْرِ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَقْرَبُ مِنْهُمْ
لِلْإِيمَٰنِ ۚ يَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَٰهِهِم مَّا لَيْسَ فِى قُلُوبِهِمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَكْتُمُونَ

"So what you suffered on the day the two armies met was by Allah's Will, so that He might distinguish the [true] believers and expose the hypocrites. When it was said to them, 'Come fight in the cause of Allah, or [at least] defend yourselves,' they replied, 'If we had known there was fighting, we would have definitely gone with you.' They were closer to disbelief than to belief on that day — for saying with their mouths what was not in their hearts. Allah is All-Knowing of what they hide" [3:166-167].

— Allah quotes Abdullah ibn Ubayy here in this verse.

Allah also said, "Allah is not going to allow the Muslims to remain in status quo until he separates the filthy from the pure" [see Quran, 3:179]. Indeed, it's only during times of fitna (trial) that one's Iman —or lack thereof— is truly shown. And the incident of Uhud did this very clearly. It is worth noting that large sections of Surah Ali-Imran (and sections of Surah al-Nisa) came down pertaining to the Battle of Uhud.

Now, when the Muslims saw such a large group (~300 people) leaving, two things happened:

1. They started talking amongst themselves what was to be done with this group of 300. One group said, "We should turn back and fight them as traitors, and then come back to Uhud." Another group said, "We will fight the Quraysh first, and deal with them later." But Allah reprimanded this: "Why are you [believers] divided into two groups regarding the hypocrites while Allah allowed them to regress [to disbelief] because of their misdeeds?" [Quran, 4:88], i.e., 'Don't disunite in your attitude towards the hypocrites.' This was a positive argument, but Allah gently told the sahaba to stop.

2. Some tribes of the Aws and the Khazraj began wavering. One of the tribes of the Aws, the Banu Harithah (بنو حارثة), and one of the tribes of the Khazraj, the Banu Salama (بنو سلمة), they were almost about to withdraw along with the hypocrites. But eventually, the Muslims among them won over, and they decided to stay with the Prophet ﷺ. Allah mentions this as well, "There were two groups about to give up, but Allah is their Protector [so Allah protected them]. And in Allah the people who put their trust should put their trust" [see Quran, 3:122]. So Allah mentions that the Banu Harithah and the Banu Salama were about to go astray, but Allah protected them.[86]

86 Trivia: So the Banu Harithah and the Banu Salama, forever afterward, they always would boast about this. Why? Because Allah says, "Allah is their Protector." Because of this, these tribes to this day boast regarding this verse.

The 700 Muslims

Eventually, 700 Muslims reached Uhud, and they set up their camps. Ibn Ishaq mentions that their backs were facing the mountain, and they were facing the city of Madinah.

The Quraysh had to double across the entire city of Madinah to reach them. There's an added point here, that the Muslims are tiring them out even more — the Quraysh would have another half day's journey. Indeed, instead of going to the south of the city, the Prophet ﷺ went to the north, at Uhud — this was a clear purposeful tactic.

700 Muslims participated in Uhud — therefore, we can infer that in the whole world at this time, there were not more than 1,000 Muslim men. This is the max — because every man above the age of 15, some even at the age of 14, had to fight in this war. So that is all there was. You can add a few dozen here and there[87], but otherwise, in the whole world, there wasn't even 1,000. And from this small quantity, look at how Allah changed the world. Within 15-20 years, they will be literally wiping away the Persian Empire. Within 50 years, they will be in Andalusia. Within 100 years, from China all the way to basically France. And there are 1.8 billion Muslims today. Subhan'Allah. From an army that didn't even have the weapons, armor, horses, etc... to *this*. The sahaba had something which we don't have, which is the strong tawakkul and Iman in Allah. It was so strong that even the mightiest superpowers in the world could not stand up to this small group of men. Indeed, "If Allah helps you, none can defeat you" [Quran, 3:160].

[87] There were some secret Muslims in Makkah, and some maybe in Yemen, etc.

047. The Battle of Uhud Part 2

We have discussed the preparations for war, the fact that the Quraysh were camping nearby, the shura that the Prophet ﷺ did, etc.

Problem With Trying to Sort the Events in Chronological Order

Now, as was the case with Badr, we don't have the entire incident of the Battle of Uhud narrated in chronological order. Instead, we have small pieces of the puzzle, each narrated by different sahaba. And this creates a challenge in filling the gaps and determining the sequence of events. Imagine you were involved in a very difficult activity that lasted the entire day — you wouldn't recount every single detail to your descendants or children; you would tell them what sticks in your mind — the one or two significant events. Similarly, each sahabi shared one or two incidents with their progeny or the next generation. Thus, reconstructing the events of the battle becomes problematic. This is especially true for the Battle of Uhud, which was chaotic and, in some respects, a loss. If you read five different seerah books, you will encounter five different chronological accounts of the battle. In today's and the following 2-3 lectures, we will present one reconstruction of these events. Note that this interpretation is original in its own way, and if you read other books, you might find slight variations. The incidents are the same; it's a matter of connecting the dots and inferring what happened in between. There will always be theories about these events, and what will be presented today and in the next 2-3 lessons will essentially be one such theory.

Setting Up the Camp

Allah knows best, but what appears to be the case is that around the 13th of Shawwal, the Quraysh were approaching the city of Madinah. The 13th is a Thursday, the 14th is a Friday, and according to Ibn Ishaq and others, the actual battle took place on the morning of Saturday. So now, we try to reconstruct the previous 3 days; the following are all theories, nothing explicit. The theory is that by the 13th, the Quraysh and the Muslims were within scouting distance. By the 14th, the Prophet ﷺ decided the Muslims needed to go to Uhud before the Quraysh army settled down / attacked Madinah. And that's why as soon as he prayed Jumu'ah and did shura, he made his way to Uhud. And according to a number of reports, the Prophet ﷺ made his way to Uhud very secretly. He asked for a guide to take him through the date palm groves. Not the main road. Why? Because that would give their location away to the enemy too early. The Muslims wanted to get to Uhud before the Quraysh so that they could choose where they wanted to camp.

It's narrated that as they were walking through the date palms, one of the hypocrites who was a blind old man heard the commotion and said, "Who is this? Is this Muhammad and his Companions? Verily, I don't allow you to step foot in my land!" and he began throwing pebbles and rocks to try to stop the sahaba from coming. One of the sahaba

wanted to raise his sword to basically get rid of him, but the Prophet ﷺ said, "Leave him alone. He is a blind man of the eyes, and a blind man of the heart." So they let him be.

The Prophet ﷺ arrives on Uhud in the early afternoon of the 14th. (By the way, according to one report, they would pray Jumu'ah early in the afternoon, even before the time of Zuhr. And the issue of 'Is Jumu'ah a different salah than Zuhr?' is a classical controversy. And the Hanbali position, which frankly is the position many mosques in America follow because it makes life a lot easier, is that Jumu'ah is a separate salah not related to Zuhr. So it has a separate time frame. So it can be prayed before the time of Salat al-Zuhr.) So we can assume the Prophet ﷺ prayed Jumu'ah at around 11ish (in our time), and so he could have arrived at Uhud easily by 2 o'clock. It's literally a half an hour's walk.[88] So the Prophet ﷺ arrives at Uhud on the 14th, and the Quraysh by their scouts now know the Muslims are at Uhud, so they make their way also to Uhud after the Prophet ﷺ. As night fell, both armies were positioned at Uhud, aware that a battle was imminent at sunrise. This sunrise, marking the beginning of the battle, occurred on the 15th of Shawwal, which was a Saturday morning.

Young Sahaba

The Prophet ﷺ began organizing the army and looking over each and every fighter, putting them in an appropriate position. It is narrated that he rejected around a dozen or so of the sahaba because they were too young: anyone under the age of 15 was sent back. Of those who were sent back were Abdullah ibn Umar (عبد الله بن عمر), Zayd ibn Thabit (زيد بن ثابت)[89], Usama ibn Zayd ibn Harithah (أسامة بن زيد بن حارثة)[90], Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (أبو سعيد الخدري), and Zayd ibn Arqam (زيد بن أرقم).

A number of these young men argued their way to remain, and two succeeded. Rafi ibn Khadij (رافع بن خديج) was 14, so the Prophet ﷺ told him to go back; but some of his relatives petitioned and begged, "Ya Rasulullah, he is an expert archer," and so the Prophet ﷺ let him remain. When he was allowed to remain, Samura ibn Jundub (سمرة بن جندب), who was also 14, stood up and said, "Ya Rasulullah, if you're going to allow Rafi, I am stronger than Rafi and I've beaten him in wrestling a number of times! It's not fair!" According to one book, he even jumped on Rafi to show his strength. And so the Prophet ﷺ allowed Samura and Rafi to stay.[91]

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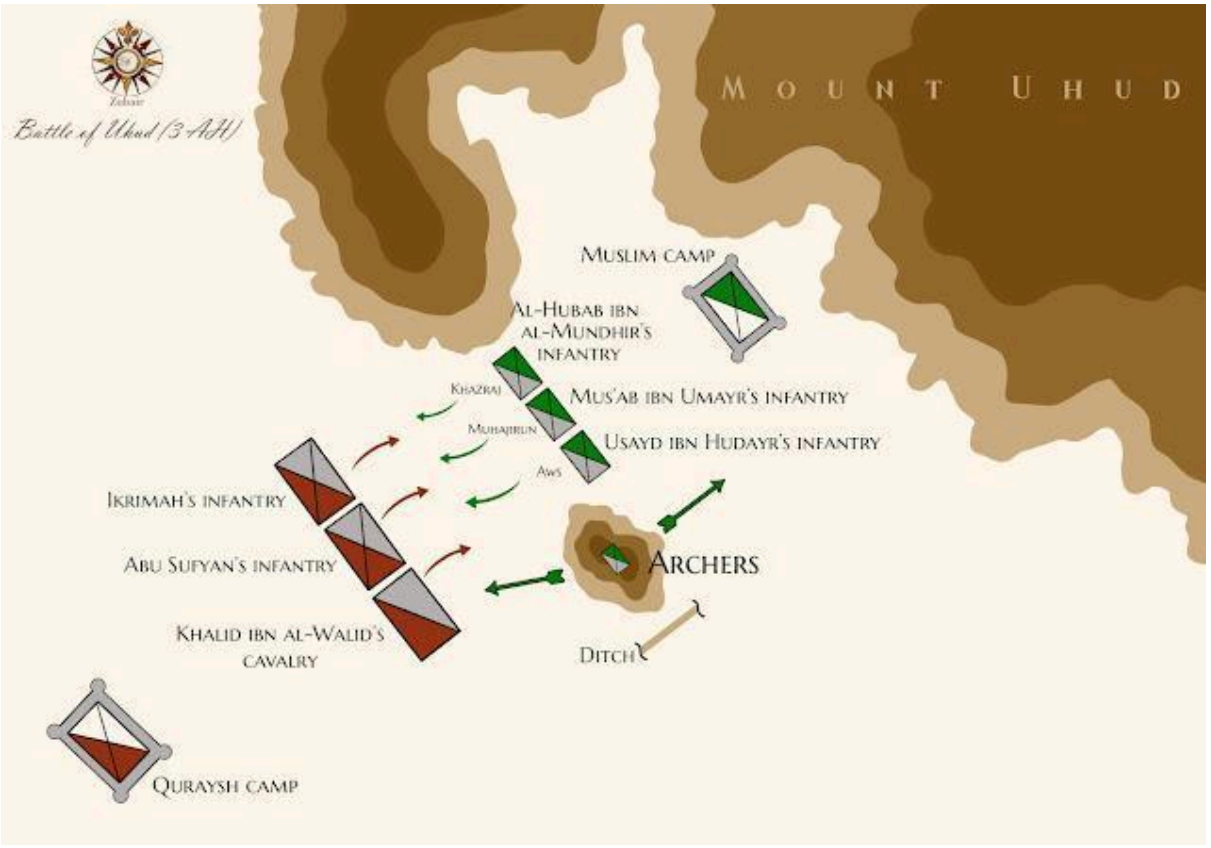
88 Or by car just 3 minutes.

89 The famous compiler of the Quran.

90 Subhan'Allah; Usama ibn Zayd was around 11-12 at this time and he was trying to sneak into the army; where are our 11-year-olds and what are they doing?

91 Subhan'Allah, compare these young lads who are full of Iman, to Abdullah ibn Ubayy and the gray-haired hypocrites.

Vitality of the Archers



(Modified from Dr. Zubair Rashid's detailing)

Ibn Ishaq says the Prophet ﷺ placed the army such that the army was facing Madinah, and their backs were to Uhud. On their left was a small mountain that at the time was called Jabal Aynayn (جبل عينين), and the Prophet ﷺ put 50 archers on it — the mountain is now called Jabal al-Ruma[92] in our times.

Out of all of the incidents narrated about the Battle of Uhud, the most authentic reports are about the advice that the Prophet ﷺ gave to the archers. This shows us the Prophet ﷺ knew that there was only one strategic weakness in the entire link, and that was that stretch of land protected by the archers. He told the archers:

"Protect us with your arrows, for their (the Quraysh's) horses will never come forth in response to arrows" — horses, when they see the arrows coming, will never be able to charge; they are terrified of arrows.

"Even if you see the birds eating our bodies, do not leave your places until I send for you."

[92] Jabal al-Ruma (جبل الرماة) - Mountain of the Archers.

"Make sure the enemy does not surprise us from behind regardless of whether we are the victors or the losers. Stay there until I tell you."

These narrations are reported in Bukhari and Muslim with the most authentic chains. The Prophet ﷺ knew how vital the archers were.

Abu Dujana RA

On the morning of the 15th, the Prophet ﷺ wanted to encourage the sahaba for battle. And what better motivation could there be than Allah and His Messenger? So he took out his own sword and said, "Who will take this sword from me and fight?"[93] Immediately, everybody is saying, "I will take it, ya Rasulullah!" Of those, one of the first to say it was Zubayr ibn al-Awwam. The Prophet ﷺ then asked, "Who will take it from me with its haq[94]?" Everyone paused. Abu Dujana (أبو دجانة) asked, "And what is its haq, ya Rasulullah?" What is the right of the sword? The Prophet ﷺ said, "You fight the enemy with it until it breaks or it's not serviceable anymore." And so Abu Dujana said, "I will take it with that haq, ya Rasulullah!" And indeed, Abu Dujana was a fearsome warrior. And in the days of Jahiliyyah, he had established a reputation of being a "fighting machine," and he had a special turban called "the turban of death," and it was red in color, and he would only wear it at extreme times of battle. So he put on the turban, and he started walking around in somewhat of a swaggering gait (walking in a very proud manner) with the sword unsheathed up and down so the Quraysh could see him. And the Prophet ﷺ said, "This type of walking, Allah SWT despises it, except at such a time and such a place." Such a time and such a place = to scare those people on the other side during jihad — to show them what you are made of; and to instill the right spirit into the sahaba.

Abu Amir the Fasiq

Of the first things the Quraysh tried to do was to separate the Ansar from the Muhajirun. First, Abu Sufyan sent a messenger to the Ansar, and he came within shouting distance and said, "I have been sent by Abu Sufyan, and he is saying, 'O people of Madinah! Leave us to our cousins, for we have nothing against you! And we have no desire to fight you!'"[95] At this, the Ansar became furious, and they responded back with insults that showed their anger, that, "How dare you accuse us of wanting to leave the Prophet ﷺ!"[96] So the messenger comes back humiliated.

Then another man says, "Leave this to me; I know what to do." This man is Abd Amr ibn Sayfi (عبد عمرو بن صيفي), a.k.a., Abu Amir al-Rahib (أبو عامر الراهب) (Note: 'Al-Rahib' means

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93 So this is going to be a blessed sword now — the sword of the Prophet ﷺ.

94 Haq (حق) - right.

95 Now, the Ansar are of course the bulk of the army, so if the Ansar leave, the 700 will go down to nothing.

96 Note: On the battlefield, it is permitted to use language that is otherwise not befitting of a Muslim, to show harshness and roughness meant for fighting.

'the Monk'). He was one of the leaders of the Aws before the Hijrah of Prophet ﷺ — one of the few seniors who remained alive after the Battle of Bu'ath. In the days of Jahiliyyah, he was of the level of Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul, greatly beloved and respected by the people. However, he didn't want to accept Islam, so before the Battle of Badr, he took a group of his fellow Aws tribesmen and simply abandoned Madinah for Makkah to wait for an opportunity such as this one to regain his chieftainhood.

So he says to Abu Sufyan, "Leave this to me, for my people have always respected and honored me. You will see the power I have over them." So he went out directly in front of the Ansar and said, "O my people of the Aws! This is me, Abu Amir!" But before he could continue, whatever offer he had, immediately, the Ansar said, "May Allah SWT curse you and give you no pleasure! You are not Abu Amir al-Rahib! You are Abu Amir al-Fasiq!" They swapped his name around from rahib (monk) to fasiq (evil person)[97] because he fled his own people out of hatred for the Prophet ﷺ.

Abu Amir was so shocked he couldn't even open his mouth to continue. He returned dazed to Abu Sufyan and said, "My people have been afflicted with some disease — I don't know what's happened to them." He could not recognize his own people anymore — because, again, this is what Iman does; this is the reality of Iman — its allegiance is to Allah and the Prophet ﷺ.[98]

The Mubaraza

The Quraysh began their preparations. The women were there as well, and they were enticing the men with bed and promises, "If you lose and come back, you won't get anything from us!" And they had their series of songs.

As with all battles, the first issue was always the mubaraza. In the Battle of Uhud, the mubaraza took place between Talha ibn Abi Talha (طلحة بن أبي طلحة) and Ali ibn Abi Talib RA. Talha came out and said, "Who will fight me?!" Ali ibn Abi Talib stood up and said, "I will!" Talha was wearing full body armor — even the hands and the limbs were covered; and Ali RA had nothing. Talha swung as soon as they were within fighting distance, but Ali was faster than him — he immediately took the full blow of the sword on the shield and before Talha could take it off of the shield, immediately at lightning speed he hit back. And since Talha's whole body was covered with armor all the way down to his thighs, Ali attacked below the thigh. And with such force, the leg was chopped off, so Talha collapsed, fell back, and his awrah was showing. Ali RA came to strike a final blow, but Talha begged, "I beg you by the rights of kinship! Don't kill me!" Indeed, they were third cousins. Nobody was hearing this conversation, but Ali RA got embarrassed, he lowered his sword and walked back. The sahaba said, "O Ali! Why didn't you kill him?" Ali RA said, "I felt embarrassed, and he begged me by the ties of kinship not to kill him." So Ali spared him out of dignity and chivalry. But of course, in that state, Talha couldn't fight properly, so he eventually died in the battle.

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[97] Fasiq (فاسق) - evil person.

[98] Side note: Abu Amir's son was Hanzala (حنظلة) RA, the one who will be washed by the angels.

Muslims Having the Upper Hand

Here we have a big gap. We have hardly any details of the initial assault. We just have a few tidbits. All that we know is that the Muslims charged after Ali's victory. And the mushrikun could not sustain this assault. Despite their powerful, well-armed army, they could not take control. And the women of the Quraysh were forced to flee, which shows the initial attack had been devastating. How? Because the women were stationed at the very end of the encampment — so it shows the Muslims had the upper hand, having penetrated deep into enemy lines to the point where even those at the farthest end were forced to flee. The small area of land was being used by the Muslims very effectively. They charged and charged forward like a bullet going through weak layers of the Quraysh.

The Flag Bearers of the Quraysh

The flag of the Quraysh was given to their subtribe called the Banu Abd al-Dar (بنو عبد الدار) which Talha was from — it was the custom of the Quraysh that the Banu Abd al-Dar always held the flag. In the Battle of Badr, they also had it — but when the army fled, the flag bearer was one of the first to run away; so Abu Sufyan before the Battle of Uhud reminded them of this, "O Banu Abd al-Dar! We gave you the flag at Badr, but you turned your backs and fled, and you saw what happened as a result. The flag is the symbol of the army: If it stands, the army stands; if it falls, the army falls! So now either take the flag with the right that it deserves, or give it back to us!" This is reverse psychology. And obviously, they were extremely insulted, so they challenged Abu Sufyan, "You will see what we will do with this flag! As long as one of us remains, this flag will forever be high up!" And that is exactly what happened: As long as one of them remained, the flag was up. But one by one, all 10 of the Banu Abd al-Dar were killed.

The Lions of the Muslim

The Quraysh's flag was always up as long as the flag bearer from Banu Abd al-Dar remained — but one by one, all 10 of them were killed. The first of them being Talha, who fought Ali RA. And the others as well were killed, most of them by Hamzah ibn Abdul Muttalib RA — he was targeting the flag bearers. Indeed, the flag bearers have a great honor, but they also have some great weaknesses: (i) they always become the target, and (ii) they are forced to fight with only one hand. So one by one, all of them are killed, and eventually, the flag falls. This truly shows how effective the initial assault was. Most of them were killed at the hands of Hamzah RA, some of them at the hands of Ali RA, and some at the hands of Abu Dujana RA. With the flag on the ground, this is the symbolic end of the army. Once the flag is not picked up, khalas, the army is *deemed* to have lost.

Abu Dujana fought a fierce battle: Zubayr ibn al-Awwam[99] narrates this hadith many years later: "When the Prophet ﷺ offered his sword and I said I want it but he gave it to Abu Dujana, I felt something in my heart; so I decided to follow Abu Dujana. And I saw that Abu Dujana did not meet a single enemy except that he managed to get rid of him with the sword by the haq. And there was one person of the Quraysh who was causing much havoc among the Muslims, so I made a du'a to Allah, 'O Allah! Let Abu Dujana meet him!' And Abu Dujana indeed got rid of him."

Ibn Ishaq also mentions another story about Abu Dujana, in which Abu Dujana himself narrates: "I saw someone encouraging the Quraysh with all of the encouragements imaginable — so I said to myself, 'I'm going to get rid of this person.' So I walked up and raised my sword to strike, but all of a sudden, she turned around and screamed like an Arab lady would scream[100], and I felt embarrassed to use the sword of the Prophet ﷺ upon a woman, so I withdrew and I let her be."[101]

And we know that of those who participated with great valor was Hamzah ibn Abdul Muttalib RA, the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ. And Ibn Ishaq has a list of who killed whom; and in that list, Hamzah RA is one of the warriors who had killed the most number of the Quraysh, along with Ali RA and Abu Dujana RA.

We conclude with a narration of Bukhari: Al-Bara' ibn Azib RA (البراء بن عازب) says, "When we fought them at Uhud, they turned and fled, until I saw with my own eyes the legs of the women as they lifted their skirts, running up the mountains, and I could see their ankle bracelets." — The women were so defenseless they were running helter-skelter; they didn't even have their men to protect them. And in Ibn Hisham, he adds, "I remember clearly seeing Hind and her female companions all running away up the mountain." From this, we can see how devastating the initial assault of the Muslim army was. The Muslims broke through the ranks of the Quraysh, made their way all to the very end, until the women were forced to flee helter-skelter. And this clearly shows the Muslims had the upper hand.

But of course, as we know, what is to follow is a different story and a change of tide.

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99 The son of Safiyyah bint Abdul Muttalib.
100 i.e., the walwalat (ولولة) - a high-pitched cry that Arab ladies would make.
101 Note: That woman was Hind, the wife of Abu Sufyan.

048. The Battle of Uhud Part 3 | Martyrdom of Hamza

As we discussed, the Muslims won the initial phase of the battle. Allah references this in the Quran where He said in Surah Ali-Imran, "Indeed, Allah fulfilled His promise to you when you [initially] swept them away by His Will, then your courage weakened and you disputed about the command and disobeyed after Allah had brought victory within your reach. Some of you were after worldly gain while others desired a heavenly reward. He denied you victory over them as a test, yet He has pardoned you. And Allah is Gracious to the believers" [Quran, 3:152]. Allah says that when the Muslims were pure and sincere to Him, He gave them what He had promised them; but when they faltered and became greedy for something, that is when disaster struck. In the books of seerah, we learn in detail what happened; and again, the issue with Uhud is it is difficult to piece together all the events. Reconstructing the incident of Uhud is the most difficult task in the whole seerah. Uhud was very chaotic and a disaster — to this day, there are a lot of questions about Uhud we don't even know.

The Change of Tide

The primary cause of the change of tide was the fact that when the mushrikun fled, the sahaba felt complacent enough to let go of their arms and started collecting the war booty.[102] They instantly started collecting the ghanima back to the camp and collect again and so on. We need to understand that the rules of ghanima had not yet been fully finalized. At Badr, only some of the rules were revealed, and so the sahaba were not aware that technically speaking, every single person was going to get the same share of the ghanima (apart from the possessions you get from the warrior that you kill). In fiqh, if the enemy flees, that which is left behind is shared amongst the entire army — it is a major sin to snatch it and hide it. It's collected, piled, and distributed in the correct accordance. The sad part is that, in Uhud, those who were eager to collect the war booty, they didn't even get that share AND they caused the disaster it caused. They neither got the booty nor the victory of the battle. It's the reality of those who prefer the dunya over the akhira: They neither get dunya nor akhira.

The Prophet ﷺ understood very clearly the battle was far from over; but the archers, when they saw the Quraysh had fled and at least a good 20 minutes had gone by and there was a feeling of complacency and they were waiting and waiting but no one sent them a message meanwhile other Muslims were collecting the ghanima, they began to feel neglected and thus began disputing amongst themselves. One group says, "Come on, it's our turn [to collect the ghanima]! Let's go!" Another group says, "No no, we can't go now."[103] And of course, Abdullah ibn Jubayr (عبد الله بن جبير) RA says, "Have you forgotten what the Prophet ﷺ told you? 'Stay where you are until my command comes to you.' By Allah, I will not move my place until the command comes to me." And we can imagine the bickering

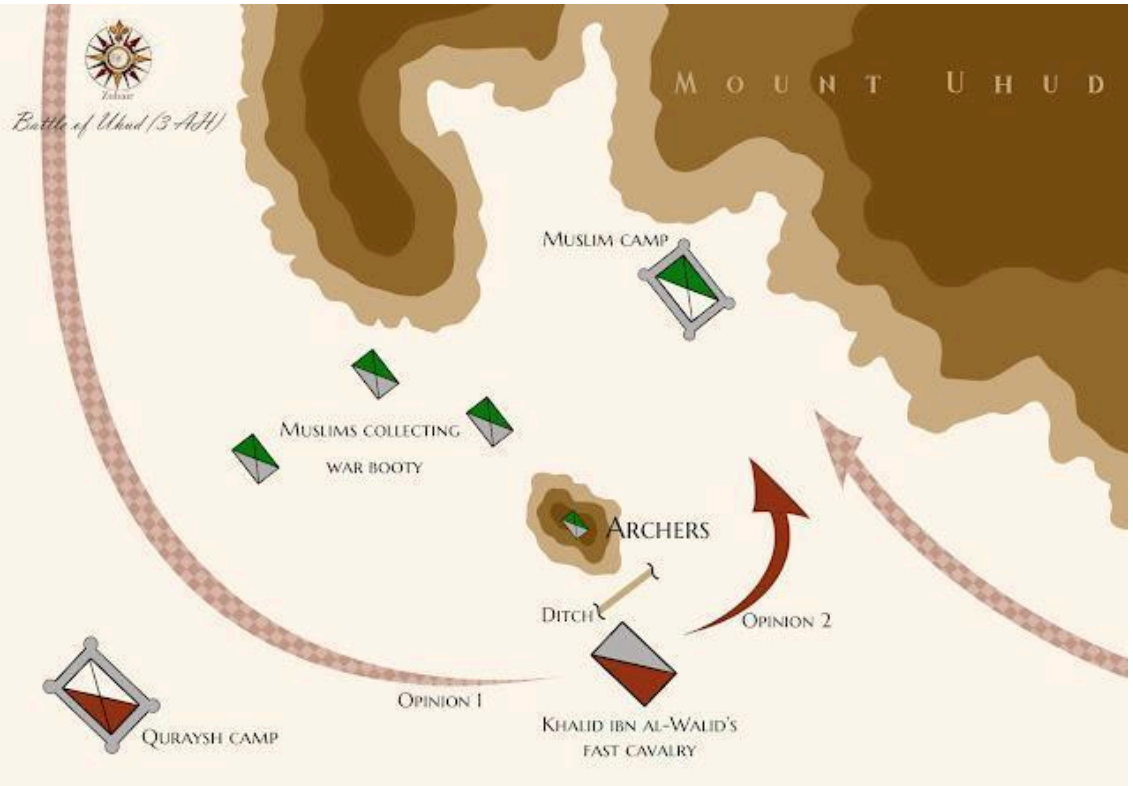
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[102] We don't have the details, but we can imagine what would be left behind. The most prized possessions are good weapons and good armor. The Arabs were not the best of ironsmiths; they would import weapons, and so weapons were very expensive. Also camels, tents, and everything else — it's a lot of money and goods.

[103] This is what Allah refers to in verse [3:152].

must have gone on for quite a while. Because nobody just changes their mind in a millisecond. You go back and forth, you see how many people follow your position, and if you're all alone, khalas, you stick with the majority; but if you get more and more people, you feel confident. And so we can imagine that from the 50, perhaps in the beginning only 1 or 2 are raising the banner to go and collect the ghanima; but slowly but surely, perhaps over 40 minutes, perhaps over 1 hour, more and more people join this banner to the point that 40 out of 50 of the archers say, "Come on, let's go..." Therefore, they descended down and left only 10 people on the mountain.

This is the grand opportunity Khalid ibn al-Walid saw. Even as he was fleeing, he was not running for dear life. He was cautiously looking behind to see what he could do.[104] As soon as Khalid sees the 40 go down from the mountain, his brain clicks. [Opinion 1] One opinion is that Khalid went behind the Mountain of Uhud to launch a counterattack. But this opinion does not make any academic sense — it's an impossible position to hold if you actually see the Mountain of Uhud. It would have taken Khalid 6 hours to go all the way around the mountain and then attack the Muslims; and by then, even the Muslims would have packed up and gone if nothing significant had happened for that long. Therefore realistically, it makes more sense to hold the opinion [Opinion 2] that when Khalid saw what was happening from a distance, he carved his way in from the right-hand side where there was a ditch that went under the land from which people could not see at ground level, and from there, he surprised the 10 archers. And after getting rid of the archers, he gathered his army for a counterattack. How many people did he have? We have no idea, but a rough estimate that makes sense is around 100-150.



104 Note: This shows us the military genius he had. The only person who ever inflicted a genuine military loss on the Muslims in the whole seerah was Khalid ibn al-Walid. He is in his early 20s yet he is showing the genius we know he is.

When Khalid ibn al-Walid is coming back, in effect he is cutting the Muslim army in half. On his right will be the camp of the Prophet ﷺ, and on his left will be the Muslims collecting ghanima. The Muslims on the right, the advantage of the protection of Uhud they had in the initial phase now turns against them — they have nowhere to flee. The Muslims on the left, they are dispersed, not in one group, cut off from their main supplies; and we also can infer many of them had abandoned their armor and weapons because now they are collecting ghanima, piling up things, so obviously, you're not going to have a sword in your hand. They assumed the war was won — an hour and a half had gone by and they were feeling very complacent. However, an hour and a half is nowhere enough time. Rather, it's just the right amount of time for Khalid to come back with an entourage and counterattack the Muslims from behind Jabal al-Ruma. The first person to see Khalid ibn al-Walid was in fact the Prophet ﷺ himself.[105]

It is human instinct that when you see an enemy coming, you turn around and flee; it's also very dangerous for the Prophet ﷺ to give his own location away because he knows he is the one that they are targeting; and therefore, we can imagine that if anyone of us had been in a similar situation, we would have immediately fled surreptitiously and quietly; but this is not anyone of us — this is our Prophet ﷺ; and therefore, he did what we would only expect him to do, which is the bravest thing imaginable; and that is he stood up, and at the top of his lungs, he started shouting to the Muslims, "O Muslims! Behind you!!" He is yelling as loudly as he can. "Take your precautions! They are coming from behind!" By yelling out, he has given his own location away. Subhan'Allah. He has done something extremely brave here. And had he not given this warning, probably the massacre would have been double or triple than it was. At least by giving this warning, some people could take precautions and take up their arms and put on their armor. This is what Allah mentions in the Quran, "[Remember] when you were running far away [in panic] —not looking at anyone— while the Messenger was calling to you from behind!" [Quran, 3:153]. So Allah describes vividly the reality of the situation; that when some of the sahaba saw the surprise attack, they started fleeing (which is the human instinct to do), but the Prophet ﷺ was calling them out to take precautions, to come back and fight.

And as can be expected, such a surprise attack led to total chaos in the ranks of the Muslims. Some of them had not even regrouped; others were in small pockets; and as the Quran mentions: many of them —because they were unarmed— simply turned their backs and fled. Again, there is symbolism here: This is what happens when you disobey the Prophet ﷺ. Other Muslims who were closer to the camp of the Prophet ﷺ, it appears shaytan did a trick on them. Shaytan caused chaos between the Muslims who are now facing one another. (We have Muslims in the camp, and other Muslims on the battlefield, and in the middle is Khalid ibn al-Walid — so what is going to happen? The two groups of Muslims are going to be facing one another.) And in the chaos, some Muslims were killed at the swords of other Muslims. And we have narrations that shaytan was the one who instigated this confusion. And unfortunately, we had some tragic deaths here:

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[105] And from this, we surmise that in fact the Prophet ﷺ was feeling uneasy at the whole situation when the sahaba started being too complacent — so he was constantly monitoring as carefully as possible.

Martyrdom of al-Yaman RA, the Father of Hudhayfah RA

One of the most tragic of these deaths was of Husayl ibn Jabir (حسيل بن جابر) RA, the father of Hudhayfah (حذيفة) RA.

Background of Husayl (a.k.a. al-Yaman): He was not from the Ansar. He was from the tribe of Abas (بنو عبس). In the days of Jahiliyyah, he had committed a murder and his own people basically disowned him, so he had to flee from his own people, and he formed an alliance with one of the tribes of Madinah who were to become the Ansar. He became their halif (حليف). When he formed an alliance with them, his Abasi people then started calling him 'Yamani' (because recall the Madinan Arabs are originally from Yemen; and so his nickname became 'al-Yaman.') Then he married one of the ladies of Madinah. And eventually, when the Prophet ﷺ started preaching in Makkah, he was of the earliest to convert. And then his son Hudhayfah embraced Islam before the Prophet ﷺ Emigrated to Madinah. When the Prophet ﷺ Emigrated to Madinah, it is said that al-Yaman asked the Prophet ﷺ, "O Messenger of Allah! Am I an Ansari or a Muhajir?" — because he is neither from Makkah nor from Madinah. The Prophet ﷺ said, "You are both an Ansari and a Muhajir." So al-Yaman has the honor of being both an Ansari and a Muhajir. Also recall, before the Battle of Badr, Hudhayfah and his father al-Yaman were caught by the Quraysh on the way to the battle [see episode 36: Mini Story 1]. And one of the Quraysh made them promise they wouldn't fight the Quraysh alongside the Prophet ﷺ, and then they were freed. They then made their way to the Prophet ﷺ and told him the story, and the Prophet ﷺ said, "Fulfill your promise. Go back to Madinah." And so Hudhayfah and al-Yaman got the reward of Badr without actually fighting in Badr.

Al-Yaman is now very elderly — he is one of the two people in Uhud who were so old the Prophet ﷺ said, "Go and stay in the city. Don't fight with us." They are exempt from fighting. So al-Yaman and this other man from the Ansar, they were sitting basically with the women and children. But eventually, their Iman gets the better of them and they start rebuking each other. Al-Yaman says, "How long do we have left to live [anyway]? We are so old now." And his companion says, "You are right. Let us go. And perhaps Allah will end our lives with a shahada[106]." And by the time they come to join the battle, Khalid is attacking. So they join at a time of chaos. And this was when shaytan caused confusion amongst the Muslims: A group of Muslims, not recognizing al-Yaman, they surrounded him and began killing him. Hudhayfah of course recognizes his father from the distance, so he starts screaming, "That is my father! That is my father! Stop!!" But in such chaos, the Muslims simply could not hear, and so they killed him. It was a sad and tragic story.

At the end of the battle, when it was all over, they came and asked for forgiveness, and Hudhayfah said, "May Allah forgive you! He is the Most Merciful of the merciful!" [Quran, 12:92]. And the Prophet ﷺ paid him the blood money for his father from the Bayt al-Mal: 100 camels, which is a lot of money. And Hudhayfah took this money and distributed it to the poor. All of it. One of the sahaba said, "Hudhayfah forever lived in good after that incident."

106 Shahada (شهادة) - martyrdom.

This incident is what boosted the ranks of Hudhayfah. And the Prophet ﷺ then rewarded him by making him Sahib al-Sirr.[107]

Martyrdom of Hamzah ibn Abdul Muttalib RA

Another sad incident of Uhud is of course the martyrdom of Hamzah ibn Abdul Muttalib (حمزة بن عبد المطلب) RA, the uncle and a very close friend of the Prophet ﷺ. He was killed by Wahshi (وحشي), the slave of Jubayr ibn Mut'im (جبير بن مطعم)[108], the son of Mut'im ibn Adi. In Uhud, Jubayr's uncle Tu'aymah ibn Adi (طعيمة بن عدي) was killed by Hamzah. so Jubayr wants revenge, he tells his slave Wahshi, "If you kill Hamzah, you will be free." So it's a double revenge: (i) Hamzah killed his uncle, so he wants Hamzah killed, and (ii) just like he lost his uncle, he wants the Prophet ﷺ to lose his uncle.

Wahshi does eventually accept Islam later on [8 AH], and he preserves this story in the first person: "I was a slave in Makkah, and I had no desire to get involved in the war. However, Jubayr my master promised me my freedom if I killed Hamzah. So I took my best javelin / spear and walked into the battle. And wallahi, I had no desire to do anyone harm except for Hamzah, in order to get my freedom. I began following Hamzah wherever he went, and I kept on hiding until finally, when he killed so-and-so, as soon as he lowered the sword, I stepped out from behind the bush, Hamzah's back was to me[109], I threw my javelin with the most force that I could, and it went through Hamzah and came through the front. Hamzah turned around to try and fight me[110], but he was not able to, and he died." It is also said that Wahshi aimed for the armor chinks when it slides around and exposes the skin / garment of Hamzah. And subhan'Allah, how else would Hamzah RA be killed except in this manner. Nobody could kill him in a true one-on-one combat.

Jubayr and Wahshi were both eventually guided to Islam, and this shows us that not a single person can be disregarded when it comes to accepting Islam, no matter how evil the enemy.

By the way, Jubayr was one of the prisoners back in Badr [2 AH], and later when he became a Muslim, he narrated: "The first time a little bit of Iman entered my heart was when I heard the Prophet ﷺ recite Surah al-Tur in Salat al-Maghrib." Recall the prisoners were tied up to the pillars of the masjid in Madinah, so that's how they were able to hear the Prophet ﷺ recite. The verse that really struck him was:

أَمْ خُلِقُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ شَيْءٍ أَمْ هُمُ الْخَالِقُونَ

"Or were they created by nothing, or were they the creators [of themselves]?" [52:35]

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107 Hudhayfah is famous because he is Sahib al-Sirr (صاحب السر - the Keeper of Secrets) — the one to whom the Prophet ﷺ told all of the names of the munafiqun.

108 At this time, Jubayr wasn't a Muslim, but he converted to Islam later on.

109 So this was a cowardly move by Wahshi — but he isn't concerned about chivalry right now, he just wants his freedom.

110 Subhan'Allah, what a warrior he was.

Jubayr said, "When I heard this verse, my heart was about to break out of my chest and fly out." So this was the first time Iman entered his heart. But he still didn't accept Islam at that time.

As for Wahshi, he fled to Ta'if right before the Conquest of Makkah [later in 8 AH] because he knew that the Prophet ﷺ would not spare him. So he flees to Ta'if, and after a year, Ta'if also becomes a Muslim city; Wahshi had no idea what to do, "I felt the whole world was going to collapse on me," so he went to exile in Syria. Somebody eventually told Wahshi that the Prophet ﷺ never kills anyone who accepts Islam. So he accepted Islam in this manner. Not the most noble way to accept Islam, but he's a Muslim nonetheless. So he went to Makkah cloaked, and his face covered so that he would not be recognized, and accepted Islam in front of the Prophet ﷺ, "I bear witness that there is no god except Allah, and you are the Messenger of Allah!" The Prophet ﷺ asks him, "Are you Wahshi?" He says, "Yes." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Tell me how you killed Hamzah." Wahshi then told him the story, and the Prophet ﷺ cried to the point that his beard got wet. The Prophet ﷺ then told Wahshi, "Hide yourself from me; let me not see your face." This is a difficult punishment for Wahshi, since every time the Prophet ﷺ was around, he had to hide himself. We seek Allah's refuge from such punishment, as we want to be with the Prophet ﷺ in Jannah.

(Tangent: Wahshi was also involved in drinking khamr. And Umar RA would have him punished multiple times; so much so that Umar RA said, "Wallahi, I knew that Allah would not leave the one who killed Hamzah untouched." And the punishment for drinking is 40 lashes.[111] At the end of his life, Wahshi did repent.)

Wahshi further related that when he heard about the advent of a false prophet called Musaylimah al-Kadhdhab[112] [in 11 AH], he made a du'a to Allah, "O Allah, allow me to take the life of Musaylimah in substitution for what I did to Hamzah." And he took the same spear that he killed Hamzah with, and he went with Khalid ibn al-Walid, and he targeted Musaylimah like he targeted Hamzah. "I threw my javelin. And at the same time, one of the Ansar attacked him from the other side with his sword, so Allah knows which one of us actually killed Musaylimah." But he considers this to be his kaffarah[113][114].

Hamzah RA was killed in the victory half of Uhud, not the losing half. He died in the initial assault, before Khalid ibn al-Walid came in to change the tide of the battle. We infer this from reports that say the women of the Quraysh were still on the battlefield: Hind[115], as a sign of inflicting pain upon the Prophet ﷺ, she cuts open the stomach of Hamzah with

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111 Side note: This shows us that no doubt the generation of the sahaba is the best generation, but that doesn't make them superhuman. They had their sins, and Allah SWT will forgive them. Their sins are shown to us so that we humanize them and not make them superhuman. They had sins, including drinking, fornication, etc., —and they were punished for that— but they would never lie about or be unfaithful to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. So we always have a lot of respect for them, and we always say radi-Allahu-anhum wa radu-anh (رضي الله عنهم ورضوا عنه - Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him).

112 Musaylimah al-Kadhdhab (مسيلمة الكذاب) - Musaylimah the Liar.

113 Kaffarah (كفارة) - expiation.

114 And of course, Wahshi killed Hamzah when he was a non-Muslim, so technically, it's not as if that sin will be on his Scales on the Day of Judgment.

115 The wife of Abu Sufyan.

her dagger, takes out his liver, bites it, and spits it out. She also cuts off his fingers, and according to some reports his toes, and she built a necklace out of them. All of this was done for nothing except to inflict pain on the Prophet ﷺ. This is the level of hatred that she had. YET, Allah still guided her to Islam [later in 8 AH].

After the battle was over, when the Prophet ﷺ saw the body of Hamzah, he cried and said, "Were it not for the fact that Safiyyah[116] would grieve and that the people would then take this as sunnah if I were to do this, I would have left his body untouched until it disperses in the bellies of the beasts and the birds (i.e., I want his body to be plucked even more so that Allah honors him even more, and so that Allah will then collect his body from all of these different places as an honor for Hamzah)." Meaning: If Hind thinks she can take his fingers, watch how Hamzah is plucked off by the animals slowly, and then brought back together by Allah SWT as a karamah[117] for him. And then the Prophet ﷺ said, "If Allah ever gives me victory over the Quraysh, I shall mutilate 30 of their bodies because of this one." But Allah SWT revealed later on:

وَإِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبْتُم بِهِ ۖ وَلَئِن صَبَرْتُمْ لَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لِّلصَّابِرِينَ

"And if you punish [an enemy, O believers], punish with an equivalent of that with which you were harmed. But if you are patient — it is better for those who are patient" [16:126].

So then the Prophet ﷺ took this from Allah SWT and said, "It is not allowed to mutilate any dead body" [Sahih Muslim].

Martyrdom of Mus'ab ibn Umayr RA

Mus'ab ibn Umayr (مصعب بن عمير) RA was most likely killed by the forces of Khalid, based upon piecing the evidences. He was targeted because unlike those who were collecting booty, he was still carrying the flag. So he was one of the first targets for the contingent of Khalid ibn al-Walid. Again, the books don't mention who did it, but we assume it was the forces of Khalid, because he was killed very gruesomely, and it is hard to die such a death in the first half of the battle when the Muslims were winning.

Background of Mus'ab ibn Umayr RA: He was the young man of Banu Abd al-Dar. His father was one of the richest traders of Makkah. He was known for being the most spoiled 'prince' of Makkah — he would wear a new garment every few days, buy the most expensive perfume, etc. His mother was well known to be spoiling him completely. And when he embraced Islam, he was tortured by his own mother and father — literally locked up, they deprived him of food and water, etc. He had to break his chains and run away to Madinah. Recall he was the first Muhajir to Emigrate to Madinah and spread Islam there. The Prophet ﷺ told him to make Hijrah 2 years before he made Hijrah himself. And because Mus'ab was intelligent, and he was of a noble class and knew how to interact with people, he won the hearts and minds of the Ansar. And the books of seerah mention that every Arab tribe in

116 Full sister of Hamzah.
117 Karamah (كرامة) - blessing / means of honoring.

Madinah, there were members that converted at the hands of Mus'ab RA. Every single tribe had Muslims because of him. He was known for being gentle and loving. And in the Battle of Uhud, he died a tragic but honorable death.

He was holding the flag and one of the mushriks came and cut off his right hand. Mus'ab then holds the flag with his left hand. His left hand is cut off, and he is using the stumps of his arms to hold the flag. Eventually, he is stabbed multiple times and dies a shaheed.

Sahih Bukhari reports the long hadith of Khabbab ibn al-Aratt which mentions the blessing / sacrifices of Mus'ab ibn Umayr. Recall Khabbab was also one of those who were tortured in Makkah, and he was an early convert just like Mus'ab. He lived a long life (73 years) — Allah blessed him to be a governor, live in a house with servants, etc., and when he was about to die [39 AH], he gave a moving speech that caused his people and his family to cry — he said: "We all Emigrated with the Prophet ﷺ seeking the rewards of Allah; and so our reward is with Allah. But some of us left this dunya without taking any of that reward in this world. Their full reward is in the hereafter. Of them is Mus'ab ibn Umayr. He was killed on the Day of Uhud, and all that he had was the one garment that he was wearing. And when we tried to cover up his body, if we cover his bottom half, the top half was naked, and if we cover his top half, the bottom half was naked. And so the Prophet ﷺ told us to cover up the top half so we covered the top half, and then we covered the bottom half with idhkhir (lemongrass). As for the rest of us, we moved on in life, and Allah blessed us; and now we don't know what Allah is going to do with us." Meaning, "I am dying with such luxury, and my friend Mus'ab died in such poverty. I don't know what my fate is going to be. As for Mus'ab, Allah gives him everything in the Next — he didn't get one thing in this dunya."

This is Mus'ab ibn Umayr RA. Allah AWJ tested him in Makkah, and He blessed him in Madinah with martyrdom.

Martyrdom of Hanzala RA

Hanzala ibn Abi Amir (حنظلة بن أبي عامر) RA was just about to kill Abu Sufyan when a spear came out of nowhere and killed him. After the battle, the Prophet ﷺ said, "I saw the angels washing the body of Hanzala as they took him up." And of course, it's a famous story that we all know: Hanzala was washed by the angels because the night before, as a newlywed, he was intimate with his wife, but he didn't have the time to do ghusl the next morning before joining the battle, and he died a shaheed in the battle. And he got a much better ghusl from the angels, subhan'Allah.

Death of Quzman ibn al-Harith

Quzman ibn al-Harith (قزمان بن الحارث) is a hypocrite — he went back to Madinah with Abdullah ibn Ubayy. But when he goes back home, the Muslim ladies begin rebuking him,

"What type of man are you?! You leave the men in the battle and come back home to us?! Have you no shame?!" etc.

So he felt such an embarrassment and went back to the battle; but his niyyah (intention) wasn't for the sake of Allah, it's to prove his manhood. He went completely armed, and fought a very tough and brave fight; so much so that one of the sahaba came back to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "Ya Rasulullah! Quzman is fighting an amazing battle!" But the Prophet ﷺ said, "هو في النار (He will be in the Hellfire)." The sahabi says he got a shock like he had never gotten before. And he decided to follow Quzman to find out what was wrong.

And eventually, Quzman was hit by an arrow, and he began wailing; he couldn't bear the pain, so he took out his sword, pointed the blade toward his stomach, the handle on the ground, and he jumped on his own sword and killed himself. The sahabi then informed the Prophet ﷺ of this. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Sometimes Allah helps this religion through a fajir[118]."

Martyrdom of al-Usayrim Amr ibn Thabit RA

Al-Usayrim Amr ibn Thabit (الأصيرم عمرو بن ثابت) was one of very few remaining pagans in Madinah. This is problematic for Sh. YQ because Ibn Ishaq said that after the Battle of Badr, anybody who was pagan converted to Islam — yet here, we find Usayrim remaining a pagan. So Allah knows best, but we can try to reconcile by saying that after the Battle of Badr, the overwhelming bulk of pagans converted, but there were still a few stragglers.

On the Day of Uhud, Usayrim goes and sees the city completely dead, so he starts asking, "Where is Sa'd ibn Mu'adh?" The women say he is at Uhud. And he asked about many people, who were all esteemed individuals he looked up to — but he was told they were all at Uhud. So he realized this was a powerful force (meaning Islam). So he accepted Islam on the morning of Uhud (between the time of Fajr and Zuhr). He gets armored, and tells his pagan family that if he dies, his money will go to the Prophet ﷺ.

When he gets to Uhud, the Muslims tell him to go back, "You don't belong here to fight with us." The Muslims didn't know he had converted. So he told them, "I have accepted Islam." So they allowed him to fight, and he died a shaheed in the Battle of Uhud.

He accepted Islam after the time of Fajr, and martyred before the time of Zuhr, so he didn't get a chance to pray a single salah. The Prophet ﷺ said, "He (Usayrim) did very little, but his ajr[119] is a lot."[120]

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118 Fajir (فاجر) - sinner / evil man.

119 Ajr (أجر) - reward.

120 Trivia: Abu Hurairah RA would test his students by asking, "Who is that Muslim who entered Jannah without making one salah?" And the answer is of course Usayrim RA.

Mukhayriq the Jew Who Honored the Constitution

The Prophet ﷺ did not approach the Jews for the Battle of Uhud, probably because he knew they wouldn't help[121]. [Or it could also be because it was Saturday, and the Jews had to observe the Sabbath.]

Mukhayriq (مخيريق) was one of the Jews who was trying to incite his people to go and help the Muslims, "You know that it is our duty to help Muhammad!" But his people said, "We can't, because today is the Sabbath." He got irritated at them and said, "لا سبت لكم - May you have no Sabbath after this!" And he took his armor and sword, and said to his people, "If I die, my property will go to Muhammad," and he went to the battlefield of Uhud and fought a brave battle. And he died defending the Muslims.

The Prophet ﷺ praised him as he praised Mut'im ibn Adi, "Mukhayriq is the best of all the Jews. He fulfilled his promise to us."

[121] Even though under the Constitution, they were required to fight: "If we are attacked externally, we will fight as one."

049. The Battle of Uhud Part 4 | Prophet ﷺ Injured

We have around 10-15 reports about the Prophet ﷺ at Uhud.

The Prophet ﷺ and the 9 Sahaba

The assumption —which is not mentioned in the narration— is that this happened at the very beginning of Khalid's counterattack. When the sahaba were dispersed around the battlefield, the group that was with the Prophet ﷺ was only 9 people. Amongst them were Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas (سعد بن أبي وقاص) and Talha ibn Ubaydillah (طلحة بن عبيد الله) — the rest were all Ansar whose name we do not know. So 2 Muhajirun and 7 Ansar. Abu Bakr RA, Umar RA, and all other sahaba are dispersed elsewhere, because the assumption is that the war has finished and the Muslims have won. So when Khalid ibn al-Walid returns, the Prophet ﷺ is only with a very small band. And we mentioned that initially, the Prophet ﷺ began shouting out to the Muslims, "Be careful! They're coming from behind you!" as Allah said in the Quran [3:153].

Again, we're piecing this together: Probably this group of 9 understood they needed to flee, because 9 was not going to withstand 150; and the only advantage they had was that of distance (they could see the force of Khalid in the distance, and it would take quite a few minutes for Khalid to get to the Prophet ﷺ); thus they decided to run into the mountains, find shelter, and hide before Khalid and his contingent came. We can also assume amongst the Ansar were those who know the mountain like the back of their hands; whereas the Quraysh didn't have a clue. So the Ansar most likely knew exactly where to go to hide in secrecy. The Quraysh just saw a massive mountain and had no idea where the Muslims would be.



As we know, the Prophet ﷺ sought refuge in a small narrow opening into the mountain — it's not even a cave, it's just a crevice inside. Perhaps only 1 or 2 people can physically be in at the same time. It appears someone in the group knew exactly where to go. As they were heading there, the contingent of the Quraysh came close; so the Prophet ﷺ asked the sahaba, "Who will take on these people? He shall be my companion in Jannah." Talha immediately offered, but the Prophet ﷺ told him to stay with him. An Ansari then offered, and the Prophet ﷺ let him go. Why did he keep Talha? Because Talha was the best of them, and so he wanted to save Talha for the very end. So one of the Ansar went, and he died a shaheed fending off the coming army.

Now, what is happening here? We're trying to piece this together. So we have 9 of the sahaba, most likely, they are taking retreat in the mountain, and they are trying to throw off the scent of their retreat by making sure nobody follows them where they are going. So perhaps one by one they are going to lure the Quraysh to another location so that they are not going to the Prophet ﷺ. And so one interpretation is that the Prophet ﷺ is sending one Ansar each time to lure the Quraysh to another location — as a decoy. And this continued to happen until finally, all 7 of the Ansar died a shaheed. Every single time, Talha is saying, "I will go next," but the Prophet ﷺ kept saying no until finally, it was only Talha, Sa'd, and the Prophet ﷺ.

In the entire seerah, perhaps this is the most critical moment[122]; because there is no protection after Allah then Sa'd and Talha. There is nothing in the seerah as dangerous and critical as this point.

Both Talha and Sa'd were expert archers, and Talha was a great warrior as well. We can assume by now the Prophet ﷺ had reached the cave. Both Talha and Sa'd began throwing volleys of arrows at anyone who would be seen in the distance scouring the land, whiffing up the sand trying to find out where the Prophet ﷺ is. And there's a narration that somewhat proves this. It says the Prophet ﷺ would be looking outside to see if he could find anyone coming, and Talha would say, "May my mother and father be given in ransom for you, O Messenger of Allah! Do not look outside! Perhaps a stray arrow will come and strike you! My chest instead of your chest, O Messenger of Allah! Let me be guard in front of the crevice." It shows us Talha and Sa'd were there with the Prophet ﷺ.

"May My Mother and Father Be Given in Ransom to You": Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas RA

Sa'd too threw volleys of arrows at the Quraysh, so much so it's said the Prophet ﷺ started finding arrows on the ground and handing them to Sa'd to fire. And he said something to Sa'd which Sa'd was always proud of for the rest of his life, and no other sahaba had ever had this phrase used by the Prophet ﷺ for him, and that phrase was:

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122 No doubt, the people of Ta'if were nasty and mean, but they didn't intend to kill the Prophet ﷺ; they intended to humiliate him; whereas here is war, it's an open battle. Even in the Hijrah, it was just Suraqa they faced.

"Fidaka abi wa ummi![123] Shoot, O Sa'd, shoot!" This phrase "fidaka abi wa ummi," the sahaba used it for the Prophet ﷺ all the time[124], but the Prophet ﷺ never used it for anybody in his whole life, except for Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas RA in the Battle of Uhud. This is the only time. That's what the chroniclers of seerah say — the Prophet ﷺ never combined between his parents in this phrase except for Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas RA.

And of course, both Sa'd and Talha are of the 10 elites Promised Paradise, so all of this is expected.

"If You Had Only Said Bismillah": Talha ibn Ubaydillah RA

Another incident is reported: Now when all 7 of the Ansar died and Talha is the only one left armed as a warrior[125], one more enemy comes up the mountain, so the Prophet ﷺ sends Talha to deal with him. In the fight, some of Talha's fingers are chopped off, and he cries out 'حس (hiss)!' meaning 'ouch!' The Prophet ﷺ said, "If you had only said 'بسم الله (bismillah)' [instead], the angels would have lifted you up while the people are watching you, and they would have taken you up to the skies."

And Talha fought the man and killed him.

"It Became the Better of My Two Eyes": Qatada ibn al-Nu'man al-Awsi RA

And during this time[126], some of the sahaba began figuring out where the Prophet ﷺ was. One of them was an Ansari by the name of Qatada ibn al-Nu'man al-Awsi (قتادة بن النعمان الأوسي) RA. And he narrates another tidbit: "On the Day of Uhud, the Prophet ﷺ gave me a bow. And I continued to use it so much that it was no longer flexible."[127][128] So Qatada's bow lost its flexibility — and he narrates, "When the arrows continued to come, I decided to use my body to shield the Prophet ﷺ." Indeed, arrows, they come out of nowhere — you don't even know it's there until it's too late, especially when you have groups of archers shooting

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123 Fidaka abi wa ummi (فداك أبي وأمي) - May my mother and father be given in ransom for you, i.e., I would sacrifice my mother and father for you.

124 Abu Bakr, Umar, et al., everybody used it; that's how they addressed him ﷺ; it's the highest expression of respect when you address somebody. Indeed, giving yourself up is easy, but giving your parents up for somebody else isn't — it really shows your determination. And nobody deserves that it be used to other than to the Prophet ﷺ.

125 Sa'd only had his bows and arrows. And from this, by the way, we assume he was among the archery team in the first half of the battle.

126 Again, we're piecing it together.

127 This was in the cave.

128 This shows us the Prophet ﷺ has collected instruments; so he has an extra bow to give to Qatada. (And this means as he is going up the mountain, he is collecting bows and arrows. Indeed, he was the one handing arrows to Sa'd.)

at you. It's very deadly.[129] Qatada further narrates, "And I started monitoring the arrows. Every time an arrow comes, I try to block it so that it doesn't hit the Prophet ﷺ. Until I saw an arrow coming and I could only use my face to protect the Prophet ﷺ, I did so, and the arrow hit my eye. When the Prophet ﷺ saw this, he began to cry and said, 'O Allah! Qatada has protected your Prophet with his face! So let his eye become the best eye! And let it be the most precise in eyesight!'" The Prophet ﷺ made du'a and took the arrow out; and Qatada says that eye healed instantly, and, "It became the better of my two eyes, and the more precise of my two eyes!"

This miracle took place in front of the sahaba.

The Prophet ﷺ Injured

During this chaos, the Prophet ﷺ was wounded. How many times and by whom? Some say once, some say twice; Allahu a'lam, but if you look at the reports, it appears he ﷺ was wounded at least three separate times in three separate locations. Again, this is one of those gray areas. For sure he was wounded, but how many times and where, we must piece it together.

1. So one report mentions Utbah ibn Abi Waqqas (عتبة بن أبي وقاص)[130] who was fighting with the Quraysh, he threw stones at the Prophet ﷺ which hit him in the face and injured his lips. This seems to be one injury. We assume this happened when they were running up to the cave.

2. Another was from Utbah ibn Abi Waqqas again, and this appears to be the most severe injury. He launched an arrow from far away, and it entered into the chink of the armor of the Prophet ﷺ, and it went straight through his cheek and dislodged the lateral incisor tooth. And the arrow was stuck in his cheek. This was the worst wound.

3. And there's one more wound, either by Abdullah ibn Shihab (عبد الله بن شهاب) or by Abdullah ibn Qami'a (عبد الله بن قمئة) — it was a short distance wound with a sword. This one, again, we aren't sure when it took place. Abdullah ibn Qami'a / Shihab came with his horse and raised his sword to strike the Prophet ﷺ. Talha ibn Ubaydillah protected the Prophet ﷺ with his shield, but it didn't deflect fully. It minimized the blow, but nonetheless hit the helmet of the Prophet ﷺ — the force of the sword caused the armor / helmet of the Prophet ﷺ to damage and go inside his cheekbone.

So it appears there were two wounds to his face ﷺ.

The Prophet ﷺ continuously wiped the blood from his face, and it's reported in Sahih Muslim that he said, "How can a nation be successful when they have injured their own

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129 And that's why our Prophet ﷺ said in a hadith, "The real strength is in arrows. The real strength is in arrows" — because you cannot fight against arrows, and horses do not run into volleys of arrows.

130 The blood brother of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas.

prophet..." In another version, he said, "How can they expect Allah's mercy when they do this to their prophet who is calling them to Islam..."

Allah SWT Reprimanded the Prophet ﷺ

The Prophet ﷺ said, "How can a nation be successful when they have injured their own prophet..." "How can they expect Allah's mercy when they do this to their prophet who is calling them to Islam..."

At this (when they went back to Madinah), Allah revealed a verse in Surah Ali-Imran that applies to this particular phrase of the Prophet ﷺ — a beautiful verse that really demonstrates the meaning of the kalimah shahada, the reality of tawhid. Allah says:

لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَوْ يُعَذِّبَهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ

"Not for you, [O Muhammad, but for Allah] is the decision whether He should [cut them down] or forgive them or punish them, for indeed, they are wrongdoers" [3:128], i.e., 'You have no matter / share in this issue.' 'This is not yours to decide.' 'You have no share in dictating who will be forgiven and who will be punished.'

It's a harsh, blunt way to phrase it. The word "شیء (shai)" here literally means "nothing." So Allah says whether He forgives or punishes is no business of the Prophet ﷺ. 'Yes, they have wronged you, but you cannot say they cannot be forgiven.' And subhan'Allah, what does this show us other than the reality of who is Allah and who is the slave. Even the Prophet ﷺ, despite being who he is, he does not control the affairs of the heaven and the earth. Allah says in the Quran, "Your job is to spread (preach), and My job is to give Judgment" [see 13:40]. And if even the Prophet ﷺ is being told this, then how about us?[131]

This incident shows us the human nature of our Prophet ﷺ. He bleeds, and he utters some words. But it's said when this ayah came down, the Prophet ﷺ made du'a for these people, "O Allah, forgive my people, because they do not know." And indeed, many of them were forgiven. Khalid ibn al-Walid is the best example.

It All Happened for a Divine Wisdom

Now the question arises: Wasn't Allah SWT protecting the Prophet ﷺ? Clearly, He was. In Sahih Bukhari, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas narrates that he saw the Prophet ﷺ on the Day of Uhud being guarded by two 'people' wearing the whitest of white fighting a fierce battle; and he never saw them before or after Uhud. (Clearly, they were angels.) So the question is: Can the angels fall short? Of course not. So what does this mean? It means the

131 Subhan'Allah, if people just understood this one incident, there would be no shirk in the Muslim ummah. There are groups in our times that believe the Prophet ﷺ will decide who will go to Paradise and who will go to Hell. This is clearly wrong.

injuries the Prophet ﷺ sustained were done for a wisdom. Allah intended it and there is great wisdom and benefit for us to learn.

Had it not been for that protection, he would not have lived through the incident. The angels protected his *life* by the permission of Allah SWT. No doubt, with some scars and wounds, but it all happened with the qadr of Allah. And we will talk about some of the wisdoms in the next episode.

The Martyrdom of Mus'ab ibn Umayr RA That Led to the Spread of Misinformation

Another thing that happened was the martyrdom of Mus'ab ibn Umayr RA (as we discussed in the previous episode).

He had the same skin color as the Prophet ﷺ, and it's also said his facial features somewhat resembled the Prophet ﷺ. Further, it's said he was wearing a cloak given to him by the Prophet ﷺ. Thus, putting this together, we understand that when Abdullah ibn Qami'a killed Mus'ab, he assumed he killed the Prophet ﷺ. And then he began screaming at the top of his lungs, "I have killed Muhammad!! I have killed Muhammad!!" And the news spread like wildfire amongst the Quraysh who were still there, and amongst the small groups of Muslims.

And we learn that this news turned out to be hugely advantageous to the Muslims. Why? Because when the Quraysh heard this, it was the number one incentive for them to 'pack up their bags' and leave.

Martyrdom of Anas ibn al-Nadr RA

So when this news spread, it's said it hugely demoralized the sahaba. They did not know what to do. Some of them just put their sword down and sat. In Sahih Bukhari, it's narrated that Anas ibn al-Nadr (أنس بن النضر) RA, the uncle of Anas ibn Malik RA, passed by a group of sahaba sitting down and he said, "Why aren't you fighting? The enemy is here!" They said, "Haven't you heard? The Prophet ﷺ has been killed." Anas replied, "Even if the Prophet ﷺ has been killed, the Lord of the Prophet ﷺ has not been killed! And besides, what will you do with life now that the Prophet ﷺ is dead? Let us go and die as he died!" And so Anas went on with his sword. Along the way, he met Sa'd ibn Mu'adh (سعد بن معاذ) RA and said to him, "O Sa'd! Verily, I can smell the fragrance of Jannah from behind that mountain!" i.e., he senses his death is coming. And he says, "O Allah, I ask Your forgiveness for what these (my fellow Muslims) have done, and I disassociate from what they (the Quraysh) have done!" And he threw himself into the battle and fought so ferociously that his entire body was disfigured. Not a single portion of his body was recognizable.

Eventually, the Muslims found a body of somebody with over 80 wounds from top all the way down, and they didn't recognize who the body was until Anas's sister came and

recognized him by the tips of his fingers. Allah revealed for him in the Quran, Surah al-Ahzab verse 23:

مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ ۖ فَمِنْهُم مَّن قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُ وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَنتَظِرُ ۖ وَمَا بَدَّلُوا تَبْدِيلًا

"Among the believers are men who have proven true to what they pledged to Allah" [see Quran, 33:23].

Ka'b ibn Malik RA Found the Prophet ﷺ

By now the rumor began spreading that the Prophet ﷺ had passed away — and yet still the sahaba are frantically searching, "Perhaps we will find him!" One of the first to recognize the Prophet ﷺ was Ka'b ibn Malik (كعب بن مالك) RA — he recognized him by his eyes, the piercing and brightness of them. And he shouted, "O Muslims, rejoice! For the Prophet ﷺ is alive!" But the Prophet ﷺ told him to remain quiet, as it is not the smartest thing to let everyone know your whereabouts right now. So Ka'b handed the Prophet ﷺ his own armor so the people would not recognize him, and he wore the Prophet's ﷺ armor so the people would think he was the Prophet ﷺ and target him. And it's said by the end of the battle, Ka'b had over 10 stabs / wounds.

Main Sahaba Joining Back

Now the Prophet ﷺ was joined by Abu Bakr, Umar, Ali, Zubayr ibn al-Awwam[132], et al.

When the sahaba rushed up to protect the Prophet ﷺ, Abu Bakr RA says he saw one man fighting and protecting the Prophet ﷺ. And he said he made du'a it was Talha, "O Allah, let it be Talha," and indeed it was. Further, he said, "While I was rushing up, another man rushed past me so fast. It was Abu Ubaydah Amir ibn al-Jarrah (أبو عبيدة عامر بن الجراح). And we both got to the Prophet ﷺ and saw that two arrows had pierced his helmet." In other versions, it's one arrow and one broken tip of the armor. (Again, there's a little bit of gray area; Allah knows best, but clearly, there were two wounds on each cheek of the Prophet ﷺ.) When they saw this arrow, Abu Bakr RA rushed forward to try to dislodge it from the Prophet ﷺ, but Abu Ubaydah kept begging Abu Bakr RA, "Let me do this," until Abu Bakr RA gave in.

Two things are stuck in the face of the Prophet ﷺ. How are you going to dislodge it? What does Abu Ubaydah do? He bites onto the arrow with his teeth, and gently pulls it out. And he bites so hard he loses one / two teeth in the process because he wants the pain to

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132 Tangent: Zubayr married Asma bint Abu Bakr; Zubayr's father al-Awwam married Safiyyah the aunt of the Prophet ﷺ. Zubayr is the hawari (حوارى - disciple / special companion) of the Prophet ﷺ. And he's related to the Prophet ﷺ in multiple ways: He is Khadija's nephew (i.e., he is the Prophet's ﷺ nephew); his mother is the Prophet's ﷺ aunt (i.e., he is the Prophet's ﷺ cousin); and he is married to Asma the sister of Aisha (i.e., he is the Prophet's ﷺ brother-in-law).

be on him and not the Prophet ﷺ. Then Abu Bakr RA insists it's his turn for the other side. But Abu Ubaydah says, "No, I've done one, I'm going to do the other." He does the same thing and he again loses / breaks one of his premolars.[133]

The Only Pagan to Be Killed at the Hands of the Prophet ﷺ: Ubay ibn Khalaf

Sometime around this —most likely before the sahaba rushed up[134]— one more scene took place. Ubay ibn Khalaf (أبي بن خلف) —the filthy, evil mushrik, who did so much vulgar taunting, the one who had a long list of disgusting mannerisms— Allah gave him a special dishonor: he was the only pagan to be killed directly with the hands of the Prophet ﷺ.

To set this up, let us go back a bit. It's narrated that during the days in Makkah, Ubay ibn Khalaf would mock the Prophet ﷺ like nobody else mocked him. He tells the Prophet ﷺ, "I'm going to kill you one day!" They are both Qureshi but he still said it. And one day, he taunted the Prophet ﷺ, "I have a special horse that I am feeding the best barley and grain, in order that it grows fat and healthy so that I can kill you while I ride it!" And this is the only time the Prophet ﷺ ever responded to a taunt; he said, "No. Actually, I will be the one killing you, insha'Allah."

On the Day of Uhud, Ubay was on that same horse and he saw the Prophet ﷺ from afar. So he aligned his horse to face the Prophet ﷺ. (And of course, on a horse you have huge advantages: the blow of your sword has extra force from the momentum of the horse, you have speed and agility, you can strike down below and the guy on the ground can't aim for your head, etc.) So Ubay charged on his horse. When the sahaba saw this, they huddled around the Prophet ﷺ. But the Prophet ﷺ said, "No, he is mine." And the Prophet ﷺ jumped up, grabbed a spear from one of the sahaba, and as Ubay came rushing, he dodged Ubay's blow and directly pierced the armor straight into the neck of Ubay ibn Khalaf. It didn't go all the way through — it rather lodged slightly in. And Ubay began screaming, "Muhammad has killed me!" and he rushed back to the contingent of Khalid. They took him off, pulled off his armor, etc., and said, "Don't worry, this wound will heal," but Ubay said, "This is not a minor wound, it's a death wound! Wallahi, if Muhammad had just spat in my face, I would have fallen dead!" — Ubay realizes this is that promise being met: "No. Actually, I will be the one killing you, insha'Allah." And indeed, he died in the Valley of Sarif (وادي سرف)[135]. So he didn't actually get home, and was buried in some no man's land in the middle of nowhere.

It's mentioned in the books of seerah that many years later, Ibn Umar passed by this valley at night, and he saw a fire that frightened him. He went to find out what this fire was, and he found Ubay ibn Khalaf (his image) coming out of that fire and crying out, "Thirst! Thirst!" He is in a state of thirst. And immediately, an angel behind him said, "Do not give him

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133 Abu Ubaydah therefore remained without these 3-4 teeth for the rest of his life.
134 So actually this should have been spoken about before.
135 ~20 minutes' drive to the north of Makkah / Masjid al-Haram in our time.

anything. This is the one whom the Prophet ﷺ has killed." In a hadith, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah's anger becomes more severe on anyone whom the prophets kill."

Severity of the Wounds of the Prophet ﷺ

Bukhari mentions that when the Prophet ﷺ returned home, Fatima RA tried to wash the wounds off the Prophet's ﷺ face. Ali RA continued to pour water, but it kept on bleeding. Until finally, Fatima burns some date palm leaves, makes a paste out of it, and glues the wound shut. It shows us again how severe the wounds were.

Muslim Women Helping the Wounded

It's also narrated that the women of the Ansar played some role in helping the wounded. They took an active role in being nurses and giving water to the sick on the battlefield. Generally speaking, the women did not participate in military expeditions — but Uhud was different as (i) it was walking distance from their houses, and (ii) it was a time of need and necessity.

We learn that Aisha RA and Ummi Sulaym (أم سليم) were running around the battlefield helping with water canisters, food, etc.

"Answer Him Back: 'Allah SWT is Mightier and Has More Honor!'"

The battle came to an end. How do we know the battle finally came to an end? By the conversation that took place between Abu Sufyan and the Muslims.

Abu Sufyan comes back. (The assumption is after Khalid's forces couldn't find the Prophet ﷺ, someone called him back to Uhud.) He stands at the mountain and cries out, "Is Muhammad alive?! Answer me!" And the Prophet ﷺ told Umar and Abu Bakr, "Don't answer him." And Abu Sufyan asks twice more and doesn't get an answer. Then he asks, "Is the son of Abu Quhafa (i.e., Abu Bakr) alive?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Don't answer." Then he asks, "Is the son of al-Khattab (i.e., Umar) alive?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Don't answer."[136]

When Abu Sufyan gets no response, he begins to exalt, "We have killed all of them!!" At this, Umar RA could not contain his anger, he shouted out from afar, "You are lying, O enemy of Allah! For verily, Allah has caused all of them to live! And they will remain to harm you at another day!" Now that Abu Sufyan got this confirmation, he said, "Today in retaliation

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136 Side note: Notice even Abu Sufyan who's a pagan at this time, as early as the Battle of Uhud, he recognizes who is number one and number two after the Prophet ﷺ. How unfortunate are some of the Muslims in our times who disrespect these two sahaba.

for the Day of Badr! And war is in turns (i.e., one day for you, one day for us)!" He is basically saying, "This is our victory and revenge for Badr!" Then he says, "You shall find amongst the dead mutilation — I did not command them to do this, but I am not angry with it either!" So Umar RA responded back, "They are not the same! Our dead are in Jannah! Your dead are in Jahannam!" And Abu Sufyan shouted out, "U'lu Hubal (Hubal, be honored)!" (Hubal is the main idol in front of the Ka'bah.) Here the Prophet ﷺ said, "Answer him back." The sahaba asked, "How do we respond?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Say to him: 'Allah SWT is mightier and He has more honor!'" Then Abu Sufyan responded, "We have Uzza! You have no Uzza!" (Uzza is another major idol.) The Prophet ﷺ said, "Answer him back." The sahaba asked, "With what?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Say to him: 'Allah will protect us! And you have no Protector!'"

Ibn Qayyim comments on this in his Zad al-Ma'ad[137] that when Abu Sufyan called out, "Is so-and-so alive?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Don't respond to him," but when Abu Sufyan mocked Allah by praising the idols, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Respond!" This shows how the Prophet ﷺ didn't want shirk and kufr to go unchallenged. If they want to mock him and the sahaba, that's one thing, but to insult Allah, that is not tolerable.

Abu Sufyan then made a promise that they would meet one more time, one year from the day (the Day of Uhud) [i.e., in 4 AH], at the Plains of Badr.

[137] Zad al-Ma'ad (زاد المعاد) - Provisions of the Hereafter.

050. The Battle of Uhud Part 5

Safiyyah Finds Out About the Death of Her Brother Hamzah

It's reported that when the Prophet ﷺ saw Safiyyah on the battlefield, he didn't recognize her from afar, so he said to the sahaba, "The lady! The lady!" meaning whoever she is, she should not be here, because she would be traumatized. The one who recognized her was her son, Zubayr ibn al-Awwam. And so Zubayr ran up to her and said, "O mother," but Safiyyah knew what he was going to say, so before he could speak, she pushed him on the chest and said, "I have no need of you now!" Zubayr responded, "But the Prophet ﷺ said you should not go." As soon as she heard this, she instantly stopped. She then handed two clothes she was carrying to Zubayr, and said, "I bought this for my brother Hamzah, so use this to shroud and bury him."[138] Zubayr finds Hamzah to wrap him in the garments. Then Zubayr said right next to Hamzah was an Ansari who did not have a kafan[139]. So he said, "I am embarrassed Hamzah should get two and this Ansari get none; so we drew lots to decide which person gets which, and we gave them as allocated."

Public Welfare vs. Personal Welfare

This incident also shows us that when the maslaha ammah[140] trumps the maslaha khassah[141], we are allowed to take the public interest over the personal interest.

Explanation: Here we have specific property intended for Hamzah, but the situation dictates this personal gift be used other than what the donor initially intended; it is wajib to ensure everyone gets at least one shroud to cover the body — thus maslaha ammah (public welfare) trumps maslaha khassah (personal welfare), i.e., the needs of the ummah overcomes the intents of the donor.

Prohibition of Mutilation

As we said, the Prophet ﷺ surveyed all of the dead and this is when he saw Hamzah RA and cried. Some reports say even the privates were cut off, so you can imagine how disgusting this was to see. The stomach was opened up, and the nose, fingers, etc., all mutilated as a personal vengeance. And at this, the Prophet ﷺ said what we mentioned before, "If Allah ever gives me victory over the Quraysh, I shall mutilate 30 of their bodies because of this one." And at this, Allah revealed, "And if you punish [an enemy, O believers],

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138 Notice how obedient she is to the Prophet ﷺ. Safiyyah and Hamzah RA were full brothers, thus they had a very close bond; she's heard he has been killed and mutilated, so she is very emotional — yet still, she obeyed the Prophet ﷺ.

139 Kafan (كفن) - shroud.

140 Maslaha ammah (مصلحة عامة) - public interest.

141 Maslaha khassah (مصلحة خاصة) - private / personal interest.

punish with an equivalent of that with which you were harmed. But if you are patient — it is better for those who are patient" [Quran, 16:126]. Thus after this, the Prophet ﷺ forbade mutilation. Mutilation therefore is haram in our shariah.

Honoring Martyrs Who Memorized the Quran

The sahaba were commanded to dig graves, and often two, three, or four had to be buried in one grave (since they couldn't afford to dig one grave for each).

And the Prophet ﷺ said, "Let those who know the most Quran be buried first." This is the honor of learning the Quran. Look at the blessings of memorizing the Quran: Living and dead, the one who knows more Quran will be honored. As the Prophet ﷺ said, "Verily, this Book, Allah will raise people through it, and Allah will debase others through it." And it's a part of our shariah that we show glory to Allah by showing honor to the elderly and the sahib al-Quran (the one who memorized the Quran). Indeed, what a traumatic time; people are dead with mutilated bodies, but still there is a special honor given to the sahaba who have memorized the Quran.

Honoring the Martyrs of Uhud

The Prophet ﷺ then gathered all the sahaba together and gave them a speech. Of the things he said: "I guarantee I will testify for every one of them (the martyrs of Uhud) on the Day of Judgment." And in Musnad Imam Ahmad, we learn he actually made a du'a. And there is a big misunderstanding amongst medieval scholars of Islam — some of them said the Prophet ﷺ prayed janazah over the martyrs of Uhud, but this is not true. We know you don't pray janazah for the shaheed. The Prophet ﷺ only made du'a for them. There is a difference between the two. The summary of the du'a: He praised Allah no matter what happens, "Whatever happens happens by the Will of Allah"; he made du'a for the blessings of this world and the security on Yawm al-Qiyamah[142]; he asked Allah that whoever dies amongst them should die in the state of Iman; and then he asked Allah to exact vengeance on those who had done what they had done. He also said many ahadith about martyrdom which are well-known to all of us, e.g., "The shaheed will be resurrected on the Day of Judgment and his wounds will still be as fresh as the day he was killed, and the sight will be the sight of blood but the smell will be the smell of musk." All of this is to raise the morale and spirit of the sahaba, as it is a very traumatic time.

How many Muslims died? We don't have an exact number. Ibn Ishaq says 65 people died; Ibn Hisham adds 5 more to make 70. There is a Quranic evidence to show 70 died. Allah said:

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142 Yawm al-Qiyamah (يوم القيامة) - the Day of Judgment.

أَوَلَمَّا أَصَابَتْكُم مُّصِيبَةٌ قَدْ أَصَبْتُم مِّثْلَيْهَا قُلْتُمْ أَنَّىٰ هَٰذَا ۖ قُلْ هُوَ مِنْ عِندِ أَنفُسِكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

"Why [is it that] when a [single] disaster struck you [on the Day of Uhud], although you had struck [the enemy in the Battle of Badr] with one twice as great, you said, 'From where is this?' Say, 'It is from yourselves.' Indeed, Allah is over all things competent" [Quran, 3:165].

— The reference here is Uhud and Badr. And at Badr, there were 140 mushriks killed, so we deduce from this that around 70 Muslims were killed at Uhud.

Most of them were the Ansar. And it is said that in no battle did the Ansar die as much as they did in the Battle of Uhud.

The Only Prisoner of War of Uhud: Abu Azzah al-Jumahi

Out of 3,000 mushriks, the Muslims caught only one prisoner of war. His name is Abu Azzah al-Jumahi (أبو عزة الجمحي), and he was executed on the battlefield because of what he had done. He participated in the Battle of Badr and was captured as a POW; his ransom was 4,000 dirhams and he begged the Prophet ﷺ to let him go and said, "O Muhammad, I have no sons, only daughters (i.e., if I die nobody is going to take care of my daughters), so I beg you be generous and let me go," so our Prophet ﷺ, being a soft-hearted person, he said, "I will let you go, but let me never see you fighting us [again]," and he sends him back for free; when the Battle of Uhud was going to take place, Abu Sufyan came to Abu Azzah and told him to write a war poetry as he was an influential poet; Abu Azzah said, "I cannot, because I made a promise to Muhammad I won't help you," Abu Sufyan said, "Come on, we are 3,000 strong. We won't lose! If we win, you will join in the spoils, and even if you happen to die, I promise I will take care of your daughters like my own," so Abu Azzah was tempted by the money of the booty if he wins or the money for his daughters, he reneged on his promise, wrote the poetry, and physically fought against the Muslims in the Battle of Uhud. So he was treacherous to his promise, and Allah punished him for it. "Verily, Allah does not like those who break their promises" [see Quran, 8:58].

Khiyana[143] is never ever allowed in our religion. We cannot ever do it. You cannot respond —even to treachery— with treachery. You can get vengeance like for like for other things, but not this. This is why Abu Azzah, when he did treachery, Allah made it so that out of the 3,000 people, he was found by the Muslims.

Prohibition of Wailing

The Prophet ﷺ returned to Madinah, and the women and children lined up waiting to see who was coming back and who was not. And then, the wailing began — and wailing had not yet been forbidden in the shariah. What is wailing? Ladies cry out at the top of their lungs, say particular phrases and walwalat. They say things such as, "How are we going to

143 Khiyana (خيانة) - breaking a promise.

live?!" "Who is going to take care of us?!" "I cannot live without him!" and sometimes they will beat themselves, tear their clothes, etc. It's an extreme form of crying. The reports say wailing began all over Madinah — and the Prophet ﷺ, when he got home said, "Where are the women of Hamzah to wail for him?" When this spread, the women of the Ansar gathered together, came outside the house of the Prophet ﷺ, and they began wailing for Hamzah. Subhan'Allah, all he had to do was utter a word and the sahaba complied instantly. The Prophet ﷺ came outside his house and praised them, but then he made a general decree that from now on wailing is haram — and therefore, wailing became haram in the aftermath of the Battle of Uhud.

Naming Your Children

It's also reported in the Mustadrak of al-Hakim that shortly after, an Ansari lady gave birth. And the husband came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked, "What should I name this child?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Name him the most beloved name to me that is Hamzah." From this, we can see the pain he was in.

Later on, the Prophet ﷺ said the most beloved names to Allah are:

1. Abdullah (عبد الله); and
2. Abd al-Rahman (عبد الرحمن) [also commonly transliterated as Abdul Rahman, Abdur Rahman, or Abdurrahman].

But note there is nothing wrong, in fact, it is good, to name your children after pious people.

Families of the Shuhada (Martyrs)

It's also narrated that the Prophet ﷺ personally visited many families to break the news of the dead to them. We can assume he chose those who probably didn't have extended families, those who needed the most consolation. Of those is Hammanah bint Jahsh (حمنة بنت جحش) who married Mus'ab ibn Umayr RA (the first one to make Hijrah). The Prophet ﷺ visited Hammanah, and this shows the status of Mus'ab.[144] The Prophet ﷺ said, "Ihtasibi (احتسبي)," which means, "Expect your reward from Allah," but it's also a phrase that hints, "I have bad news," "This won't be easy," and "Be patient." So she said, "What? Who?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Your brother," (since her brother also died). She said, "Inna liLlahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un. May Allah accept his shahada, may Allah forgive him," etc., and she grieved for him. Then the Prophet ﷺ said again, "Ihtasibi." She said, "Who?!" He said, "Mus'ab ibn Umayr." At this, she let out a loud shriek and began wailing much more (this was before wailing was made haram). Later on, the Prophet ﷺ commented, "Verily, the husband has a maqam (special status) in the eyes of the wife" [Ibn Majah]. Subhan'Allah, it's

144 Note the two main Muhajirs that died in Uhud were Mus'ab and Hamzah; most were Ansar.

very true that no doubt a woman grows up in her family's household and has a very special attachment to her parents and siblings, but the love that Allah places for the husband is something even more special.

We also have the famous story of the anonymous lady who has lost her father, husband, and brother. She is first told of the death of her father, but she asks, "How is the Prophet ﷺ?" i.e., "Is the Prophet ﷺ alive?" They say, "He is fine." Then she was told of the death of her husband, but she still asked, "How is the Prophet ﷺ?" and same with the news of the death of her brother, she said, "Until I see the Prophet ﷺ!" And she was amongst the crowd waiting for the Prophet ﷺ to return, and finally when she saw with her own eyes that he is indeed safe and sound, she uttered that famous phrase, "Every musibah[145] after you is trivial," i.e., "As long as the Prophet ﷺ is alive, other calamities, I can bear."

The Expedition of Hamra al-Asad: Making Sure the Quraysh Don't Launch Another Attack

We learn that the Quraysh, even though at the end they knew the Prophet ﷺ was alive, still decided to regroup and return to Makkah. However, on the way back, they began debating: "What should be done?" "Shall we go back to Madinah and finish them off?" "Or should we just go back to Makkah?" etc. During this time the Prophet ﷺ is worried this is exactly what they are going to be doing, so as soon as he got back to Madinah, he organized a contingent, "We need another contingent to ensure they will not return. Who will volunteer?" And he said, "Only those who participated are allowed to volunteer [i.e., I don't want the 300 munafiqun]," and therefore 70 of the sahaba volunteered, at the head of them was Ali ibn Abi Talib. This was on the Sunday, the 16th of Shawwal, one day after Uhud. And he told Ali to camp at Hamra al-Asad (حمراء الأسد), and therefore, this expedition is called the Expedition of Hamra al-Asad (غزوة حمراء الأسد - Ghazwa Hamra al-Asad). And he said to Ali RA, "See in the distance what they are riding. If they are riding horses, they will come back to Madinah; but if they are riding their camels, they will go back to Makkah." And the sahaba found that the Quraysh were riding their camels back to Makkah.

The next day, the Prophet ﷺ joined the 70 sahaba. And Allah praises these 70 in the Quran in Surah Ali-Imran, "Those who responded to Allah and His Messenger after they were wounded, those of them who did good and were mindful [of Allah] will have a great reward" [Quran, 3:172].[146] Aisha RA recited this verse to her nephew Urwah ibn al-Zubayr (عروة بن الزبير) and said, "O my nephew, both of your fathers responded." Aisha RA is referring to Zubayr ibn al-Awwam (Urwah's father) and Abu Bakr (Urwah's grandfather).[147]

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145 Musibah (مصيبة) - calamity.

146 Remember, most of Surah Ali-Imran came down for Uhud.

147 Tangent: Who is Urwah's mother? Asma bint Abu Bakr. The number one rawi (راوي - hadith narrator) from the chain of Aisha is Urwah. Why? Because he is her blood nephew. He is the only man who could talk to Aisha directly without the extra hijab. Also, note that Urwah is not a sahabi — he was born way after Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr.

The Prophet ﷺ camped at Hamra al-Asad for three days to make sure the Quraysh did not come back. And we learn from a number of reports —most of them from the Maghazi (المغازي) of al-Waqidi— that actually, the Quraysh were one hair's breadth away from returning. They were just about to come back. But from al-Waqidi, we learn why they didn't:

Many of the Quraysh began lamenting the fact that they didn't do what they hoped to do, i.e., to kill the Prophet ﷺ. The main person was Ikrimah ibn Abi Jahal; he said, "We need to go back and get rid of this menace forever!" But Safwan ibn Umayyah, one of the noblemen, was against the idea. He said, "O my people, do not do this! For verily, they will be fuming in anger and you don't know maybe their groups of the Khazraj and Aws who didn't participate will now participate!" (The Quraysh didn't know about the munafiqs, nor the political situation in Madinah.) Ikrimah continued to persist, "Neither have we killed Muhammad nor have we earned the admiration of our young ladies (i.e., we haven't done something worthy of genuine honor)!" They were all about to be convinced until Allah sent a tactic against them in the form of a person by the name of Ma'bad al-Khuza'i (معبد الخزاعي). (Note: Ma'bad was not yet a Muslim[148], but even though he wasn't upon Islam, his heart was sympathetic to the plight of the Muslims — especially given the treachery and the vulgarity that was shown by the Quraysh that goes against even jahili Arab values.)

Ma'bad happened to be in the area, so he visited the Prophet ﷺ in Madinah[149] to give special condolences to him. Ma'bad said, "We have heard what happened to you and your Companions. Know that I am not pleased by this. I would rather the other group was inflicted with the loss and defeat." And he (Ma'bad) leaves Madinah. And on his way back home, he meets Abu Sufyan who recognizes him as being one of the noblemen of Khuza'a. And Abu Sufyan is happy because now they will find out about the state of Madinah. He asked, "O Ma'bad, tell me. How did you leave Muhammad and his Companions?" Ma'bad is sympathetic to the Muslims, so he said, "Oh! You don't want to see them now! They are fuming with anger! And all those who didn't fight are going to fight now!"—Allah made him repeat exactly what Safwan had said without him even knowing he was repeating him. It's amazing. Exactly what Safwan made them scared about, Ma'bad pictured it as described, that, "They are lighting the fire of war, beating the drums of vengeance; and they have promised themselves they will not enjoy peace until they exact vengeance at what you have done to them." And so Abu Sufyan asked, "What do you advise?" Ma'bad said, "I advise you to flee as fast as your horses will take you." When they saw someone as noble as Ma'bad looked so terrified, this sealed the decision of the Quraysh. The Prophet ﷺ had no idea this happened of course. Ma'bad did this on his own accord.

And so that was the last of that. After three days, the Muslims returned back to Madinah.

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148 Most likely he did convert later.
149 Before the Prophet ﷺ left for Hamra al-Asad.

Was the Battle of Uhud a Win or a Loss for the Muslims?

Is Uhud a genuine loss or not? It's common to say it was a loss —indeed in terms of how many people died, the Muslims certainly lost; the Quraysh lost around 22 whereas the Muslims at least 70— however, there are many other ways to look at victory and loss:

1. The goal of the Muslims was to defend Madinah. Were they victorious in this? Yes. The goal of the Quraysh was to obliterate the Muslims, but they failed in all departments. They thought they would surprise the Muslims, but they failed.[150] So in terms of goals, the Muslims were victorious.

2. Who remained on the battlefield and who left? In fact, it was the Muslims who remained on the battlefield and it was the Quraysh who had to go back.

3. The prisoners of war: The Muslims had one but the Quraysh had zero.

4. The mushrikun did not pursue the Muslims, rather the Muslims pursued them the next day. This shows us the Muslims had the upper hand post-battle.

5. The Muslims remained for three days at Hamra al-Asad whereas the Quraysh traveled back.

6. The issue of the trade route was still the same for the Quraysh. The whole point of trying to go to Syria had still not been resolved.

7. Ibn al-Qayyim mentions in Zad al-Ma'ad: From the very testimony of the Quraysh which Ikrimah said, "We haven't done anything worthy of honor yet," we can see that the Quraysh themselves don't consider the Battle of Uhud a victory.

This clearly demonstrates therefore that the Battle of Uhud for the Muslims no doubt was not a pure victory, but it was not a loss either. The Muslims did not achieve the kind of victory they were expecting, but the Quraysh most certainly did not even gain a fraction of what they wanted.

Lessons From the Battle of Uhud

Lessons and wisdoms we can derive:

1. The first wisdom is tamyiz[151] — Allah SWT wanted to separate the filthy from the pure. Let us compare the Battle of Uhud with the Battle of Badr. Allah says in the Quran

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150 Side note: It is narrated that Abu Sufyan began suspecting there might be a spy. And indeed there was: al-Abbas.

151 Tamyiz (تمييز) - separation.

regarding Badr in Surah al-Anfal, "So Allah can separate the filthy from the pure" [Quran, 8:37]. Who is the filthy? The mushriks. And who is the pure? The Muslims. In Surah Ali-Imran, Allah mentions something very similar regarding Uhud: "Allah will not allow the believers to remain as they are until He separates for them the khabith (filthy) from the tayyib (pure)" [Quran, 3:179]. So Uhud has the same wisdom as Badr, but the people that are khabith are different. The khabith in Badr are the mushrikin and the khabith in Uhud are the munafiqin. Thus we learn immediately from the Quran that one of the biggest benefits of Uhud is so that Muslims truly understand the real nature of nifaq[152]. Before this, there was always a notion that, "They can't be that bad." So the Muslims needed to see the true colors of the hypocrites and how evil they are. Indeed when push came to shove, they turned their backs and went back home. Allah says in al-Anfal with regards to Badr, "It was Allah's Will to establish the Truth by His Words and uproot the disbelievers" [Quran, 8:7]. In contrast, with regards to Uhud, Allah says in Ali-Imran, "When it was said to them, 'Come fight in the cause of Allah or [at least] defend yourselves,' they replied, 'If we had known there was fighting, we would have definitely gone with you'" [Quran, 3:167]. This is what Abdullah ibn Ubayy said.

2. We learn that through unity and sincerity, Allah will help you; through disunity and disobeying Allah and His Messenger, Allah SWT will take that help away. In regards to Badr, Allah says in al-Anfal, "Allah showed them in your dream as few in number. Had He shown them to you as many, you [believers] would have certainly faltered and disputed in the matter. But Allah spared you [from that]" [Quran, 8:43]. How about Uhud? The exact opposite: "You faltered and you disputed about the command and disobeyed after Allah had brought victory within your reach. Some of you were after worldly gain while others desired a heavenly reward. He denied you victory over them as a test, yet He has pardoned you. And Allah is Gracious to the believers." [Quran, 3:152].[153] In Surah Muhammad, Allah SWT said, "If you stand up for Allah, He will help you and make your steps firm" [Quran, 47:7]. Also, contrast what the sahaba said at Badr versus what the munafiqun did at Uhud. What did Sa'd ibn Mu'adh RA say at Badr? "By Allah, O Messenger of Allah! Even if you charge into the ocean, we are going to go right behind you!" Contrast to Uhud when Abdullah ibn Ubayy said, "Why should we listen to him when he didn't listen to us?" and 300 broke away. Additionally, even though at Badr the sahaba were unarmed and defenseless, they were willing to fight; but at Uhud even though they were fully armed, they were swayed by the booty that they saw. Therefore we clearly see what happens when one is sincere to Allah and obeys Allah, versus when one disobeys Allah and His Messenger and is not sincere to Allah and His Messenger.

3. We learn that Allah SWT chooses / knows who He will guide and who He will not. He SWT said, "You [O Prophet] have no say in the matter. It is up to Allah to turn to them in mercy or punish them" [Quran, 3:128]. And amazingly, pretty much every senior leader of the Quraysh in the Battle of Uhud is eventually guided to Islam: Abu Sufyan, Ikrimah, Khalid ibn al-Walid, Safwan ibn Umayyah, et al. The very person who launched the counter-offensive

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152 Nifaq (نفاق) - hypocrisy.

153 Tangent: It's narrated that the rebels who challenged Uthman ibn Affan as a khalifa [30+ AH], they said to him, "Weren't you among those who fled at Uhud?" Uthman said, "Yes; but did you not read the Quran?" — and then he recited this verse [3:152], and said, "Allah has pardoned us."

(Khalid ibn al-Walid) will become the Sword of Allah. Compare this to Badr: All the filthy leaders not worthy of Iman died.

4. We learn that victory is not granted nor is it guaranteed just because you are a good Muslim. Victory has to be struggled for. No exception. No one's rank is raised in this world or the Next, except through testing, patience, pain, and suffering. Even the Prophet ﷺ had to be wounded to demonstrate to us that every single human, no matter how perfect they might be, still has to go through trials and tribulations.

5. We learn that our Prophet ﷺ was a normal human being — he bleeds like we bleed.[154]

6. The primary benefit we learn from the Incident of Uhud is that: The two causes of humiliation and defeat were (i) isyan[155], and (ii) hubb al-dunya[156]. Sincerity to Allah and unity were displayed at Badr, thus Allah gave the Muslims honor. Whereas in Uhud, they disobeyed Allah and His Messenger, and they preferred this dunya over the Next, and this was the cause of their defeat: Allah says very clearly, "You faltered and you disputed about the command and disobeyed after Allah had brought victory within your reach. Some of you were after worldly gain while others desired a heavenly reward. He denied you victory over them as a test" [Quran, 3:152]. In Sahih Bukhari, Uqba ibn Amir (عقبة بن عامر) RA says that 8 years after the Battle of Uhud (the year the Prophet ﷺ was going to pass away), the Prophet ﷺ made a special du'a for the dead of Uhud as if he was bidding them farewell (i.e., it was a very emotional du'a), and then he stood on the minbar[157] and said, "I will be the one who will be waiting for you at the Fountain. I will testify in front of Allah SWT regarding you. Meet me at the Fountain" — and then he said, "I am not worried that you will fall into shirk; I am worried that after I die, this dunya will open up for you, and you will compete with one another to try to get the most out of it." Subhan'Allah. Uhud. Dunya. Competition. In the very last sermon that he gave, he was still thinking about the shuhada of Uhud and the lesson of Uhud, which is "loving the dunya too much." And this is exactly what is happening in our time as well: Hubb al-dunya. People love the dunya too much.

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154 To this day, there are some groups of Muslims who think the Prophet ﷺ was a superhuman. They say he ﷺ didn't cast a shadow, etc.

155 Isyan (عصيان) - disobedience, i.e., to disobey Allah and His Messenger.

156 Hubb al-dunya (حب الدنيا) - love of dunya, i.e., to turn to this world above the akhira.

157 Note: This was when the Prophet ﷺ was sick — the last week of his life.