

Battle of Badr – 2 A.H.

This battle was the most decisive battle in the annals of Islam because this battle was the forerunner to the honour and splendour of Islam and it marked the beginning of the fall and humiliation of disbelief.

Through the divine mercy of Allah Ta'ala, without any form of external and material resources, the Deen of Islam was fortified from the unseen whilst a powerful blow was dealt to the skull of disbelief and polytheism. Perhaps no other battle can be equated with the battle of Badr. This is why Allah Ta'ala refers to that day as the day of Furqaan – the differentiating factor between truth and falsehood. In fact it was also the month of Furqaan. It was the month of Ramadhaan in which, by revealing the Qur-aan, Allah Ta'ala exposed the distinction between truth and falsehood, between guidance and deviation.

Preamble to the Battle of Badr

During the early stages of the month of Ramadhaan, Rasulullah ﷺ learnt that Abu Sufyaan was returning to Makkah with a trade caravan fully laden with commercial merchandise and other goods.

Rasulullah ﷺ gathered the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and addressed them: “This is a fully laden trade caravan of the Quraysh. Proceed towards this caravan. It would not surprise me if Allah Ta'ala decides to award this caravan to you as ‘the spoils of war’.”

Since they entertained not a hint of engaging in hostilities, they had set out without any military preparations. Abu Sufyaan, who was also anxious of such an interception, continued soliciting every traveller on his journey for some news about Rasulullah ﷺ as he got closer to Hijaz. On one of his enquiries, a traveller enlightened him about Rasulullah ﷺ instructing his companions to pursue his trade caravan. Without further ado, Abu Sufyaan paid Damdam Ghifaari a sum of money and sent him off to the Quraysh of Makkah with the message: “As quick as you can, protect your caravan and salvage your capital because Muhammad and his companions have already departed to intercept this caravan.”

This is the very same caravan against which Rasulullah ﷺ set out with two hundred Muhaajireen in the expedition of ‘Ushayrah. Now the caravan was returning from Syria. Since Rasulullah ﷺ merely intended to intercept the caravan, in haste very few people were able to accompany him on this journey. Since this journey was not undertaken with the intention of fighting and Jihaad, those who failed to participate were neither rebuked nor criticised.

Departure

On the twelfth of Ramadhaan, Rasulullah ﷺ set out from Madinah Munawwarah. Three hundred and thirteen Mujaahideen accompanied him on this lofty expedition. They were so ill equipped for this expedition that the entire group had just two horses and seventy camels. One horse belonged to Hadhrat Zubair bin ‘Awwaam رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and the other to Hadhrat Miqdaad رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Each camel was allocated to a group of two or three people. Hadhrat ‘Abdullah bin Mas’ood رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates: “In the expedition of Badr, just one camel was allocated to a group of three people, which they would take turns in riding. Abu Lubaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ were partnered with Rasulullah ﷺ. When it was Rasulullah’s ﷺ turn to walk, Abu Lubaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ would plead: “O Rasulullah ﷺ! You continue riding, we will walk on your behalf.” To this Rasulullah ﷺ would reply: “You are neither stronger than I am nor am I more independent of the divine reward of walking than you are.”

When they reached Bir Abi ‘Inabah (approximately a mile out of Madinah), Rasulallah ﷺ assembled all of them for a visual inspection. Youngsters, who were eager to participate in this expedition, were sent back home from this point. When he reached a place called Rawhaa, he appointed Abu Lubaabah bin ‘Abdul-Munzir as his deputy in Madinah and sent him on his way.

There were three battle flags in this army. One was held by Hadhrat Ali ﷺ, the second one was held by Mus‘ab bin ‘Umair ﷺ and the third by an Ansaari Sahaabi ﷺ.

As they drew closer to a place called Safraa, Rasulallah ﷺ despatched Basbas bin ‘Amr Juhani ﷺ and ‘Adi bin Abi Zaghbaa Juhani ﷺ as forward scouts to spy on Abu Sufyaan’s trade caravan.

In the meantime, Damdam Ghifaari landed in Makkah with Abu Sufyaan’s message warning the people of Makkah that their caravan was under imminent threat of attack. “Hurry”, he urged the people of Makkah, “run and save your property.”

The moment this news reached the people of Makkah, the entire city was thrown into a state of riotous uproar because not a single man, woman and child remained in Makkah who did not inject capital into this trade caravan. Threatened by the loss of their capital, the citizens of Makkah were gripped by a state of frantic enthusiasm. A thousand fully equipped men were rapidly deployed and they subsequently set out to engage this threat. Abu Jahal was the commander of this force.

Fully laden with appliances of fun and amusement and accompanied by singing women, drums, tambourines and other musical instruments, the Quraysh puffed up with arrogance, emerged from Makkah with all their splendour and glory, as Allah Ta’ala depicts:

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بَطْرًا وَرِقَاءَ النَّاسِ

“Do not resemble those who emerged from their homes conceitedly and flaunting (their splendour) before people.” [Surah Anfaal verse 47]

Almost all the chieftains of the Quraysh participated in this campaign. Only Abu Lahab, for some reason, was unable to join the expedition. He sent Abu Jahal's brother, ‘Aas bin Hishaam in his place instead.

‘Aas bin Hishaam was in debt to Abu Lahab to the sum of four thousand dirhams. Due to his poverty-stricken circumstances, he was unable to repay this debt. Under pressure of this debt, he agreed to go to battle on behalf of Abu Lahab.

Mashwarah with the Sahaabah ﷺ and their Staunchly Devoted Discourses

As Rasulallah ﷺ left Rawhaa and reached Safraa, Basbas ﷺ and ‘Adi ﷺ turned up with news that the Quraysh were on their way. Rasulallah ﷺ assembled all the Muhaajireen and Ansaar for a consultation. Rasulallah ﷺ alerted them about the departure of the well-equipped army of the Quraysh. The moment Abu Bakr ﷺ heard this, he swiftly got to his feet and gracefully expressed his devoted allegiance to Rasulallah ﷺ. He enthusiastically subscribed to the hints of Rasulallah ﷺ with all his heart and soul and pushed himself to comply with the wishes of Rasulallah ﷺ. Thereafter, Umar ﷺ stood up and he too brilliantly expressed his enthusiasm to sacrifice his life for this cause.

Selfless sermon of Miqdaad bin Aswad ﷺ

Thereafter, Miqdaad bin Aswad ﷺ got to his feet and submitted:

امض لما امرك الله (تعالى) فنحن معك والله لا نقول كما قالت بنو اسرائيل لموسى اذهب

انت و ربك فقاتلا انا ههنا قاعدون ولكن اذهب انت و ربك فقاتلا انا معكما مقاتلون

“O Rasulullah ﷺ! Go ahead and accomplish what you have been divinely instructed to do. We are with you all the way. By Allah! We will never be like the Jews who told Musa ﷺ: ‘You and your Lord go to engage the enemy whilst we take a seat here.’ (We on the contrary pledge to you): ‘You and your lord go and engage the enemy and we will fight side by side with you.’”

The narrator of this Hadith, Hadhrat ‘Abdullah bin Mas’ood رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ relates: “(Upon this pledge) I noticed Rasulullah’s ﷺ blessed countenance glowing in delight.”

Rasulullah ﷺ made a special dua for the welfare of Hadhrat Miqdaad رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.

Abu Ayyub Ansaari رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates: “We were in Madinah when Rasulullah ﷺ notified us about the trade caravan of Abu Sufyaan and company, saying: ‘If you advance towards this caravan, it would not be surprising if Allah Ta’ala awards you with the spoils of war.’ To this we commented: ‘Very well,’ and we set out. One or two days into our journey, Rasulullah ﷺ informed us about the departure of the Quraysh from Makkah. He also petitioned us to prepare ourselves for imminent battle. Some of us were a bit hesitant (because they did not leave home with the intention of engaging in hostilities). At that moment, Hadhrat Miqdaad رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ got to his feet and conveyed his selfless commitment to Rasulullah ﷺ. If only all of us could express the same spirit of selflessness like Miqdaad رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.”

On this occasion the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ vowed:

لا نقول كما قالت بنو اسرائيل ولكن انطلقا انت و ربك فقاتلا انا معكما مقاتلون

“We will not say what the Jews said but go, you and your Lord and we will fight alongside you.”

In spite of these adequate assurances, Rasulullah ﷺ once again, for a third time, asked the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ:

اشيروا عَلَيَّ ايها الناس

“O people! What is your opinion? Give me your Mashwarah.”

The leader of the Ansaar S‘ad bin Mu‘aaz رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ promptly understood what Rasulullah ﷺ, the most eloquent of the Arabs and non-Arabs, was trying to say. He instantly submitted: “O Rasulullah ﷺ! Perhaps your speech is directed to the Ansaar?” Rasulullah ﷺ replied in the affirmative.

The Valiant Speech of S‘ad bin Mu‘aaz رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ

Upon this, Hadhrat S‘ad bin Mu‘aaz رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ passionately declared:

يا رسول الله قد امانا بك وصدقناك وشهدنا ان ما جئت به هو الحق واعطيناك على ذلك عهدا ومواثيق على السمع والطاعة ولعلك يا رسول الله خرجت لامر فاحدث الله غيره فامض لما شئت وصل حبال من شئت واقطع حبال من شئت وسالم من شئت و عاد من

شئت وخذ من اموالنا ما شئت واعطنا ما شئت وما أخذت منا كان احب الينا مما تركت
وما امرت به من امرنا فامرنا تبع لامرك لئن سرت حتى تاتي برك الغماد لنسيرن معك
فوالذي بعثك بالحق لو استعرضت بنا هذا البحر لخضناه وما تخلف منا رجل واحد وما
نكره ان نلقي عدونا انا لصبر عندالحرب صدق عنداللقاء ولعل الله يريك منا ما تقر به

عينك فسرنا على بركة الله

“O Rasulallah ﷺ! We affirmed our faith in you, we believe in you, we bear testimony to the fact that whatever you came with is the truth and upon this we had wholeheartedly pledged our absolute submission. O Rasulallah ﷺ! Perhaps you emerged from Madinah with a specific purpose but Allah has brought about something else. So proceed as you deem fit. You may maintain ties with whom you wish and you may sever ties with whomsoever you wish. You may enter into a peace agreement with whom you wish and you may engage in hostilities with whom you wish. We are with you all the way. You may take from our wealth whatever you please and you may bestow upon us whatever you please. Whatever you take from our wealth would be dearer to us than what you would leave behind, and whatever you charge us to do we will unquestionably abide by it. If you bid us to set off for Barkul-Ghamaad with you, we will eagerly accompany you. I swear by the Being Who has deputed you with the truth, if you direct us to leap into the ocean we would eagerly hurl ourselves into it and not one of us would be left behind. We do not detest confronting the enemy. Yes, during the heat of battle we are tolerant and we are committed to meet the enemy head-on. We hope Allah Ta’ala will exhibit something of ours that would bring about the coolness of your eyes. So, in the name of Allah, take us along with you.”

Listening to these selfless words of sacrifice of these Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ brought great joy to Rasulallah ﷺ. He proclaimed: “Come on. Let us depart in the name of Allah and many glad tidings for you. Allah Ta’ala had promised me that He would grant me victory over one of the two parties; either the party of Abu Jahal or the party of Abu Sufyaan.”

He revealed further: “I was also shown the location of where the disbelievers will fall in defeat. I was shown that this is where so and so will fall slain and this is where so and so will perish.”

Allah Ta’ala says:

وَأَذِيعُكُمْ اللَّهُ إِحْدَى الطَّائِفَتَيْنِ أَتَاهَا لَكُمْ وَتَوَدُّونَ أَنْ غَيْرَ ذَاتِ الشُّوْكَةِ تَكُونُ لَكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُحِقَّ الْحَقَّ
بِكَلِمَتِهِ وَيَقْطَعَ دَابِرَ الْكَافِرِينَ ۗ

“And remember when Allah promised you one of the two parties (of the enemies i.e. either the caravan or the enemy) that it would be yours and you wished that the unarmed party (the caravan) be yours but Allah willed to justify the truth by His words and to cut off the roots of the disbelievers.” [Surah Anfaal verse 7]

Dream of Aatikah bint ‘Abdul Muttalib

Whilst Rasulallah ﷺ was busy informing the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ about the revelation regarding the locations of the disbelievers dropping in defeat, there in Makkah, even before Damdam Ghifaari could reach Makkah (forewarning the disbelievers about the impending doom), Rasulallah’s ﷺ aunty (father’s sister) Aatikah bint ‘Abdul-Muttalib saw a dream.

She dreamt that a person mounted on a camel appeared, made his camel sit in the valley of Bathaa and yelled:

انفروا يا آل غدر لمصارعكم في ثلاث

“O people of deception! Head off towards the locations in which you are doomed to fall in defeat within three days.”

A number of people then gathered around this man. Holding onto his camel, this man then proceeded to the Masjidul-Haraam where he delivered the same proclamation. He then ascended the mountain of Abu Qubais from where he hurled a gigantic boulder. As the boulder landed at the foot of the mountain it shattered into smithereens and not a single house in Makkah was spared but a smidgen of this rock filtered through it.

Aatikah narrated this dream to her brother ‘Abbaas adding: “Brother! By Allah, I have seen such a dream that I dread a horrendous calamity is to befall your people. Listen, I beg of you not to narrate this dream to anyone else.”

When ‘Abbaas left home, he narrated this dream to his friend Waleed bin ‘Utbah and stressed upon him not to relate this dream to anyone else but Waleed related this dream word for word to his father ‘Utbah. In this manner, news of this dream spread to the whole city of Makkah.

A few days later, when ‘Abbaas entered the Masjidul-Haraam, he caught sight of Abu Jahal sitting in the company of a group of people. The moment Abu Jahal noticed ‘Abbaas entering the Masjid, he sneered: “Abul-Fadl (‘Abbaas)! All along your men were claiming prophethood. Now even your womenfolk are laying claim to it!”

“What do you mean?” asked ‘Abbaas. Upon this Abu Jahal referred to the dream of Aatikah. Whilst these people were engaged in this conversation, Damdam Ghifaari reached Makkah with Abu Sufyaan’s message of the impending catastrophe. This messenger entered Makkah with torn clothing, with the nose of his camel severed and bellowing at the top of his voice: “O people of Quraysh! Salvage your caravan and with due haste, assist the caravan of Abu Sufyaan.”

The moment the Quraysh heard this message they rallied their equipment and men and headed out of Makkah. They reached Badr where they witnessed a true interpretation of this dream.

Dream of Juhaim bin Salat

In all their ceremonial glory, the Quraysh headed out of Makkah serenading to the accompaniment of drums and musical instruments. When they reached a place called Juhfah, Juhaim bin Salat saw a dream. He saw a person riding a horse and this person also had a camel with him. This rider drew closer and pronounced: “‘Utbah bin Rab’iah is slain, Shaybah bin Rabi’ah is slain, Abul-Hakam (Abu Jahal) is slain, Umayyah bin Khalaf is slain, so and so and so and so are also slain.” This man then struck a spear into the camel and set it loose within the army. Not a single tent in the army remained but blotches of blood spattered onto it.

When Abu Jahal heard of this dream, he was fuming with rage. He sarcastically exclaimed: “This is the second prophet born in the Banu Muttalib. Tomorrow when we confront the enemy then only will it be known which of us has been slain.”

When Basbas رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and ‘Adi رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, the two Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمُ whom Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ sent to spy on Abu Sufyaan’s caravan, reached Badr, they seated their camels at the foot of a hillock close to a water spring. In the interim, they spied two women in the vicinity chatting with one another. When one of them demanded payment of a debt from the other, the debtor replied: “Tomorrow or the day after that, when the trade caravan returns from Syria, I will toil and labour and pay you whatever is due to you.”

Mujaddaa bin ‘Amr Juhani, who was also near this water spring, was busy listening to this intriguing exchange between these two women. When the indebted woman pledged to repay her creditor what was due to her after doing some manual labour for the trade caravan that was expected

to arrive the next or the following day, Mujadda commented: “It appears that she is speaking the truth.” Saying this, he promptly withdrew himself from the area and sneaked away.

The instant Basbas رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and ‘Adi رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ gathered this intelligence, they mounted their camels and rapidly made tracks back to Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. They appeared before him and apprised him of this incident.

After the departure of Basbas رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and ‘Adi رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, Abu Sufyaan, who was attempting to get some intelligence about the whereabouts and movements of Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ also happened to come to this spring. He asked Mujadda bin ‘Amr: “Did you notice anyone coming or going in this area?” He replied: “Not really. I only saw two men mounted on camels passing this way. They halted at the foot of that hillock, rested and watered their camels and after filling their water skins they moved off. Abu Sufyaan immediately went to the spot where he noticed some animal droppings. He picked up one of the droppings and split it open. Upon closer scrutiny, he noticed a seed embedded within it and he exclaimed: “By Allah! This is a Yasrib (Madinah) date-seed.”

At once, he returned from this area and slightly altering the direction of the caravan, he proceeded towards the coastal road via which he safely reached Makkah undetected by the Muslims.

As he reached Makkah, he despatched a message to the Quraysh advising them: “You primarily set out with the express purpose of safeguarding your property, wealth and the lives of the travellers. Allah has saved your property and lives. So why do you not return to Makkah?”

To this Abu Jahal responded: “Until and unless we do not proceed to Badr to eat, drink and celebrate for three days, we will never return to Makkah.”

Akhnas bin Shariq, the chieftain of the Banu Zuhrah tribe counselled his people: “O people of Banu Zuhrah! You originally set out to protect your merchandise. So Allah Ta’ala has safeguarded your goods from ruin. Now there is no need to fight. There is no need for us to hurl ourselves into pointless jeopardy as this man (Abu Jahal) is beckoning us to do. So you might as well return home.”

On the counsel of their leader Akhnas bin Shariq, the entire Banu Zuhrah tribe returned home. Not one of them participated in the battle of Badr. A number of others also cautioned their people against fighting the enemy. They argued that since the caravan had returned safe and sound, there was absolutely no need to go into battle. However, Abu Jahal was adamant. He failed to listen to reason and he determinedly set out for Badr.

By the time Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ landed at Badr, the disbelievers had already seized control of the water springs. They also promptly took control of the better areas of Badr. On the contrary, the Muslims neither had any water nor were any suitable areas available to them. Their area was made up of rough terrain where it was a dreadful challenge to walk. Their feet would sink into the ground.

Allah Ta’ala sent down rain. The soft yielding sand turned to hard ground and the Muslims dug up a few small ponds for Ghusal and Wudhu purposes. In Surah Anfaal, Allah Ta’ala describes this boon in the following manner:

وَيُنزِلُ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ بِهِ وَيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمْ رِجْزَ الشَّيْطَانِ وَلِيَرْبِطَ عَلَى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتَ بِهِ

الْأَقْدَامَ ط

“And He caused water to descend upon you from the sky so that He may purify you with it and remove from you the filth (evil insinuations) of shaytaan and to strengthen your hearts with it and make your feet firm thereby.” [Surah Anfaal verse 11]

Although this water rained down to meet the needs of the Muslims, out of His sheer mercy, Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, who was a personification of compassion, keenly allowed his enemies also to drink from the water.

The same evening, Rasulallah ﷺ despatched Hadhrat Ali رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, Zubair bin 'Awwaam رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, S'ad bin Abi Waqqaas رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and a few other Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ to gather some intelligence about the Quraysh.

Coincidentally they chanced upon two slaves whom they apprehended and returned to base camp with. Rasulallah ﷺ was engaged in Salaah whilst they started interrogating them. The slaves whined: "We are merely water bearers of the Quraysh. We simply came out to fetch some water for them."

However, their statement failed to convince the Muslims and they started beating them in the hope that, under pressure of further aggression, they will reveal the whereabouts or conditions of Abu Sufyaan. They changed their statements forthwith and whimpered: "Yes, yes! We are members of Abu Sufyaan's caravan." The moment they said this, they left them alone.

When Rasulallah ﷺ completed his Salaah, he remarked: "When they were speaking the truth, you beat them and when they were telling lies, you left them alone. By Allah! These slaves belong to the Quraysh (and not to Abu Sufyaan's people)."

Rasulallah ﷺ then went about questioning the slaves personally. He asked: "Where are the Quraysh?" "By Allah", they replied: "they are at the foot of Muqanqas mountain." "What is the total number of people?" asked Rasulallah ﷺ.

They replied: "They are quite a few in number."

"How many in number are they?" he asked. The slaves replied that they had no idea what their numbers were. Rasulallah ﷺ asked: "Okay, tell me, how many camels do they slaughter daily?" They replied: "One day nine and one day ten." To this Rasulallah ﷺ pointed out: "They are between nine hundred to a thousand."

After this, Rasulallah ﷺ asked them which of the Quraysh chieftains were in attendance. They replied: "Utbah bin Rabi'ah, Shaybah bin Rabi'ah, Abul-Bakhtari bin Hishaam, Hakeem bin Hizaam, Nawfal bin Khuwaylid, Haaris bin 'Aamir, T'amiyyah bin 'Adi, Nadr bin Haaris, Zam'ah bin Aswad, Abu Jahal bin Hishaam, Umayyah bin Khalaf, Nubayh bin Hajaaj, Munabbih bin Hajaaj, Suhail bin 'Amr and 'Amr bin 'Abdud."

When Rasulallah ﷺ heard of this 'impressive lineup' of the chieftains, he turned to his companions and commented: "Today Makkah has consigned all her treasured souls to you."

In short, this was how Rasulallah ﷺ went about gaining information from these slaves.

Preparation for War

The next morning Rasulallah ﷺ made preparation for the actual battle. As per the advice of S'ad bin Mu'aaz رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, a simple thatched hut was erected at the peak of the hillock for Rasulallah ﷺ.

S'ad bin Mu'aaz رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ submitted: "O Rasulallah ﷺ! May we erect a thatched structure for you, in which you will be able to sit? We will have your mounts ready for you whilst we go and engage the enemy. If Allah Ta'ala honours us and bestows us with victory over the enemy, this is precisely what we aspire for. On the contrary, Allah forbid, something else happens, you will still be able to mount your conveyances and take off to join our other compatriots who have stayed behind (in Madinah). O Rasulallah ﷺ! We are not dearer to you than they are. If those people had only known that you are going to engage the enemy in battle, they would never have remained behind. Perhaps Allah Ta'ala would shield you through them, and they would have engaged in Jihaad with absolute devotion and goodwill." Rasulallah ﷺ commended S'ad bin Mu'aaz رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ on his devoted enthusiasm and made dua for him. Thereafter a simple thatched hut was erected for Rasulallah ﷺ in which he took shelter. This structure was erected right on the summit of a hillock that afforded a bird's-eye-view of the entire battle ground.

Hadhrat Anas رضي الله عنه narrates from Hadhrat ‘Umar رضي الله عنه that on the eve of the impending battle of Badr, Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم took us with him to the battlefield so that we may see for ourselves the locations of those who would be slain in battle. As we reached the battleground, he continued pointing out to us with his blessed hand: “This is the spot so and so would collapse and this is the spot so and so would fall, in the morning Insha Allah.” Gesturing with his hand, he proceeded to reveal the exact location of where each person would be slain.”

Hadhrat Anas رضي الله عنه says: “I swear by the Being Who has sent Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم with the truth, not one of them had fallen beyond a hair’s breadth than the location that was pointed out by Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم.”

Thereafter, Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم, in the company of his most dear companion of the cave, the Siddeeq of the Muhaajireen, Hadhrat Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه, entered his hut and offered two Rakaat of Salaah. Meanwhile, the Siddeeq of the Ansaar, S‘ad bin Mu‘aaz رضي الله عنه stood guard at the door, wielding a sword.

Hadhrat Ali رضي الله عنه narrates: “On the night preceding the battle of Badr, there was not a single one of us who did not fall off to sleep except Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم. He passed the entire night in Salaah and earnest dua right until the morning.”

At the onset of Fajr, Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم announced: “As-Salaah! O people! The time for Salaah has arrived.” The instant the people heard this announcement, they rapidly gathered for Salaah. Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم led them in Salaah whilst standing at the base of a tree. After Salaah, Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم spurred the Sahaabah رضي الله عنهم to engage the enemy with fearless valour and daring zeal.

Thereafter Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم straightened the files of the Mujaahideen for battle whilst the ranks of the disbelievers had already been imposingly arrayed for conflict. It was a Friday the seventeenth of the holy month of Ramadhan. On one side of the battlefield was the assembly of Haq whilst the other end of the battlefield was blustering with the forces of Baatil (falsehood). Both parties advanced towards the arena of Furqaan.

When Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم laid eyes on the well-equipped Qurayshi army pressing ahead with all their swaggering glory, he submitted before Allah Ta‘ala:

اللهم هذه قريش قد اقبلت بخيلائها وفخرها تحادك وتكذب رسولاك اللهم فنصرك الذي

وعدتني اللهم احنهم الغداة

“O Allah! Here are the Quraysh marching ahead in all their arrogance and pomp. They have come to challenge You and falsify Your Messenger. O Allah! I beg of You Your victory and assistance over them as promised by You. O Allah! Annihilate them (these forces of Baatil).”

Thereafter, Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم arranged the ranks of the Muslims in proper fighting formation. He held a small spear in his hand, which he used to straighten the ranks of the fighters.

Once Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم formed the lines of battle similar to that of the ranks of the Malaikah (angels), he went into his hut. Only Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه went along with him into his hut whilst S‘ad bin Mu‘aaz رضي الله عنه stood sentry at the door wielding a sword in his hand.

Inception of the war

From the disbelievers, ‘Utbah, his brother Shaybah bin Rabi‘ah and his son Waleed were the first combatants to swagger out of the ranks of the disbelievers and emerging onto the battlefield they mockingly growled for their challengers to approach the field.

From the files of the Muslims, three contenders stepped forward; ‘Awf bin Haaris, Mu‘awwiz bin Haaris and ‘Abdullah bin Rawaahah.

“Who are you?” bellowed ‘Utbah.

They countered:

“We are a group of the Ansaar.”

To this ‘Utbah replied: “We have no need to engage you. We wish to fight with our own people.” Saying this, he shrieked:

“O Muhammad! Why don’t you send us evenly-matched contenders from our own tribe!”

Rasulullah ﷺ then bade the Ansaar to withdraw to their ranks and petitioned Hadhrat Ali رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, Hadhrat Hamzah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and Hadhrat ‘Ubaidah bin Haaris رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. He called each of them by name and exhorted them to stride out and fight.

As per Rasulallah’s ﷺ directive, the three of them emerged from their ranks. Since their faces were concealed by protective masks, ‘Utbah asked them to identify themselves. “I am ‘Ubaidah,” said Hadhrat ‘Ubaidah bin Haaris رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. Hadhrat Hamzah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ rejoined: “I am Hamzah.” Hadhrat Ali رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ replied: “I am ‘Ali.”

‘Utbah reacted by exclaiming:

“Yes! Now these are equally-matched noble combatants.”

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

“Rise O children of Haashim, with the truth with which Allah Ta’ala has sent your Prophet. Stand against this falsehood with which they have appeared in order to extinguish the light of Allah.”

Slaying of ‘Utbah, Shaybah and Waleed

Now the contestants confronted one another. ‘Ubaidah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ clashed with ‘Utbah. Hamzah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ challenged Shaybah and Ali رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was pitted against Waleed.

Hadhrt Ali رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and Hadhrt Hamzah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ laid their foes to rest with a single stroke of the sword. Meanwhile ‘Ubaidah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ who was clanging swords with ‘Utbah was seriously injured. Both combatants suffered injuries but continued fighting. Eventually, ‘Utbah dealt such a severe blow with his sword that ‘Ubaidah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ sustained a serious injury to his leg. In the interim, Hadhrt Hamzah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and Hadhrt Ali رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, dismissing their rivals, swiftly went to the aid of ‘Ubaidah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. They then promptly despatched ‘Utbah to his death. Thereafter, they carried ‘Ubaidah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and brought him to Rasulallah ﷺ. He was bleeding profusely from his shin area. ‘Ubaidah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ expectantly asked: “O Rasulallah ﷺ! Am I a martyr?” When Rasulallah ﷺ replied in the affirmative, ‘Ubaidah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said: “If only Abu Taalib was alive he would have utterly been convinced that indisputably, we are more deserving of his poem than he ever was:

وَنُسَلِّمُ حَتَّى نَصْرَعَ حَوْلَهُ وَنَذْهَلُ عَنْ أَبْنَائِنَا وَالْحَالَئِلِ

“We will surrender Muhammad to the enemy only when all of us around him are slain and when we are absolutely oblivious of even our own wives and children.”

‘Ubaidah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ then recited the following stanzas:

فَإِنْ يَقْطَعُوا رَجُلِي فَاتِيَّ مُسَلِّمًا أَرْجِي بِهِ عَيْشًا مِنَ اللَّهِ عَالِيًا

“If they (disbelievers) severed my leg, this is not a problem. In compensation of this injury, I anticipate a far more superior life from Allah Ta’ala. (In other words, although the severance of my leg foretells the end to my transitory life in this world, I hope that in compensation I would get a far better life of eternal bliss.)

وَأَلْبَسَنِي الرَّحْمَنُ مِنْ فَضْلِ مَنِّهِ لِبَاسًا مِنَ الْإِسْلَامِ غَطَّى الْمَسَاوِيَا

And why not? Why should not I anticipate this? After all, Allah Ta’ala, out of His infinite compassion has adorned me with the religion of Islam that has concealed all my defects.”

Note: Initially, ‘Utbah and Shaybah were awfully reluctant to go into battle. Firstly, because of Aatikah’s ominous dream and this was closely followed by the foreboding dream of Juham bin Salat, these people were agonizingly terrified. Secondly, on their departure from Makkah, ‘Addaas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ (the slave of ‘Utbah and Shaybah who had renounced Christianity and embraced Islam at the hands of Rasulallah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ on his return from Taaif) grasped his master’s feet and pleaded:

بابي وامي انتما والله انه رسول الله وما تساقان الا الى مصارعكما

“May my parents be sacrificed for both of you! Please! He is the Rasool of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. You are not being driven except to your deaths.”

Saying this, he burst out crying.

When ‘Aas, the son of Shaybah noticed ‘Addaas weeping, he asked what made him so upset. ‘Addaas replied: “I am weeping for both my masters who are about to go into battle with the Prophet of Allah.” ‘Aas enquired: “Really? Is he really the Prophet of Allah?” Trembling in fear, ‘Addaas replied:

اي والله انه رسول الله الى الناس كافة

“Off course! He is unquestionably the Prophet of Allah to all peoples of the world.”

These solemn pleadings of ‘Addaas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and his startling revelation of their impending doom had a profound effect on both ‘Utbah and Shaybah. This is why both ‘Utbah and Shaybah didn’t want to take part in this battle. Only because of Abu Jahal’s taunts did they march along. Time and time again, Abu Jahal would scornfully taunt ‘Utbah and Shaybah with insulting comments of cowardice and unmanliness. So, in order to put an end to such vulgar criticism and to inhibit allegations of cowardice and effeminacy thrown at them, these two strode out into battle.

Abu Usaid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates: “On the day of the battle of Badr, Rasulallah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: ‘Reserve your arrows for the moment the disbelieving mob rushes upon you. Release your arrows only when they are close to you.’”

Rasulullah’s صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ Dua for Victory

Following the deaths of ‘Utbah and Shaybah, the rage of the battle kicked off in earnest. Rasulallah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ emerged from his hut and strategically laid out the ranks of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and then, in the company of Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, he returned to his hut. Wielding a sword, Hadhrat S’ad bin Mu’aaz رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ stood sentry at the door.

When Rasulallah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ laid eyes on his companions’ negligible numbers and their minimal equipment confronted by the vast and well-equipped legion of the disbelievers, he got to his feet and performed two Rakaats of Salaah. He then absorbed himself in dua. He implored Allah Ta’ala thus:

اللهم اني انشدك عهدك ووعدك اللهم ان شئت لم تعبد

“O Allah! I plead with you to honour Your word (of victory over the enemy). O Allah! If You wish, You may not be worshipped (after this day).”

Rasulullah ﷺ was overcome with an extraordinary condition of humility and submissiveness. Sometimes he would humbly bow down in Sajdah before Allah Ta’ala and at times he would piteously spread his hands out in supplication and beg Allah Ta’ala for His assistance and victory. He was so immersed in this state of humility that his upper garment repeatedly fell off his shoulders.

Hadhrat Ali رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates: “On the day of Badr, I engaged the enemy for a little while and then I hurried to check on Rasulallah ﷺ. I found him prostrating before Allah Ta’ala piteously begging Allah Ta’ala repeatedly with the words ‘Yaa Hayyu Yaa Qayyum!’ I returned and busied myself with fighting. I went to check on him a second and then a third time but still found him prostrate. However, when I went to check on him the fourth time, by then Allah Ta’ala had favoured him with victory.”

Ibn ‘Abbaas رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ says: “Hadhrat ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ related to me that on the day of Badr, when Rasulallah ﷺ noticed the thousand-strong force of the disbelievers of Makkah on one hand, confronted by his three hundred odd ill-equipped companions on the other hand, he went into his hut, faced the Qiblah and spread his hands out in supplication:

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْجِزْ لِي مَا وَعَدْتَنِي اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ تَهْلِكْ هَذِهِ الْعَصَابَةُ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْإِسْلَامِ لَا تَعْبُدُ فِي الْأَرْضِ

“O Allah! Fulfil Your promise You had made to me. O Allah! If this small group of Muslims is eliminated, You will never again be worshipped on the earth.”

In other words, Rasulallah ﷺ was the seal of all the Prophets and his Ummah is the final Ummah. So if, Allah forbid, Rasulallah ﷺ and his Ummah is wholly eliminated, not a single person will remain on this earth to worship Allah Ta’ala. Furthermore, we learn from this that his dua of victory and divine assistance was not only to safeguard the lives of the Muslims but also to consistently maintain the Ibaadat of Allah Ta’ala on the earth. It should not be such that the earth is entirely devoid of the Ibaadat of Allah Ta’ala.

For an incredibly long period of time, Rasulallah ﷺ continued making this dua about Allah Ta’ala not being worshipped if this group of Muslims was destroyed. He was so engrossed with this dua that his sheet fell off his blessed shoulders. Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ picked the sheet up and replaced it on his blessed shoulders. Coming up from his rear, Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ clasped Rasulallah’s ﷺ hand and implored:

حَسْبُكَ فَقَدْ أَلْحَحْتَ عَلَى رَبِّكَ

“O Rasulallah ﷺ! This is enough for you. You have persistently implored your Lord.”

Upon this, Allah Ta’ala revealed the following verse:

إِذْ تَسْتَعِيثُونَ رَبَّكُمْ فَاسْتَجَابَ لَكُمْ أَنِّي مُمِدُّكُمْ بِأَلْفٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُرَدِّفِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ بِهِ قُلُوبُكُمْ ۚ وَمَا النَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾

“Remember the time when you sought the aid of your Lord and He responded to you (saying): ‘I will assist you with a thousand angels one behind the other in succession. Allah made this (divine assistance) only as glad tidings and so that your hearts are comforted therewith. There is no

assistance (of victory) except from Allah. Verily Allah is the All-mighty, the All-wise.” [Surah Anfaal verses 9-10]

At the revelation of this verse, Rasulallah ﷺ emerged from his shelter with the following verse on his tongue:

سَيَهْرَمُ الْجَمْعُ وَيُوَلُّونَ الدُّبُرَ ﴿٤٥﴾

“Their multitudes will be routed and they will turn their backs and flee.” [Surah Qamar verse 45]

Whilst Rasulallah ﷺ was beseeching Allah Ta’ala in dua, he dozed off. When he awakened, he addressed Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ saying:

ابشر يا ابا بكر اتاك نصر الله هذا جبريل اخذ بعنان فرسه يقوده على ثناياه الغبار

“O Abu Bakr! Glad tidings to you. Allah’s aid has come. Here is Jibraa’eel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ clutching the reins of his horse and driving it along. It has dust on its teeth.”

Descent of the angels to assist the Muslims

Allah Ta’ala sent down a thousand angels, then three thousand and finally five thousand angels to lend a hand to the Muslims.

Note: Since Iblees (shaytaan) and his cohorts were all set and primed to assist the disbelievers in this battle, Allah Ta’ala sent down a group of angels under the command of Jibraa’eel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, Mikaa’eel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and Israafeel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to assist the Muslims. Since shaytaan appeared in the disguise of Suraaqah bin Maalik and his cohorts appeared in the form of the menfolk of the Banu Mudlij, the angels also appeared in the form of normal men as mentioned.

The angels who descended from the skies came to assist. They were such creations who ostensibly were human, but in reality were divine angels.

Abu Usaid Sa’idi رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ (who was also a Badri Sahaabi) relates: “On the day of the battle of Badr, the angels descended from the skies wearing yellow turbans. The tail ends of their turbans were suspended between their shoulders. Zubair رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was himself wearing a yellow turban on the day of this battle.”

According to some narrations, the colour of the turbans of the angels was black and according to other narrations, they had white turbans on their heads.

Rab’i bin Anas رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates: “On the day of Badr, those slain by humans could easily be distinguished from those killed by the angels. Those slain by the angels had dark fire-scars on their necks and fingertips.”

A Muslim would run behind a scuttling disbeliever when suddenly he heard the crack of a whip accompanied by a voice: ‘Hayzum! Go on! Charge!’ The moment he located the disbeliever, he found him lying flat on the ground. His face, especially his nose, was bruised green with the lash of a whip.

When this Ansaari reported this incident to Rasulallah ﷺ, he commented: “You have spoken the truth. This is divine aid from the third heaven.”

On the day of Badr, Rasulallah ﷺ remarked:

هذا جبرئيل آخذ براس فرسه عليه اداة الحرب

“Here, this is Jibraa’eel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ clutching the reins of his horse, adorned with the weapons of war.”

Suhail bin Hunaif رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates: “On the day of Badr, we observed that when any of us would merely gesture towards the Mushrik and even before our swords made contact with him, his head would be chopped off and fall to the ground.”

Sahl bin S‘ad رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates: “Describing the battle of Badr, Abu Usaid رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ addressed me saying: ‘O nephew! If you and I were on the battlefield of Badr, I would have pointed out to you the valley from which the angels appeared to offer us divine assistance. There is not an iota of doubt in this.’”

The attendance of the angels mounted on horses is also established from authentic Ahaadith. According to some narrations, they were mounted on piebald (spotted) horses.

Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ emerged from his shelter and after motivating them to engage the enemy, declared: “I swear by the Being in whose absolute control lies Muhammad’s life, today whosoever puts up a bold front and engages the enemy with forbearance and sincerity and he is subsequently martyred, Allah Ta’ala will certainly admit him into Jannah.”

Abu Jahal’s dua and his Incitement of War

Subsequent to the slaying of ‘Utbah, Shaybah and Waleed, Abu Jahal encouraged his troops to fight valiantly and in a frantic bid to spur them on, he addressed them saying:

“O people! Do not be flustered over the deaths of ‘Utbah, Shaybah and Waleed. They fell victim to the sword because of their imprudent haste. I swear by Laat and ‘Uzza! We will never return until we truss them up in ropes.”

He then beseeched Allah Ta’ala with the following dua:

“O Allah! He who is guilty amongst us of severing family ties and of perpetrating strange actions, O Allah, destroy him, and amongst us, he who is most dear and beloved to You, O Allah, grant him victory.”

Upon this Allah Ta’ala revealed the following Qur-aanic verse:

إِنْ تَسْتَفْتِحُوا فَقَدْ جَاءَ كُفْرُ الْفِتْحِ ۚ وَإِنْ تَنْتَهُوا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ ۚ وَإِنْ تَعُوذُوا نَعُدْ ۚ وَلَنْ تُغْنِي عَنْكُمْ فِئَتِكُمْ شَيْئًا
وَلَوْ كَثُرَتْ ۗ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

“(O disbelievers!) You were seeking victory. So, here victory has come unto you. And if you desist (from evil) it will be better for you. And if you return (to fight) so shall We return and your forces will be of no avail to you however numerous they may be. Verily Allah is with the believers.”

[Surah Anfaal verse 19]

As Abu Jahal made his dua, Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ also raised his hands in supplication before Allah Ta’ala and implored: “O Allah! If (Allah forbid) this group of people is annihilated, you will never be worshipped again on the face of this earth.”

Here on this side Abu Jahal was engaged in dua whilst on the other end Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was also engaged in imploring Allah Ta’ala. After this, both parties started fighting in earnest. Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ emerged from his shelter and exhorting the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ to fight, he promised: “Whoever is slain in the path of Allah, Allah will admit him into Jannah.”

On the direction of Jibraa’eel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then picked up a fistful of sand and hurled it towards the faces of the Mushrikeen. He then bade the Muslims to launch an attack against them. Not a single Mushrik remained but a particle of this sand penetrated his eyes, nose and mouth.

Only Allah Ta’ala knows what impact this sand had on the disbelievers. The instant Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ hurled this fistful of sand at them they took flight. In this regard, Allah Ta’ala revealed:

وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَىٰ ۚ

“And you did not throw (the sand) when you threw it but Allah threw it.” [Surah Anfaal verse 17]

In other words, although Rasulallah ﷺ himself tossed a fistful of sand particles that got into the eyes and noses of the thousand-strong army, this was no achievement on his part as such but this was a divine deed, a manifestation of the omnipotence of Allah Ta’ala.

As the fighting intensified, Rasulallah ﷺ uttered thrice: “Shaa-hatil-Wujooh (may the faces (of the enemy) become disfigured).” He then picked up a handful of pebbles and hurled them towards the Quraysh and charged the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ to attack.

Barely a moment passed when the metaphorical dust of humiliation settled on the faces of the enemies of Allah Ta’ala, then they started rubbing their eyes whilst the Muslims opportunely unleashed a quick attack against the confused enemy. Allah Ta’ala cast a peculiar attribute within this handful of sand that left each and every one of them humbled and bewildered. In downright perplexity, they had no idea where to turn.

Rasulallah ﷺ barely hurled the fistful of sand when the entire army of disbelievers was left bewildered and thrown into turmoil. ‘Eminent’ heroes and ‘noble warriors’ were either getting captured or slain at the hands of the Muslims.

Slaying of Abu Jahal – Pharaoh of this Ummah

Hadhrat ‘Abdur-Rahmaan bin ‘Awf رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates: “I was standing poised to attack on the battle lines of Badr when suddenly I caught sight of two youngsters to my left and right. I was a bit concerned (perhaps the enemy, spotting me between two youngsters, would try to rush me). I was reflecting over this when one of them came up to me and murmured: ‘Uncle! Would you point out Abu Jahal to me?’

“What would you want to do with Abu Jahal?” I asked in amazement.

This young man replied: “I have made a vow unto Allah Ta’ala that when I lay eyes on Abu Jahal I will surely kill him or I will be killed in the process. I heard that he is guilty of verbally abusing Rasulallah ﷺ. By Allah in Whose absolute control lies my life! The moment I lay eyes on Abu Jahal, I will ensure that my shadow does not break away from his shadow until one of us is killed.’

The moment I heard his zealous words, my expectation of being flanked by two men instead of two youngsters, rapidly dwindled away.

When I pointed out Abu Jahal to this young man, he dashed over to him and like a swooping raptor, he pounced on him and finished him off.”

These two youngsters were Mu’aaz and Mu’awwiz, the sons of ‘Afraa.

Mu’aaz bin ‘Amr bin Jamooh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ relates: “I was maintaining a vigilant lookout for Abu Jahal. The moment I was presented with an opportunity, I pounced on him with my sword and dealt him such a powerful blow that left his leg severed.”

The narrator continues: “In defence of his father, Abu Jahal’s son ‘Ikramah (who embraced Islam at the conquest of Makkah), struck Mu’aaz bin ‘Amr bin Jamooh with such force that left his arm hanging by its tendons. However, this handicap did not deter Mu’aaz and he continued fighting valiantly right until the evening. When fighting with this dangling hand became excruciatingly painful, he placed the hand beneath his foot and ripped off the hand completely. He lived until the Caliphate of Hadhrat ‘Usmaan Ghani رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.”

After finishing off with Abu Jahal, Mu’awwiz bin ‘Afraa, however, continued fighting until he drank from the nectar of martyrdom. We belong to Allah and to Him shall we return.

Searching for Abu Jahal's Body after the Victory

Although Abu Jahal suffered extensive injuries, he still had some life left in him. Hadhrat Anas رضي الله عنه relates: “On the day of Badr, Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم bade the Sahaabah رضي الله عنهم: ‘Is there anyone who would provide some information about Abu Jahal?’ ‘Abdullah bin Mas’ood رضي الله عنه went in search of him amongst the corpses. When he located him, he realised that he still had a bit of life in him.”

Ibn Mas’ood رضي الله عنه planted his foot on Abu Jahal’s neck and remarked:

اخزاك الله يا عدو الله

“O enemy of Allah! Allah has humiliated and disgraced you.”

Saying this, he severed his head from his body. He then carried the head and deposited it before Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم saying:

هذا راس عدو الله ابي جهل

“This is the head of Abu Jahal, the enemy of Allah.”

Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم asked, “Really? By Allah, besides Whom there is no other deity! Is this really the head of Abu Jahal?”

He replied: “By Allah besides whom there is no other deity! This is really the head of Abu Jahal.”

Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم expressed his profound gratitude before Allah Ta’ala thrice and remarked:

الحمد لله الذي اعز الاسلام واهله

“All praise is due to Allah Who has honoured Islam and its people.”

Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم even prostrated in gratitude before Allah Ta’ala.

According to another narration, Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم performed two Rakaat Salaah as an expression of his gratitude before Allah Ta’ala.

‘Abdullah bin Mas’ood رضي الله عنه relates: “I climbed onto Abu Jahal’s chest and sat astride him. Abu Jahal opened his eyes and said: “O sheep herder! You have parked yourself astride a very honourable place.”

I replied:

الحمد لله الذي مكنتني من ذلك

“All praise is due to Allah Who has awarded me the ability to do so.”

He then asked me: “Who triumphed and who lost?” I replied: “Allah and His Rasool صلى الله عليه وسلم have prevailed.”

“What is your intention now?” he asked. I replied: “I wish to behead you.” He said: “Very well. Here, this is my sword. It is incredibly sharp. It would assist you in fulfilling your objective rather swiftly. But listen, be sure to sever my head closer to my shoulders as this would instil more awe within my onlookers. Furthermore, when you return to Muhammad, give him this message that I cherish more animosity and disgust for him today than I did yesterday.”

Ibn Mas’ood رضي الله عنه further relates: “I then lopped his head off and brought it to Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم saying: “O Rasulallah! This is the head of the enemy of Allah, Abu Jahal.” I then relayed his message to Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم. Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم glorified Allah and pronounced: “This

man was the Pharaoh to me and my Ummah. His evil by far overshadowed the evil of the Pharaoh of Musa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. At least the Pharaoh of Musa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ attempted to recite the Kalimah at his death but the Pharaoh of this Ummah snapped out words of arrogance and disbelief even at the instant of his death.” Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then awarded Abu Jahal’s sword to ‘Abdullah bin Mas’ood رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.

In other words, just as Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ surpassed all the Ambiyaa عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ in virtue and perfection, similarly, his Ummah’s Pharaoh eclipsed all the other Pharaohs in disbelief and immorality. Even at the time of death his eyes failed to open and the throes of death did not nudge him in the least from his disbelief and arrogance. In fact, his kufr (disbelief) and conceit mushroomed even further at the time of his death. (May Allah Ta’ala protect us from this. Aameen.)

The Prisoners of Badr

Alhamdulillah, after a sweeping defeat of the disbelievers, the battle came to an end. Seventy of the Quraysh were killed and seventy were taken as prisoners. Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ directed that the bodies of the disbelievers be dumped into the well of Badr. However, the corpse of Umayyah bin Khalaf was so badly bloated that when they tried to remove his armour, his body started disintegrating. This is why his remains were put into the ground there and then.

As ‘Utbah bin Rabi’ah’s corpse was being cast into the well, Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ noticed ‘Utbah’s son Abu Huzaifah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, visibly distraught. Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ asked him: “O Abu Huzaifah! Looking at your father in this pitiful condition perhaps causes your heart grave concern?” He replied: “O Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ! By Allah, I am not distressed by this but the only thing that really concerns me is that my father was an intelligent, graceful and forbearing man. That is why I had expected his intellect and perception to guide him towards Islam. However, when I realised that he died with kufr (disbelief), I was awfully disappointed.”

Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then made dua in favour of Abu Huzaifah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.

Disposing of the Corpses in the well of Badr

Anas bin Maalik رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates from Abu Talhah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ that on the day of Badr, Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ instructed that twenty-four bodies of the slain Qurayshi chieftains be disposed off in a dreadfully dirty, filthy and polluted well. All those who were cast into the well were the leaders of the kuffaar. The remaining corpses were dumped elsewhere.

Whenever Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would secure victory over any nation, it was his noble habit to spend an additional three days at that location. As was his noble tradition, on the third day, Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ordered his mount to be saddled and he set out. The Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ followed guessing that Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was perhaps going for some important work. They followed until Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ reached the edge of that well and he called out each occupant by name. He called out: “O ‘Utbah! O Shaybah! O Umayyah! O Abu Jahal! You did not find submission to Allah and His Rasool very appealing. Verily, whatever our Lord has promised us; we found it to be true. Did you also find the promise of your Lord to be true?”

Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then addressed them saying:

“O dwellers of the pit! You were a dreadfully wretched tribe for your Prophet. You falsified me whilst others believed in me. You banished me whilst others offered sanctuary to me. You waged war against me whilst others assisted me. You declared a trustworthy person as dishonest. You pronounced a truthful person to be a liar. May Allah severely punish you.”

Hadhrat ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ exclaimed: “O Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ! You are speaking to lifeless corpses?” Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied: “Yes! I swear by Him in whose absolute control lays my

soul! You are not more perceptive of my words than they are. The only difference is that they are unable to respond.”

Despatching a Messenger to Madinah with News of Victory

Thereafter, to share the glad tidings of victory with the others, Rasulallah ﷺ despatched his messengers to Madinah Munawwarah. He sent ‘Abdullah bin Rawaahah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ towards the upper regions and Zaid bin Haarisah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ towards the lower regions of Madinah.

Usamah bin Zaid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates: “The good news of victory reached us whilst we were engaged in burying Hadhrat Ruqayyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, the daughter of Rasulallah ﷺ and the wife of Hadhrat ‘Usmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Rasulallah ﷺ left Hadhrat ‘Usmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to care for her in Madinah. This is why Hadhrat ‘Usmaan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was unable to participate in the battle of Badr. However, since his absence from the battle was on the instruction of Rasulallah ﷺ, he was considered to have, in principle, attended the battle. I saw Zaid bin Haarisah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ standing on the Musallaa with the people encircling him from all sides. Sharing the glad tidings of victory with the people, I heard him cheerfully saying: “A number of the chieftains have been slain including ‘Utbah bin Rabi’ah, Shaybah bin Rabi’ah, Abu Jahal bin Hishaam, Zam’ah bin Aswad, Abul-Bakhtari bin Hishaam, Umayyah bin Khalaf, Nabihah bin Hajaaj and Munabbihah bin Hajaaj.”

I excitedly enquired: “Father! Is this really true?” He replied: “Yes, by Allah! This is true.”

After despatching Zaid bin Haarisah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and ‘Abdullah bin Rawaahah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to Madinah, Rasulallah ﷺ, in due course, set out for Madinah Munawwarah. The pack of prisoners also tagged along with Rasulallah ﷺ. The spoils of war was consigned to the custody of ‘Abdullah bin K‘ab Ansaari رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

When Rasulallah ﷺ reached a place called Rawhaa, he was met by a few Muslims who congratulated him and the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ on this triumphant campaign. Upon this Salamah bin Salaamah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ remarked: “Why do you congratulate us? We confronted a few old hags resembling trussed-up camels. We slaughtered them and dumped them.” (In other words, we did not accomplish any great feat for which we deserve congratulations.)

On hearing this, Rasulallah ﷺ smiled and said: “These were, after all, the chieftains and leaders of Makkah.”

Distribution of the booty

Following the conquest, Rasulallah ﷺ stayed over in Badr for a further three days. Before setting out for Madinah, he consigned the war booty in the care of Abdullah bin K‘ab Ansaari رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. When he reached a place called Safraa, he went about dividing the booty. Rasulallah ﷺ barely started partitioning the booty when the participants of Badr started squabbling about its distribution. The younger Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ argued that since they had killed the enemy, they deserved the booty more than anyone else. On the contrary, the elder Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, who did not take much part in the actual fighting, maintained that they should also be included in the booty. They said: “We won this battle because of our backup and support. If, Allah forbid, you youngsters suffered defeat, you would have fallen back onto our strength.” Yet again, another group who was guarding Rasulallah ﷺ reckoned that they were the most eligible for this wealth.

Upon this, the following verse was revealed:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَنْفَالِ ۗ قُلِ الْأَنْفَالُ لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ ۗ

“They ask you (O Muhammad!) about the spoils of war. Inform them that the spoils are for Allah and the Rasool.” [Surah Anfaal verse 1]

In other words, the spoils of war belong to Allah and His Rasool ﷺ is His representative. He may dispense it as he deems appropriate. Once Rasulullah ﷺ reached Safraa, he distributed this booty equally amongst the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ.

Furthermore, an additional eight people who, with the consent of Rasulullah ﷺ, did not physically participate in this campaign were also allotted a share from the booty. They are:

1. ‘Usmaan bin Affaan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. Rasulullah ﷺ left him in Madinah to attend to his ill wife Hadhrat Ruqayyah, the daughter of Rasulullah ﷺ.
2. Talhah bin ‘Ubaidullah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.
3. Sa’eed bin Zaid رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. Both these Sahaabis were despatched from Madinah to gather information about Abu Sufyaan’s trade caravan.
4. Abu Lubaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. Rasulullah ﷺ left him in Madinah to attend to the day-to-day administrative affairs.
5. ‘Aasim bin ‘Adi رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. Rasulullah ﷺ left him (as his representative) in Aaliyah (upper regions of Madinah Munawwarah).
6. Haaris bin Haatib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. For some reason Rasulullah ﷺ sent him back to ‘Amr bin ‘Awf.
7. Haaris bin Al-Sammah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. He was sent back because he was injured.
8. Khuwaat bin Jubair رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. He was sent back due to an injury to his calf.

Although these Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ did not actively participate in the battle of Badr, Rasulullah ﷺ allotted them a standard share of the war booty and included them from amongst the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ of Badr.

Nadr bin Haaris was executed by Hadhrat Ali رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ whilst ‘Uqbah bin Abi Mu’it was slain by ‘Aasim bin Saabit رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. With the remaining prisoners in tow, Rasulullah ﷺ then set out to Madinah Munawwarah.

Note: Nadr bin Haaris and ‘Uqbah bin Abi Mu’et were bitter enemies of Rasulullah ﷺ. They were blasphemous and foulmouthed. Either in speech or action, they left no stone unturned in belittling, ridiculing and mocking Rasulullah ﷺ. This is why these two wretched souls were particularly singled out from the other prisoners and condemned to death. This was the same ‘Uqbah bin Abi Mu’et who dumped a bucketful of camel intestines upon the blessed back of Rasulullah ﷺ whilst he was in Sajdah. He also throttled Rasulullah ﷺ. This ill-fated person also spat on the blessed face of Rasulullah ﷺ. In short, a relentless torrent of abuse and ridicule against Rasulullah ﷺ was what sustained him.

Hostile opposition and antagonistic confrontation against a Prophet of Allah Ta’ala is a major sin and an obvious source of depravity. However, verbal abuse against the reputation of a Prophet and mockery and contempt of his honour is a far more serious crime than hostile opposition because this in effect, is tantamount to denigrating the status of prophethood.

Halting at various points along the way, Rasulullah ﷺ eventually reached Madinah Munawwarah with his war captives.

Distribution of the War Captives amongst the Muslims

As Rasulallah ﷺ reached Madinah Munawwarah, he distributed the captives amongst the Muslims accompanied by the admonishment:

استوصوا بالاسارى خيرا

“Treat the captives favourably and kindly.”

As a result of this prophetic caution, the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ who had captives in their care would first feed their captives and then feed themselves if there was anything left over, otherwise they would suffice simply on dates.

Mus‘ab bin ‘Umair’s رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ blood brother Abu Aziz bin ‘Umair was also one of the prisoners of war. Abu Aziz recalls: “The family members of the Ansaari household were such gracious people that whatever little bread they baked morning and evening, they would feed it to me whilst they simply lived on dates. I was certainly embarrassed by this and I would always insist that they eat the bread but they would not yield to my appeals. They would say: ‘Rasulallah ﷺ enjoined us to treat the captives well.’”

Consultation over the Captives of Badr

A few days after reaching Madinah Munawwarah, Rasulallah ﷺ held a meeting with the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ about the captives of Badr. Hadhrat Anas رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates: “Rasulallah ﷺ sought the opinion of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ over the prisoners of Badr. At the outset, he addressed the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ saying:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَمَكَّنْكُمْ مِنْهُمْ

“Surely Allah has awarded you control over them.”

Hadhrat ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ proposed: “O Rasulallah! I think that each one of them should be put to the sword.”

However, the embodiment of mercy and the epitome of compassion, Rasulallah ﷺ declined this proposal and once more he said:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَمَكَّنْكُمْ وَإِنَّمَا هُمْ إِخْوَانُكُمْ بِالْأَمْسِ

“O People! Allah has awarded you control over these people. Yesterday they were your brothers.”

Once again Hadhrat ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ made the same proposal only to be countered by the same prophetic statement: “Allah has awarded you control over these people. Yesterday they were your brothers.”

Hadhrat Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ submitted: “O Rasulallah! My suggestion is that these prisoners be released on payment of a ransom.” Ibn ‘Abbaas رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ relates that Hadhrat ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ proposed: “O Rasulallah! Each of us should slay his close relative. Instruct Ali to kill his brother ‘Aqeel and allow me to strike the neck of so and so relative as these are the leaders of kufr.”

Hadhrat Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ submitted: “O Rasulallah! These people are, after all, members of your own family. I suggest that you release them on payment of ransom. It would not be strange to imagine that perhaps Allah Ta’ala would guide the same people towards Islam and then they would assist us against the disbelievers.” Rasulallah ﷺ eagerly accepted this proposal.

‘Abdullah bin Mas’ood رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates: “On receiving the proposals put forward by Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ remarked: “O ‘Umar! Your nature is similar to that of Hadhrat Nuh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and Hadhrat Musa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام who made dua against their people. And you O Abu Bakr! Your nature is akin to that of Hadhrat Ibraaheem عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and Hadhrat ‘Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام who implored Allah to pardon their people. Hadhrat Nuh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام made the following dua:

وَقَالَ نُوحٌ رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ مِنَ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ دَيّٰرًا ﴿٢٦﴾ اِنَّكَ اِنْ تَذَرَهُمْ يُضِلُّوْا عِبَادَكَ وَلَا يَلِدُوْا اِلَّا فٰجِرًا
كَفّٰرًا ﴿٢٧﴾

“My Lord! Leave not a single person from the disbelievers dwelling on the earth. If You leave them, they will lead Your servants astray and they will not give birth but to immoral disbelievers.” [Surah Nuh verses 26-27]

and Musa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام made the following dua:

رَبَّنَا اطْمِسْ عَلٰٓى اَمْوَالِهِمْ وَاشْدُدْ عَلٰٓى قُلُوْبِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُوْا حَتّٰى يَرَوْا الْعَذَابَ الْاَلِيْمَ ﴿٨٨﴾

“Our Lord! Destroy their wealth and seal their hearts so that they will not believe until they see the painful torment.” [Surah Yunus verse 88]

Ibraaheem عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام made the following dua:

فَمَنْ تَبِعَنِىْ فَاِنَّهٗ مِنِّىْ ؕ وَمَنْ عَصٰنِىْ فَاِنَّكَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿٣٦﴾

“So whomsoever follows me, he is of me and whomsoever disobeys me, You are most forgiving, most merciful.” [Surah Ibraaheem verse 36]

and ‘Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام made the following dua:

اِنْ تُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَاِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ ؕ وَاِنْ تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَاِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ﴿١١٨﴾

“If You punish them, they are Your servants and if You pardon them, You are All-mighty, All-wise (You can pardon any offender You wish and Your pardon is not devoid of wisdom).” [Surah Maa’idah verse 118]

Rasulullah’s صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ nature of ‘embodiment of mercy to mankind’ came to the fore, thus agreeing with Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. He then instructed them to release the captives on payment of ransom.”

Whilst Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was engaged in consulting with the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ, divine revelation charged Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to give the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ the option of execution or ransom. Hadhrat Ali رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates: “Jibraa’eel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام appeared before Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and said: ‘O Rasulullah! Give your companions an option; either they execute their captives or they release them on payment of ransom. However, the proviso for accepting a ransom is that the same number of Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ will be killed the forthcoming year.’ The Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ assented to the second option of accepting a ransom from the disbelievers thus exposing themselves to martyrdom in the forthcoming year.”

Jibraa’eel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام appeared before Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and submitted: “O Rasulullah! Your Lord has given you liberty with the captives of Badr.” When Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ sought the counsel of the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ, they submitted: “O Rasulullah! Today we are willing to set them free in lieu of a ransom so that we may attain a degree of strength against them and in the

forthcoming year, Allah Ta'ala may confer martyrdom upon whomsoever He wishes.” The Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ added:

“Perhaps in the forthcoming year, seventy of us will be admitted into Jannah.”

Divine Admonishment upon the Acceptance of Ransom

Nonetheless, Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ endorsed Hadhrat Abu Bakr's رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ opinion and instructed the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ to accept a ransom and liberate the captives. A number of senior Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ also suggested the ransom route on the thought that these same captives would perhaps embrace Islam, thus boosting the cause of Islam, and the ransom that they would collect now could be utilised for further Jihaad expeditions and other Deeni activities. Amongst those who proposed taking a ransom, the odds are that there were some Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ whose primary objective was the accumulation of worldly wealth. This was spurred by their love for this material world. Although this wealth was from Halaal sources – as part of the war booty – such love attracted severe divine admonishment. The following verse was revealed:

مَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ أَسْرَى حَتَّى يُتَخَذَ فِي الْأَرْضِ طَرْدُكُمْ أَوْ يُرِيدُ عَرَضَ الدُّنْيَا وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ
حَكِيمٌ ﴿٦٧﴾ لَوْلَا كِتَابٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ سَبَقَ لَمَسَّكُمْ فِيمَا أَخَذْتُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٦٨﴾

“It is not (appropriate) for a Prophet that he has captives (and sets them free with ransom) until he causes a massacre in the earth (by killing the enemy). You desire the goods of the world (the ransom) but Allah desires the hereafter. And Allah is all prevailing, all wise. Were it not for a previous ordainment from Allah, you would have been inflicted with a grave punishment due to what you had taken.” [Surah Anfaal verse 67-68]

This reproachful censure is specifically directed to those whose focus was centred on monetary gain and worldly benefit and thus proposed that ransom be taken in lieu of the captives' liberation. This is evident from the verse “you desire the goods of the world”. As for those who proposed the taking of ransom for the benefit of Deen and the hereafter, they are not, in reality, included in this admonishment. Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ applauded the opinion of ransom simply on the grounds of maintaining favourable family ties and on the grounds of compassion. Furthermore, he wished to give the others an opportunity to get some financial gain. This was motivated by his spirit of selfless generosity, which in itself is commendable. Yes, what is deplorable is to have one's personal financial gain in mind. So this verse slams those whose primary objective was the acquisition of worldly gain.

When Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ learnt of this divine admonishment, they burst out crying. Hadhrat 'Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates: “When I enquired as to what makes him weep so much, Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied:

ابكي للذي عرض علي اصحابك من اخذهم الفداء لقد عرض علي عذابهم ادنى من هذه

الشجرة

“I am weeping because of the divine punishment that was presented before me for those of your companions who consented to accept ransom. Their divine punishment was presented before me even closer than this tree in front of us.”

Note: The punishment was not meted out but merely shown to him. The objective was simply to caution them.

Rasulullah ﷺ then declared: “Had the punishment struck, none of us except ‘Umar would have been saved.” Another Hadith says, “except S‘ad bin Mu‘aaz.”

Since S‘ad bin Mu‘aaz رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ also proposed that the captives be killed, he was also absolved with Hadhrat ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. Although ‘Abdullah bin Rawaahah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was also opposed to taking ransom, he proposed that all the captives be thrown into a fire but Shari‘ah disapproves of this as well. This is why his name was not mentioned here.

The reason for this is that the primary aim of this campaign was to establish the truth and obliterate falsehood as Allah Ta‘ala says:

وَيُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُحِقَّ الْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَاتِهِ وَيَقْطَعَ دَابِرَ الْكَافِرِينَ ۗ لِيُحِقَّ الْحَقَّ وَيُبْطِلَ الْبَاطِلَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُجْرِمُونَ ٧٨

“And Allah wishes to establish the truth with His words and to sever the roots of the disbelievers. And that He may render the truth triumphant and frustrate falsehood even though the sinners detest it.” [Surah Anfaal verses 7-8]

The Muslims, particularly in this battle, were divinely commanded to kill the disbelievers.

This is further confirmed in this verse:

فَاضْرِبُوا فَوْقَ الْأَعْنَاقِ وَاضْرِبُوا مِنْهُمْ كُلَّ بَنَانٍ ١٢

“And strike them (the disbelievers) on the necks and smite all the fingertips.” [Surah Anfaal verse 12]

Another verse ordains:

فَإِذَا لَقَيْتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَضَرْبَ الرِّقَابِ ۗ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَثَخْتُمْهُمُ فُشِدُوا الْوَتَاقَ ۗ فَمَا مَتَّابِعُدُوهُمْ وَإِمَّا فَدَاءٌ حَتَّىٰ تَضَعَ الْحَرْبُ أَوْزَارَهَا ۗ

“So when you meet the disbelievers (in Jihaad) smite their necks until when you have shed their blood, then bind them securely (by taking them as prisoners). Thereafter, there is a favour (by setting them free) or there is a ransom until the war divests its burdens (arms)....” [Surah Muhammad verse 4]

Ransom Amount

As per the financial abilities of the captives, the ransom per captive was fixed at anything from one thousand to four thousand dirhams. As for the poor captives who were unable to afford anything, they were set free without the payment of any tangible ransom whatsoever.

The literate amongst these indigent captives were charged to tutor ten children each in reading and writing. Once they taught ten children each, they would be set free. This was their ransom. Hadhrat Zaid bin Saabit رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ learnt to read and write in this very manner.