

# MUHAMMAD (SAS) A CONCISE BIOGRAPHY

## **Preface**

We study history to derive benefit from it, and the life of the Prophet Muhammad (SAS) is the best piece of history from which we can derive the greatest benefit. To derive the benefit in full one has to study it in great details, and this involves the study of the great works of 'Hadith', in which we find recorded, the every-day activities of the Prophet (SAS), his manner of dealing with people, friend and foe, his manner of running the state and the society, the war-fares and the peace agreements, as well as the advice given to individuals by word and by deeds. It is of course a big and time consuming task that can be undertaken by the learned people.

We common people also need some knowledge of the life of the Prophet (SAS), as a model to mold our lives, and to understand the Holy Quran. Many of the verses of the Quran cannot be understood without referring to the time and circumstances under which they were revealed. Moreover, to love the Prophet of Allah (SAS) we have to know about him. This concise biography that I am presenting here is for the common people, even for the children, and gives the reader only glimpses of the major events, and purports to show the way of thinking of the Prophet (SAS) himself, and of the contemporary society.

We find that the better people accepted the truth readily, because they in their conscious or subconscious mind harbored the ability to recognize the difference between truth and falsehood. Some did it quite readily without persuasion (**hesitation**), such as Khadijah(RA), Ali(RA), Zaid (RA), Abu Bakr(RA) and others like them. There were others who needed jolts to arouse their conscience, such as we find in the cases of Umar ibn Al-Khattab(RA) and Hamza ibn Abdul Muttalib (RA).

Amongst them we find people like Mus'ab ibn Umair (RA), a young man who could for the sake of his faith give up a life of ease and luxury and embrace poverty; stalwarts like Bilal (RA), Ammar (RA) and his parents Yasir (RA) and Sumaiyah (RA), who dared to face torment, even to lay down their lives for the truth. Most of the masses however we find, accepted the truth when it became the victorious force.

On the other side of the picture, we see cases like Abu Talib ibn Abdul Muttalib who recognized the truth, yet failed to give up the untrue religion, the legacy of the forefathers. It's a peculiar psychology, a mixture of love for the forefathers and the more dominant factor, the fear of the criticism of the people. Abu Talib loved his nephew the Prophet (SAS) dearly and yet, even in his death bed refused to give up the religion of his forefathers, because he thought people would say he had done it for fear of death.

There is the example of Abu Lahab ibn Abdul Muttalib, who was so enamored of the lifestyle of his forefathers that he would not ever be ready to hear anything against it. "Were all

our forefathers on the wrong? Are they all in hell? Were they all ignorant fools?" These questions of provocation of anger would always dominate his mind. Even pausing for a moment and pondering over the truth, in his opinion would bring disaster on the prevailing lifestyle, the social setup and the economic system. His love for his nephew Muhammad had turned into bitter hatred. He and others like him were ultra conservative, satisfied with the present state of affairs, without any question of right or wrong. They were against any possibility of a change, against any development.

The other staunch enemies of the truth were the people like Abul Hikmah (father of intelligence), who came to be more widely known as Abu Jahl (father of ignorance) of the Makhzum and the other leaders, both of the Arabs and of the Jews. The main cause of their non-acceptance of the truth was tribal rivalry. Abu Jahl might probably have accepted the Prophet (SAS) if he had been from his tribe, the Bani Makhzum, and the Jews too might have accepted him if he was of the Bani Israil.

If we ponder over the failure of acceptance of the truth by those groups of people and all the peoples since then till our time, we find one factor common to all, the lack of real faith in the life of the hereafter, and the overwhelming concern with the life of this world.

It is the faith in the reward of 'Akhirat' that had induced the people of Yathrib to accept Islam and to invite not only the Prophet (SAS) and the Muslim refugees, a huge burden on their economy; but also the inevitability of going into war

against the rest of the world. It is the faith in the eternal life of the hereafter that had increased the fortitude of the Ansars, so as not to be jealous of the lavish gifts that were being given to the newly converted Quraish leaders after Hunayn.

Even today, in this world of the twenty first century, the whole world may come to accept Islam if the people really believe in the eternal life of the hereafter. If they believe in the Judgment of the hereafter and the magnitude of the eternal life there, they can never think of allowing the moral laxities practiced in the different societies. This is why Allah asks for 'Yaquīn', certitude of faith in case of the hereafter (Al-Baqara 2:4). Strange, how can a sane person believe that one can atone for the sins of others! Is the trial of the hereafter a trifling matter? Allah has asserted in the Quran that nobody will bear the burden of the other (Al-An'am 6:164).

Allah has given man intelligence, the ability to think and reason and take decisions, to rule over the world. Can it be without responsibility?

The fact that man's life is dependent on education and not governed by instinct, is it not to make man responsible for what he does? (It is a fact that man's life is mostly dependent on education and not governed by instinct. Does it not make man responsible for what he does? ) We marvel over the superior social life of the bee and the ant, but do we give them credit for it? They can't feel proud, they don't have to answer, because whatever they do, it is done by their instinct. We man take pride in our achievements, don't we

have answerability for our shortcomings? To make man responsible and answerable, Allah has made man's life dependent on education. If we educate ourselves properly and employ our intelligence in the right path and achieve success, we can of course take pride and hope for rewards. If we fail, don't we have to face punishment? So, isn't the Judgment of the hereafter inevitable? Because there is the Judgment of the hereafter, with the reward and the punishment, Allah has not compelled man by instinct to take faith.

For man, to help him employ his intelligence in the right direction, Allah has sent messengers through the ages, from Adam(AS) through Noah (AS), Abraham (AS), Moses (AS), Jesus (AS), to the final messenger Muhammad (SAS). These messengers are not to be worshipped, but to be followed, and the last one to be followed till the last day.

Most of the messengers were for their tribes, such as Moses, Jesus and many of the others for the Bani Israil, but the last one is for all. Allah has called him 'Rahmatul lil A'lamin', mercy for all the worlds. He is the 'Nazir wa Bashir', the warner and the bringer of good tidings. Allah has asserted that his character, for all people to follow, is of the highest caliber, 'Innaka laala Khuluquin Azim' ( Al-Qalam 68:4 ). So, let all man-kind study his life.

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## **Earlier history**

Muhammad (SAS) the last prophet of Allah comes of the offspring of the great prophet Ibrahim (AS), the one who had named his followers in the path of Allah as Muslims (Al-Hajj 22:78). Ibrahim (AS) was seated in Palestine. He had become old and was childless. He longed for a child so dearly. His wife Sarah who thought she was now too old to bear a child, married her maid Hajera to her husband to maintain the progeny.

Soon Hajera became pregnant and gave birth to a son who was called Ismail. Naturally the child and its mother were loved dearly by Ibrahim and were getting all his attention. This made Sarah jealous. She could not bear to have the child and the mother around anymore.

Allah commanded Ibrahim to take them a long distance to the south in the valley of Bacca (Makkah), a desolate land without any water or vegetation. As Ibrahim was leaving them with only a sac-full of dates and a skin-full of water, Hajera asked him if they were being left there by the command of Allah. Ibrahim without even turning back said "Yes". Hajera said "In that case Allah will take care of us".

In a few days all the food and water were exhausted. Hajera's breast milk also dried up and she was afraid the child would die of hunger and thirst. Frantically she went up the nearby mount Safa to look for any caravan approaching, leaving the child on the ground. She came down and again ran up the other hillock Marwa. Again she went up Safa and again up Marwa. She ran thus seven times. Now she heard an angel of Allah calling her to look at where the baby Ismail was lying. And lo! water was gushing out of the spot, where the crying

baby's heel was striking the ground.

Hajera lifted the baby and with her hands formed a barrier of sand to contain the water. While doing this she was saying "Zam zam". Thus the eternal spring of Zamzam came into being, the source of the most abundant and the best of drinking water on earth.

Birds began to fly around the newfound source of water. Seeing the birds a caravan coming from the south came and halted there, it was the tribe of Jurhum and their mother-tongue was Arabic. They sought Hajera's permission to use water and then to settle there, and she was too pleased to have them to stay with her. Ismail grew up with their children and learned Arabic. Here we find a great lesson in the sequence of events. Had Hajera encountered a caravan before the discovery of Zamzam, they would be the saviors of the mother and the child, and Ismail and Hajera would have lost their importance which could not be, because Ismail was to become the prophet of Allah.

Ibrahim would come from time to time to see Hajera and the boy. On one of his visits he saw a dream on three consecutive nights that Allah is commanding him to sacrifice his son, the only son, for Allah. Being a prophet he knew that he must obey Allah's command. He told Ismail of his dream and asked him what he thought of it. Without hesitation the boy of twelve or thirteen replied "O my father, do as you are commanded by Allah, insha-Allah you will find me patient" ( Al-Saffat 37:102). Can we imagine whose sacrifice is the greater, the father's or the son's?

Ibrahim set out with his son to sacrifice him. On the way Satan tried to dissuade the father and the son, and on three spots the two of them stoned the Satan. Ibrahim laid down his son and was about to put the knife at his throat, when he was told that Allah was well pleased with the spirit of the sacrifice of both the father and the son; a lamb was brought by an angel, and Ibrahim sacrificed it in Ismail's

stead.

A few years later when Ismail was a strong and healthy youth, Allah commanded Ibrahim to build the Ka'bah. Ismail brought the stones and Ibrahim laid the foundation and built up the cubical structure of the Ka'bah. When the height of the walls became too much for Ibrahim to continue construction, Allah provided with a big stone for Ibrahim to stand on it and continue his work, it acted as a lift.

While doing the construction work both father and son prayed to Allah to accept it from them and to accept their repentance for their shortcomings and to raise from their progeny a people submissive to Allah and to provide from amongst them a messenger of Allah( Al-Baqarah 2:127-129).

Allah accepted their prayer and from amongst the progeny of Ismail, Allah chose His last prophet, the greatest of the prophets, the seal and crown of the prophets, whom Allah Himself named Muhammad as well as Ahmad.

After the incidence of the sacrifice, Allah granted Sarah, at a very old age, a son, who was named Ishaq. From the progeny of Ishaq came many a prophet of the Bani Israil, the last of whom was Eisa ibn Mariam, Jesus Christ.

## **Makkah**

When baby Ismail and his mother Hajera were to be sent in exile, Allah chose the spot where they were to be left. There was a noble purpose behind the choice with far reaching consequences. The place was Bacca or Makkah the seat of the first prophet of Allah, the father of mankind, Adam (AS).It is reasonable that the last prophet should also come here.

The first reward gained by Ismail and his mother was to win the Zamzam, the eternal fountain. It helped them survive and helped them in getting neighbors. The neighbors were the tribe of Jurhum,

whose language was pure Arabic, the language of Paradise. Ismail married in this tribe and his progeny was Arabic speaking. The last prophet of Allah amongst his progeny would be Arabic speaking and the last Book of Allah for the guidance of mankind would be in the language of Paradise.

Allah was so pleased with Ibrahim, Ismail and Hajera, for their perseverance, that the running of Hajera from Safa to Marwa, the stoning by Ibrahim and Ismail of Satan, and the sacrifice, all were included in the rituals of Hajj. The sacrifice of animal has been ordained for all people of means, annually, even outside of Hajj.

The Ka'bah was built, actually rebuilt on the very spot where Adam had built the first house of Allah (Al-Imran 3:96). It is the Ka'bah that is the most frequented house of Allah, not only amongst the Arabs, but all mankind.

Makkah gained importance because of the Ka'bah, and the custodians of Ka'bah rule Makkah and are held in honor by all Arabs. After Ismail the custodians were from his offspring and later from the Jurhum, their maternal cousins. Later still when the Jurhum people became weak and demoralized, the Khuzaah took over the custody. They were the descendants of Ismail who had migrated south to Yemen and then had returned after several generations.

The Jurhum while ceding defeat had out of spite cast the treasures of the Ka'bah in the well of Zamzam and covered it with sand and rocks, obliterating it altogether, without leaving a trace. The Zamzam was lost.

Long afterwards the Quraysh took over. They too were the direct descendants of Ismail. The transfer was not by any big and prolonged war. Qusayy of Quraysh, a gifted man married the daughter of Hulayl, the chief of Khuzaah. Hulayl preferred Qusayy over his own sons because of his qualities and he became the guardian of Ka'bah. There was dissension after Hulayl's death and some fighting too, but

it was resolved by arbitration.

Qusayy's grandson Hashim became wealthy by undertaking regular commercial trips to Syria and Yemen. He was very hospitable to the pilgrims who came to visit the Ka'bah. After Hashim's death the custody of the Ka'bah and looking after of the pilgrims fell in the hands of his youngest brother Muttalib, as the other two brothers were too preoccupied with commerce.

Muttalib found that neither his own sons nor the sons of his brothers would be any good in managing the affairs of the Ka'bah and the pilgrims. His brother Hashim had however left a son by the name of Shaybah in Yathrib who was a youth of distinct promise, but his mother would not be ready to part with him. Muttalib went to Yathrib and persuaded the mother to part with the boy for the noble purpose of becoming the guardian of the house of Allah. When he was returning to Makkah with the handsome young man, people who saw thought it was a slave he had bought and began calling him Abdul Muttalib. The name got struck and the real name Shaybah was all but forgotten.

Abdul Muttalib continued the institution of 'Rifadah' i.e. the looking after Ka'bah and the needs of the pilgrim, and was always trying to make an ever better job of it. But providing water to the ever increasing number of pilgrims was indeed a formidable task, the few stray wells did not yield much. He would always be thinking about how to solve the water problem. One night in his sleep he heard a command "Abdul Muttalib dig the good one". "What is the good one?" There was no answer. For three consecutive nights he was commanded to dig, but what to dig he did not know. On the fourth night he was told to dig Zamzam and was told of the precise location where to dig.

At dawn Abdul Muttalib took his only son Harith and began digging. Presently people gathered and they were outraged at the digging of a

hole in the sacred ground, as there were idols nearby. They even threatened to prevent him physically, saying that he had only one son to support him. Abdul Muttalib felt distressed and beseeched Allah to give him ten sons and promised if he was given ten sons and they all grew up to maturity, he would sacrifice one for Allah.

However in spite of all opposition and threatening, he went on digging for three days and when he was almost on the verge of despair, he struck something metallic. It was the treasure, two golden deer, swords, shields and other items. He soon found the well of Zamzam. Zamzam was redeemed by the effort of one individual Abdul Muttalib. He became the most respected person in all Arab lands.

Allah gave Abdul Muttalib ten sons and they all grew up. The youngest Abdullah was most dear to his heart. Now Abdul Muttalib decided to keep his pledge with Allah. He called all his sons together and talked to them. They decided to cast lots and went inside Kabah. The name of Abdullah came up. Abdul Muttalib, a man true to his word took Abdullah by one hand and a knife in the other, and sat out for the sacrificial ground. Abdullah's sister raised the first hue and cry and all people of Quraysh joined in. Abdullah was loved by all because of his honesty and good manners and he was the most handsome young man in Makkah. All of them implored that all alternatives must be explored before Abdullah was sacrificed. They agreed to take the opinion of a woman fortune teller of Yathrib. She asked what the blood money was for a man accidentally killed and they said that it was ten camels. She told them to return to Makkah and put ten camels on one side and Abdullah on the other and draw lots, if the camels come up sacrifice them. But if Abdullah's name comes up, add ten more camels and cast lots again, and go on increasing the number of camels, until the draw comes against the camels. Abdullah was saved by sacrificing one hundred camels. When Muhammad the son of Adullah was born, he was called "Ibnul Zabihyin", son of two sacrifices, Ismail the prophet of Allah and

Abdullah ibn Abdul Muttalib.

Now that Abdullah's life was spared, Abdul Muttalib wanted to get his son married. He selected for Abdullah Aminah the daughter of Wahb, the now dead chief of the tribe of Zuhrah, and the formal proposal was put to Wuhayb, the girl's uncle and the present chief. The proposal was accepted. Wuhayb had a daughter by the name of Halah and Abdul Muttalib proposed to marry her himself, and this also was accepted.

A few days later when the two bridegrooms were going to the house of Wuhayb to get married, they were passing in front of the dwellings of Bani Asad, and Qutaylah the sister of Waraqah was standing at her front door, like many other people, to see the bridal procession. Abdullah a youth of twenty five was by far the most handsome young man of the community and Qutaylah had seen him earlier also, but on this day she had seen something more in Abdullah's countenance. Waraqah was a learned Christian and he was aware that it was the time for the new prophet to come. Other learned Christians and Jews also knew it, but they were expecting the prophet to come amongst the Bani Israil, but Waraqah was not so sure, he thought the new prophet might come in the progeny of Ismail. He used to talk about it to his sister Qutaylah. Qutaylah was standing at the door to see the two grooms, the father and the son. But now the unearthly glow in the countenance of Abdullah made her wonder, could he be the new prophet, or is he going to be the father of the prophet? Besides herself she called out to Abdullah. Abdul Muttalib let his son fall back and listen to Qutaylah. Qutaylah blurted out to Abdullah "Will you marry me today right now, I will give you the equal number of camels that were sacrificed for your sake". Abdullah declined and went with his father. A day later Qutaylah happened to see Abdullah again, but she did not see the same radiance in his face anymore.

Abdullah's was a very happy marriage. Sometime after the marriage a trade caravan was going to Syria, and to the anguish of Aminah,

Abdul Muttalib wanted Abdullah to accompany it. Before embarking on the journey Abdullah was given by Aminah the good news of her pregnancy.

The journey to Syria proved to be too much of a strain for Abdullah. He fell ill and on the return journey the caravan had to leave him behind at Yathrib, to be nursed by his cousins of the tribe of Najjar. When the caravan reached Makkah without Abdullah, Abdul Muttalib forthwith sent his eldest son Harith to Yathrib to look after his brother and to bring him back home. Abdullah had died before Harith arrived and had been buried in Yathrib.

The tragic news was almost unbearable for Abdul Muttalib and Aminah. Their only solace was the child in Aminah's womb. Abdul Muttalib was reflecting that Abdullah's life had earlier been spared only to beget the child.

### **The year of the elephant**

The year of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad (SAS) is known in history as the year of the elephant. It is the year 570 CE. The Arabs had no calendar then, they would name and remember a year by some major incidence. A splendid miracle occurred just fifty days before the birth of Muhammad. The incidence has been recorded in the Quran in Sura Fil (105: 1-5). When the sura was revealed there were hundreds of people living who were eye witnesses of the incidence.

Yemen was under the rule of Abyssinia and was being governed by Abrahah for the king, the Negus. He was harboring a spectacular idea at heart, of diverting the attention of the people of the Arabian peninsula from the Ka'bah to Yemen. He built a magnificent cathedral in Sana in the name of the Negus and decorated it with marble from the palace of the queen of Sheba, crosses of gold and silver and pulpits of ivory and ebony. He was launching propaganda campaigns all around, to divert the pilgrimage from the Ka'bah to the cathedral.

He could however engage very little attention of the Arabs, rather provoked hatred of individuals. A man of Kinanah, a tribe akin to the Quraysh went to Sana and defecated in the church.

Abraham took it as an opportune pretext to march to Makkah and raze down the Ka'bah. He proceeded with a large army and several elephants, one of which was very big indeed. Some Arab tribes tried to halt his march but failed. The army with the elephants reached al-Mughammas, a valley between Taif and Makkah and camped there. They captured many animals from all around, which included two hundred camels of Abdul Muttalib. Abraham sent a delegate to the chief of Makkah, asking him to come and meet Abraham if he does not want war, because they too do not want any bloodshed, they want only to destroy the Ka'bah.

Abdul Muttalib went, and Abraham impressed by his appearance, received him with respect. He came down from the throne and sat with Abdul Muttalib. But when Abdul Muttalib just wanted his camels back, without pleading for the Ka'bah, Abraham said "I had admired you at first sight, but by asking for the camels only you have belittled yourself". Abdul Muttalib said "We do not have the ability to fight you. The camels belong to me and so I have asked them back. The Ka'bah has its Lord, if He feels fit He will protect it. Abdul Muttalib returned with his camels and told the people to leave the city and take to the mountains.

In the morning Abraham prepared to launch the final attack, but the elephants would not cooperate. Whenever they were made to face the Ka'bah they would sit down. Any other way they were ready to proceed but not towards the Ka'bah. Suddenly from the west, from towards the red sea came a dark cloud of small birds, thousands of them. Each one was carrying three stones, two in the claws and one in the beak. They began to drop the stones on the army. Whoever was hit by the stones his flesh would begin to rot. The army began to fly helter-skelter and were falling dead on their tracks, like chewed up

stalks and leaves of grain (Al-Fil 105:1:5). The army of Abrahah was routed by the tiny birds, the Ababil. This was probably the first aerial attack on an army recorded in history. After that day the Quraysh were called by the Arabs "The people of Allah" and were held in ever greater honor. The miraculous help from Allah increased the fame of the Ka'bah and the influx of pilgrims.

### **Birth of Muhammad**

After this miraculous incidence, the most momentous incidence in the history of mankind occurred, the birth of a child, Muhammad. Fifty days after the destruction of Abraha's army, Aminah the wife of Abdullah gave birth to her child, a boy. For Aminah the pregnancy was easy and the childbirth too was easy. After the birth of the child she was commanded by a divine voice to call the child by the name of Muhammad, the praiseworthy. Aminah sent for Abdul Muttalib to come and see his grandson. He took his grandson to the Ka'bah and invoked Allah's blessings. Muhammad was then given to Thuwaybah a maid servant of Abu Lahab for breast feeding for the time being. Abu Lahab was so pleased at the news of the birth of his nephew, the son of his deceased brother Abdullah, that he set free the slave girl who had brought him the news.

### **Early Childhood**

It was the custom of the noble families of Makkah and other Arabian cities to send their children into the desert to be breastfed by the Bedouin wet nurses. They thought that the open desert was better than the confines of the town for the growing child. The desert air was deemed healthier. Moreover the child would learn the pure language of the desert people.

Every now and then Bedouin women would come to Makkah to seek newborn babies. They would take the babies with them and were sure of getting good remunerations, nobody would haggle for prices. Soon after the birth of Muhammad a group of Bedouin women came

to Makkah. They looked at Muhammad, but none was inclined to take a child whose father was not living, how much the grandfather or the poor widow might give they thought.

Now every one of the Bedouin women had got a child except Halima. She was loath to go back empty handed and told her husband "Let us take this orphan boy rather than going back empty handed", and her husband agreed "Allah willing the orphan may bring us blessings". So Halima took Muhammad. As soon as they set out with the child, Halima felt her breasts swelling with milk, she could suckle both Muhammad and her own baby. The two of them drank and fell asleep. Earlier her baby was not getting enough and was ever crying. And how could the child get milk, since she herself was almost starving, the she camel she had with her was not giving any milk for her to drink. Now Halima's husband found the udder of the camel full and milked enough for the two of them. On the way to town Halima had always been falling behind and the caravan had to stop from time to time for her to catch up, as her mule was too weak. Now her mule was outstripping others. The other women were asking her if it was the same mule. Halima and her husband were sure they had got a blessed child. Halima was amazed to notice that Muhammad would suck on one breast only and would not accept the other, it was as if he knew that it was the right of his brother.

When Halima returned to her Quarters (quarters) she found that amazingly in spite of the draught her sheep would return every day well fed and would give enough milk. Her neighbors would tell their shepherds to graze their flock alongside Halima's, and yet they would not get enough.

Muhammad was weaned when he was two years old and Halima took him back to his mother Aminah, but was not ready to part with the blessed child. So she put forward all possible arguments to persuade Aminah to let her take the child for a longer period.

When Muhammad was about four years old, one day while the children were playing outside, Halima's son came running in scared, and told her "My brother has been killed". Alarmed she rushed outside and found Muhammad standing but pale of face. She asked him what had happened. He said two men clad in white robes had laid him on the ground and had cut open his chest, had taken out his heart and out of the heart had taken out something black and cast it off saying it was the trace of Satan, then had washed the heart in a golden bowl and had replaced it and sealed the cut. Now Halima was really scared. She and her husband decided to return the child to its mother before anything more dreadful happened.

Aminah was surprised why Halima who was so keen to have the child with her was suddenly giving him back. Halima narrated the incidence, and Aminah said "Do not fear Satan for this boy, he is protected by Allah". Aminah kept the boy with her.

### **Doubly orphaned**

Although marriage of widows was the norm of the society, Aminah did not marry again. When Muhammad was six years old Aminah took him to Yathrib to visit his father's grave and to see his father's maternal uncles of the clan of Najjar. His nurse Barakah went with them. They stayed in Yathrib for a month, and on the return journey Aminah suddenly fell ill and died quickly. After Aminah had been buried where she had died at al-Abwa, not far from Yathrib, Muhammad came back to Makkah with his nurse.

Doubly orphaned, Muhammad was now in the care of his grandfather Abdul Muttalib, who loved him more than he loved any other child, so much so that he would be allowed to sit on his couch, which no other child even Hamza, Abdul Muttalib's son by Halalah, almost the same age as Muhammad could ever venture to. He would even be allowed to sit beside his grandfather in the meetings of the chiefs and notables of the tribes, which no other boy small or grown could ever

dream of. The grandfather would tell people that Muhammad would one day become the king.

### **In Abu Talib's care**

Muhammad was in his grandfather's care for about two years. When Abdul Muttalib felt that he had not long to live, he called in Abu Talib and entrusted the boy to his care. Abu Talib was chosen not only because he was the full brother of Abdullah, Muhammad's father, but also because he was the most caring and loving guardian.

After the demise of Abdul Muttalib, Abu Talib took good care of his nephew. His wife Fatimah also loved the child dearly. Abu Talib was a poor man with a big family, but the presence of Muhammad seemed to make little things suffice. When they would be eating together every one would have eaten to his satisfaction, even though the food might have seemed to be too little at first.

Even at the age of nine or ten years, Muhammad was aware of the poverty of his uncle. So he took to pasturing goats and sheep, to add to the family's income. This pursuit exposed him to the vastness of nature and gave him the incentive of thinking about creation.

It was probably at the age of twelve that Muhammad had accompanied Abu Talib on a business trip to Syria. Near the town of Bostra in southern Syria there lived a learned Christian monk by the name of Bahira. He had studied the scriptures and he knew that it was the time for a new prophet to come and that he might come amongst the Arabs. When he was looking at the Quraysh caravan approaching, he noticed something strange. A small cloud was moving slowly above the caravan giving shade to some one or two persons. This made him to think of the new prophet and he invited the people of the caravan to take food at his place and insisted that everybody must come. When they had come he looked at the face of each person and did not find the one he was seeking. He asked them if they had not left anyone behind. They said that it was only a boy

that was left behind, and on Bahira's insistence he was brought in. The sight of Muhammad convinced Bahira that this was the prophet promised. He talked to him and saw the seal of prophet-hood between his shoulder blades. Bahira cautioned Abu Talib to take care of the child and said that if the Jews recognize him as he had, they might contrive to harm him.

In his early teens Muhammad was given training in the use of weapons, along with his uncles Abbas and Hamza. Hamza almost of the same age as Muhammad was of a sturdy physical structure and very strong. He was a good swordsman and a good wrestler. Muhammad was of average height and strength, and became a good archer. He had very good eyesight.

Muhammad in his adolescence had taken part in a tribal feud, the battle of Al-Fijar, between the Hawazin and Kinanah in which the Quraysh had become involved. He did not engage in actual fighting but collected arrows for his uncles Abu Talib and Zubayr.

### **Hilf al Fudul**

This feud brought some righteous minded people of the Quraysh into thinking of establishing justice in the society. In the mean time another scandalous incident took place in Makkah. Al-As ibn Wail a notable person of the clan of Sahm had bought some valuable goods from a Yemeni merchant and was not paying the price, knowing that the merchant had no patron in the city. The merchant went to several clans of the Quraysh, but none ventured to stand against Al-As. In desperation the man stood on the slope of Mount Abu Qubays and addressed all Quraysh at large in an eloquent voice, appealing to their sense of justice. Ultimately sense of justice was roused. Abd Allah ibn Judan the chief of Taym offered his house as a meeting place for the lovers of justice. Notables of Hashim, Muttalib, Zuhrah, Asad, Taym and Adi attended, as well as two young men, Muhammad ibn Abdullah and Abu Bakr ibn Abu Kuhafah. They took

the solemn oath of standing up for justice against any oppressor. Al-As ibn Wail was compelled to pay. This was 'Hilf al Fudul'.

Muhammad was twenty years of age at the time. The inclusion of the two young men in the organization along with the prominent persons shows the respect they commanded in the society.

### **Al-Amin**

Even from his childhood Muhammad was distinguished for his honesty, kindness, patience, humility and readiness to help others, he was the one praised, the truly praiseworthy one. He never indulged in any vice so rampant in the society like drinking, gambling or promiscuity. He never went near any idol, let alone worship one. Not even Abu Talib or others of his uncles ever could persuade him to take part in the festivities connected with idol worship. Muhammad's honesty was so absolute that it earned him the name of Al-Amin, the trustworthy.

Muhammad had no money to do business with, nor did his uncle Abu Talib have. His good reputation however earned him employment as agent for one or the other of the merchants. He had a good business sense and could earn them good profit.

### **Marriage with Khadijah**

Khadijah, a rich merchant, a widow was sending a large trade caravan to Syria and was looking for a trustworthy agent. She asked Abu Talib if she could hire his nephew Muhammad. Abu Talib was at first reluctant to let him go to Syria, because of the cautioning of Bahira the monk years ago. He however yielded to her pressure when she said she would pay double the usual commission. He was confident Muhammad would now be able to look after himself.

It was a successful trip. He sold all the goods in Syria at a good profit and with the money bought Syrian merchandise which was sold in Makkah at a handsome profit. Khadijah found that the profit was twice

as much as she had hoped for. To show her gratitude she further doubled the commission.

Maysarah, Khadijah's servant who was with Muhammad in the business trip informed her of his honesty, kindness and helpfulness towards others. He also narrated to her the comments of the monk Nestor (who apparently had succeeded Bahira) who had asked him about his companion, and had said that he was none other than the promised prophet.

When Muhammad sat in front of Khadijah giving his report, her concentration was more on the speaker himself. He was twentyfive years old, of medium stature, inclined to slimness with a large head, broad shoulders and a perfectly proportioned body. His hair reaching between the earlobe and shoulder and the beard of a matching length were slightly curled and raven black. The moustache was closely cropped, eye-lashes long and the brow slightly curved and not joined together. His nose was aquiline and the mouth wide and finely shaped. His skin was white slightly tanned by the sun. There was a light radiating from his face, particularly the forehead, and the eyes were luminous.

When he had departed, Khadijah consulted her friend Nufaysah, who volunteered to talk to him about matrimony. Khadijah also went to her cousin the learned Waraqah and repeated what Maysarah had said. Waraqah said "If this is true then Muhammad is the prophet of our time".

Nufaysah went to Muhammad and asked him why he was not marrying. He replied that he had not enough means. Nufaysah insisted "If means is provided?" He asked "who is the bride?" "It is Khadijah".

On receiving the glad tidings from Nufaysah, Khadijah sought to talk to Muhammad personally. After the talk Muhammad spoke to his uncles and Khadijah to her uncle Amr ibn Asad as her father was no

longer living. Muhammad's uncles went with him to Amr, to ask for Khadijah's hand, and it was agreed that Muhammad should give her twenty she-camels as dowry.

The marriage took place soon and Muhammad went to live at Khadijah's place. It was a very happy marriage. Besides being a wife Khadijah was his best friend and adviser. Although she was much older being forty and twice a widow having had children, while he was twenty five, theirs was a blissful conjugal life of twenty five years, until she died. Though polygamy was commonly practiced in the society, he did not take another wife as long as she was living. They had had six children. The first born was a boy who was named Quasem, and after him Muhammad came to be known as Abul Quasem. The son died before he was four. Then they had four daughters in succession, and the last one another son who also died in infancy.

The real benefit of marrying Khadijah became apparent fifteen years later, only after he began to receive revelations from Allah. She was the very first person to have faith in him without hesitation, so firm was her confidence in his veracity and honesty. When after the first revelation Muhammad (SAS) had come home shaken and perturbed and was saying "Cover me cover me", she covered him, comforted him and when he narrated to her the incidence, she assured him "No evil can ever touch you, you are the truthful one, you help the distressed and the poor, you are ever kind to your relatives, no harm can come to you". She went to her learned cousin Waraqah and he told her that it was none other than the Angel Gabriel who had visited Muhammad, the same angel who had come to Moses. Later, Muhammad (SAS) met Waraqah and he also believed in him. Later on, in the face of all opposition and ill treatment, it was she who gave him solace and comfort.

On the day of his marriage Muhammad had set free Barakah, the faithful slave and nurse, who had been with him the day his mother died. On the same day Khadijah had gifted him with a fifteen year old

slave Zayd.

Barakah was married to a man of Yathrib, bore him a son by the name of Ayman and came to be known as Umm Ayman. Several years later, when she was a widow, she was married to Zayd ibn Harithah, a man younger than her in age and bore him another son, Usamah ibn Zayd.

Zayd ibn Harithah was of noble birth, the tribe of Kalb and his mother was of the tribe of Tayy. He had been kidnapped by bandits and sold as a slave a few years ago. Khadijah's nephew had bought him from the fair of Ukaz and had given him to her. Harithah had searched in vain for his son, and Zayd too had not seen anybody of his tribe or that of his mother. Now after several months with Muhammad he happened to meet some people of his tribe in the streets of Makkah, and with them he gave information of his whereabouts. Being associated with Muhammad had transformed him and the giving of information was done as a moral duty. When his father and uncle came to Muhammad and wanted to ransom him out at whatever price he asked for, he told them "Zayd is yours without any ransom if he wants to go, but if he does not, I can't force him". Zayd was called in, he recognized his father and uncle, but chose to remain with his master. His father and uncle were amazed, how can a boy of over fifteen, an intelligent boy, prefer to remain a slave. Muhammad took them to the Kabah and there he declared that Zayd is a free man and from now on he will be called Zayd ibn Muhammad. Harithah and his brother went their way satisfied that the boy was in good company. This is but one example how Muhammad loved people, even a slave, and how he was loved by the ones who came to know him.

Among the most frequent visitors to their house was Muhammad's aunt Safiyyah with her little son Zubayr. With her also would come Salma the midwife who delivered Khadijah of all her children. She was considered one of the family. Occasionally would come Halimah, Muhammad's foster mother. Khadijah respected her and gave her

generous gifts. In a year of draught she had given her forty sheep and a hawdah camel.

The draught had brought want and misery in Abu Talib's household. Muhammad talked to his uncle Abbas and to lighten Abu Talib's burden Abbas took Jafar to his house and Muhammad took the youngest Ali. Now Muhammad and Khadijah had six children, their four daughters, Ali and Zayd. It was a home full of love and bliss.

### **Rebuilding the Kabah**

When Muhammad was thirty five, the Quraysh decided to rebuild the Kabah, as it had become very old and dilapidated. For reconstruction it had to be pulled down first, and everybody was afraid to undertake the task. Their fear was increased many fold as a big snake appeared. It had taken shelter in the vault of the Ka'bah and every morning would take sunbath by the wall. It would rear up and hiss ominously at any one who would approach. One day however a big eagle took away the snake, to the relief of the Quraish. (Martin Lings)

Ai'd ibn Imran ibn Makhzum ventured to start the demolition work. He had just removed one stone and it flew back to its position. So the Quraysh conferred again and after much deliberations decided that only honest money would be used, no money earned by fraud or usury or prostitution or any other evil means would ever be used.

All the chiefs and noble men of Quraysh participated personally as also the common people. This was labor of love and none was ready to keep away from it. Muhammad also joined his uncles. Praying to Allah that the demolition was for the good intent of rebuilding, Walid ibn Mughirah volunteered to start the work. When the others saw that he was not smitten by any calamity they came forward and the building was soon razed to the ground. In the foundation they encountered green stones, and when they tried to dislodge one, the whole of Makkah shook in an earthquake. So they decided to leave

the foundation undisturbed, and started rebuilding over it.

The Ka'bah at that time was not very high and had no roof. They decided to increase the height and build a roof too. A merchant ship of a Greek had run aground and wrecked near Jeddah, they purchased the timber for the rafters of the roof.

As the Quraish had vowed to use only pure money and the amount was not very big, Safiur Rahman Al-Mubarakpuri in his book 'Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum' (The sealed Nectar) says that it was at this time of the reconstruction that the six arms length area on the northern side of Al-Ka'bah, called Al-Hijr or Al-Hateem was left out.

When the construction work had reached a height that the sacred black stone was to be put in its position, the dispute began as to who of the chiefs should do it. Every clan wanted the honor for themselves and none was ready to forgo. The work had to stop, several days went by, and swords were about to be drawn. Some wise men undertook the effort to resolve the dispute by peaceful means. Meetings were held in the mosque. At last they agreed to abide by the suggestion of the oldest person Abu Umayya ibn Mughirah, that the very first person who comes in next will arbitrate and his judgment everyone will honor. The man who came in was none other than Muhammad, Al-Amin, and all expressed their pleasure that on his judgment they can depend.

Muhammad asked for a cloak and it was provided. He spread the cloak on the ground and put the black stone in the middle of it. He then called all the chiefs to lift the cloak jointly. When they had raised it to the desired level he himself put the stone in its proper place in the wall. Thus a war was averted easily, and Muhammad was being praised all the more for his fairness and wisdom.

### **Humanity in distress**

Makkah was the greatest city and its greatness was due to Ka'bah. It

is to the Ka'bah that people would come in throngs for Hajj every year from all over Arabia. Even besides Hajj they would come all around the year to circumambulate the Ka'bah. They all knew that the Ka'bah was built by the great prophets of Allah Ibrahim and Ismail (AS) and that the Hajj was a ritual coming down from them. They knew well that the prophets of Allah, none of them were idolaters. Yet they had taken to idolatry. The Quraysh, who would take pride in introducing themselves as the descendants of the prophet Ismail, had put idols inside Ka'bah, the house of Allah and all around it. There were no less than three hundred and sixty idols there. In addition to it they had family idols too. They believed in Allah, but the idols they took as media for reaching Allah. Their forefathers the prophets did not need these media they conceded, but they themselves were not as pure as them, so as sinners they needed the media of idols; this was their argument. The polytheists and the pantheists of today also put forward the same reason. Besides idolatry they had developed the serious misconception that Allah had married the Jinn, and that the angels were Allah's daughters. Like the Christians they had brought down Allah to the stature of the created.

Idolatry and all these misconceptions naturally do away with the fear of Allah. The idols and Allah's children will surely intercede and absolve us of our sins, so why refrain from illicit pleasures, why refrain from earning money by usury, by gambling, by robbery or by any other means? Even today most Christians believe that if you testify that Jesus Christ died on the cross for your sins, you will be absolved.

It was the Ka'bah again that was the primary cause of affluence of the people of Makkah. The regular influx of large number of people from abroad helped boost their trade. Foreign trade of Makkah developed primarily following the routes of the pilgrims. The Makkans did not fail to notice that their economic prosperity was largely dependent on the pilgrims. It is well imaginable that to increase the number of pilgrims,

they encouraged people of all faiths to come for Hajj. They failed to impose restrictions on idolatry for fear of reduction of the number of pilgrims. So idolatry crept in and they themselves were engulfed in it. A chieftain of Khuzaah, on his way back from a commercial trip to Syria, had asked the Moabites to give him one of their idols. They gave him Hubal which he brought and set inside the Ka'bah itself. It became the chief idol of Makkah.

It is apparent that when fear of Allah is abandoned, the sense of morality vanishes and getting rich by whatever means possible, becomes the major pursuit. Ill gotten money makes people pleasure seekers. All sorts of vices like gambling, drinking parties and other sorts of organized entertainment, where all inhibitions are thrown to the wind become common practice. Fornication, adultery and prostitution became commonplace. Shamelessness was so rampant that it was even imposed on the rituals of Hajj. Those who came to Hajj from outside, both male and female, if they could not buy clothes from the local market of Makkah, would have to circumambulate the Ka'bah in the nude. Hajj had been reduced to a pornographic show.

The position of women had gone down to the status of livestock or even worse, so much so that the birth of a daughter was regarded as a cause of shame. Burying the female child alive was not a crime anymore. This cruelty would be practiced by the father, and the mother would probably console herself that by being killed the child was being spared a life of ignominy and dishonor like her own. There was no rule of law, no justice. Anybody who had not a tribe to support him would easily be deprived of his rights, neither his wealth nor his life was secure. Immorality, want of justice and unrestrained freedom of committing crimes had brought the social structure to such a level that historians have called the age 'Aiyam-e-jaheliyat', the age of ignorance, the dark age.

This unfortunate plight of humanity pained Muhammad. In his childhood when he was a shepherd boy he was wont to look at the

vastness of space and to think of its creation. Now in maturity, to this had been added the thought of the distressing condition that humanity had fallen into.

### **The first revelation**

Muhammad was a likable person, loved and respected by all, but temperamentally he could not mix with the crowd, who were mostly pleasure seekers. He would usually prefer seclusion. When he was nearing the age of forty he was having 'true visions' which came to him in his sleep 'like the breaking of the light of dawn'. These visions caused him to seek more of solitude and a desire for meditation. This went on for a few years until he was forty. Now he took to going to the cave of Hera on the Mount Noor to meditate. He would go there frequently, particularly in the month of Ramadan. He would take food and water and go and stay there for a few days, then would come home to replenish the provisions and return to the cave. He would be contemplating on the misery of mankind but was never thinking of becoming a messenger of Allah. Allah testifies to it in the Quran "And you were not wont to expect that there would be cast unto you a book, but as a mercy from your Lord. So never you be a helper of the unbelievers"(Al-Qasas 26:86). One night towards the end of Ramadan in his fortieth year, in the cave of Hera he received the first revelation from Allah.

Jibrail (AS)(Gabriel) the angel of Allah came in the form of a man and said to him "Read". He said "I am not one who can read". The angel caught him in an embrace that reached the limit of his endurance, then releasing him said again "Read". Again he said "I am not a reader". Again the angel embraced him and said "Read". Again he said "I am not a reader". After embracing for the third time, the angel said

"Recite in the name of thy Lord who created,

Created man from a clinging clot,  
Recite, and thy Lord is the Most Bountiful,  
He who hath taught by the pen,  
Taught man what he knew not." ( Al-Alaq 96:1-5)

Muhammad (SAS) recited the words after the angel, who thereupon left him. This unique incidence left him perturbed and afraid beyond limit. He left the cave and started for home. When he was half way down the slope of the mountain, he heard a voice above him saying "O Muhammad, you are the messenger of Allah and I am Jibrail". He raised his eyes and Jibrail was there all over the horizon. When the angel left he ran home and lying down said to Khadijah "Cover me, cover me".

Khadijah covered him with a cloak and comforted him. When Muhammad (SAS) had regained control of himself he narrated the incidence to his wife. He was afraid if he was going mad, if he was being possessed by some Jinn. Khadijah reassured him that nothing evil can ever touch him because he was one who was truthful, helpful to others and always thought of doing good to people. She went to Waraqah, her learned cousin, who was now very old and had gone blind, and narrated the event to him. He said "By Allah, it is the same 'Namus', the Angel of Allah that would come to Musa (AS). Verily Muhammad is the prophet of Allah, bid him rest assured". When Khadijah came back and informed him of Waraqa's reassurance, Muhammad (SAS) felt peace in his mind and went back to the cave of Hira to complete the days he had vowed to stay there. Fear had left him and was rather being replaced by a sense of longing.

Returning from the cave he circumambulated the Ka'bah and met Waraqah, who on hearing from Muhammad(SAS) reassured him that he was indeed the promised prophet. Waraqah cautioned him "You will be called a liar, you will be ill treated by your people and will be

ousted from your home land. No prophet of Allah had ever been left in peace. If I live till that time I will insha-Allah help you to the best of my ability". He then kissed him on his forehead and the prophet (SAS) returned home engrossed in deep thought, why should the people oppose a cause that is for their own good.

Soon the Prophet (SAS) received the second revelation "Nun, by the pen and what they write, you are not by the grace of your Lord one gone off his head. And verily for you will be a reward without cessation. And indeed you are on a character most lofty" (Al-Qalam 68:1-4). After this exhilarating second revelation there was a period of silence and the prophet (SAS) became afraid if he had incurred the displeasure of Allah by some shortcoming of his, and Khadijah reassured him. Then at last the silence was broken "By the morning brightness and by the night when it is calm, your Lord has not abandoned you, nor does He hate you. Surely your later life will be better than the earlier. And surely your Lord will give you so much that you will be satisfied. Did He not find you an orphan and shelter you? And He found you without guidance and guided you. And He found you needy and enriched you. So as for the orphan, do not treat him harshly, and as for the bagger(**beggar**), do not drive him away. And as for the grace of your Lord, proclaim it!"(Al-Duha 93:1-11)

With the command to proclaim he increased his efforts of talking to those who were dear and near to him. Ali, his cousin a boy of ten years who was a member of his family, accepted the message unhesitatingly. Zayd who was another member of the household also accepted without hesitation. These two like Khadijah had known him closely and knew that he could never tell a lie. Zayd was so impressed by his personality that some fifteen years earlier had chosen to remain a slave of him in preference to going with his father, how could he fail to believe in him. Outside of the family, the first to accept was Abu Bakr, a childhood friend. He had no hesitation in accepting the message, the simple reason being, how can one who

does not tell a lie even in jest, can take resort to falsehood about Allah. And was not all that Muhammad (SAS) was preaching reasonable and appealing to the conscience, the real truth?

Abu Bakr was a man of integrity and was well honored in the society. Through his influence others of sober mind and commendable character like Uthman ibn Affan, Zubayr ibn Awam, Abd ar Rahman ibn Awf, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas and Talhah ibn Ubaydallah accepted Islam. People with an inborn sense of honesty would accept Islam easily. Abdullah ibn Mas'ud was a young shepherd tending a flock of sheep. The prophet (SAS) and Abu Bakr came by him and asked him if they could have some milk to drink. He said that the sheep was not his, how could he give them milk. The prophet (SAS) asked him to bring a young ewe who is yet to bring forth lamb, patted its unformed udder, prayed to Allah and it swelled with milk, milked it and the two of them drank. He then told it to go back to its former condition. Abdullah wondered, asked questions and became a Muslim. Among the early Muslims were Bilal ibn Rabiah, Abu Ubaidah Amir ibn Al-Jarrah, Abu Salamah ibn Abdul Asad, Al-Arqam ibn Abul Arqam, Uthman ibn Mazoun and his two brothers Qudamah and Abdullah. There were also Ubaidah ibn Al-Harith ibn Muttalib, Sa'id ibn Zaid Al-Adawi and his wife Fatimah bint Al-Khattab, Khabbab ibn Al-Aratt.

During the early days the angel Jibrail taught Muhammad (SAS) how to make 'Wadu'(ablution) and perform 'Salat'. At first the prophet (SAS) with Ali, Zayd and Khadijah would say prayers morning and evening, and so also did the other Muslims. Five times prayer was made mandatory much later, at 'Mei'raj'. Jibrail also taught the greetings of the people of Paradise "As salamu alaikum"(peace be on you), to which the answer is "Wa alaikumus salam" (and on you too, be peace). All the Muslims greeted each other thus whenever they met.

### **Command to go public**

For the first three years there was no public proclamation, yet about forty people had embraced Islam. Allah then commanded "And warn your clan, the near relatives"(Al-Shuara 26:214). So the prophet (SAS) went and stood on the Mount Safa and called all the people of Quraysh, the Banu Hashim, the Banu Muttalib, the Banu Umayyah and all, as was the custom for important public proclamations and announcements. People rushed in from all quarters and gathered around him. Muhammad (SAS) asked "If I were to tell you that armed horsemen are beyond this valley heading towards Makkah to attack you, would you believe me?" They answered "Yes we will, because you are Al-Amin, you never tell a lie". The Prophet (SAS) said "I am sent to you to warn you to save yourselves from Hell-fire. There is no god but Allah, so worship Allah alone and forsake all other gods". The whole audience was enthralled (outraged). They had heard that Muhammad was spreading some new doctrine, but the point blank attack on idolatry really stunned them. Abu Lahab, Muhammad's uncle was the first one to give him a harsh reply "Confound you! Is this what you have called us here for?" He threw a fistful of dust towards him and left. Others also dispersed, many of them uttering words of insult.

They had understood that Muhammad's aim was to bring about a total change in the life of the Arab society, its values and standards, its sense of purpose, its practices and its whole direction. They thought it would invite the enmity of all the Arabs, it would jeopardize the lofty position that the Quraysh held amongst the Arabs and would bring disaster to the trade and economy too. Above all "Were all our forefathers on the wrong?"

The failure of the gathering could not daunt Muhammad (SAS). He arranged a homely get together in his house in a banquet, knowing well that Abu Lahab his closest neighbor and uncle would be there. The banquet was foiled by Abu Lahab, Muhammad (SAS) could not even speak. He arranged another banquet and spoke. He appealed

to them to pronounce two words "There is no deity other than Allah and that Muhammad is His messenger". He warned them of the reckoning of the hereafter. Abu Talib said that he loved him, believed what he said was true, would help him, but could not abandon the faith of Abdul Muttalib. Others were of similar opinion. It is noteworthy that the teachings of their late ancestors the prophets were there in their hearts, in their remote conscience, but yet they could not give up the religion of their fathers and grandfathers. Were our fathers and grandfathers on the wrong? This self contradiction could remain because the faith in the hereafter was not strong. This is why Allah has called for 'Yaquin bil Akhirah' unwavering conviction, certitude of faith in the hereafter(Al-Baquara 2:4). But Abu Lahab was abusive, he threatened to do everything in his power to stop Muhammad.

Abu Lahab's hostility towards Muhammad (SAS) was an all out war. To do everything in his power, he did not stop at even doing the meanest, but failed to stop the prophet of Allah. With his power he ordered his two sons Utbah and Utaybah who were married to two of Muhammad's daughters Ruqayyah and Umm Kulthum, to divorce them. His wife Umm Jamil Arwah bint Harb who was equally mean would throw thorns, garbage and other obnoxious objects at the doorstep of the prophet (SAS). She would even throw dust and filth in the prophet's cooking pot. She would compose poems derogatory to the prophet and sing them loudly. Allah finally in condemnation of the two revealed the sura Al-Lahab(111:1-5).

However Abu Lahab and his wife were exceptions in the family circle. Amongst the relatives, the prophet's aunt Safiyyah and Umm al Fadl the wife of Abbas had entered Islam without hesitation at the outset. Umm al Fadl brought her sisters Maymunah, Salma and Asma into the fold of Islam. Of the uncles, Abu Talib was ever-loving and protecting, even though he never entered Islam. Hamza and Abbas eventually took faith and did their best for the cause of the 'Deen-al-Haq'.

Muhammad's call of monotheism was gaining popularity particularly after going public at Mount Safa. The younger generation, the slaves and the downtrodden were being attracted in ever increasing numbers, in spite of the opposition of the community leaders. The leaders were alarmed. They conferred and a strong delegation of all the clans, like Abd Shams, Umayyah, Asad, Makhzum and Sahn, met Abu Talib. They complained to him that his nephew was criticizing and ridiculing their gods and calling their honored forefathers misguided fools. Abu Talib could part with them with gentle words, by dint of his lofty position in the society and because he had not given up his old religion.

The Prophet (SAS) however continued with his preaching and was attracting people. Allah was encouraging him to go public all the more "So proclaim openly that which you are commanded, and turn away from the polytheists"(Al-Hijr 15:94). So after some time the delegation went to Abu Talib again, and this time they even threatened that if Muhammad is not restrained, they may ultimately have to fight his clan to the bitter end. Abu Talib was in a dilemma, neither did he want a quarrel with the people, nor could he let down his nephew. He called in his nephew and appealed to him that the situation was getting too tough for him, asking him to agree to some compromise. Muhammad (SAS) replied that even if they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left hand, I cannot give up this mission, decreed by Allah, even if I perish, and tears welled up in his eyes. Abu Talib promised he would never abandon him.

The reason of the vehement opposition of the Quraish leaders was also mainly tribal rivalry, Abu Jahl had said "We of Banu Makhzum have competed in every affair with the Banu Hashim and have proved to be equal, now they are claiming they have a prophet of Allah in them, we never can put faith in him." Sometimes he would concede to his near ones that what Muhammad was preaching was the truth, but how could he follow one who was not of his clan? How could he

accept the superiority of the Banu Hashim over the Banu Makhzum?

### **To hinder the pilgrims from listening to Muhammad**

The Quraysh leaders had achieved nothing from their meetings with Abu Talib. The time of Hajj was approaching and soon pilgrims from all Arab lands would be coming into Makkah. The leaders were afraid, the people coming from abroad would listen to Muhammad and be influenced by him to accept his new religion; or else the idolaters might think of not coming again to a city where monotheism is preached, thus causing a reduction of the number of pilgrims and loss of trade. They assembled in the house of Al-Walid ibn Mughirah, and conferred on how to prevent people from listening to this man. They agreed upon manning all the entrances of the city, to caution the incoming pilgrims of the dangerous man Muhammad. Now sometimes they were calling him a poet, at other times a sorcerer, a man possessed, or a soothsayer. What they are to tell the people unanimously? At last they agreed upon calling him a dangerous sorcerer who has the power of separating a husband from a wife, a son from a father and family, a brother from a brother. This campaign they took up in earnest. The adverse propaganda succeeded in spreading the name of Muhammad much more widely all over the Arabian peninsula and beyond, then he could have done himself, singlehanded. And all people surely would not believe in propaganda blindly, people with intelligence would be made inquisitive and would be prompted to make enquiries.

Abu Dharr of Bani Ghifar did not believe in idols. His brother Unays returned from Makkah and told him of a man who claimed to be a prophet and said "There is no god but Allah", and his people had disowned him. Abu Dharr went to Makkah, met the prophet (SAS) and embraced Islam. Most of his tribe followed him.

Tufayl of the tribe of Daws who was himself a poet, had heard so

much of the propaganda that he had resolved not to listen to Muhammad and so had plugged his ears with cotton wool. But in spite of all precautions, the voice of the prophet (SAS), when he was reciting the Quran in prayer at the Ka'bah, penetrated into his ears. He told himself "I am an intelligent person, a poet, why not hear him and decide for myself". So he followed Muhammad (SAS) to his house and became a Muslim. He went to his tribe, his father and his wife accepted Islam but the tribe refused. Dejected he returned to the prophet (SAS), who prayed for the tribe and sent him back. Ultimately most of them became Muslims.

Dammad a man from the tribe of Azd Shamuah was a well known faith healer and was proud of his ability. On hearing the propaganda of the Quraysh, he came to Makkah to heal Muhammad, met him with confidence and expressed his desire to heal him. After talking to him however he accepted Islam. The prophet (SAS) asked him to propagate Islam to his people.

### **Persecution**

Failing to halt the progress of Islam, the Quraysh leaders extended the persecution, and now the elite class even was not spared. The nature of persecution took different forms according to the social status of each person. Those who belonged to higher classes with good tribal lineage were subjected to taunts and ridicule. If the person was a merchant, his business was threatened to be boycotted and ruined. Along with the slaves those who were living in security by alliance with some tribe were also now brutally tortured.

Belal was tortured by beating, being dragged by a rope round(around) his neck, by being laid on the hot mid-day desert sand with a heavy rock on the chest and many other means of torment and humiliation for a long time by his master Umayyah ibn Khalaf, until he was bought and freed by Abu Bakar. Abu Bakar freed many other slaves like Amir ibn Fuhayrah, Zunayrah, Nahdyah and her daughter,

Umm Ubays and the like.

Khabbab ibn al-Aratt was one who was tormented most brutally but would never give up faith. Sometimes he would even be laid on smoldering coal.

Abu Fukayhah after Belal was similarly tortured by Umayya's son Safwan.

Yasir who was not a slave but an ally of the tribe of Makhzum, and his wife Sumayyah were tortured to death under the eyes of their son. The son Ammar had to utter words of disbelief for relief from torment. Sumayyah and Yasir were the first of 'shuhada' (martyrs). The tormentor and murderer was Abu Jahl.

In spite of all the torturing and killing, the number of Muslims was on the increase steadily, to the exasperation of the Quraysh leaders. So again they went en-mass to Abu Talib with a bizarre proposal. They took with them a handsome young man of noble birth Imarah ibn Walid, and offered him to Abu Talib in exchange for Muhammad. To them it was a fair deal in their pagan standards. Abu Talib however rejected it outright "You give me your son to feed and nourish, and I am to give mine to you to kill!"

So the process of persecution continued. Even those of noble birth were not spared from being tortured. Mus'ab ibn Umayr belonged to a prosperous family. He was the pampered son of a wealthy mother. When he chose to be a Muslim, he was bound hands and feet, imprisoned, starved and tortured. At last he was left to go with nothing but a torn piece of blanket to cover his shame.

Uthman ibn Affan was from one of the noblest families, the Umayyah. His uncle Al Hakam ibn Abi al A's tied him to a post and beat him. He also wrapped Uthman in a mat of palm leaves, and tormented him by lighting fire underneath him.

Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas loved his mother dearly, so when he accepted

Islam, his mother feigned committing suicide; but he told her that he would not renounce his faith even for the life of his mother.

Not even Abu Bakar was safe. One day when he was calling the people to the path of Allah, a mob pounced upon him. Utbah ibn Rabbiah beat him on the face with his shoe. When he was rescued by his own tribe, they at first thought he was dead. When he recovered his senses he enquired about the prophet (SAS), if he was alright. He was afraid the Prophet (SAS) might have been attacked too. He would not even take water until he had seen the prophet. After dusk his mother and a Muslim woman of their relatives supported him on two sides and took him to see the Prophet(SAS). On this occasion Abu Bakar's mother embraced Islam and he forgot all his pains.

Abu Talib was increasingly worried about his nephew's safety. He called his clan, and all except Abu Lahab reaffirmed their pledge to protect Muhammad.

From the beginning, the Muslims were a solid brotherhood without discrimination. Abu Bakar was the best example, he bought the slaves and set them free. The congregational prayer was a model of indiscrimination.

The Muslims would gather in remote areas to perform 'salat' together. One day some unbelievers saw them praying, ridiculed them, abused them and a scuffle ensued. Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas took a camel jaw bone and hit an unbeliever, causing him to bleed. This was the first blood, shed in defense of Islam. Allah called upon the Muslims to restrain themselves, and they adopted forbearance.

### **The first Islamic school**

While before the public proclamation at As-Safa the number of Muslims was about forty, by the end of the third year it was about sixty, and by the early fifth year it was well over hundred. The prophet (SAS) felt the need of a place, where to get together and teach the

newcomers the Quran and the rituals, and to pray. Arqam ibn Abul Arqam of Makhzum, the same clan as Abu Jahl, offered his house for the purpose. It was a big house, centrally placed near As-Safa, and this is where the prophet (SAS) and the Muslims would always meet.

### **Utbah's proposal**

Utbah ibn Rabiah a leading personality of Makkah was a person of moderate temperament. One day he was sitting with other leaders of the Quraysh near the Ka'bah, when he saw the prophet (SAS) sitting alone on the other side. He told the other leaders that he wants to put forward some proposals to Muhammad, some of which he might accept. They agreed to his proposals and he went and sat by him and told him in a cajoling tone "My nephew, you are a person of noble birth and command a position of high esteem, but you have brought about disunity in the society. I am making you some offers and I hope you may find some of them acceptable. The prophet said he was ready to hear. So Utbah said "If you want wealth, we all will contribute and make you the richest among ourselves. If you want power we will make you our master and will not do anything without your consent. If you want to be a king, we will make you our king. If you are possessed we will arrange for your cure." When he had finished, the prophet (SAS) recited the first thirty eight verses of Sura Fussilat. Utbah listened and his color changed. He went to his confederates and told them to leave Muhammad alone, he is destined to bring about great events. The Quraysh however would not listen to good advice, they were bent upon preventing Muhammad from propagating the monotheistic religion of Islam. The fact is that all the Quraish leaders, Utbah and the others, conformists or militants, all were concerned with this world only with no thought of the hereafter; and Islam on the other hand wants people to be more concerned with the eternal life of the hereafter. Islam wants man to prosper in this world, but not at the cost of the hereafter.

Soon afterwards one day while the prophet (SAS) was

circumambulating the Kabah and was passing by a group of Quraysh leaders, some of them uttered some abusive words. This they did a second and a third time, when the prophet retorted by saying that a day may come that they may be slaughtered. At this they were startled, some of them rose and pacified him saying "O Abul Quasim, you are not known to loose your temper". When Muhammad(SAS) was gone they realized that they had shown weakness and resolved to be more firm in the future. Later another day they confronted him and asked him if he thinks their gods are false and he said "Yes, they are false". This time they attacked him to show him that they were not weak. Abu Bakar who happened to be nearby rushed in to help him saying "Do you want to kill a man only because he says Allah is his only Lord?" The Quraysh left.

### **Hamza**

This incidence of assault on the prophet (SAS) seemed to enhance the courage of Abu Jahl, he thought he could rely on the support of the Quraysh in abusing Muhammad. One day he found the prophet alone near Mount Safa and reviled him with the worst insults. A little while later Hamza was returning that way from a hunting trip, and a woman who had witnessed the incidence told him about it in details. Hamza forthwith went to the Kabah, found Abu Jahl there with his confederates, struck him a mighty blow with his bow, causing him to bleed, and said "You dare abuse my nephew, now I have taken his faith and I dare you to strike back if you are man enough". Although Abu Jahal's companions were trying to stand up, he prevented them saying that he had indeed abused Muhammad and to let Abu Umarah (Hamza) be.(Addressing a person as the father of his first born child was the manner of giving him respect). It was apparent that every evil action of the Quraysh was adding to the strength of Islam.

### **The three questions**

When the Quraysh leaders were finding no way of stopping

Muhammad, failing particularly to find a way of confronting him intellectually, they sought the help of the Jewish Rabbies. They sent Nadir ibn Harith and Uqbah ibn Muayt to Yathrib. The Rabbies gave them three questions saying that if he is an imposter, he will never be able to answer them. They told them to ask Muhammad about some young men who left their folk in the days of old, about a traveler who reached the ends of the earth in the west and the east, and about 'spirit'. When confronted with the questions the prophet (SAS) told them to come on the morrow, but forgot to say "Insha-Allah". No revelation came in two weeks. On the fifteenth day came Allah's admonition and the answer. The youth were the 'Ashab-e-Kahf' and their dog, who slept in a cave for three hundred and nine years (Kahf 18:9-25). About the traveler Allah revealed the story of 'Dhul Qarnayn' (Kahf 18:83-98). About the spirit Allah revealed "And they ask you about the 'spirit'. Say the 'spirit' is by the command of my Lord, and you have not been given of the knowledge but a little (Isra 17:85).

When the answers were not forthcoming for two weeks the Quraysh did not fail to taunt and jeer, but when the answers came they did not take faith.

This incidence shows that the Prophet (SAS) did not have all knowledge of the unseen, he only knew what Allah informed him about. This also shows that Allah did admonish the Prophet (SAS) His beloved servant. Another instance of admonition we find when the Prophet (SAS) was talking with some Quraish leaders including Walid the senior most leader of the Bani Makhzum, and Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum the blind old man had interrupted and the Prophet (SAS) had frowned and averted his face; Allah sent down the verses of 'Abasa'(80:1-12). These are examples to show that the Prophet (SAS) was a man like other men, the difference being he had been chosen as Allah's messenger and revelations came down on him. The companions had no qualms in accepting him as such and never

did their love for him diminish. Allah has testified to it in the Quran (Al Kahf 18:110).

### **To Abyssinia**

Even after the three questions were answered the Quraysh failed to accept Islam, but rather were increasing the repression on the Muslims in general and on those who were not well protected by tribal relations in particular. So the prophet (SAS) advised his companions to migrate to Abyssinia if they can, where the Negus, the Christian King was known to be a man of justice. Allah had by that time declared "...and Allah's earth is spacious..." (Az-Zumar 39:10). The first party to migrate in Rajab of the fifth year of prophet-hood, consisted of sixteen people of whom four were women. Notables among them were Uthman ibn Affan and his wife Ruqayya, the prophet's daughter. The Quraysh were not ready to let the Muslims escape and had tried to intercept them, but the boat with the emigrants had already set sail before they reached the Red Sea coast.

Ten of these emigrants however returned to Makkah soon, when they heard that the Quraysh had embraced Islam. What in fact had occurred was that the prophet (SAS) was reciting the Sura Najm in the mosque when a good number of people, both Muslims and non-Muslims were present. When he reached the last ayat "So prostrate yourselves before Allah and worship" (An-Najm 53:62) was reached and the prophet (SAS) prostrated, all of them too prostrated, including the non-Muslims. Actually it was no more than a momentary weakness of the unbelievers caused by the impact of the Quran.

Emigration to Abyssinia continued as the situation in Makkah had not improved. In course of time over a hundred people had gone there, some eighty three male and nineteen female.

The exodus of the Muslims caused the Quraysh leaders to ponder over the situation. They sent two shrewd diplomats Amr ibn Al-As and

Abdullah ibn Abi Rabbiah to Abyssinia. They first met the generals and the courtiers of the king, gave them gifts of camel hides, which is much appreciated there, to motivate them to advise the king to extradite the refugees without even hearing them. They then presented the king with gifts and put forward their case. They said that some ignorant young people of their community had abandoned their religion and taken up a new one and had come to Abyssinia. The fools had not even chosen Christianity, the religion of the king. So their parents and the community leaders have sent for them. They appealed to the king to let these people go with them without taking the trouble of talking to them, and the courtiers also lent support. But the Negus did not agree to take a decision without hearing the other side. So the refugees were called into court, and Jafar spoke for them. He gave a description of the evil practices and injustice in the pagan society and said that "Allah has sent His messenger who tells us to worship none but Allah, always to speak the truth, be honest, be good to our neighbors and relatives, to refrain from all sins, not to devour the property of the orphans, not to slander honorable women. He also commands us to say regular prayers, give a portion of our money for the poor and destitute, and also to fast. Our people tortured us only because we are following the messenger of Allah, a person who is so honest and truthful that these people, the leaders of the society used to call him Al-Amin the trustworthy. We have come to your country because we were oppressed and denied the freedom of choosing our faith and practicing it". Negus asked Jafar to read some passage of the Quran and he recited Sura Maryam. The Negus and the courtiers were moved to tears. The Negus dismissed the Quraysh emissaries and assured protection of the refugees. Amr ibn Al-As said to his buddy that he had another arrow in his quiver that was sure to hit the mark. So they returned the next day and asked the Negus to ask the 'fugitives' what they think of Jesus Christ. The refugees were again summoned in, and in answer to the question, Jafar said what Allah and His messenger had taught them, that Jesus

Christ was a mighty messenger of Allah, the spirit and the word of the Lord, delivered unto Virgin Maryam and he was a servant of Allah. Even though some of the courtiers and clergy showed some anger, Negus said that what Jafar had said was the truth. He ordered the gifts of the envoys to be returned to them, and assured the protection of the Muslims. Here we can see that the Muslims were not afraid of telling the truth even in the most adverse circumstances.

One may wonder why the emigration and why the efforts of the Quraysh to bring them back. Was torturing and abusing by the Quraysh, the only reason for emigration? Bilal, Ammar and others who were most brutally tortured were not among the emigrants. Uthman and his wife Ruqayya the prophet's daughter, Ja'far ibn Abi Talib and many others belonging to the most influential clans, were among the emigrants. Obviously, the main objective was to seek a second base for Islam. More over it was to show that, for security of life and property tribal affiliation was not so important anymore, rather Islamic justice was to become the means of protection for everybody. The Quraysh leaders were shown that their sons were no longer depending on their tribal protection. They also understood that Islam will no longer remain in the confines of the Makkan society, and the Muslims will be able to implement Islam, outside of the direct supervision of the prophet (SAS). They also envisaged that the chances of exterminating Islam altogether was going out of their hands, so the attempt to get the exiled ones back. **The attempt failed.**

### **Umar**

When the two envoys returned unsuccessful and ashamed, the Quraysh leaders were brooding over their failures one after the other. They were totally exasperated and at a loss about what to do next. Torturing the weaker Muslims was not availing them any results. Umar ibn Al-Khattab was not a leader but he felt the anguish of the leaders. As a youth of dynamic spirits he was feared and respected for his physical strength and determination. The failure of the leaders

prompted him into action. The thought came to his mind that the only solution of the problem of the rift in the society is just to eliminate the root cause, Muhammad. He took his sword and went out of his house. Nuaym ibn Abdullah who was secretly a Muslim, happened to see the ominous shadow in the countenance of Umar and asked him what the matter was. Umar said "I am going to find Muhammad and behead him". Nuaym tried to dissuade him "Don't be too rush, you might get killed in-stead". Umar did not care. So at last to delay him for sometime Nuaym said "Should not you look at your own house first, your sister Fatimah and her husband Sa'id have become Muslims, take care of them before dealing with Muhammad". Umar turned and made for the house of Sa'id.

As he approached his sister's quarters he heard some recitations. He rapped on the door and shouted to declare his presence. Khabbab of Zuhrah who was with them hid himself and Fatimah hid the pages they were reading before she opened the door. Umar came in and asked "What was it I heard you reading?" "You have heard nothing" Fatimah and Sa'id tried to say. "I certainly have heard, and I have heard that you two have become the followers of Muhammad", so saying he began to beat Sa'id. Fatimah tried to defend her husband and Umar dealt her a blow that caused her face to bleed. Fatimah stood up and said with spirit "Yes, we have become Muslims and we will never give up our faith, you may do whatever you can". This spirited reply and the sight of blood on her face brought about a sudden change in Umar. He had heard a few words of the recitation and now it seemed to echo in his mind. He also recollected the recitation of the Prophet (SAS) that he had heard a few days back near the Ka'bah, and had been thinking it was poetry. Presently (Recently) he had heard "It is not the word of a poet, little is that you believe". He had been taken aback and had thought he was a soothsayer, and presently (then) he heard "Nor is it the word of a soothsayer, but little is that you take heed" (Al-Haqqah 69:40-43). He had been thoroughly perplexed. Now he was overawed. He said now

in a softer voice "Let me see what you were reading". Fatimah did not fail to notice the change. She said "You are unclean, you can't touch the scripture of Allah". So, on her insistence Umar made ablution and read the sacred pages. It was Sura 'Ta Ha'. When Umar read it his transformation was complete. He exclaimed "How beautiful, how noble are the words!". When Khabbab heard this he came out of hiding and said "It was only yesterday that I heard the Prophet (SAS) beseeching Allah to strengthen His Deen, either by Abul Hakam or by Umar. Allah has accepted you for His Deen." Umar asked where he might find the prophet (SAS), and went to the house of Arqam. He knocked on the door.

They had earlier been warned about Umar by Nuaym. The Prophet (SAS) told them to open the door. Hamza said if he has come with good intent it is well and good, but if he has any evil motive, we will kill him by his own sword. The prophet (SAS) went forward, took him by the belt and said "O son of Khattab, what has brought you here". Umar said humbly "O messenger of Allah, I have come to declare my faith in Allah and His messenger". "Allahu Akbar" said the prophet (SAS) and all assembled echoed it. Umar resolved to make his faith known to the worst enemy of Allah and so the next morning he knocked on the door of his maternal uncle, Abu Jahl, who himself opened the door and said "The best of welcome". Umar said "I have come to tell you that I have become a Muslim, that there is no god but Allah and Muhammad (SAS) is His messenger". Abu Jahl slammed the door on his face.

### **Interdiction (The boycott)**

Umar now took to praying in the Mosque openly. He and Hamza would at times take a number of Muslims with them and pray together. The Quraysh were losing face but did not dare to confront them, Umar and Hamza would stop at nothing. So, on Abu Jahl's insistence they took the decision of interdicting(**boycotting/ ostracizing**) the clan of Hashim, who with the exception of Abu Lahab

were giving protection to Muhammad. They drew up a document saying 'None would marry a daughter of Hashim, nor give his daughter in marriage to one of the clan. None will sell anything of food, clothes or other necessities to the clan of Hashim nor buy anything from them. This would continue until Muhammad gives up his claim of prophet-hood or the Hashimites disown him'. They took the signature and seal of as many as forty leaders and hung the document inside the Ka'bah. The clan of Muttalib refused to agree and so were included in the boycott. The ban was imposed.

For the sake of security all members of the Banu Hashim and Banu Muttalib gathered around the house of Abu Talib in 'Sheb-e-Abu Talib'; and Abu Lahab with his family moved away. The prophet (SAS) with Khadijah and their household moved in totally.

Some of the Quraysh and particularly Abu Jahl would usually be on the look out to impose the embargo strictly. Even then some people would for the sake of familial relations or for purely humanitarian reasons, send them food and other necessary commodities.

Khadijah's nephew Hakim was one. One day when Abu Jahl tried to prevent him, an altercation ensued. Abul Bakhtari came in saying that Hakim should be allowed to bring food to his aunt, but Abu Jahl was adamant. So Hakim and Abul Bakhtari who were not Muslims gave Abu Jahl a thorough beating, trampling him under their feet. Hamza happened to witness the scene and was amused. Hisham ibn Amr of Amir and others also sent food merely for humanitarian considerations. The Muslims of other clans particularly Abu Bakr and Umar did their best to supply provisions to the Hashimites. Abu Bakr who was a wealthy merchant had become poor in these three years. In spite of all these efforts the people in 'Sheb-e-Abu Talib' were almost always starving. The boycott continued for over three years.

All the misery however could not weaken the resolve of the Muslims, nor did the Hashim clan or Muttalib clan show weakness. Moreover the story of the boycott and of the misery of Hashim and Muttalib

clans was being talked over around the peninsula, winning sympathy for them. It was also drawing ever increasing attention of the people to Islam.

Many amongst the Quraysh even, were no longer happy with the prolonged brutality, they wanted a change. Hisham who had often sent his camel laden with food and clothes, now began to organize a campaign against the boycott. He went to Zuhayr of Makhzum, Mut'im ibn Adi of Nawfal, Abul Bakhtari and Zumah ibn Aswad of Asad, and worked out a plan. One fine morning in the assembly of the mosque, they raised the question of the continued brutality against the Hashim and Muttalib clans. Apparently the enthusiasm of continuing with the ban had waned in almost everybody except Abu Jahl. Mean while a word had come from Abu Talib that Muhammad had said that the document of the interdiction(ostracism) had been destroyed by insects. Mut'im went inside the Kabah and brought the document. It had indeed been destroyed by worms save the words "In thy name O Allah". So the boycott was lifted and a body of the Quraysh went to give the news to the Banu Hashim and Banu Muttalib.

With the lifting of the ban hostilities against the Muslims also relaxed for a time. The Quraysh leaders finding no other way agreed in their meeting to come to a compromise with Muhammad, that they would all follow both religions, one day they would worship the idols, and on another only Allah. To them it was a middle path. The fools did not see that Islam the true monotheism has to be absolute, it begins with the negation of false gods "La ilaha illallah", it can never exist in association with polytheism. After they put the proposal to the prophet (SAS), Allah revealed the Sura Kafiroon (109:1-6), a small sura of six verses.

In the pagan concept of religion, worshipping means giving something to the gods to appease them. In Islam worshipping Allah is not for Allah's sake, but for purifying one's own self, if it does not cast

a permanent effect on the life of the person, it is no worship at all. The moment you bow to a false god or agree to abide by any law contrary to Allah's law, all the worshipping of your whole life has gone down the drain. By worshipping Allah you benefit yourself, by worshipping or even tolerating even for a moment anything other than Allah, you prove that your claim of practicing Islam is false.

After the news of lifting of boycott reached Abyssinia, some emigrants returned to Makkah, amongst them were Uthman ibn Affan and Ruqayya and also Uthman ibn Maz'un.

### **Year of sadness**

Not long after the lifting of the boycott, Khadijah, the prophet's wife and best friend and adviser died at the age of sixty five. Every body of the household and the Muslim community at large were overcome with grief. The prophet(SAS) consoled them that she was the one person to whom Allah had sent greetings of peace in her lifetime through Jibrail.

Within weeks after Khadijah's death Abu Talib fell ill and it was apparent that he may be dying. The Quraysh leaders including Utbah, Shaybah and Abu Jahl came to visit him. They again urged him to persuade Muhammad to come to a compromise. When the Prophet(SAS) was called in he said "Let them give me one word and the whole of Arabia will be under their rule and the Persians will be their subjects". They said in that case we are ready to give not one but ten words. The prophet (SAS) said "Say La Ilaha Illallah, Muhammadur Rasulullah". They did not utter the words. When they had left Abu Talib said "My nephew you had not asked them for anything bad". The prophet (SAS) implored his uncle "Please you say the words that I may intercede for you on the Day of Judgment". Abu Talib said "If I do, they will say I said it for fear of death". Just before death his lips moved and Abbas who was near him said that he had testified to 'Shahadat', but the prophet (SAS) said "I did not hear him".

With the death of Abu Talib not only the prophet (SAS) but all Muslims became more vulnerable. Nawfal, half brother of Khadijah organized a mob attack on Abu Bakar and Talhah, and not even their tribe came to their assistance. For Abu Bakr the goings became very tough and he took permission of the prophet (SAS) to migrate to Abyssinia, but before he reached the Red Sea coast, he happened to meet Ibn Dughunnah a tribal chief, who brought him back under his protection.

Abu Lahab had succeeded as chief of the clan of Hashim, and the prophet (SAS) was being ill treated more than ever before. Putrefying offal was thrown in his cooking pot. Some offal was thrown on his back while he was praying. Dirt was thrown on his head and face. One day when the prophet (SAS) was praying in the mosque, Abu Jahl was there nearby with several of his friends. He said "Which one of you is ready to take the intestines of the camel slaughtered yesterday and deposit it on Muhammad's neck while he is prostrating"? The most wretched of them, Uqbah ibn Abi Mu'ait did do this. The prophet (SAS) could not lift his head until his daughter, Fatimah heard of it, came running and removed the filth. After finishing his prayers the prophet (SAS) prayed to Allah to punish Abu Jahl, Utbah, Shaybah, Walid ibn Utbah, Umayyah ibn Khalf, Uqbah ibn Abi Mu'ait and Umarah ibn Al-Walid; all of them were killed in the battle of Badar. On hearing the prayer the faces of the evil ones went pale.

On another day Abu Jahl proceeded with a large stone to crush the Prophet (SAS)'s head while he was prostrating, but suddenly turned back in fear. On being asked by his friends he said that a fearsome camel was about to bite him. On yet another occasion he had ventured forward to step on the Prophet (SAS)'s neck while he was prostrating, but suddenly stepped back seeing a pit of fire. Yet in spite of these incidences(**incidents**) the enemy of Allah did not mend himself; to him it was sorcery. The people who are bent upon

destroying themselves seal their own hearts.

## **Taif**

As the situation worsened in Makkah, the prophet (SAS) thought of looking for a second base for Islam in the nearby town of Taif, about one hundred and ten kilometers away. He set out on foot with Zayd ibn Harithah as sole companion. He thought, just as there were some people in Makkah to respond to truth, there might be some in Taif too, but the situation there turned out to be worse. He stayed in Taif for ten days and met different prominent persons of the Thaqif, but none showed any inclination to accept the truth. Particularly three brothers Abd Yalil, Masud and Habib, sons of Amr ibn Umayr were sarcastic and abusive. They taunted him, treated him ill and set on him the street urchins to jeer him, yell at him and stone him on the ankles. This they did and the prophet's shoes were filled with his blood. Zayd tried his best to protect him.

Coming out of the town the prophet (SAS) took refuge in an orchard owned by two persons of Makkah, Utbah and Shaybah. They saw Muhammad in this plight and in spite of their hostilities towards him, felt sorry for him. They sent their slave Addas with a bunch of grapes on a plate for him to eat. He began to eat saying "In the name of Allah", at which Addas was astonished and said "The people here do not utter these words". The prophet (SAS) asked him where he comes from. Addas said "I am from Nineveh and I am a Christian". The prophet said "The city of Yunus (Jonah) son of Matta". Addas asked "How do you know Jonah?" The prophet (SAS) said "He is my brother, like him I am a prophet of Allah". Addas kissed his head, hands and feet. When Addas returned to his masters they scolded him for being so naive.

Late that night the prophet (SAS) reached the valley of Nakhlah. When he was saying his prayers there, a number of jinn heard the Quran and took faith.

The prophet (SAS) felt that he should seek the protection of some capable person before entering Makkah again. Mut'im the chief of Nawfal who was one of those who had arranged the annulment of the boycott, came forward with his sons and nephews and escorted him to the Kabah. Abu Jahl who was there at the time asked them if they had become Muhammad's followers. They said they had given him protection. Abu Jahl said "Whom you protect, to him we give protection". Here is a lesson for each and every Muslim, we must depend on the protection of Allah all throughout our lives, but must not fail to seek state protection or social protection where necessary, even if it be from non-Muslims.

### **Isra and Meraj**

In this year of sadness after all the distressing experiences like the deaths of Khadijah and Abu Talib, and the unmerciful treatment in Makkah and Taif, came for the prophet (SAS) the most novel experience. For him it was the most exhilarating and heart-warming incidence, the 'Isra and Meraj'. The prophet (SAS) was sleeping in the house of his cousin Umm Hani one night when he awoke and went to Al-Hijr of Kabah and slept there. Presently the angel Jibrail (AS) came and awakened him. He then took him to the gate of the Masjid, where there was the 'Buraq', a winged beast with a body like a mule. (The name has been derived from 'barq' i.e. lightning.) On it the prophet (SAS) travelled to Baitul Maqdis, where he met all the prophets of Allah and prayed with them, he himself leading the prayer, thus being inaugurated as the leader of them all. Thence he was taken upward, visiting all the skies, to the 'Sidratul Muntaha', and to the throne of Allah. After conversing with Allah and receiving commandments he came back, within the night. The commandments included 1. Worship Allah alone, 2. Be good to parents, 3. Give the relatives, the poor and the wayfarers their due, 4. Don't be extravagant, 5. Speak kindly to those who seek help, 6. Be moderate in giving, 7. Don't kill the children for fear of impoverishment, 8. Do

not go near adultery and lewdness, 9. Don't kill anybody unlawfully, 10. Don't go near the property of the orphan with evil motive, 11. When measuring and weighing, give in full measure and weight, 12. Do not pursue a thing of which you have no knowledge, 13. Don't walk on earth with arrogance, and 14. Don't associate partners with Allah. (Isra 17: 23-39) Besides, five times 'Salat' was ordained too. The Prophet (SAS) was shown heaven and hell also.

The prophet (SAS) returned to the house of Umm Hani and after the dawn prayers narrated to them the incidence. Umm Hani was a Muslima and she believed, but was afraid the unbelievers would not believe and would make mockery of the prophet. So she told him not to talk about it, but he knew he has to divulge the truth. In the mosque it so happened that Abu Jahl asked him if there was anything new, and he narrated the incidence of his journey to Jerusalem. Abu Jahl was overjoyed that, this was something nobody would ever believe. He spread it to his friends, some of whom confronted the prophet. The prophet (SAS) told them that on his return journey from Jerusalem he had seen a caravan of such and such people of Makkah and they are likely to arrive today, and it came out to be true. He also described the masjid of Baitul Maqdis to those who had seen it. These took them a little aback, but still they would not believe. Abu Jahl asked Abu Bakar if he believed in the fantastic story of Muhammad that he has gone to Jerusalem and come back in one night? Abu Bakar said if the prophet (SAS) has said it, it is of course true. Don't I believe when he says Allah sends him revelations from above seven heavens? So Abu Bakar was named As-Siddique, the one with the highest confidence, the great confirmer of truth.

### **Marriage with Sawdah and A'ishah**

After the death of Khadijah, Khawlah the wife of Uthman ibn Maz'un would look after the prophet's household. She felt that the Prophet (SAS) should get married again, and talked to him about it. He asked her if she had any particular bride in mind. She suggested A'ishah

daughter of Abu Bakar, a virgin, and Sawdah daughter of Zam'ah, the widow of Sarkan. Meanwhile the prophet (SAS) had seen in his dream the silk clad A'ishah as his bride. So the prophet (SAS) asked Khawlah to put the proposal in both places.

Sawdah a mature woman of about thirty was readily agreeable, and the prophet (SAS) asked her to nominate her guardian, who should give her in marriage. She chose her brother-in-law Hatib. The marriage took place soon.

On receiving the proposal Abu Bakar was overjoyed at the prospect of further enhancing his relations with the prophet (SAS), but he had already promised his daughter to Mut'im for his son Jubayr. So, Abu Bakar went to Mut'im, who readily agreed to forgo his claim. The engagement with A'ishah was done in a few months, but the marriage took place after Hijrah.

### **Yathrib**

During the following Hajj season as usual, the prophet (SAS) renewed his vigorous campaign with the pilgrims, but this year he was more inclined to addressing groups and tribes than individuals. He was looking earnestly for bases outside of Makkah. Abu Lahab also was stepping up his propaganda campaign against the prophet. He would go to the groups the prophet had visited, telling them that he was his own nephew, that he was a dangerous sorcerer who could cause rifts between father and son and between brothers, and asking people not to follow him.

Some tribes like the Bani Amir ibn Sasah, who saw the potentialities in the work of the prophet, would ask if they would be given the kingdom after the prophet; but the prophet naturally could not promise anything other than the reward of the hereafter. So the seekers of the worldly gains were no longer interested.

Yathrib was different. In that city there were two major tribes of Arabs, the Khazraj and the Aws, who were idolaters; and there were the Jews. The Aws and the Khazraj were destroying themselves by battling one another for generations, and the Jews would always fan the hatred between them. The Jews were further weakening them economically by usury. The Jews too were not in peace either, the three tribes of them were inimical against each other. The pagan Arabs though divided amongst themselves were the dominant force, because of their numerical superiority and their connections with the other Arab tribes all around. The Jews knew from their scriptures that it was the time for another messenger of Allah to come, and that he would come from the south. They would threaten the Arabs that when the new prophet comes, they would with his help slaughter them, as the Ad and the Iram had been slain.

A group of six men of Khazraj was met by the prophet (SAS) at Aqabah of Mina, and he called them to Islam and recited some passages of the Quran. They were convinced that he was the prophet the Jews had always been talking about, and they decided to be the first to join him, before the Jews did. They also felt convinced that he would be able to cause their two warring tribes to unite.

These six Muslims delivered the message of Islam to as many people in Yathrib as they could, and next year five of them came again with seven others, two of whom were of the Aws. At Aqabah these twelve men pledged themselves to the prophet, and this is called the first Aqabah. They pledged not to associate any partners with Allah, not to steal, not to commit fornication or adultery, not to slay their offspring, not to utter slander, and not to disobey the prophet in that which is right.

When they returned to Yathrib, with them the prophet (SAS) sent Mus'ab ibn Umayr of Abd adDar, who had returned from Abyssinia. Mus'ab was to instruct people about Islam, recite to them the Quran and to lead the 'salah'. He was a handsome person with a

commendable personality. He spoke gently with reason, and his recitation of the Quran was enchanting. In eleven months he visited almost every house of Yathrib, and a good number of people accepted Islam. Before the Hajj he returned to Makkah to give his report to the prophet (SAS).

Mus'ab's report was carefully considered to assess the possibility of establishing the Islamic state there; what the relation with the Jews and other non-Muslims will be, the economic problems that might arise as the Muslims of Makkah emigrate to Madinah virtually as destitute refugees, and particularly of the inevitable hostile reaction of the Quraysh. From Mus'ab the prophet (SAS) learned that the Muslims of Yathrib would be ready to face all eventualities.

It had been arranged that the delegates of Yathrib would meet the prophet (SAS) on the last night of the Hajj at Aqabah. On the appointed night seventy three men and two women sneaked out of their tents in Mina and assembled at Aqabah to meet the prophet. The prophet (SAS) was accompanied by only his uncle Abbas who was not yet a Muslim.

All aspects of the emigration with all the possibilities were discussed in details. Abbas was particularly concerned about the safety of his nephew. The Muslims of Yathrib pledged to protect the Prophet(SAS) as they protect their women and children; and the prophet promised that he will not leave them. The Muslims of Yathrib well understood that they were committing themselves to go to war against the world. They asked what their reward will be, and the prophet answered in one word "Paradise". The Muslims of Yathrib did not ask for a kingdom. Thus the second Aqabah was concluded.

### **Migration of the Muslims**

The prophet (SAS) gave the green signal to migrate secretly, so the Muslims began to leave for Madinah by ones and twos. Abu Salamah had however migrated earlier, after the death of Abu Talib. He had

set out with his wife and small child Salamah. His wife's tribe prevented her from going, and his own clan took away the little boy, thus all three were separated. Later some people took pity, and the mother and son set out alone on a camel for Madinah. Uthman ibn Talhah of Abd ad-Dar not yet a Muslim happened to see them in the desert and escorted them to Quba where Abu Salamah was.

Most of the Muslims who could go, had now reached Madinah in a few weeks. Abu Bakar sought permission of the prophet and was told to wait, that he might get a companion. Ali also was asked to stay. Umar was probably the only one who dared to go out publicly with his family, nobody dared to stop him. Hisham and Ayyash were to accompany him, but Hisham was prevented by his father and brother, was tortured and made to renounce faith. Ayyash did travel with Umar, but was overtaken by his half-brother Abu Jahl and Harith, who told him that his mother had vowed to stay outside in the sun, not to go inside the house, nor to comb her hair until Ayyash had returned. Thus he was motivated, in spite of Umar telling him that it was false, that it was only a trap. When Ayyash had come near Makkah, Abu Jahl and Harith bound his hands and feet took him to the city and Abu Jahl boasted of his cleverness and called Ayyash a fool. Ayyash also was made to renounce his faith. When the two verses "Say O My servants who have transgressed against themselves, be not in despair of the mercy of Allah, verily Allah forgives all sins, verily He is the Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. And turn in repentance to your Lord and surrender to Him before punishment comes upon you, after that you will not be helped" (Zumar 39:53-54) were revealed, Umar wrote them and sent them to Hisham and he showed them to Ayyash and both of them got solace.

Suhayb a former slave prospered as a merchant, bought his own freedom and amassed a sizable fortune. When he set out for Yathrib he was chased by a group of unbelievers led by Abu Jahl. When almost overtaken he turned around with bow in hand and said that he

would fight to the bitter end, and surely would take a number of them with him, instead he offered them his wealth if they would let him go. They chose to take the wealth because they knew he was a good marksman.

### **Muhammad(SAS), Abu Bakr and Ali**

When most of the Muslims of Makkah were gone, the Quraysh leaders met together as to how to prevent Muhammad from reaching Yathrib, which they knew would bring danger for them. The superiority of the Quraysh would surely be challenged. At Abu Jahl's insistence they took the decision of killing Muhammad, and they decided that the best course was to form a band with members from each tribe and clan, who would pounce upon Muhammad all at once and kill him. The Banu Hashim in that case will not be able to fight all the tribes and will have to accept blood money. The angel Jibrail (AS) informed the prophet (SAS) of the plot at noon and forthwith he went to the house of Abu Bakr. Seeing the prophet (SAS) at this unusual hour, he was sure that the permission had come from Allah to leave Makkah. Abu Bakr had kept ready two fast camels for the journey and he offered one to the prophet (SAS). He insisted on buying it instead of taking it as a free gift.

At night the assassins surrounded the house of the prophet. They heard voices of women inside and decided to strike him down as soon as he comes out at dawn. The prophet (SAS) instructed Ali to sleep in his bed, covered by his cloak, so that if anybody looks in he would assume that it was the prophet. He assured Ali that he will come to no harm insha-Allah. Ali was to remain behind to hand over the trusts of the people of Makkah that were kept in the prophet's custody. The unbelievers trusted Muhammad with their treasures, while their leaders were conspiring to kill him. At midnight all assassins fell asleep and dust was thrown on their heads, while the prophet (SAS) went out of the front door and made for the house of

Abu Bakr.

Thence they proceeded to the south to the cave of mount Thawr, although Madinah is to the north. This was done to elude the pursuers. Although the prophet (SAS) was assured of protection from Allah, he never failed to take all possible precautions. In the cave they stayed for three days, during which time the Quraysh were sending teams all around in search of the prophet. They had declared a prize of one hundred camels for the head of Muhammad, and it was given wide publicity. Abdullah ibn Abu Bakr would bring them news of the goings on in Makkah and all around, every day. Amir ibn Fuhayrah, Abu Bakr's shephard would graze the sheep and come with the flock at dusk to give them milk and to obliterate Abdullah's tracks. When they were in the cave a group of pursuers had come one day to the mouth of the cave, they could hear them and even see their legs. The prophet (SAS) reassured Abu Bakr not to lose heart, "fear not, Allah surely is with us" (Tawbah 9:40). After taking all precautions humanly possible, his dependence in Allah was complete and unwavering. The pursuers did not enter the cave, nor even did they look inside, for there was a sapling growing at the mouth of the cave and the cave mouth was covered by a spider web. There was also a nest of rock dove and the bird was sitting on its eggs.

On the fourth night Abdullah ibn Araqat, the guide brought the two camels, and Asma bint AbuBakr brought their supply of food. She had forgotten to bring a string to bind the bag of provisions to the saddle, and so she divided her girdle in two, and with one tied the bag. The prophet (SAS) gave her the nickname 'Dhat al-Nitaqayn', the lady of the two girdles. This little piece of jest at such a tense moment shows the strength of nerves of the Prophet (SAS). Amir ibn Fuhayrah had brought another camel for himself and he too accompanied them. The guide took them through a most unusual route, going southwest to the Red Sea coast and then turning north. They took all the precautions humanly possible and Allah helped

them.

When they were passing by the tribe of Mudlij a man saw them and talked about them in their assembly. Suraqah of the tribe instantly understood that it must be Muhammad, for whom the Quraysh have declared a prize of a hundred camels. So to get the prize all by himself he said "Oh, it is such and such person I have seen some time back going northward", and after some idle talk of a few minutes he sneaked out of the meeting. He went home took his arms and set out on his horse. When he saw them his horse tumbled and he fell off. He fell a second time and yet he was bent upon winning the big prize. When he had come nearer to the small caravan the front legs of his horse sank in the sand and he fell for the third time. As the horse pulled out its legs smoke was rising from the holes. Suraqah was convinced that he will never be able to harm them. He called them to stop so that he can talk to them. He asked the prophet (SAS) to give him something in writing for future reference. Abu Bakr gave him a note. Later he used the note at the time of the conquest of Makkah and became a Muslim. When he was going back with the note, the prophet (SAS) asked him how he would like to wear the bracelets of the Persian emperor and Suraqah was amazed. Several years later, when Umar (RA) was the Khalifa, he gave Suraqah the bracelets.

One day the prophet's caravan met another small caravan coming from north. It turned out to be AbuBakr's cousin Talhah. He was returning from Syria with merchandise. He gave them some very fine white garments.

On another day they came upon a Bedouin woman Umm Ma'bad. She was alone in her cottage, her husband had gone out to graze the flock of sheep. She was feeling distressed that she had no food to offer to the guests. There was only one sheep left with her which was too weak to go with the flock. The prophet (SAS) patted the ewe and prayed to Allah, and its udder swelled with milk. It was milked and

everybody had enough to drink and a quantity of milk was left with Umm Ma'bad.

On the twelfth day after leaving the cave at about noon they came in sight of the palm groves and orchards of Quba. For the last few days since hearing of the prophet's disappearance from Makkah and of the offer of the prize over his head, the people of Quba and the Muhajirun staying there would every morning come out and stay looking till the sun became too hot. This day also they had just been returning, when a Jew from over his roof top saw the white garments reflecting the sun and instantly knew who they were. He shouted "O sons of Qaylah here comes your fortune". The Prophet (SAS) stayed at Quba for two weeks, and Ali (RA) came and joined them, after handing over the trusts of the people of Makkah.

## **Jihad the on going struggle**

The word Jihad means to strive and struggle, for any cause, good or bad.

Terminologically Jihad means "Jihad fi sabilillah" to strive and struggle in the way of Allah. Orientalists in general and many Muslims too have translated the word jihad as 'holy war', and it is not correct. Battles are only a particular stage of jihad. Hijrat in the way of Allah is also top most Jihad.

The prophet Muhammad (SAS) embarked on jihad the very first day the revelation of “Iqra be ismi Rabbikal lazi Khalaq.....” came down on him. The first co-warrior with him was Khadijah (RA), who covered him up, comforted him, reassured him and talked about him to her cousin the learned Waraquah ibn Nawfal.

In fact the jihad had begun long before that, it had begun when Muhammad (SAS) took to wondering about injustice in the society, the hardship and misery of mankind, and to thinking a way out to restore peace in the society. It was jihad when “Hilful Fuzul” was formed. It was jihad when (and) the young stalwarts endeavored to restore the rights of the oppressed.

Mekkah was virtually an idolatrous society, the Ka’bah had become a depot of idols; but there were a few people who did not like idol worship, some of whom professed to follow the religion of Ibrahim (AS).

There were at least four of the Quraysh who were known to be in quest of ‘The true religion’. They were Zayd Ibn Amr, Uthman Ibn Al-Huwayrith, Ubayd Allah Ibn Jahsh and Waraqah Ibn Nawfal. Of them Waraqah joined Christianity. It was to him that Khadijah (RA) went and talked, after the prophet (SAS) received the first revelation. He had recognized Muhammad (SAS) as the prophet and had vouched to help him when his people would persecute him and drive him away, if he lived that long. It is likely that he had accepted Islam. Ubayd Allah had embraced Islam, migrated to Abyssinia, but there he converted to Christianity and died as a Christian. His wife Umm Habibah Bint Abu Sufian remained a Muslim and later married the Prophet (SAS). Uthman Ibn Huwayrith became a Christian and was a favorite of the Byzantine king. Zayd Ibn Amr would openly criticize idolatry and was beaten and tortured by his uncle Al-Khattab. He traveled widely in quest of the true religion, did not accept Christianity or any other religion; would go to the Ka’bah and beseech “O Allah, if I knew the correct way of worshipping You, I would surely do so”. He

did not have the good fortune of meeting Muhammad (SAS) as the Prophet, he was murdered on his way to Makkah. His son Sa'id (RA) and Khttab's son Umar (RA) once asked the Prophet (SAS) if they can pray to Allah for the forgiveness of Zayd, and the Prophet (SAS) said "yes" and added that Zayd will be an ummah on his own, on The Day of Resurrection. Zayd's and Waraqah's Jihad was genuine and fruitful.

After the first revelation gradually other 'mujahedeen' (warriors) like Ali (RA), Zayd Ibn Haritha (RA), Abu Bakar (RA) and others joined hands. The jihad at this time was of motivation and persuasion of individuals. The procedure was to reveal the truth to them, to appeal to their good senses the inborn sense of justice and righteousness in man. Gradually one by one men and women gathered, mostly the young, the poor and the slaves. At the beginning the only noteworthy person was Abu Bakar (RA).

One of the best examples that the honest and righteous are for Islam is Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud. This young man was a shepherd. When the Prophet (SAS) and Abu Bakar (RA) asked him for some milk, he replied that he was only a trusty and how he can give them milk? He accepted Islam after talking to them.

Another example is Uthman Ibn Maz'un. Even before entering Islam he had vowed not to take intoxicants, as these things cause a man to lose his ability to think and judge properly. He was conscious of his self-respect in a society where alcoholic intoxication was a part of life.

It is true that the Makkan period of prophet-hood did not involve battles i.e. armed conflicts. But was it not an all out war against polytheism and corruption? The call of 'Tawhid', the very words "La Ilaha Illa-Allah" "There is no god other than Allah" was a declaration of war against the gods, against the social and economic system based on polytheism and against all corruption. So even when there

was no public announcement, only individuals were contacted and attracted, and that too only the closest of friends; the leaders of the society, those with vested interest were apprehending trouble, they were not at ease.

When Allah commanded the prophet (SAS) to admonish his nearest kinsmen ( As-Shuara 26:214), and he mounted the Safa and called the Quraish to truth, they reacted angrily. His uncle Abu Lahab was abusive.

One day when a group of Muslims were performing Salah in a remote area, some unbelievers happened to see them. They ridiculed them, became aggressive and there was a small scuffle. Allah ordered the Muslims to be patient and gentle ( Al-Muzzammil 73:10). So they became forbearing to the extreme, so much so that they were tortured even to death; and none of them did try to retaliate. It was Jihad, a test of patience and perseverance, and the Muslims came out victorious.

One may wonder how being tortured, humiliated and even murdered be called a victory. It is victory of faith. Ammar (RA) was tortured, his parents were killed in front of his eyes, he was made to utter words of disbelief, but he did not give up faith. His mother Sumaiya (RA) and father Yasar (RA) were tortured and killed, but did not concede defeat. Bilal (RA) was tortured continually but did not ever utter one word against his faith. None of the Muslims were spared. Many migrated to Habsha leaving behind their home and hearth, but never left their deen. This is the triumph of faith, the first of the victories. The victorious stalwarts were mostly the poor people and the slaves. The faith in their hearts had raised them from the lowly status in the society to the pinnacle of belief and conviction.

Persecution and torturing did not deter people from entering Islam. Nor did the violent anti Islamic propaganda dissuade the righteous and intelligent people. One example of failure of false propaganda is

Dammad of Azd Shanu'ah. He was a faith healer, a man with confidence in his own crafts, and he came to heal Muhammad (SAS) of his 'madness'. When he met Muhammad (SAS) he told him frankly the purpose of his coming and wanted to talk to him. He talked and became a Muslim. Dammad preached Islam to his people.

Another example is Tufayl Ibn Amr, a leader of the Daws tribe. The unbelieving Quraish leaders had talked so much ill about Muhammad (SAS) to him that he had resolved not to see him, nor to listen to him. He even plugged his own ears. But Allah made him hear Muhammad (SAS), and he thought 'I am an intelligent and learned person, a poet, I surely can distinguish between right and wrong, then why not listen to him?' He listened and became a Muslim. He converted his father, his wife and most of his tribe. The propaganda of the Quraish leaders rather helped the message of Islam to spread far and wide.

The other immediate victory was that the Muslims overcame racism. Without Islam it would never have been possible to conquer racist discrimination. From the very outset and throughout the period of over fourteen hundred years Muslims stand in Salah five times a day, touching shoulder to shoulder, without discrimination between black and white, rich and poor, prince and slave. In the eye of Allah all are equal, if the poorest of poor, even the slave is better in 'Taqwah' in righteous deeds, then he is the greater (Al-Hujurat 49:13). This equality of Muslims is seen in every country of the world.

The Hajj congregation every year is the greatest congregation on earth. It is a model of indiscriminate on the international level.

Bilal (RA) the Habshi slave was chosen as the first Muezzin to proclaim the Adan, to call the Muslims to prayer from the top of the Ka'bah, because of his 'Taqwah'. Umar (RA) when he was chosen the 'Amirul Mu'minin', would refer to Bilal as "Saiyeduna Hazrat Bilal" "Our master his highness Bilal".

In the Quran Allah has said that all human kind are the children of

one couple Adam and Eve (Al-Hjurat 49:13), and no Muslim ever had any qualms in accepting all humans as equal. In fact Islam is the only religion that has effectively abolished the cast system. So this is another triumph of Jihad that the Muslims have achieved and none others have.

Every individual has his own Jihad. Abu Bakar (RA) bought and freed Belal (RA) and several other slaves, male and female, who were being tortured mercilessly. Never did he hesitate in spending his money for the cause of Allah. He called his friends who were righteous people to Islam. Uthman Ibn Affan, Zubayr Ibn Awam, Abd al Rahman Ibn Awf, Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas and Talhah Ibn Ubaydallah embraced Islam by his efforts, in the initial stage.

There were slaves who could not be freed by anyone. Khabbab Ibn Aratt and Abu Fukayhah were amongst those that were tortured mercilessly continually, and yet they remained Muslims.

Arquam Ibn Arquam (RA) had a large house at the foot of Mount Safa. He became a Muslim and offered his house to be used by the Prophet (SAS) as a meeting place for the Muslims. Here the Prophet (SAS) and the companions would gather and confer and pray.

Bani Ghifar was a tribe of highway robbers. Abu Dhar of the tribe accepted Islam and many of his tribes-men followed suit. They continued the practice of waylaying caravans, particularly of the Quraish now. After capturing the spoils he would offer the goods back if they were ready to testify to "La Ilaha illa-Allah, Muhammadur Rasoolullah".

Jafar Ibn Abu Talib and the muhajereen in Abyssinia played a great role there. When about a hundred of the Muslims had migrated to Abyssinia to avoid persecution, the Quraish leaders contemplated to bring them back. They sent two efficient diplomats as emissaries to the king, Amar Ibn Al As and Abdullah Ibn Rabiah. They first of all bribed the king's generals and courtiers with attractive gifts and

presented gifts to the king too. They then appealed to the king on behalf of the Quraish leaders and the families of the emigrants to send the emigrants back with them, as these half-witted young people had left the religion of their forefathers, but had not entered Christianity, the religion of the king, the Negus. So the Quraish emissaries insisted that the emigrants be sent back with them, even without hearing them. The courtiers also lent support to it. But the Negus who was a righteous king did not agree to decide without hearing the other sides, even if they were half-witted.

So the emigrants were called in and their spokesman Jafar put forward the teachings of Islam in an eloquent manner. Negus was impressed and asked Jafar to recite from the Quran. He recited Sura Maryam and Negus was visibly moved. He refused to send the emigrants with the emissaries.

The shrewd Amar Ibn Al-As came to the court again the following day and beseeched the King to ask the emigrants about what they think of Jesus Christ. The King summoned them and put the question. Jafar told exactly what was said in the Quran, that Jesus Christ was a mighty messenger of Allah, that he was the Messiah, the word of Allah, that he was born miraculously of the Virgin Maryam, that he was a servant of Allah. Although the bishops and generals present in court snorted and grunted, Negus agreed with Jafar. He gave the envoys back their gifts and sent them away. The King knew he was taking a risk in accepting Jesus as a servant of Allah and not a son, but it could not deter him from being just. The king told the Muslims if in case he is overthrown or killed, they should leave the country, and kept two ships ready for them.

The bishops and generals did indeed try to hatch up an uprising against the king, saying he had left Christianity, their religion. Negus however could contain the situation, and pacify the people. He could because he was just and intelligent. The Prophet (SAS) had encouraged his companions to migrate to Abyssinia, because the

Negus was a wise and just king. Actually Nagus did embrace Islam and played his role as a Muslim. The Negus fought his Jihad befittingly. He played his heroic role in protecting the emigrants even at the risk of losing his life and kingdom. Later also he served the cause of Islam throughout his life.

The emigration of the Muslims from Makkah to Abyssinia was not just for saving their skin from torture and persecution only. They had other missions to accomplish. The Prophet (SAS) was thinking of establishing a second base for Islam. Islam was surely to be for the whole of the world. The emigrants did not have a vegetable existence there in Abyssinia. They were active workers propagating Islam in the country and did face opposition too, even though the king himself had embraced Islam. When on the day of Khaibar, Jafar and others returned after long fifteen years, the Prophet (SAS) gave them equal portions of war booty; he regarded them as mujahideen. Their stay in Abyssinia was jihad.

Nuaym Ibn Abdullah played his role when he saw the infuriated Umar Ibn al-Khattab with sword in the hand. He asked Umar what the matter was, and Umar said he was going to find and kill Muhammad, to put an end to the trouble of the rift in the society. Nuaym asked Umar to look after his own family first, before acting for the society at large, pointing out that Umar's own sister Fatimah and her husband Sa'id had converted to Islam. Hearing this Umar rushed to his sister's house, and Nuaym went to caution the prophet (SAS) and the Muslims.

Umar's sister Fatimah (RA) played her part when Umar started beating her husband and herself too. She said with spirit "Yes we have become Muslims, do whatever you can, we will not give up our faith". These undaunted words and the blood in her face brought about a sudden change in Umar.

This sudden change was at least in part brought about by another earlier incidence. Umar had beaten a slave girl by the name of Lubaina (RA) mercilessly and had failed to make her renounce her faith. He was amazed at the tenacity of Lubaina, a petty slave girl for her faith. Now the steadfastness of his sister and brother-in-law jolted him to the core. Lubaina (RA) had played her role.

Umar now wanted to see the text of the Quran that they were reading. He was visibly shaken and his sister did not fail to notice it. She insisted that he must make ablution before he can touch the sacred manuscript. Umar complied. On reading the verses of the Quran, Umar (RA) was totally transformed. Now Khabbab (RA) played his part. He had been there with Sa'id (RA) and Fatimah (RA) reading the Quran and had hidden on Umar's arrival. Now he came out and informed Umar that only the day before, the Prophet (SAS) was beseeching Allah to assist Islam with the help of either Umar or Abul Hakam (Abu Jahl). Umar forthwith went to the house of Arqam and professed shahadah.

Earlier than this, the staunchest enemy of Islam Abu Jahl had inadvertently done a great service to the hitherto weak Muslim community. He had reviled the Prophet (SAS) with the most abusive words and the Prophet (SAS) had kept silent. A little while later Hamza (RA) the prophet's uncle happened to come that way and a woman who had witnessed the incidence told Hamza about it in details. Hamza who was returning from a hunting expedition got infuriated, walked straight to the Kaba where Abu Jahl was, struck him a blow with his bow and declared before all the Quraish leaders assembled there "You dare to abuse my nephew, now I too have become a Muslim and I dare you to strike back". Abu Jahl did not dare.

The coming of Hamza(RA) and Umar(RA) into the fold of Islam added new strength and now the Muslims dared to perform Salah in public at the Kabah. The open performance of Salah in congregation hurt

the vanity of the Quraish leaders. They also envied the increasing strength of the Muslim community. The Quraish leaders conspired. As all of the clan of Banu Hashim, although many of them not yet Muslim were committed to lend support to Muhammad (SAS) under the leadership of Abu Talib, with the sole exception of Abu Lahab, the Quraish leaders decided to boycott the Banu Hashim altogether. They drew up a document that none would marry a daughter of Banu Hashim nor would give any of their daughters to them in marriage. They would not sell any item of food, clothing or anything else to them, nor would they buy anything from them. This was to continue until Muhammad (SAS) renounced his claim of prophet hood or until the Banu Hashim disowned him. Not less than forty leaders of Quraish signed and put their seals on the document at the insistence of Abu Jahl. The clan of Muttalib refused to forsake their Hashimite cousins and so they too were boycotted. All these people were obliged to take refuge in the valley, the Sheb-e-Abu Talib.

During the ban that lasted for over three years, people not yet Muslims like Hisham Ibn Amr, sent them food and clothing from time to time because of familial relations or just for humanitarian considerations. Muslims not included in the ban, particularly Abu Bakar and Umar did their best to help them. Abu Bakar once a wealthy merchant, after two years was no longer well to do.

All these help however was very little in respect of the need, and most of the time the people of Sheb-e-Abu Taleb would be starving. Because of the embargo very little food would reach them. The pathetic crying of the children for hunger would move the hearts of the passers by, but not the Quraish leaders.

The sufferings of the Hashimites moved some of their friends and relatives to action. Hisham Ibn Amr of Amir took the initiative. He motivated Zuhayr of

Makhzum, Mutim Ibn Adi of Nawfal, Abul Bakhtari and Zamah Ibn alAswad of Asad. They conferred together and in an assembly of the Quraish leaders they raised their voices to lift the ban. In spite of vehement opposition from Abu Jahl, they succeeded to convince the leaders, and the ban was lifted.

Divine help was there. Muhammad (SAS) on being informed by the angel Gabriel had told his uncle Abu Talib that the document of the ban that had been posted inside the Kabah, had been eaten up by worms, and Abu Talib sent word to the Quraish leaders challenging them to see if the document had not been destroyed. Mutim fetched the document from inside the Kabah, and in fact it had been destroyed, save the words "In thy name O Allah".

The Quraish leaders were further motivated by another fact, that the story of the ill treatment of the Hashimites was spreading and drawing ever increasing attention and sympathy of the people all around, to the Prophet (SAS) and the religion of Islam. It was becoming the talk of all of Arabia.

The endurance of the Banu Hashim and Muttalib clans for over three years was a great Jihad and it yielded good results. The number of Muslims continued to rise steadily.

Not long after the lifting of boycott, the Prophet (SAS) was bereaved of Khadija (RA). To him she was more than a wife. Aside from the strength given by Allah in the heart of the Prophet(SAS), the very first support was the spontaneous faith of Khadija(RA). Her reason was straight and simple, a man as honest and truthful as Muhammad (SAS) can never be deceived by Satan; it must be the angel of Allah who had visited him. Being his wife for fifteen years, she knew what he was. She was the comfort in the moments of anguish. Frustration could never touch him because of her. Besides the moral support, she also had given all her wealth to be spent for the cause of Islam. Once a wealthy merchant she and the prophet (SAS) would

sometimes spend weeks and months, when no food was cooked in the house. They would be thriving on only dates and water. This is Jihad that Khadija(RA) fought.

Soon afterwards, the prophet's uncle and protector Abu Talib also died. So the prophet (SAS) was being treated ever more harshly. All the Muslims in Makkah were being persecuted and ill treated, even Abu Bakar(RA). Abu Bakar took permission of the prophet (SAS) to migrate to Abyssinia and set out, but before he reached the red sea coast, he happened to meet the Bedouin chief Ibn ad-Dughunnah, who persuaded him to return to Macca under his protection.

Now that Abu Lahab had become the chief of the Banu Hashim clan, the prophet (SAS) had no protection at all. Considering the bleak circumstances of Makkah, the Prophet (SAS) decided to invite the Thakif of Taif to Islam. They were a prosperous tribe in a fertile green land. He thought if he can win them over, Taif may become a second base. The prophet (SAS) set out for Taif on foot with Zaid ibn Harithah, as his sole companion.

The Thakif chiefs turned out to be very rude and arrogant. They treated him badly and on the way back they set upon him the street urchins to abuse him and pelt stones at him, particularly his ankles. He was injured to the extent that his shoes were filled with his blood.

While returning to Makkah, the Prophet (SAS) thought it expedient to seek protection of some benevolent chief. Mutim Bin Aadi the chief of Nawfal, one of the organizers of the lifting of the boycott, promised him protection. Mutim himself with his sons and nephews escorted the Prophet (SAS) to the Kabah and then to his house.

After the traumatic incidence of Taif when the Prophet (SAS) was in an extremely depressive mood, he had the most exalted experience, that of Isra and Meiraj. In a night time journey he was taken by Allah from Mekkah to Jerusalem and thence to the presence of his Lord Allah. It was the most exhilarating incidence for the Prophet (SAS)

himself, but would it be believed by the people? One way journey to Jerusalem from Makkah took over one month, and he had gone there and come back within the night. Moreover he had gone above the seven heavens also! Will the people believe it? Yet the Prophet (SAS) talked of it openly. It did take courage and self-confidence.

The unbelievers ridiculed and those of weak faith were taken aback. Abu Jahl with a leer, confronted Abu Bakar (RA) "You believe in your companion, now he is saying he went to Jerusalem and came back within the night. What have you to say about it?" Abu Bakar (RA) replied "If he has said so I surely will believe, and why not? Do I not believe in more amazing things, that Allah sends him messages regularly from above the heavens?" This is true faith. This is why Abu Bakar was called 'The Siddiq'.

Such things are tests. They doubly confirm the faith of the believers and make those of weak faith to falter and fall out. Later in the Madani period, another such test was the change of Quibla from Baitul Muquaddas to Ka'ba.

While Makkah and Taif failed, Yathrib, later to be called Madinatun Nabi or simply Madina, showed promise. In Yathrib there lived tribes of Jews and the majority of the population were idolaters, the two major groups of them being the Khazraj and the Aws. These two groups were weakening themselves in a continuous series of battles, which was often fanned by the Jews. The Jews being usurers, were weakening them economically too. The Jews moreover would often threaten the idolaters that the time is coming near for a prophet of Allah to appear, and that they the Jews with the aid of the prophet would slaughter them. So the Yathrib people in their subconscious mind were looking forward to welcoming a prophet of Allah, beating the Jews to it, even before Muhammad (SAS) was chosen by Allah as the last prophet. So when the news of the prophet in Makkah reached Yathrib, the people had a feeling of enthusiasm; but not the Jews, as they were expecting one from amongst their tribes, the Bani

Israil.

At the time of the annual pilgrimage of Hajj every year the Prophet (SAS) would meet the various groups of people coming from all over Arabia and would invite them to Islam. Some individuals would sometimes prove to be very promising. One such person was Al-Tufail Ibn Amr, a leader of the Daws tribe. He accepted Islam and soon converted his father and wife too. A lot of people in his tribe followed suit. Thus the news of the prophet had reached far and wide including Yathrib.

During the pilgrimage by the end of the year of sorrow i.e.the year of death of Khadijah (RA) and Abu Talib, the Prophet (SAS) came upon six men of Khazraj. As he invited them to the way of Allah, they recognized him as the prophet talked of by the Jews, and they decided to be the first to put faith in him before the Jews. The other major cause of their accepting Islam instantly was that they felt confident the Prophet (SAS) would be able to end the long lasting enmity between the Aws and the Khajraj, and bring peace in Yathrib.

Five of these six people came again the next year with seven more, of whom two were from the Aws. They met the Prophet (SAS) at Aqabah and all twelve of them pledged allegiance to him. This was called the first Aqabah. When they returned to Yathrib, the Prophet (SAS) sent with them Mus'ab Ibn Umair (RA) of Abd-ad-Dar, who had by that time returned from Abyssinia. Mus'ab did a wonderful job in Yathrib.

Mus'ab was a wonderful young man. He was handsome. He was the pampered son of a wealthy mother. He would parade the streets of Makkah every evening, dressed in silk and brocade, on a fine horse, with two slaves running on either side of the trotting horse. This indulgent young man, when he accepted Islam, was bound and tortured by his mother. Later when she failed to make him renounce his faith, she let him go without a penny and without clothes, only

giving him a piece of a torn blanket to cover his shame. This was Mus'ab! He was one of the ahlus-suffa. He had migrated to Abyssinia and had returned.

Mus'ab was sent to Yathrib as an instructor and to recite the Quran. He also was made the Imam. But the most important thing for which Mus'ab was chosen was that he was to assess the mental disposition of the people of Yathrib, to assess the possibility of establishing an Islamic State there. He had an eloquent tongue with persuasive arguments and the most engrossing personality. Within the year he had visited most houses and had won over a lot of Yathrabites. Before the next pilgrimage he returned to Makkah, and in the Hajj seventy five representatives from Khazraj and Aws turned up, of whom two were women. This is called the second Aqabah. We see that Mus'ab returned to Makkah a few days earlier of the delegation, to make the Prophet (SAS) aware of the condition of Yathrib, so that he may decide on the manner of the negotiations with them. In this meeting decision was taken for the Prophet (SAS) and the Muslims to migrate to Yathrib. The Yathrib representatives pledged to protect the Prophet (SAS) as they protect their own women and children. They would even go to war against any people if need be. They knew they would have to engage in wars.

After the second Aquabah the Muslims began to leave Makkah in ever increasing numbers and take refuge in Yathrib. They left Makkah in small groups at dead of night, leaving their homes and possessions behind, knowingly for good. When the exodus became apparent the Quraish leaders endeavored to stop it. They did succeed in preventing some. They chased some others into the desert.

Abu Jahl chased his half brother Ayyash Ibn Rabi'ah right upto Medina and telling him lies about his mother's vow not to go inside her house until her son returns to her, persuaded him to return to Makkah, tied him up, tortured him and rejoiced over his own

cleverness.

Suhayb a former slave, who had proved himself to be a shrewd businessman, had bought his own freedom and had amassed a great fortune, was chased into the desert by a group led by Abu Jahl and was almost overtaken. He was a marksman of renown with his bow and arrow. He stopped and facing them said that he was ready to fight to the end, and surely would take a number of them with him into the hereafter. He offered them instead his wealth to take and let him go. They accepted the money and returned to Mekkah. When Suhayb reached Madinah and the prophet (SAS) heard of the incidence, he remarked that Suhayb had made the best of bargain.

It was only Umar who announced his intention to migrate and challenged anyone to meet him outside Makkah. Nobody dared.

The concentration of the Muslims in Yathrib caused the unbelieving Quraish leaders to worry. Finally they conferred and after lengthy deliberations took the decision of killing Muhammad (SAS). They decided that selected persons from all the tribes would attack him all at once and kill him, so that Banu Hashim would not be able to fight them all and would be obliged to take blood money. They agreed upon the date and the armed assailants surrounded the house of the prophet (SAS) during the night.

In these tense and hostile circumstances the Prophet (SAS) waited for Allah's command to come. Abu Bakar (RA) did not leave Makkah and waited so that he could accompany the Prophet (SAS) in the perilous journey. Ali (RA) remained in Makkah till after the departure of the Prophet (SAS), to return the valuables of the people that had been kept in deposit with the Prophet (SAS), the trustworthy one. On the night of the departure of the Prophet (SAS), Ali (RA) even slept in the Prophet's bed, possibly the most unsafe place on that very night.

The Prophet (SAS) was well aware of the danger. So he took all possible precautions. Although Madinah is due north of Makkah, he

and Abu Bakar (RA) travelled south and hid in the cave of Sur for three days. The unbelievers dispatched searching expeditions and one of the teams even reached the mouth of the cave. The Prophet (SAS) reassured his companion "...La tahzan Innallaha ma'ana..." "Do not fear, surely Allah is with us" (At-Tawbah 9:40). Allah saved them miraculously.

During these three days Abdullah Ibn Abu Bakar (RA) would come every night to inform them of the goings on in Makkah. Abu Bakar's servant Amer Bin Fuhaira (RA) grazing the goats, would come in the vicinity after dusk and give them milk to drink. Abu Bakar's daughter Asma (RA) would bring them food at night. On the fourth night at the appointed time the trusted guide Abdullah Bin Ariquat came with the two camels, Asma (RA) brought provisions, and they set out. They were four persons including the guide and Abu Bakar's servant Amer Bin Fuhaira, a very small caravan indeed. Amer Bin Fuhaira had brought another camel, so there were four persons and three camels. Abu Bakar took all the money he had, leaving none for the family.

After an eventful journey through a circuitous, untrodden westerly path, in which they met quite a few people, some of whom were after their heads, but later by the grace of Allah became friendly, they at last reached Quba a suburb of Yathrib, where they stayed for two weeks. Here Ali (RA) joined them in two days after the Prophet (SAS)'s arrival, after having handed over the trusts of the Makkan people.

### **The Quba Masjid**

In Quba the Prophet (SAS) lodged with Kulthum ibn Al-Hadm of Bani Amr of Aws, and Abu Bakr lodged with a man of Khazraj in the village of Sunh. Here in Quba, Salman Al-Farsi met the Prophet (SAS) for the first time.

In Quba was built the first noteworthy Masjid of the new generation of Muslims, the followers of Muhammad (SAS). The initiative was taken by Ammar (RA) and the prophet (SAS) laid the foundation and took

part in the construction work, with the rest of the Muslims. Earlier than that, masjids had been built in Yathrib and around by the initiative of the Ansars and Musa'b (RA).

The Prophet (SAS) then proceeded to Yathrib proper. It was Friday morning. At noon they stopped in the valley of Ranuna to perform the 'Jum'a' prayer. The congregation was of about a hundred men, a good number of whom were of the clan of Bani Salim of the Khazraj. This was the first Jum'a led by the Prophet (SAS). Earlier than that Musa'b (RA) had led Jum'a prayers.

### **Life in Madinah**

Yathrib was now being called the city of the Prophet (SAS), Madinatun Nabi, or simply Al- Madinah. As the Prophet (SAS) approached Madinah, the Banu Najjar, the tribe of his maternal uncles wanted him to reside with them. Others also wanted him. Banu Salem, a strong and prosperous clan also wanted him to stay with them, claiming they were in a better position to provide him protection. Some tried to hold the bridle of the camel Quswa. The Prophet (SAS) with a smiling face told them all to let the camel to choose her path, to let Allah guide her. The camel walked at will and finally settled down near the house of Abu Aiyub Ansari (RA) one of the Najjar. The Prophet (SAS) now put up with him. It was a two storied house and he chose to reside in the ground floor, so that people could come and meet him easily.

A few days later the Prophet (SAS) sent Zaid ibnHarithah and Abu Rafi to Makkah, and with them there arrived his wife Sawdah, his daughters Umm Kulthum and Fatimah, as well as Usamah ibn Zaid and Umm Aiman, Zaid's wife. There also came Abdullah ibn Abu Bakr and others of his household including his mother and Aishah, the Prophet (SAS)'s betrothed. Zainab the prophet's eldest daughter was not able to migrate and stayed with her husband Abul As, who was not yet a Muslim. The Prophet (SAS)'s other daughter Ruqayyah

had migrated earlier with her husband Uthman ibn Affan.

After arrival in Madinah, Abu Bakr and Bilal fell ill with fever. The Prophet (SAS) prayed to Allah to spare the Muhajirun and take away the fever from Madinah.

The Madinese phase of the prophet's life could be divided into three stages. The first stage is from entry into Madinah till the peace treaty of Al-Hudaibiyah in Dhul-Qadah of the sixth Hijri year. This stage is fraught with trouble and war. The second stage is upto the conquest of Makkah in Ramadan of the eighth year, and the other important features were the sending of emissaries with invitations to the kings and emperors to enter the fold of Islam. The third stage is since then till the death of the Prophet (SAS), in which people came to embrace Islam in hosts.

### **The central Masjid**

The Prophet (SAS) now wanted to build a mosque, to be the central Masjid. The piece of land on which Quswa had set down belonged to two brothers who were orphans. It was fallow land. The prophet (SAS) liked the plot and the two brothers offered it as a gift. But he wanted it to be bought. Alongside this plot As'ad ibn Juhara had already built a masjid, in which regular salah including Jum'a was being performed. Moaz (RA) offered to pay for the land, but the Prophet (SAS) asked Abu Bakar (RA) to pay.

All the Muhajirun and ansars took part in the construction work and the Prophet (SAS) too, with enthusiasm. All of them chanted rhymes during the construction work, in praise of the muhajirun and the ansars, and seeking Allah's blessings for them. Apartments were built for the prophet (SAS)'s wives attached to the masjid; Aishah had also been married to the Prophet (SAS).

After about seven months in the house of Abu Aiyub Ansari (RA), the Prophet (SAS) moved to those apartments. The masjid was not for

salah only. It was also the school, people were taught the 'deen' of Islam here. All governmental activities were also performed here. It was the assembly hall as well as the meeting place with foreign delegates. It was in fact the headquarters of the newly founded Islamic state.

All the efforts of the Muhajirun, their migration as refugees, leaving behind their home and hearth, the hardship undertaken by the left behind wives and children were all Jihad fi Sabilillah of the highest order. The efforts of the Ansars in meeting the Prophet (SAS) at Aquaba, their oath of allegiance, the readiness of taking the risk of war against all of the Arabs including the mighty Quraish, was also Jihad fi Sabilillah of the top order. The Ansars had moreover knowingly accepted the burden of emigrants, a burden that the highly developed prosperous countries of today do not want to accept. And it is history how they had treated the emigrants as their brothers. The Ansars individually had shared their houses and property with the destitute Muhajirun. Compare this with how the emigrants, the refugees are treated today, in this era of development. This is the difference between Islam the true faith, the faith of peace and mercy, and the want of it.

### **Charter of Madina**

The other important work that was done soon after coming to Yathrib was the legislation of the charter of Medina. It can rightly be called an authentic written constitution. It began with the words "In the name of Allah, The Most Merciful, The Most Beneficent". 1. It is a document drawn up by Muhammad (SAS) the prophet of Allah, for the believers that include the Muhajirun, the Ansars and all who join them. They are one nation. 2. All the tribes and clans shall ransom their prisoners in kindness and justice. 3. All believers shall rise against anyone who seeks to commit injustice, aggression, sin, or tries to spread enmity between the believers, even though he may be one of their sons. 4. None shall kill a believer nor shall assist any unbeliever against a

believer.

The understandings included, (1) sovereignty lies with Allah only. (2) The laws given by Allah will be implemented. (3) The Prophet (SAS) will be the head of the state. (4) Allah's law and the judgment of the Prophet (SAS) will be the final word in any dispute.

A deed was also signed between the Jews and the Muslims, in which was agreed (as follows): 1. The Jews will have the freedom of practicing their religion. 2. The relation between the Jews and the Muslims will be one of friendship. 3. If either the Muslims or the Jews engage in war against outside forces, the other party will help them physically and morally. 4. Neither of the two parties will help the Quraish. 5. If Madinah is attacked both parties will fight together, and each will bear their own expenses. 6. If one of the parties makes a treaty with the enemies the other will honor it, so long as it does not go against the faith. 7. In case of payment of blood money, both parties will contribute.

These measures were the essentials of a sovereign state, that the Arabs hitherto did not know of. The Prophet (SAS) was indeed the most foresighted head of a state, a real statesman.

Unlike in Makkah the society in Madinah was a multifaceted one with diverse elements. The bulk of the population was Arab, the main two tribes the Aws and the Khazraj, who were originally from Yemen. There were the Jews, mainly three tribes, The Banu Quainuqa inside the city, The Banu Nadir on the north of the city and The Banu Qurayzah on the south. Each of the Quaynuqa and Nadir tribes had about seven hundred adult male fighting force, and the Qurayza had about nine hundred. The Jews were wealthy, the Quaynuqa were jewelers and the other two tribes had their agricultural farms and date orchards, and all of them had their money lending business. They were always fattening their purses by usury from the Arab farmers. To get money the Arab farmers had to pawn not only their valuable

articles but at times even their wives and children. Naturally the Arabs hated the Jews.

But the Jews were not in peace amongst themselves either. The Qaynuqa had fought battles with the other two tribes, had to abandon their farms and orchards and take refuge inside the city. All three tribes were inimical with each other. Their mutual hatred forced them to take shelter under alliance with the Arab tribes, and had to pay annual tributes to them, for security against aggression. The Banu Quainuqa were the allies of the Khazraj and the other two of the Aws. So in spite of their economic superiority, politically the Jews were under the subjugation of the Aws and the Khazraj.

The Aws and Khazraj were not in peace with each other either. They had fought battles against each other and almost always it was instigated and fanned by the Jews. The Jews were continually impoverishing the Aws and the Khazraj economically through usury, as well as physically through wars.

In all, there was a strange and awkward situation of interdependence and hatred between the Jews and Arabs of Yathrib. It was by no means a healthy situation. In spite of the mutual hatred a number of Arabs, particularly of the well to do class, both of Aws and Khazraj had adopted Judaism, owing to marriage with a Jewish woman or simply because of being brought up amongst the Jews. The Jews were never very keen to convert a non-Jew to Judaism. They were proud of being the 'chosen people', the Bani Israil.

### **The brotherhood of Islam**

One of the reasons that the people of Yathrib had welcomed the Prophet (SAS) was to be the means of ending the long lasting hostilities between the tribes of Aws and Khajraj. To this end he adopted the most noble and ingenious method. To cement the brotherly ties he brought in a second brotherhood, between the Ansars and the Muhajirs. (The reader will not understand that the

Prophe(s) set pairs between Ansars and Muhajirins as brothers. This should be mentioned along with mention of prominent pairs.) This was the solution of the refugee problem too. The brotherhood of Islam, a brotherhood for the sake of Allah, was so strong and long-lasting and sincere that the well to do Ansars did not feel any qualms in sharing their homes and properties with their Muhajir brothers, who were destitute refugees. They even offered half of the date orchards and farms that they possessed. When the Muhajirin, who were not used to working in orchards, declined to take it, some of the Ansars gave it to the state, promising to work in the orchards and take half of the produce. This enormous sacrifice that they practiced brought in them a magnanimity, a broadness of mind, and they automatically forgot their age old enmity between themselves. The brotherhood of Islam proved to be stronger than that of blood relations. In their overwhelming emotion some of the Ansars proposed to nominate their Muhajir brothers their heirs. Here Allah intervened and declared that 'blood relations are the ones entitled to inheritance'(Al-Anfal 8:75).

The muhajereen also did not take undue advantage of the magnanimity of their Ansar brothers. They instead sought to engage in trade and business and make their fortune. Some tried to learn farming.

This change of mentality of a whole people from one of hatred and rivalry to one of self sacrifice and doing for others, isn't it top notch Jihad? The Prophet (SAS) has called change of mentality for the better as Hijrat, and Hijrat is among the highest of Jihad. The biggest Jihad is the Jihad against one's own evil propensities.

### **Ahl-e-Suffa**

Although most of the Muhajirun were thus settled, a number of the young men chose to live near the Prophet (SAS). For them a shed

was erected along the Masjid-e-Nababi. This was 'Suffa' and the inmates the Ahl-e-Suffa. They had adopted a monastic life, but not the so called monasticism or 'Sufiism' that turns a blind eye to the world. They took part in all social work that included running errands, taking part in Jihad meaning armed struggle, in teaching new converts. Mus'ab Ibn Umair and Abu Huraira are examples.

The Jews of Yathrib, even though they were not keen on accepting Islam, had been eager to welcome the Prophet (SAS) for another reason. Their strategy was to make an alliance with the Prophet (SAS) and take revenge over the Christians, for their banishment from Palestine long ago.

The dealings with the Jews was a Jihad too. Their rabbis had made them believe that they were the chosen people, chosen for heaven, and all others are destined for hell. So they would never accept a non-Jew prophet. Ummul Mumineen Hazrat Safia Bint Huai (RA) has narrated the incident of her father and uncle. Her father and uncle, two nobles of the Jews, had been to visit the Prophet (SAS). She heard their conversation after they returned. They were convinced beyond any doubts that Muhammad (SAS) was the prophet mentioned in the scriptures, but would never accept him, as he was not a Jew.

A few of the learned Jews however accepted Islam, like Hasin Ibn Salam, who changed his name to Abdullah Ibn Salam after conversion. He was a respected chief of the Jews but when he entered Islam he was abused by his people. The conversion of Abdullah Ibn Salam enraged the Jews. They were also feeling disappointed because the Prophet (SAS) was not showing any inclination of fighting the Christians with them. So they started subversive activities to create doubts and suspicions amongst the Muslims.

Some rabbis would meet the Prophet (SAS) feigning conversion and

would ask questions like 'if Allah created the Universe, who created Allah?' This was just to create confusion in the minds of the weaker Muslims. They would also conspire with the hypocrites to create rifts in the ranks of the Muslims. They tried to revive the old hatred between the Aws and Khazraj, reminding them of their former skirmishes like the Battle of Buath and other warfares. With the connivance of the hypocrites they tried to create hatred between the Ansars and the Muhajir. They tried to dishonor Muslim women too. Standing up against all these conspiracies, was it not Jihad?

### **Change of Quibla**

The change of Quibla was a test, a jihad. In 'Salah' the Muslims would be facing towards Baitul Muquaddas the Quibla of the former prophets who were of Bani Israil. Now that a sovereign Islamic state had been established, the prophet (SAS) was feeling in his heart that the time has come for the supremacy of the Bani Israil to come to an end, and he as the last prophet should revert to the first Quibla of mankind, Ka'bah, the Quibla of Ibrahim (AS), Ismail (AS) and Adam (AS) the father of mankind. So he would often be looking at the skies with beseeching eyes and a longing in the heart. At last in the month of Rajab or Shaban of the second Hijri year, Allah commanded the Prophet (SAS) to face towards Ka'bah (Al-Baqarah 2:142-144). The revelation had come while the Prophet (SAS) was leading a prayer, and in the prayer he had changed the direction and in doing so he and those following him had to move about to rearrange the lines. The masjid in which the incidence(incident) occurred is called the Masjid-e-Quiblatain.

This change of Quibla was a great event, it heralded the termination of the Bani Israil as the chosen people. There was no more to be any chosen people. It had to be terminated formally because the Jews had taken a new meaning of the word 'The chosen people'. Allah had called them the chosen people as more prophets had been sent amongst them in preference to other tribes. The Jews took to calling

themselves the people chosen for heaven, and the rest of mankind in their opinion as destined for hell. If this be true, heaven and hell can be allocated just by birth, then there cannot be any relevance of the Day of Judgment and of Akherat.

The change of Quibla was a real test. The Jews were screaming their heads off that Muhammad (SAS) had left the Quibla of the former prophets of God. They even implored Muhammad (SAS) to reorient towards Baitul Muquaddas and they would enter Islam, all the Jews en mass. Earlier also the Jewish rabbis had advised the Prophet (SAS) to advance from Madinah to Jerusalem, 'the city of prophets'. Their ulterior motive was that the Muslims should engage in war against the Christians. At that time also the Jewish Rabbis had offered the red carrot of joining en mass into Islam, only if the Prophet (SAS) would agree to act and judge as they wished. They were never sincere.

The hypocrites were saying "If Ka'bah is the real Quibla, than were we facing a wrong Quibla so long? Are all our prayers so far lost?" Both these parties were up and doing to create confusion amongst the Muslims. Allah says that both the Quiblas were right, each for its time. Allah made the change in the right time, to denote the change in the history of mankind (Al-Baqarah 2:106-150).

### **Preparation for confrontation**

Now that the Islamic state had been established, the time had come to consolidate it, to look to its safety and to enhance the influence of Islam abroad, because Islam is for all of the world, for the whole of humanity. The Prophet (SAS) knew that the Quraish would not let the Muslims live in peace. He was also sure that the Jews cannot be trusted. He was aware of the hypocrites also.

The escape of Muhammad (SAS) and the Muslims to Madinah infuriated the Quraish. They were watching over the Muslims still living in Makkah and torturing them too. They established secret

contacts with the hypocrite leader Abdullah ibn Ubai ibn Salul of Madinah. Ibn Ubai who had earlier been nominated to be the king, and had been bereft of the position because of the arrival of the Prophet (SAS), readily joined the conspiracy. Being shrewd and without scruples he had professed Islam, as it was the go of the day, to take the advantage, but without sincerity. Some of the Jews also were making contacts with the Quraish, to subvert the newly formed Islamic state.

Mean while Sa'd ibn Mu'ad of the Ansar had gone to Makkah to perform Umrah. Abu Jahl threatened him for having harboured the Prophet (SAS) and the Muslims. Sa'd warned that if he is harmed, the trade route of the Makkan people to the north would be cut off.

It was a fact that the Quraish were preparing either to assassinate the Prophet (SAS) secretly or to launch an attack on Madinah. The Prophet (SAS) was aware of the conspiracy and employed guards on strategic points. Allah also gave the Muslims permission to fight the wrongdoers (Al-Hajj 22:39).

There were Bedouin tribes around Medina and they were pagans like the Quraish, and they held the Quraish in awe. So it was essential that the neighboring tribes should have glimpses of the power of the new state established not on tribal alliance, but on the unity of faith. Besides the man-power needed regular military exercise. The Quraish also had to be shown that the newly established state of Madinah is no weakling. This is why the Prophet (SAS) deemed it necessary to send out Sariya or expeditions from time to time. This started about six months after the Prophet (SAS) arrived in Madinah. These exercises besides enhancing their sense of discipline and their fighting ability, would help them gain valuable knowledge about the surrounding terrain, the tribes and the clans. These expeditions were mainly for exercise and for making peace treaties with the tribes around.

The first expedition was of thirty Muhajerin and no Ansar, under the command of Hamza (RA). They went towards the Red sea coast and confronted a three hundred men strong caravan led by Abu Jahl. A tribal chief by the name of Majdi Ibn Amr of Juhaina intervened and prevented clash. It was in the month of Ramadan of the first Hijri year.

One month later Ubaidah Ibn Al-Harith (RA) with a sixty men strong contingent went to Rabigh, a place nearer to Makkah than Madinah and faced a two hundred men strong convoy led by Abu Sufian. They exchanged arrows but no real fighting took place.

A few weeks later in Dhul Qadah, Sa'd Ibn Abu Waqqas commanded a twenty man team on foot upto Kharrar and returned without any encounter.

In Safar of the following year the Prophet (SAS) himself went with a group up to Waddan. There they concluded a peace treaty with a tribe called Damrah.

After a few days rest he set out again, leaving Abu Salamah in charge of Madinah. He went to Al-Ashirah near Yambu, stayed there for a few days and made a peace agreement with the allied tribes of Mudlij and Damrah.

Shortly afterwards Kurz Bin Jabir of the Fihri tribe raided the grazing grounds outside of Madinah. The Prophet (SAS) himself with a contingent chased the raiders up to the valley of Safwan close to Badar.

### **The Nakhla Incidence.**

As time passed the expeditions increased in frequency. Some were purely for reconnaissance purpose. One such expedition was sent under the leadership of Abdullah Ibn Jahsh. They were sent to Nakhla midway between Mecca and Taif. In Nakhla they found a small Quraishi caravan an easy prey. It was the last day of Rajab,

one of the four months in which fighting is prohibited traditionally. It was the evening of the day and they debated amongst themselves if they should wait till after dusk, and as they thought that the caravan might reach the outskirts of Makkah by that time, they decided to attack. They killed one of the four persons with the caravan, took two others as prisoners and captured the caravan. The fourth person managed to escape to Makkah.

When they returned to Madinah, the Prophet (SAS) rebuked them and refused to take custody of the prisoners and the booty either. The incidence also gave the Quraish, materials for propaganda. At this time Allah revealed the ayat announcing that fighting in the sacred months was indeed a grave offence, but turning people from the path of Allah and expelling people from their homes and from the sacred mosque was even greater sin (Al-Baqarah 2: 217). So the Prophet (SAS) accepted the goods of the caravan and took custody of the two prisoners. Of the two prisoners Al-Hakam Ibn Kaysan however accepted Islam and chose to stay in Madinah and the other went away to Makkah.

This skirmish though a small one had taken place in Nakhla, over five hundred kilometers away from Madinah, and near to and between the two most hostile anti-Muslim areas of Makkah and Ta'if. So both Makkah and Ta'if could well recognize the increase of power and the reach of the arm of the state of Madinah. In later days, in fact only a few weeks later, the militant Quraish leaders like Abu Jahl used this incidence to instigate their troops to proceed to Badar.

The Islamic state of Madinah was consolidating its position rapidly. Madinah was surrounded by many Bedouin tribes, and looting raids by them was quite common. The Prophet (SAS) took two sorts of steps; peaceful means of forging alliances with a significant section of the tribes, and with the more stubborn tribes, the show of strength by demonstrating the ability to strike and inflict punishment rapidly whenever the occasion called for. The government machinery was so

well established that it could function smoothly even in the absence of the Prophet (SAS). It was indeed an amazing feat for a newly established state formed by the uneducated and upstart Arabs, who had always been looked down upon by the Byzantine and the Persian empires and their allies.

Since the incidence of Nakhla, events occurred in rapid succession, with greater and still greater magnitude and significance. The Nakhla clash had taken place on the last day of Rajab of the second Hijri year. Some two weeks later the change of Quibla occurred in Sha'ban, marking the end of the supremacy of the Bani Israil. Naturally it raised a hue and cry in the Jewish community. In the following month of Ramadan took place the most significant one day battle in the history of mankind, the battle of Badar.

### **Badar**

In fact the change of history that was heralded by the battle of Badar cannot be equalled by any other battle; not even the two great wars of the twentieth century, the first and the second world wars. Come to think of it, Badar heralded the rise of the Islamic power in Madinah , which became the superpower that dominated the world for well over a thousand years. Do the achievements of the two world wars come anywhere near the achievements of Badar? Badar heralded the rise of a power, a civilization, a new culture with developments in the fields of morality, science, arts and crafts.

The two world wars, what did they achieve other than large scale destruction? The first world war marked the end of the Ottoman empire, the end of the system of Khelafat. The second world war marked the beginning of the end of the British empire, and the rise of the USA as a superpower and its greatest achievement, the Nuclear Bomb, the weapon of mass destruction. Yes, there was another byproduct, the birth of the Zionist state of Isra'il. If these two last mentioned elements can bring about the end of the world, I have to

admit it will be something really big!

The reconnaissance network was active and intelligence was brought to the Prophet (SAS) that the large trade caravan of the Quraish was returning to Makkah from Syria, in which almost every household of the Quraish had a share.

All the Muhajerin had left all their belongings in Makkah, and the Quraish had no hesitation in confiscating it. Now this was an opportunity of getting some compensation. So three hundred and thirteen men marched with the Prophet (SAS). Abu Lubabah (RA) was left to govern the state and Ibn Maqtum to lead the prayer. The contingent had only two horses and seventy camels, four riders to each camel. Even the Prophet (SAS) would take turns in riding.

Meanwhile Abu Sufian the leader of the Quraish caravan got intelligence of the movement of the Muslims. He changed his route and took a coastal way. Moreover he sent Damdam Ibn Amr Ghifari to Makkah on a rapid camel seeking military help. Damdam came rapidly and conveyed the news of the impending disaster in the most dramatic manner, slitting the nose and ears of the camel causing them to bleed, tearing his own shirt to ribbons, and riding on the camel backwards and crying at the top of his voice. Abu Jahl gathered a large army of one thousand and three hundred men that included almost all the Quraish chiefs except Abu Lahab. The army was well equipped. They had dancers and singers too with them to boost their morale.

But the Quraish leaders were afflicted with foreboding of misfortune and many of them were hesitant in setting out. The cause was a dream of Atikah bint Abdul Muttalib, the Prophet (SAS)'s aunt. She had dreamed three days before Damdam came that a man had come on a camel calling the Quraish leaders to hasten to their death in three days, first from near the Kab'ah and then from the Mount Abu Qubays, and from the mountain he had hurled a big stone that on

falling split into fragments, the fragments hitting the doors of the houses. On hearing of the dream Abu Jahl had mocked Abbas, the Prophet's uncle that the children of Abdul Muttalib were not content with one prophet and were bringing forth a prophetess too. When Damdam came 'in three days', the mockery dampened and was replaced by foreboding, and Abu Jahl felt the need of making the army strong and well equipped.

The Prophet (SAS) received the news of the strong Quraish army, and also of the change of rout of the caravan. Now it would be disgraceful for them if they returned without confronting the army. Moreover the Quraish and also the Jews in Madinah would become more aggressive and militant thinking the Muslims weaklings and cowards. The Prophet (SAS) conferred with his companions, and both the Muhajir and the Ansars unanimously expressed their opinion to march forward. When the Prophet (SAS) had assured them that Allah had promised them either of the two, the caravan or the army, their faith never wavered.

The Quraish army on the other hand, on receiving news from Abu Sufian that the caravan had successfully evaded the danger, were feeling relieved and most of them were ready to return to Makkah. But Abu Jahl and some others were bent on proceeding forward. They instigated the brother of the man killed in Nakhla to cry for revenge and stir up militancy. Abu Jahl insisted on proceeding to Badar, not to fight, but to stay there for three nights, make festivities, slaughter camels, feast and drink, inviting any body that might come by, and enjoy dances and songs; there by enhancing the glory and reputation of the Quraish. Obviously he was sure the Muslims having missed the chance of capturing the caravan, would return to Madinah, and definitely would not dare to confront the Quraish army. Not all of the contingent however did see eye to eye with Abu Jahl. The Banu Zahrah, on the advice of Al-Akhnas bin Shuraiq broke away and returned to Makkah.

On reaching Badar the Prophet (SAS) dismounted at the first well, but Al- Hubab Ibn Al-Mundhir suggested a better plan and the Prophet (SAS) accepted it.

It was Friday the seventeenth of Ramadan of the second Hijri year and the battle started. At first duels were fought, in which four of the Quraish leaders were killed, and of the Muslims only Ubaydah Ibn Al-Harith became the first martyr. Then mass fighting started and the Prophet (SAS) threw a handful of dust at the opponents. Allah has said that it was He, Allah who threw the fistful of dust and it was Allah who killed the infidels (Al-Anfal 8:17). The Muslims fought valiantly, and Allah helped them with angels. The night before the battle it had rained bringing tranquility in the minds of the Muslims and making the sand under their feet firm (Al-Anfal 8:11).

Of the Quraish many were reluctant and halfhearted, and also in dread. Abu Lahab had not come even, he had sent in his stead Al-A's ibnHisham who owed him a large sum of money. Umayyah ibn Khalf was not at all willing to join the force, but was forced by being ridiculed and shamed by his friend Uqbah ibn Abi Mua'yt. In the battle field he came across Abd al-Rahman ibn Awf and requested him to take him and his son prisoners. This however could not save his life, Bilal saw him and called other Muslims and both father and son were killed.

Abu Jahl however was fighting in earnest but was killed by two adolescent boys, Muadh ibn Amr ibn Al-Jamuh and Muawwidh ibn Al-Afra. Towards the end of the battle Abdullah ibn Mas'ud found him dying and cut off his head.

(A more vivid description of the battle would touch the mind of the reader. I mean the details of camping by the Muslims, plan given by Al-Hubab and refixing of the strategy of the war, the beceeching supplication to Allah by the Prophet at night, description of the 3 to 3 duel, the killing of Abu Jahil by two teenagers, angels sent by Allah

etc. in details.)

At the end of the battle, seventy of the Quraish had been killed that included leaders like Abu Jahl, Umayyah Ibn Khalf, Uthbah, Shaibah and Abul Bakhtari. Seventy others were taken prisoners. The rest of them fled. On the Muslim side there were fourteen martyrs.

Abul Bakhtari was killed in spite of the Prophet (SAS)'s instructions to spare his life, because he was one of those people who had taken the initiative in lifting the boycott of Sheb-e-Abu Talib. In the battle field he was confronted by al-Mujaddhar Ibn Ziyad of Ansar, who told him that the Prophet (SAS)'s command was that his life be spared. Abul Bakhtari sought the same for his companion, but the Ansari said that the prophet's instructions were not for him. So Abul Bakhtari chose to fight and die. The Prophet (SAS) had also told his soldiers not to kill those of the clan of Hashim specially his uncle Al-Abbas, as they had protected him during the thirteen years in Makkah after being chosen as the prophet. They had even endured the hardship of the three years of boycott, in Sheb-e-Abu Talib.

Abu Lahab who had avoided going into the battle field could not save his life either. He was sitting near Zamzam one day when Umm Al-Fadl wife of Abbas and her servant Abu Rafi were nearby, as well as other people. Abu Lahab called to him one of the Quraish soldiers returning, and asked him how they had suffered the defeat. The man was describing soldiers on horses on the horizon who were aiding the Muslims. The boy Abu Rafi who was secretly a Muslim suddenly blurted out that they were the angels of Allah. Abu Lahab in his fury cast Abu Rafi on the ground, sat on his chest and began to beat him severely. Umm Al-Fadl there upon took a pole and hit him on the head saying "You dare to beat the boy as his master is away". Abu Lahab, badly cut on the head, left the place humiliated having been hit by a woman in public, and died in seven days.

It was an amazing victory for the Muslims, over an army three times

their size numerically and much better equipped. How could it be possible? The factors can be enumerated as follows: 1. The Muslims were fighting not for any worldly gains but for upholding the faith. 2. They had assurance of victory in spite of the adverse situation and they had full confidence in it. 3. The Muslims were under a single command that of the Prophet (SAS). 4. The relation of the commander and those commanded was one of love and compassion, rather than subordination. 5. Adherence to command and discipline was perfect. 6. The timing of the commands and the strategy was superb. 7. The commander consulted his companions before taking major decisions. Once a decision is taken there is no wavering. 8. The Prophet (SAS) had a system of sending out patrols and gathering information that acted perfectly. 9. Rather than fear, there was a longing for martyrdom and gaining paradise in the hearts of the warriors. 10. Allah sent angels to their aid. Whenever the Muslims do their utmost with sincere efforts in a right cause, Allah helps them.

This was a victory with the most far reaching effects, the equal of which the world has never seen. This achievement was possible only because of the sincerity of purpose, the establishment of Islam on earth. It was true Jihad for the sake of Allah, not for material gains, nor for vengeance.

After the war was over the Prophet (SAS) sent Abdullah Ibn Rawahah and Zayd Ibn Harithah to convey the good news to the people of Madinah. The two of them entered the city only a little while after Ruqayyah the Prophet (SAS)'s daughter had been buried. She had been ill and the Prophet (SAS) had asked her husband Uthman ibn Affan to remain by her side.

After the battle arose the question of distribution of war booty. Those who had collected the booty claimed it. Those who had chased the enemies put forward their claim, because had not they done so, the enemy might have regrouped and made an attack. Yet others who had been guarding the Prophet (SAS) also made their claim. The

Prophet (SAS) told them to pool the booty together and wait. Presently Sura Anfal was revealed with detailed instructions (8:1...). One fifth of the war booty was allocated for Allah, His Rasool, the kindred, the orphans, the needy and the wayfarers. The remainder to be distributed equally, the one with a horse getting double share. Those that had remained in Madinah by order of the Prophet (SAS) were also to get a share each.

On the way to Madinah, two of the captives Al-Nadir Ibn Harith and Uqbah Ibn Abu Mu'ayt were executed, because of their criminal records. The rest of the prisoners were brought to Madinah.

There was a difference of opinion about what to do with the prisoners. Umar was in favor of mass execution, while Abu Bakar was for mercy. Most other Muslims were keen on taking ransom.

The prisoners were assigned to groups of the Muslims, and the Prophet (SAS) told them to be kind to them. They became so kind that if there was bread to eat, they would give the prisoners the bread and themselves take dates only. A number of the prisoners were ransomed for different amounts, according to ability, from a thousand to four thousand dirhams. The ones that were literate were set free without ransom, in exchange for educating ten children of the Muslims each. The poor ones were released without any ransom at all.

Abul As Ibn Rabi was one of the prisoners. His wife Zaynab the eldest daughter of the Prophet (SAS) sent the ransom and it included a necklace of Late Khadija (RA), the sight of which moved the Prophet (SAS). He asked his companions if they can consider the release of the prisoner without taking the ransom. All agreed unanimously. Abul As returned to Makkah, but the Prophet (SAS) told him that as he was not a Muslim and Zaynab was, he should send Zaynab to Madinah, and this he did. A few years later he embraced Islam and was united to his wife. This was a great Jihad for a young

woman who loved her husband dearly, and her husband loved her too. Although she was divorced, she never took a second husband. While coming to Madinah escorted by her brother in law, she was intercepted by the Quraish, her camel was injured and made to jump, she fell off the camel, suffered a miscarriage, had to return to Makkah, and had to migrate to Madinah a few days later in the darkness of night, all these for her faith which was dearer to her than life. She never recovered from the consequences of the miscarriage, and it actually killed her ultimately.

The contrast is the case of Abbas, the Prophet (SAS)'s uncle. As a prisoner of war he pleaded with the Prophet (SAS) that he was actually a Muslim. The Prophet (SAS) replied "I don't know that you are, you were fighting against us". He then said he had no money, but the Prophet (SAS) asked him about the money he and his wife had buried before he set out with the army. Abbas was amazed because nobody other than himself and his wife ever knew of it. He then appealed to count the twenty ounces of silver that had been taken from him in the battle field in the ransom. The Prophet (SAS) did not agree because that was war booty. Abbas was made to pay his ransom as well as the ransom of his two nephews Nawfal Ibn Al-Harith and Aquil Ibn Abi Talib, and also his ally Uthbah Ibn Amr. This is the same Abbas who was present in the Second Aqabah, had argued with the representatives of the Aws and Khazraj about the safety of the Prophet (SAS).

Abu Sufian the Quraish leader took advantage of the goodness of the Prophet (SAS) and the Muslims. One of his sons Hanzala had been killed in the battle and another Amr was taken prisoner. He did not care to ransom out his son, as he was sure his son would come to no harm, so why suffer a financial loss? Sometime later an elderly man of the Ansar, Sa'd Ibn Numan went to Makkah to perform Umrah. Abu Sufian detained Sa'd as a hostage against his son the war prisoner, throwing to the winds the age old rules and regulations of Hajj and

Umrah; and the Quraish did not object to his action. The moral degradation of the Quraish had come to such a level that they did not feel any shame at the blatant violation of the time honored traditions. At the insistence of the clan of Sa'd, the Prophet (SAS) agreed to the exchange of prisoners.

After Badar the Jews and some of the other non-Muslims, became frantic about the growing strength of the Muslims. In spite of the peace treaty with the Muslims, they treacherously began conspiring with the Quraish. Ka'b Ibn Ashraf was one who was transgressing all limits. He went to Makkah and incited the Quraish leaders to unite again against the Muslims. Besides he wrote poetry against Islam and the Prophet (SAS). He also wrote poetry to dishonor Muslim women, concocting false obscene stories. This Ka'b Ibn Ashraf was actually an Arab, but had been brought up as a Jew. His efforts became so abusive and offensive that the Prophet (SAS) asked for volunteers to deal with him. A group of Ansars that included Muhammad Ibn Maslamah and Silkan Ibn Salamah did away with him.

Abu Afk of the tribe of Banu Amr Bin Awf was another poet who was slanderous. Salim Ibn Umair by his own initiative killed him.

In the wake of Badr in Makkah, Safwan ibn Umayyah ibn Khalaf and Umair ibn Wahb Al-Jumahi were talking of taking revenge. Umair ibn Wahb was saying that but for his large family who would be left unprotected and for his loan, he would go to Madinah on the pretext of ransoming his son Wahb and kill Muhammad, and would not care for his own life. Safwan promised to look after his family and meet his debt, and there upon Umair set out to Madinah, having poisoned his sword. When Umair was taken to the Prophet (SAS), he asked him about the purpose of his visit, and at length told him about his dialogue with Safwan and also the poisoning of his sword. The amazed Umair became a Muslim.

## **Banu Qaynuqa**

The Banu Qaynuqa Jews who lived inside Medina became envious and very abusive. In addition to engaging in conspiracies they would abuse Muslim individuals. One day in their jewellery market in front of a shop they disrobed a Muslim woman by tying the end of her robe to a post and were laughing at her. She cried for help and a Muslim youth rushed in and killed the main culprit. All the Jews present then attacked and killed the Muslim. People began to gather and there could be more casualties. The Prophet (SAS) came and asked the Jews to honor the covenant. The Jews ridiculed and boasted that they were not like the Quraish, they were a martial tribe. So the Prophet (SAS) ordered a siege of the Banu Qaynuqa. They did not dare to come out and fight. No other Jewish tribe, nor the Hypocrites came to help them. With the provisions in their castles they might have lived longer, but fear overtook them and they surrendered at the end of fifteen days.

The Prophet (SAS) wanted to punish them for their misdeeds and arrogance, but at the insistence of Abdullah Ibn Ubayy, and specially on the request of Ubadah Ibn Samit, a good Muslim, allowed them to leave Medina taking all their movable properties, except the military arms.

The Banu Qaynuqa had been very arrogant, their treachery was quite manifest, their conduct was unpardonable, and yet the Prophet (SAS) and the Muslims were lenient. Abdullah Ibn Ubayy behaved very insolently making the Prophet (SAS) and the Muslims angry, but they did not let their anger get the better of them. This is Jihad of controlling the emotions, on the part of the Prophet (SAS) and the Muslims. In spite of their ability to take revenge they refrained from doing so.

The expulsion of Banu Qaynuqa consolidated the state further. This tribe was within the city, could gather information and supply it to the

enemies. This threat was minimized considerably. More over the strength of the Jews also diminished.

After Badar the Muslim state of Madinah took up a plan of weakening the Quraish by blockading their summer trade route north to Sham. Makkah virtually lived on trade; the summer trade northward to Sham, and the winter trade southward to Yemen and Abyssinia. If the northern route could be cut off effectively their strength would be definitely diminished. Of course the trade embargo would surely spur them to make an attack on Madinah quickly, because it is a matter of life and death for them. But the fact is, the Quraish would try to attack Madinah irrespective of whether there was trade embargo or not. They could never sit tight after having been kicked down from the position of the greatest power in the Arabian peninsula. The humiliation of Badar could never go un-avenged.

Actually ever since Badar the Quraish were bent upon taking revenge. Abu Sufian had vowed not to take a bath until he had taken some revenge. So about two and a half month after Badar, Abu Sufian mobilized a force of two hundred horsemen and went towards Madinah. First he went to the Jewish tribe of Banu Nadir. Huyayy Ibn Akhtab expressed his inability to help, but Sallam Ibn Mishkam gave him information. That night before dawn Abu Sufian attacked a small settlement at Urayd, three miles from Madinah, killed two men of Ansar, burned their houses and made a quick retreat. The Prophet (SAS) was quick to pursue them, and Abu Sufian and his troops to lighten themselves for the quick flight, dropped sacs of their provisions of 'sawiq', a flour of wheat and barley. Abu Sufian had made this raid as a face saver, but the hasty retreat dumping provisions on the way earned for him even more humiliation.

The coastal route to Sham was effectively blockaded by regular patrols of the Muslim forces and their alliances with tribes on that route. So the Quraish decided to send their caravans north through Iraq, a difficult route with water spots very few and far between.

Safwan Ibn Umayyah ventured to lead a caravan, and took as guide Furat Ibn Hayyan of banu Bakar Ibn Wail tribe. They were travelling in winter rather than in Summer, and they were maintaining secrecy. Nuaym Ibn Masud Al-Ashjai was in Makkah and happened to hear of the preparations; and on return to Madinah informed the Prophet (SAS). He sent Zaid Ibn Harithah at the head of a hundred men force of Muhajir and Ansar. They surrounded the caravan at an oasis of Qaradah. All the Quraish fled and they captured the caravan and the guide. The guide later accepted Islam.

Some tribes around Madinah occasionally tried to make raids on the city, but every time these efforts were nipped in the bud. The Prophet (SAS) and the Muslims were ever vigilant.

## **Uhud**

Just over a year after Badar, in the month of Shawal of the third Hijri year, Abu Sufian gathered a large army of three thousand men, three thousand camels, two hundred horses and all possible war equipments. The troops included large numbers of volunteers from Tihama, Kinanah, Abyssinians living in Arabia and also other tribes. There were one hundred men of Thaqif. There was Abu Amir who was also called Al-Rahib, a prominent member of the Aws of Madinah who had not accepted Islam and had gone to Makkah with fifty of his followers. He boasted with the Quraish leaders that in the battlefield if he calls the Aws they will all surely come and join him. There was Abu Azzah the poet who had been taken prisoner in Badar and was pardoned by the Prophet (SAS) after he promised that he would not ever do anything against Islam or the Muslims. With the Quraish army there were fourteen women led by Hind the wife of Abu Sufian, to sing and dance and encourage the troops.

Abu Sufian was the chief commander, Khalid Ibn Walid and Ikrimah Ibn Abu Jahl would lead the two flanks, and Safwan would command

the infantry. Talhah Ibn Abi Talhah of Abd Al Dar was the standard bearer. The Abd Al Dar were the flag bearers in Badar too, and the flag was not kept up. Abu Sufian asked Talha if he dares take the flag, and he promised that he and his clan would keep it up. In fact at Uhud the Abd al Dar were true to their word, seven of them brothers and two more of their clan died one after the other, before the flag was no more raised from the ground.

Abu Sufian's army marched out to the locality of Al-Aqiq and camped near Mount Uhud and set free their animals to graze on the plantations there.

Mean while Abbas Ibn Abdul Muttalib, the Prophet (SAS)'s uncle had sent him an urgent letter through a man of Ghifar, giving all details of the Quraish's preparations. On receiving the information the Prophet (SAS) sent Anas and Munis, two sons of Fadalrah to reconnoiter. They found that the Quraish army had reached near Uhud and their camels and horses were grazing in the plantations. Hubabh Ibn Mundir Ibn Jamuh and Salamah Ibn Salamah also confirmed the report.

The Prophet (SAS) conferred with the Muslims about the course of action to be taken. His intension he expressed was to wait in the city and fight the enemies there, if and when they came. Abdullah Ibn Ubayy agreed with him and so also did several other senior members of the Ansar and the Muhajir. Most of the young men particularly those that had missed the battle of Badar, said that they should go out and fight. Some mature persons like Hamzah Ibn Abd Al Muttalib, Malik Ibn Sinan, Nu'man Ibn Malik, Iyas ibn Aws, Khaythama and Abdullah ibn Jahsh also opined that the Muslims should go out and meet the enemies.

As the majority opinion was to confront the enemy outside, the Prophet (SAS) accepted it and ordered all to make preparations. Later some of those who had been in favor of going out conferred

amongst themselves that they had made the prophet (SAS) to change his own opinion, came to him saying that they were ready to reconsider, but the Prophet (SAS) said that once a decision is taken there must not be any faltering.

The Prophet (SAS) proceeded towards Uhud with a contingent of one thousand soldiers, but when they reached an orchard midway between Medina and Uhud, Abdullah ibn Ubayy deserted with three hundred of his followers. The reason he said was that his advice of staying inside the city had not been heeded to. It is noteworthy that he had proceeded with the contingent and deserted on the way. It was done intentionally to break the morale of the Muslims. In fact two other clans of Harithah and Salamah were about to follow Ibn Ubayy, but some of their allies, with the help of Allah made them regain their strength and fortitude.

The remaining seven hundred marched with spirit. The Prophet (SAS) noticed two young men by the name of Rafe ibn Khadij and Samura and ordered them to go back to Medina as they were too young, but they endeavored to prove their worth and some companions also certified that they were good as archers. So they were allowed to continue.

At Uhud the Prophet (SAS) deployed his troops in front of Jabal-e-Aynayn. There was a passage at the rear of the mount through which the enemy might attack from behind. The Prophet (SAS) posted fifty archers under the command of Abdullah ibn Jubayr on the mount to guard the passage. They were ordered not to leave their position on any account, unless commanded to.

At the outset Abu Sufian called the Aws and Khazraj telling them to leave the battle-field, as they were not his enemies; to no avail. Abu Amir Al-Rahib also tried to call his kinsmen the Aws to join him and they instead rebuked him. The Quraish began their battle by their women singing, and the Muslims by glorifying Allah.

Ikrimah ibn Abu Jahl tried to attack from one side and failed to make a headway. Khalid ibn Walid tried to enter the passage way behind the mount Aynyn and was repelled by the volley of arrows from above the mount. One unbeliever came out and challenged for a duel and was instantly killed by Al Zubayr ibn Awam.

The battle now started in earnest. Hamza, Ali, Abu Dujanah were playing havoc on the enemy. The Prophet (SAS) held out a sword and asked "Who takes the sword for its proper value?" Several of the companions extended their hands, but he did not give it to any of them. Abu Dujanah asked what its proper value was and the Prophet (SAS) said "Strike the enemy till it is bent". Abu Dujana took it and fought untiringly. He even played a great part in defending the Prophet (SAS) at the moment of crisis.

Hamza (RA) was killing the enemy left and right, as he had done in Badar. Wahshi an Abyssinian slave was there in Uhud, not for any fighting but only for killing Hamza. His master Jubayr ibn Mut'im had promised him freedom if he could kill Hamza, to avenge the killing of his uncle in Badar. Hind the wife of Abu Sufian had promised him great reward of her jewellery, if he could kill Hamza, to avenge the killing of her father, brother and some other relatives in Badar. He was offered these because he was a cock sure target shooter with his spear. He was following Hamza from a distance and waiting for his opportunity. When Hamza lifted his sword high to strike Subba ibn Abdul Uzza and his armor lifted, exposing his lower abdomen, Wahshi threw the spear piercing him through. With one throw of the spear he had earned his freedom and a big reward too.

The fall of Hamza was a great blow indeed, but still the Muslims fought valiantly and the Quraish troops were flying from the field. As the enemy fled and the Muslims were chasing them, a number of the Muslims took to collecting the booty left behind by the enemy. Presently those chasing the enemy also came back without finishing their task, and engaged in booty collection. Now the archers who

were posted on mount Aynayn to guard the passage thought the battle was over and began to leave their post. Their commander Abdullah ibn Jubayr reminded them of the Prophet (SAS)'s order, but even then forty of them left and went after booty.

The very shrewd general Khalid ibn Walid didn't fail to notice it. He marshaled his cavalry, took a wide semicircle and stormed the passage behind the mount Aynayn. This time he did not fail, ten archers were no match for him. He finished the ten and attacked the nucleus of the Muslim contingent from behind, in lightning speed. The Muslims were startled at the sudden unexpected attack. At the shouts of Khalid and his soldiers others of the Quraish force joined them. Quite a few of the Muslims were killed and the rest were running in confusion. Some one of the Quraish was shouting "Muhammad has been killed". This news though false caused some of the Muslims to fall into despair. They thought if the Prophet (SAS) has been killed then what is the purpose of our fighting now? Others with strong faith were saying "If the Prophet (SAS) has been killed, why should we be living, let us fight and lay down our lives".

The Prophet (SAS) however raised his voice and called out "Come to me, O you who worship Allah, come to me. I am Allah's messenger". He called certain of his companions by name. Only a few of the Muslims, not more than ten were around the Prophet (SAS), virtually shielding him with their own bodies. Among them was Talhah ibn Ubaydallah, a muhajir. He was moving around the Prophet (SAS) taking on the stabs of the enemy spears and swords on his shield and his body. Anas ibn Nadr, uncle of Anas ibn Malik, was one who had not run away with the sudden attack of Khalid ibn Walid. He tried his best to repulse the onslaught with courage and was martyred. He had about eighty wounds all over his body. His body had been so cut and mutilated that it was unrecognizable. His sister recognized him by a mark on his finger. Shammas ibn Uthman of the Makhzum was another who defended the Prophet (SAS) similarly, and laid down his

life in so doing. Yet another was Abu Dujana, who had taken the sword from the Prophet (SAS) promising to keep its honor. Yet another was Abu Talha of Ansar who was an archer. He was fighting to keep the enemy at bay. The Prophet (SAS) himself was handing him the arrows. Another such marksman was Sa'd ibn Abu Waqqas of the muhajirun, repelling the enemy with arrows handed over by the Prophet (SAS). Nasibah binte Ka'b of the Ansar who was giving water to the soldiers, took her sword and fought like a man defending the Prophet (SAS). She received at least thirteen wounds on her body. Al-Hubbab ibn Mundhir fought off a whole unit of the disbelievers. Mus'ab ibn Umayr put himself in the way when Amr ibn Qamiah leveled a blow at the Prophet (SAS). Mus'ab was killed, but the assailant thought he had killed the Prophet and shouted to declare his achievement. A few more men of the Ansar also laid down their lives in defending the Prophet (SAS), of whom one was Zaid ibn Al-Sakan. Perhaps as many as thirty people were killed in defending the Prophet (SAS), so fierce and repeated were the attacks.

The Quraish launched wave after wave of attacks, with the sole purpose of killing the Prophet (SAS). Four men of the Quraish had particularly declared their determination to kill the Prophet and had been able to reach him. Abdullah ibn Shahab managed to inflict injury on the forehead of the Prophet (SAS) and his face and beard were bloodied. While Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas (RA) was ready to sacrifice his life defending the Prophet (SAS), his brother Utbah was bent upon killing him. He even managed to hit and cut his lip and break one of the front teeth of the lower jaw. Amir ibn Qamiah hit the Prophet so hard that two links of his iron helmet penetrated into the cheek bone. Amar hit the Prophet (SAS) with his sword so hard on the shoulder that he fell in a hole.

Ubay ibn Khalaf had told the Prophet (SAS) that he would kill him and he had retorted "No, I will kill you". Now Ubay tried to kill the Prophet (SAS) and raised his spear, but the Prophet (SAS) was too quick and

struck him with his spear, and it only grazed his shoulder. In panic he went away billowing “Muhammad has killed me” and in fact died before he could return to Makkah .

The unbelievers claimed more than once that they had killed the Prophet (SAS). At one time even Abu Bakar and Umar also believed it. At this time of their abject despair Anas ibn Nadr had inspired them saying “If the Prophet (SAS) has been killed, what is the purpose of our living now, let us fight and lay down our lives”. Later however they lifted the Prophet (SAS) from the hole, took him to a safe place up in the mountain, and reinforced the protective circle. When Ka’b ibn Malik had shouted that the prophet (SAS) is alive, he had asked him not to shout again. The unbelievers did not believe in Ka’b, and a group of them ran towards the Muslims shouting “Where is Muhammad? Death to me if he lives”. The Prophet (SAS) took a spear and hurled it towards them. It hit the leader of the band, throwing him off his horse and killing him.

On reaching a safe place Ali brought water in a shield and washed the Prophet (SAS)’s wounds. Abu Ubaidah ibn Jarrah pulled out the two helmet links from the prophet’s face, and in so doing two of his teeth were broken. Khalid ibn Walid tried again to attack on the hill side and was repelled by Umar ibn Al-Khattab and other companions.

The Prophet (SAS) was weak because of the profuse bleeding, and all the Muslims were also injured and exhausted. So they performed the Noon Salat sitting.

Abu Sufian and most of the Quraish were seeking satisfaction in the claim of their man Amr ibn Qaimiah that he had killed Muhammad. Now that they had killed a lot of Muslims, they took this fact as their victory, and were satisfied that they had achieved the all important revenge they needed, over the Muslims for Badar. As the Muslims who had earlier scattered off, began to reassemble, Abu Sufian and his troops did not think it necessary to confront them again.

The Quraish had a perverted sense of bravery. Abu Sufian's wife Hind and others of their women mutilated the bodies of the Muslim martyrs. They cut the ears and noses of the bodies and of these they made garlands. Hind cut out the liver of Hamza and chewed it. Abu Sufian hit the face of the now fallen Hamza with his bow and sought satisfaction in it.

Abu Sufian looked around for the dead body of the prophet. He then called aloud if Abu Bakar and Umar were alive, if Muhammad was alive? When Umar replied that all of them were alive, he said that he believed Umar and not his man Ibn Qaimiah. He vowed to meet again and fight the Muslims the next year at Badar.

The Quraish buried their dead, about thirty in number, and left Uhud. The Prophet (SAS) sent Ali to reconnoiter if they were riding their camels or the horses. If they were riding the horses, they would surely be attacking the city of Madinah, and the Muslims would have to follow them forthwith and attack them from behind. Ali brought the news that they were riding the camels.

After the Quraish had left, the Muslims buried the martyrs, two and three in each grave, a total of seventy of them. Of them only four were muhajirun and the rest of Ansar. Forty of the Muslims were wounded.

The following day, Sunday the 16<sup>th</sup> of Shawal, the Prophet (SAS) assembled the Muslim forces again, only those that had taken part in Uhud, and marched after the Quraish army. The Prophet (SAS) was apprehending Abu Sufian might realize his own folly and might return to attack Madinah. The Muslims reached Hamra al Asad, fourteen kilometers from Madinah, while Abu sufian with his troops were at Al-Rawaha, sixty kilometers from Madinah. Ma'bad Al Khuzai, a non-Muslim, who happened to be passing that way was asked by Abu Sufian, and learned from him that Muhammad was at Hamra al Asad. To test the determination of Muhammad, Abu Sufian sent a message

with some riders of Abd al Qays, who were going to Madinah, that the Quraish were coming to finish the Muslims off. Instead of being afraid the Muslim force remained in Hamra al Asad for three days and three nights, making large bonfires during the night. Abu Sufian proved to be the weaker in the test of nerves and left for Makkah.

(The battle that had been won was lost. Allah (swt) has kept for us a lesson. This lesson may be particularly dwelt upon.)

### **After Uhud**

After the debacle of Uhud, the position of the Muslims in Madinah was not the same as before. All of Arabia had come to know that after all the Muslims are not altogether invincible. The hypocrites were rejoicing over their cleverness. The Jews were also feeling important again. The Muslims in general were mortified. There were quite a number of widows and orphans to be taken care of. Allah at this time revealed the verses permitting the Muslim men to marry upto four wives (Al-Nisa 4:3). This was not an indulgence but a concession granted by Allah, primarily to solve the social problem of the destitute widows and orphans.

The tribes around the city of Madinah were now trying to hatch up conspiracies and launch raids on the city. So the Prophet (SAS) increased his reconnaissance activities, to keep abreast of the developments.

Tulayhah and Salamah, sons of Khuwailid, two leaders of Banu Asad were inciting their tribesmen and clients to attack Madinah and kill the Prophet (SAS), and also to raid the city out- skirts and seize the cattle. On receiving information the Prophet (SAS) sent Abu Salamah ibn Abd al Asad with one hundred and fifty fighters including personalities like Abu Ubaydah ibn Jarrah, Sad ibn Abu Waqqas and Usayd ibn Hudayl . He ordered them to march during night, along un-trodden paths and surprise the enemy. This was done and the enemy ran away defeated. Abu Salamah had sustained injury

in the battle of Uhud and now it flared up and ultimately killed him.

The Prophet (SAS) received information that Khalid ibn Nubayh al-Hudhali was arousing the people of Nakhla and Uranah to attack Madinah. He sent Abdullah ibn Unays to gather further news.

Abdullah went to Khalid when he was in the company of women, introduced himself as an Arab ready to join his forces, engaged him in talks and managed to kill him singlehanded.

### **Adal and Al-Qarah**

To avenge the assassination of their leader Khalid ibn Nubayh, the Hudhayl took recourse to deceit, a cowardly deceit . They sent delegations to the Prophet (SAS) from two tribes named Adal and Al-Qarah, requesting him to send learned people to teach their tribes about Islam and the Quran. The Prophet (SAS) sent six teachers, Marthad ibn Abu Marthad, the leader of the team, Khalid ibn al-Bukhayr, Asim ibn Thabit, Khubayb ibn Adiy, Zayd ibn al-Dathinnah and Abdullah ibn Tariq. At the spring of Al-Raji in the territory of Hudhayl, the treacherous Adal and Al-Qarah people sent message to Al-Hudhayl to come in force and arrest the Muslims. The Muslims woke up to find themselves surrounded by over a hundred armed soldiers. The Adl and Al-Qarah people said that they did not wish to kill them, they only want to hand them over to the Quraish in return for some money. The Muslims fought and four of them were killed and two were captured and sold to the Makkans, who eventually killed them after torturing them.

(There is a poignant story of a sahaba who was tortured hoisted on a cross and in that condition he refused to say ill of Rasool(s). This story may be highlighted.)

### **Bir-e-Maunah**

Another similar cowardly incidence took place at about the same time. Amir Ibn Malik, better known as Abu Bara after his first son,

came from Najd to meet the Prophet (SAS). He was a chief of the Amir tribe. He asked for a group of learned teachers to educate the people of that area about Islam. When the Prophet (SAS) expressed his apprehension about their safety, Abu Bara said that he would be their guardian and protector. So the Prophet (SAS) sent a group of seventy learned people of Ansar with Mundhir ibn Amr as the leader.

When the group reached Bir-e-Maunah, at the frontier between Banu Amir and Banu Sulaym, Haram ibn Milham was sent to Amir ibn Tufayl the chief of Banu Amir with the prophet (SAS)'s letter. Abu Bara was the other chief of the tribe. Amir ibn Tufayl killed the messenger without even opening the letter. He incited his tribe to go and kill the rest of the Muslims, but they refused as the Muslims were under protection of Abu Bara. Amir then took the killers of Banu Sulaym and killed the rest of them, of which only one, Kab ibn Zaid survived and could return to Madinah. Kab was wounded and was lying amongst the dead. Kab ibn Zaid recovered and embraced martyrdom in another battle about a year later.

Two men of the Muslims had been away grazing their cattle. They noticed scavenger birds gathering over the area where they had left their brothers and were apprehending there might be something wrong. When they returned and found their brothers dead, one of them fought the killers, killing two of them before he was martyred. The last one Amir ibn Umayyah returned to Madinah. On his way he found two men of the tribe of Amir and killed them in retaliation. He did not know that these two had been to visit the Prophet (SAS) and was protected by him. So the Prophet (SAS) prepared to pay their blood money.

### **Banu Al-Nadir**

As the Amir tribe was allied to the Banu Al-Nadir Jews, the Prophet (SAS) with a few of his companions including Abu Bakar, Umar and Ali went to them and asked them to contribute. They agreed and

made them to sit by a house and prepared to lift a heavy rock on the roof, to drop it down on the Prophet (SAS). Allah gave out the plot to the Prophet and he immediately left for Madinah. The companions after waiting for sometime also went. The Jews had understood that the prophet might have somehow come to know of their heinous plot, and tried to convince the companions of their good intentions.

The Prophet (SAS) sent Muhammad ibn Maslama to tell the Banu Nadir Jews that as they had violated the covenant by plotting to kill the Prophet, they had forfeited their right to live in Madinah, and must leave in ten days. They may however take all their possessions, and even may manage their farms and orchards by agents.

The Jews knew what they had done, and began preparing to leave. Meanwhile Abdullah Ibn Ubayy sent them message not to leave. He promised them support with his men, a two thousand strong contingent. The Banu Quraizah Jews, the Arab tribes of Ghatfan would join them he said. Ibn Ubayy promised, even if it would come to the worst and the Banu Nadir had to leave, he himself would leave with them.

Huyayy ibn Akhtab the chief of Banu Nadir remembered Ibn Ubay's treachery with the Qaynuqa Jews, but even then concluded to put trust in him in the now changed circumstances. As the Muslims have suffered defeat in Uhud and have lost further strength and honor by the massacre of Al-Raji and Bir-e-Mauna, he gambled to put trust in the hypocrite. His fortresses were quite strong, he amassed food to last for a year, enough of weapons and stones, and sent message to the prophet saying "We are not leaving, do whatever you can."

Immediately on receipt of the message, the Prophet (SAS) mobilized troops. The Prophet himself marched at the head of the contingent with Ali carrying the flag. Ibn Umm Makhtum was left in charge of Madinah. The Muslims encircled the Jewish Quarters of Al-Nadir, who retreated inside the fortresses. In vain did the Al- Nadir Jews

wait for support from Ibn Ubayy and the Quraiza Jews. Nor did the Ghatfan turn up. Allah put fear in their hearts (Al-Hashr 59:2). As no force came to their aid, the Nadir Jews after twenty six days sent a message to the prophet saying they were ready to leave Medina under the former terms. The Prophet (SAS) said that as they had not left peacefully, the former conditions were no longer tenable. He however would let them take their women and children, and a camel load of goods for each, but no arms. Their farms and land all were confiscated. Two of the Jews, Yamin ibn Umayr and Abu Sa'd ibn Wahb were disgusted with the behavior of their leader. They came out and embraced Islam.

All the properties confiscated of the Banu Nadir was not regarded as war booty, as there was no fighting, but as 'Faiy'. 'Faiy' as decreed by Allah belonged to the state. With the consent of the Ansars, the Prophet (SAS) distributed it all among the poor Muhajirun. Only two people of Ansar, Sahl ibn Hanif and Abu Dujanah, who were poor, got shares. Allah with His infinite wisdom declared the system of 'Faiy', so that wealth should not be rolling with the rich people only (Al-Hashr 59:7). To this end Allah has also given the system of Zakat, the system of inheritance and many other commandments.

The Prophet (SAS) used to take the help of a Jew in writing letters in Hebrew and Syriac. Now as the Jews could no longer be trusted, he chose Zayd ibn Thabit, a youth of the Ansar, and commanded him to learn the languages.

### **Second Badar**

As it was going to be a year since Uhud, the Prophet (SAS) was remembering the challenge of Abu Sufian to meet at Badar. Abu Sufian was not ready as it was a year of draught. None the less he sent Nuaym to Madinah with the story of their amassing a huge army such as the Arabs had never seen and that they were planning to wipe out the Muslims once for all. Nuaym was to spread the story in

Madinah to demoralize the Muslims. Some Muslims felt terrified for a time, but with the steadfastness of the Prophet (SAS) they did tide over their fears.

The Prophet (SAS) went out to Badar, appointing Abdullah ibn Abdullah ibn Ubayy to govern Madinah. Abu Sufian on his part started out of Makkah with his troops, but from the way he turned back, blaming the year of draught and poverty. The Muslims stayed in Badar for eight days, and in the annual fair there they did some trade and business and earned good profits.

### **Dat-Al-Riqā**

After the expulsion of the Banu Nadir, Medina was more peaceful, the hypocrites were also subdued, but threats from outside remained. Information reached the prophet (SAS) that two Arabian tribes, Muharib and Thalabah of the Banu Ghatfan were mobilizing troops to attack Medina. He was not ready to give them time. He assembled a force of seven hundred, appointed Uthman ibn Affan to govern Medina in his absence, and marched quickly to Nakhla, in the province of Najd, and came face to face with a huge army. Even though the enemy troops were several times larger than the Muslims, they did not dare to attack them. The fact that the Muslims had traversed so long a path over difficult terrain in so short a time, to confront them in their own territories, put fear in their hearts. No fighting took place, but the nights and days were passed in tension. The Muslims took to a special manner of offering Salah, the Prophet (SAS) would lead the salah with half the troops standing behind him, while the other half keep watch. After half of the salah, the people who were praying would now go and keep vigil and those who were on guard would join the Prophet in salah. This is 'Kasr', shortening of salah for the emergency of war.

Ultimately the enemies retreated and the Muslim contingent came back triumphant. As the terrain was difficult, the Muslims had to wrap

their feet in pieces of cloth to protect from injury, so the expedition was called "Dat-al-Riqā", the expedition of pieces of cloth.

### **Dumat-Al-Jandal**

Sometime later, in early fifth Hijri, the Prophet (SAS) led another campaign to Dumat-al-Jandal, an oasis on the frontier between Hijaz and Sham, close to Palestine. Here in this area one Christian by the name of Uquaida was plundering the food caravans. Besides being closer to the Byzantine territory, he was also being instigated by the Jews of Khaibar and the Banu Nadir who had been expelled from Madinah. For the Muslims it was a long journey and they travelled by night, for fifteen nights, to take the enemy by surprise. At the sudden unexpected onslaught, the miscreants fled, leaving behind all their animals and possessions. The Prophet (SAS) encamped for several days, made treaties with some tribes like Aynia ibn Hasin. It was a significant morale booster, because the area was close to the borders of the Byzantine empire.

### **Banu Al-Mustaliq**

After return from this expedition, came the news of Banu Mustaliq, that they were trying to organize an attack against Madinah. The Prophet (SAS) took prompt steps and reached the spring of Maraysi. The Banu Mustaliq chief Harith ibn Abi Dirar had assembled a large army, but at sight of the Muslims most of them fled, leaving behind Harith and his tribe. They were easily defeated and most of them with their women and children were taken prisoners. As they were distributed as slaves, a woman by the name of Barra, the daughter of the chief of the clan, fell in the lot of the Prophet (SAS). She accepted Islam and the prophet set her free. He then proposed and she accepted and they were married. He named her Jewayriah. After the marriage the Muslims set their slaves free, as they did not think it right to keep the prophet's relatives in slavery. This magnanimous gesture brought about a change in the way of thinking of the Banu

Mustaliq, and a lot of them soon embraced Islam. The enemies became brothers and sisters.

This change of mind could occur because the Muslims did not harbor hatred towards the people they fought. When they raided a community they would fight and kill the soldiers, but not the civilian population. The Prophet (SAS) and so also the Khulafa-e-Rashidin after him would always admonish the troops not to kill the women, children and old people, not to destroy crops, not to cut down trees and palms unless absolutely necessary. The battles the Muslims fought were for genuine purpose, not for vengeance.

These tremendous gains one after the other made the hypocrites envious. They would always be seeking opportunities for sabotage. Even before leaving the spring of Maraysi, they got the first opportunity. In quarreling about taking their horses to the water to drink, Jahjah the servant of Umar (RA) came to blows with Sinan ibn Wabr of the Khazraj. As they fought each of them called his compatriots the muhajirun and the Khazraj for help. Some individuals hastened to aid the one of his tribe, according to the old tradition of the Arabs, and a scuffle ensued. The Prophet (SAS) heard of it and rushed to the spot. He rebuked both sides for invoking the old tribal loyalty of ignorance, forgetting the brotherhood of Islam. They were ashamed and embraced each other.

But Abdullah ibn Ubayy would not let it go at that. He took on to instigate hatred between the Ansar and the Muhajir. He began talking to his people of the Khazraj quoting the proverb "Fatten your dog and he will eat you". He was saying "When we go back to Madinah, the people of honor will oust the lowly ones". Zaid ibn Arqam, a boy of fourteen heard it and realized it was something serious. He reported the matter to the Prophet (SAS) in presence of other companions. The Prophet (SAS) asked him again and again if he had heard it right, from Abdullah ibn Ubayy himself; if he was angry with Abdullah ibn Ubayy for some other reason, etc. Umar Ibn Al-Khattab

suggested that Ibn Ubayy should be executed. The Prophet (SAS) said “No, how will it be when people start to say that Muhammad is killing his own companions”? So to reduce the tension, to minimize idle gossip and to prevent further conspiracies, the Prophet (SAS) gave order to break camp and start out forthwith, even though it was a very odd hour. The journey continued throughout the night and in the morning too, till the sun became unbearably hot.

Abdullah ibn Ubayy got word that the Prophet had heard of his instigating words, and hastened to his side and vouched by Allah that he had never said anything like that. So some people began rebuking Zaid ibn Arqam. Shortly afterwards the Sura Munafiqun was revealed by Allah (63:8).

Ibn Ubayy’s son Abdullah ibn Abdullah, who was a good Muslim, whom the Prophet (SAS) loved and trusted so much that he was even left to govern Madinah in the prophet’s absence. He came to the Prophet (SAS) and said if his father has to be executed, it should be done by himself, because if anybody else does it he will not be able to look at him and control himself, for the rest of his life. The Prophet (SAS) said “We are not going to do any such thing, we will be kind to him and treat him well”. It is the teaching of the Prophet (SAS) to love your parents, even if they are not good Muslims or Muslims at all; and the prophet (SAS) respected the sentiment of the loving son.

Abdullah ibn Abdullah ibn Ubayy did his part on reaching Madinah, he stood in front of his father saying “You said the people of honour will oust the lowly ones, now you will not enter Madinah unless the Prophet (SAS) gives permission”. The Prophet (SAS) ordered Abdullah to let his father in.

### **Aishah’s necklace**

Aishah and Umm Salamah had accompanied the Prophet (SAS) on this expedition; and on a brief sunset halt Aishah noticed that she had lost her necklace. The necklace was very dear to her, and for its sake

the halt had to be prolonged till morning. There was no well at this spot and there was want of water for ablusion. Some murmuring arose and Abu Bakr (RA) was feeling a bit embarrassed at the carelessness of his daughter. But presently before 'Fajr', Allah revealed the ayat of purification by clean earth (Al-Nisa 4:43), and the companions congratulated Abu Bakr for this great concession that Allah had granted through one of his family. While even at day break the necklace was not found the Prophet (SAS) commanded to start, but as Aishah's camel stood up the necklace was found, it had been under it. The necklace unclasped and fell again in this same journey.

### **Slander on A'ishah (RA)**

One of the next stops was in a pleasant valley with long stretches of level sand, and the two tents of the Prophet (SAS) were pitched at a distance from the others. The Prophet (SAS) dared Aishah to compete in a race with him and she agreed. The Prophet (SAS) won and said "This is for the earlier race that you had won". This is a glimpse of the manner, how he loved his wives.

On this very halt another major incidence took place. The incidence itself was not anything big, but it was given a bad color by Abdullah ibn Ubayy. Aishah (RA) had gone to answer the call of nature, and in the mean time the Prophet (SAS) had ordered to break camp and proceed. On return A'ishah noticed that she had lost her necklace again and so she went back to look for it. By the time she returned with the necklace everybody had left including her camel. The usual practice was that A'ishah would be sitting in the palanquin and the servants would hoist it on the camel. Now what had happened was that the people had hoisted the palanquin without realizing that she was not inside, she was indeed very thin and light of weight. When A'ishah found herself alone on the deserted spot, she decided to stay there, hoping that when she will be missed people will surely come back looking for her. She tied her robes around herself and lay down. Presently she fell asleep. Now Safwan ibn Mu'attal (RA), who had

been left behind earlier, was coming this way with his camel. When he saw 'the ummul muminin A'ishah' sleeping alone, exclaimed "Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi rajiun". Startled at the sound A'ishah sat up. Safwan made his camel kneel and A'ishah scrambled on, and they started after the caravan at an express pace, and caught up with them as they were entering the city, and A'ishah went home. Many people saw her coming. Abdullah ibn Ubayy now began spreading the scandal that the prophet's wife had spent the night with her paramour and had returned on his camel. Some people took up the gossip, and it even reached the ears of the Prophet (SAS). He was very distressed. Most people heard it but not A'ishah herself.

A few days after return to Madinah, A'ishah fell ill and her mother came to look after her. A'ishah noticed that the Prophet (SAS) was not as caring and concerned as he would be in her illness on earlier occasions. She felt a bit hurt, but did not think much of it, and asked permission of him to go to her parents' house for sometime, and went with her mother. There she recovered.

One night while walking with her, her aunt Umm Mistah tripped and fell and cursed "cursed be Mistah". A'ishah exclaimed "What a mother you are, you speak ill of your own son, the one who fought in Badar". Mistah's mother was highly amazed, she asked "Have you not heard the story?" "What story?" A'ishah asked. Then Umme Mistah related the story to her. A'ishah was now crying her eyes out. She accused her mother why she had not told her earlier. Her mother tried to console her. A'ishah could now make out the reason of the cool attitude of the Prophet (SAS) towards her.

The Prophet (SAS) would come and enquire about her condition in only a few words and then depart. This day he sat and asked A'ishah to seek forgiveness of Allah if she had done any wrong, and Allah will forgive her. A'ishah asked her parents to answer the Prophet, but they did not. Now, she a girl of about seventeen, said that as the Prophet (SAS) had begun to doubt her innocence, if she claims to be

innocent, he will still continue to doubt, and if on the other hand she admits to the false accusation, he will readily believe it; so she leaves the matter with Allah, and says like the father of Yusuf (AS) “Sabrun Jamil”. She could not in her agitation, remember the name of Yaqub (AS). Presently divine revelation descended on the Prophet (SAS) declaring A’ishah’s innocence, asserting that a group of the Muslims were the slanderers (Al-Noor 24:11-20).

Three persons Hamnah Bint Jahash, Mistah Ibn Athathah and Hassan ibn Thabit were punished by eighty stripes each of flogging for falsely accusing a chaste woman of adultery. The master mind behind the gossip, Abdullah ibn Ubayy could not be punished for want of proof that he had uttered such words. Some others were also not punished for want of proof. Their punishment will be in the hereafter.

Hamnah had joined the gossip as an effort to enhance her sister’s position in the affection of the Prophet (SAS) over A’ishah. The Prophet (SAS) had however asked Zainab her opinion about A’ishah and she only spoke good of her. Mistah was a relative of A’ishah’s father Abu Bakar and a dependent on his charity for his living. Besides participating in the gossip, he was an honest man and had taken part in the battle of Badar. After the incidence Abu Bakar vowed not to help Mistah anymore, but Allah admonished him (Al-Noor 24:22) and he resumed supporting Mistah.

Here again we see that the Prophet (SAS) does not know of the unseen unless Allah makes it known to him.

### **Khandaq**

The redoubled show of power on the part of the Muslims, after the debacle of Uhud, was the cause of envy of the Quraish, the Ghatafan, the Hudhayl, the Jews of Khaybar and particularly the

Banu Nadir Jews, that had been ousted from Madinah.

The leaders of Banu Nadir Huyayy ibn Akhtab, Sallam ibn Abu Al-Huqayq, Kinanah ibn Al-Huqayq together with Hawdhah ibn Qays and Abu Ammar of the tribe of Banu Wa'il went to Makkah to provoke the Quraish. Huyayy told the Quraish that his tribe the Banu Nadir was waiting between Khaybar and Madinah to march. He also assured the Quraish that their religion of idolatry was better than that of Muhammad.

After agreeing upon a definite date with the Quraish to march, the Jewish leaders went to the Ghatafan, the Banu Murrah, the Banu Fazarah, Ashja, Sulaym, Banu Sa'd, Asa'd and all other tribes inimical towards the Muslims.

The Quraish gathered an infantry of four thousand, a cavalry of three hundred and a camel corps of one thousand five hundred. This huge army was led by Abu Sufian. The flag bearer was Uthman ibn Talhah. With the inclusion of the Jews and the pagan tribes, the troops totaled over ten thousand. They were well equipped and had sufficient numbers of animals for transport and for food.

As the news of the confederate armies, the 'Ahzab', reached Madinah, the Prophet (SAS) and the companions realized the gravity of the situation. The decision was unanimous to wait for the enemies in the city. Salman al Farsi came up with the brilliant idea of digging a moat around the city, a Persian idea. The city was naturally protected on three sides, the west and east by volcanic lava beds, that could not be negotiated by man or animal easily, and the south of the city was covered by thick plantations of date palms. Only the northern side, a stretch of three and a half miles needed artificial protection. Plan was taken and implementation began immediately, to dig a moat wide enough and deep enough, so that a horse may not jump across. It was to be ten yards across and five yards deep. Sections of forty yards were assigned to each group. The soil and rock was heaped up

on the inner side making a parapet wall affording added protection and supply of stone missiles. Watch towers were built to keep better vigilance over enemy movements. Most reports say the task of digging was completed in six days, some reports say a longer time.

In digging sometimes difficulties arose. There was a big rock that could neither be broken nor be budged. The Prophet (SAS) struck it three times and it crumbled. With each strike there was spark and in it he saw the palaces and castles of Persia, Rome and Yemen. He predicted all these would be conquered by the Muslims.

All the men were engaged in digging and all other business had come to a standstill. Naturally there was want of food. The Prophet (SAS) saw a small girl carrying something in a small bundle in her hand. He asked her what it was. She said it was a few dates for her father and her uncle. The Prophet (SAS) asked her to give it to him. This she did and the dates did not fill his hands. He asked for a cloak to be spread and sprinkled the dates on it. Now he called all men to come and partake of it. All men ate to their fill and still there were dates on the cloak. Another time some of the people had put stones on their stomach(belly) and wrapped it to the body with clothes, to allay the pangs of hunger and the Prophet (SAS) had two stones on his stomach(belly). This sight moved Jabir Ibn Abdullah. He went to his house and asked his wife if there was any food in the house. She said there was a small goat and some barley. He slaughtered the goat, gave the meat to her and she ground the barley. He asked his wife to cook the meat and make bread, and went to the prophet (SAS) and asked him to come with a few of the companions to his house for a meal. The Prophet (SAS) called all the people to come to Jabir's house in groups to eat. He sent Jabir home to tell his wife to keep the pot of meat and the bread covered. Jabir ran home and said to his wife "Confound me, the Prophet (SAS) has invited all the men, what can we do now?" His wife said if he has invited all, you don't have to worry. Everybody ate to his heart's content and still there was

some meat and bread left. The Prophet (SAS) asked Jabir's wife to send food to her neighbors.

As the moat was being dug, all the dwelling houses nearby were evacuated for the use of the army. All the women and children were concentrated to the central part of the city in fortified houses.

The moat was just ready as the enemy approached. They were amazed at the sight. They had never seen anything like it even in their wildest dreams. Abu Sufian was shouting "This is sacrilege, this is treachery". When one of his men tried to jump the moat with his horse, fell in and died, he shouted asking for blood money. The reply was "This is war". While some horsemen tried to jump and died, a few managed to jump over and were killed. Amr ibn Abd al- Wadd jumped over and was killed by Ali in a duel.

The siege continued for days and weeks, with no actual fighting. It was a war of nerves. The Quraish and the Ghatafan were worried how long will the siege continue and how long will their provisions last. The biting cold of the winter was telling upon their energy.

The Muslims also were not at ease, they had to maintain vigil day and night round the clock. A moment's slackness might bring disaster. The Prophet (SAS) proposed to make the Ghatafan people leave, by offering them a portion of the crops of Madinah, but the Aws and Khazraj asked if it was a decree from Allah and His Rasool, if not they would not give them even a grain in exchange for their lives. Even in the days of their ignorance they had never bowed down to the Ghatafan, how could they do so now that they are Muslims?

The Banu Quraiza Jews were not violating their pledge. They even had lent their axes and shovels in digging the moat. The Prophet (SAS) had not asked them to participate in the war. They were to keep neutral.

Huyayy ibn Akhtab of the Banu Nadir Jews, who was the main

instigator of the whole expedition became frantic. He thought that the only way of winning was to get the Banu Qurayzah on their side, actively attacking the Muslims from inside the city. He went to see the chief of the Qurayzah, Ka'b Ibn Asad, who shut his door on his face, calling him an ill omen. But Huyayy had not come to take "No" for an answer. He insisted and implored until he was allowed in. He argued, coaxed and cajoled, he made Ka'b understand that, this was the last chance they would ever have of wiping the Muslims out once and for all. They had over ten thousand well equipped soldiers, only the moat had so far prevented them from exterminating Muhammad and his followers. It is you the Banu Qurayzah who can attack them inside the city and make for us a way to enter. After that there will be no Muhammad and no Muslims.

Ka'b was insisting that he had never seen anything but goodness and honesty in Muhammad, how could he violate the treaty? Another man of Qurayzah, Amb Bin Sa'd also appealed to his people not to violate the treaty with the prophet. But ultimately Ka'b and the Qurayzah were lured by Huyayy. Huyayy promised Ka'b, even if it comes to the worst, which is not at all likely, and the Quraish and the Ghatafan leave without finishing off the Muslims, he Huyayy will come and join him and share his fate.

The news of the treachery reached the ears of the Prophet (SAS). He sent Sa'd Ibn Muad, the chief of Aws, Sa'd Ibn Ubadah, the chief of Khazraj, Abdullah Ibn Rawahah and Khawat Ibn Jubayr to the Banu Qurayzah, to ascertain the authenticity of the news. They returned and said two words "Adal and Al-Quara", meaning they have betrayed. This technicality of words was used according to the instructions of the Prophet (SAS), so that he gets the message but the people do not understand and are not upset. The Prophet (SAS) glorified Allah.

Ka'b of Qurayzah had asked Huyayy to give him ten days time to prepare for the attack. Meanwhile however they began their nefarious

activities. A Jew was found snooping around the quarters where the Muslim women and children were. Safiyyah Bint Abdul Muttalib, the prophet's aunt killed him, cut off his head and threw it over the fence. This frightened the Jews, they felt sure there were troops guarding the interior of the city. The prophet (SAS) would however send contingents of two hundred or three hundred men to patrol the areas at night from time to time.

Tension was mounting in the Muslim camp and had become almost unbearable. The siege lasted twenty seven days. Allah sent his special aid in the person of Nuaym Ibn Mas'ud. He was a respected person of the Ghatafan, with connections with the Quraish as well as the Qurayzah. He came to the Prophet (SAS) and declared that he had embraced Islam and his people did not know of it. He volunteered to be of service. The Prophet (SAS) said "If you join the army you are but only one more soldier, rather try to dissuade your people from attacking us, war is but a success in trickery". He was an intelligent man and did even better. First of all he went to the Qurayzah camp and said to them "Your position and that of the Quraish and the Ghatafan are not the same, your home and your women and children are here. If they go away without finishing Muhammad and the Muslims, you will have to face them by yourselves. I have seen unrest in the Ghatafan and in the Quraish camp too. Think twice before you engage in war against Muhammad. The Qurayzah asked his advice. He said "To ensure that they do not go away without finishing the job, you may ask the Quraish and the Ghatafan to send to you some of their prominent persons as a guarantee. They will be your guests for a few days." The Banu Qurayzah thought it reasonable. In Arabia at that time people would even leave their wives and children as guarantee against loans.

Nuaym then went to the Quraish. He told them that he was coming from the Qurayzah people and they seem to be regretting the breach of trust with Muhammad and are trying to make amends. In order to

regain Muhammad's trust they may seek to give to him some of your prominent persons to kill. If they ask for any hostage from you I don't think you should give. Then he went to his people the Ghatafan and said the same thing.

The Quraish sent messenger to the Banu Qurayzah saying that they cannot wait any longer, and asked them to attack on the morrow. The Qurayzah protested that they can't, as it was Sabbath. They also said "We can't go into any offensive unless we are ensured that you will not go away without finishing the job. So give to us some of your prominent persons as a guarantee". The Quraish became sure that the Jews have betrayed them.

That very night thunderstorm struck the Quraish and the Ghatafan with clapping of thunder, torrential rain and biting cold. All their fires were extinguished, all pots and pans upturned, all tents torn and blown away.

After the storm the Prophet (SAS) sent Hudhayfah Ibn Yaman of the Ansar to the enemy camp to see what they were doing. **(The Rasool(s) found Hudhayfa cuddled up on the floor due to very cold weather. Then there was a miraculous protection from cold given to Hudhayfa by dua of Rasool)** He went to the Quraish camp and in the darkness set down with them. At one time Abu Sufian cautioned his people to look if there was any stranger amongst them. Hudhayfah promptly caught the hand of the person next to him and asked "who are you?" The man said his name and nobody cared to ask him. Abu Sufian declared that they are leaving for Makkah and presently mounted on his camel. Hudhayfah later said if the Prophet (SAS) had not commanded him not to go into any action other than gathering information, he could easily have killed Abu Sufian with an arrow. The Ghatafan also deserted by dawn.

In the morning the Muslims saw that the enemies were all gone. They praised Allah, their faith had redoubled. The battle of Ahzab was not

a battle of the sword, but of nerves, and Allah made the Muslims come out triumphant. During the siege the character of the hypocrites was exposed, they were asking leave to depart from the warfront again and again, on flimsy grounds (Al-Ahzab 33:9-25).

### **Banu Qurayzah**

The Muslims returned to their homes, but Allah did not allow them to take rest. At noon Gabriel came to the Prophet (SAS) with Allah's command to march to the Banu Qurayzah without delay. The Prophet (SAS) declared that the Muslims are to perform their Asr Salah at Qurayzah. Some of the Muslims halted on the way to say their Asr prayers on time, others went to the area of Qurayzah and said the prayer late. The Prophet (SAS) said both were right according to their own understanding.

Ali had been sent ahead as the flag-bearer, the Prophet (SAS) set out later appointing Ibn Umm Makhtum to deputize for him in Madinah. As the Muslims assembled, the Prophet (SAS) ordered the siege to begin, a siege that would last twenty-five days.

At first the Jews were abusive, reviling the prophet, slandering the Muslims and their women. As the siege continued they were gripped by fear. They sent word appealing to let them go like the Banu Qaynuqa and the Banu Nadir. But the Prophet (SAS) said that their offense was not as small as that of those tribes, they had betrayed at a very crucial time and they had planned to exterminate the total Muslim community altogether; so theirs must be an unconditional surrender. The Jews knew what they had done and could well imagine the fate they deserved. They also knew how Huyayy ibn Akhtab had behaved after the prophet's kindness and they had joined hands with him, thus forfeiting all chances of leniency. They asked for Abu Lubabah of the Aws, a former ally of theirs to come to them to negotiate. Abu Lubabah could not give them any encouraging news.

Rather in a moment of weakness he passed his finger over his throat indicating slaughter. At once he realized that he had done a treasonable act. He emerged forthwith and without meeting the Prophet (SAS) went straight to the Masjid and bound himself to a post for repentance. (The pillar is still there marked as "pillar of Abulubaba".)

The Quraizah Jews sent to others of the Aws Ansars, to negotiate on their behalf for leniency, just as the Khazraj had done for their friends the Banu Qaynuqa . Some Aws people came to the prophet (SAS). He asked them if they will be satisfied if one of the Aws gives the judgment, and they were happy. The Jews came out of their fortresses, the women and children were taken to one side and the men were handcuffed. The Jews chose Sa'd Ibn Muadh, the chief of the Aws as the judge.

Sa'd Ibn Muadh was a young man of thirty-five, but he had been injured by an arrow during the siege of Khandak and so was being nursed in a makeshift hospital. He was brought from there on a donkey by his clansmen of Aws, who on the way incessantly coaxed him to be merciful towards their former clients.

As Sa'd arrived, he asked the Aws, the Khazraj and the Muhajir if they were ready to abide by his judgment whatever it be. He asked the Prophet (SAS) also with reverence if he will accept his verdict. He then asked the Jews if they will accept his verdict without question. All agreed without exception. So he gave his verdict that all able bodied men of the Qurayzah including Huyayy of Banu Nadir be beheaded, their women and children be enslaved and all their property confiscated. The order was carried out. Two of the Jews who had earlier entreated Ka'b not to violate the treaty with the Muslims now embraced Islam, and another one went away never to be seen again. One woman of the Jews was executed because she had killed a Muslim by dropping a millstone on him.

Soon after proclaiming the judgment, Sa'd ibn Muadh died as his wound opened and bled profusely. When he had been wounded by the arrow he had beseeched Allah to keep him alive if he could take part in Jihad, or grant him martyrdom. Allah granted him both his prayers, giving the judgment was also jihad.

Huyayy ibn Akhtab was executed but another chief of the Banu Nadir, Sullam ibn Abi Al-Huqayq who was also instrumental in promoting the Ahzab expedition had fled to Khaybar and taken refuge there. A small group of Al-Khazraj Ansars ventured there and killed him. Abdullah ibn Atiq the group leader sneaked into Sullam's fortress and killed him. While escaping he fell and broke his leg and was carried by his friends. The Prophet (SAS) rubbed the leg with his hand and it became alright.

A platoon of thirty, under the leadership of Muhammad ibn Maslama was sent to Najd, to punish the Bani Bakr bin Kalb. They traveled by night and took them unawares. Most of the tribe fled, but the chief of Bani Hanif, Thumamah ibn Uthal Al-Hanafi was captured and brought to Madinah. He was tied to a post of the Masjid. The Prophet (SAS) after talking to him released him and he became a Muslim.

### **Abu Al As**

In Jumada al-Ula of the sixth Hijri year, Zaid ibn Harithah intercepted a Quraishi caravan returning from Syria, captured the total of it, took a few prisoners but the leader of the caravan Abu Al As escaped. Abu Al As thought if he returned to Makkah empty handed, the Quraish people who had entrusted him with their goods might think he had not done enough to defend the caravan, because he was the husband of Zainab, the prophet's daughter. Other caravans had earlier been captured by the Muslims and nobody had blamed anybody. But his case was unique. So he took a daring decision. He went to Madinah stealthily and managed to reach Zainab's apartment attached to the mosque by night.

During the dawn prayers Zainab declared in the mosque at the top of her voice that she has extended her protection to Abu Al As ibn Al-Rabi. After the prayer the prophet (SAS) asked all present if they had heard what he has heard. It was a surprise to all including the prophet.

He then talked to Zainab and Abu Al As, and later addressed the Muslims “You know my relationship with this man. If you are kind enough to return what you have taken from him, it will be appreciated. If you refuse, it is your right to do so, and nobody can force you”. Abu Al As was given back everything of the caravan intact, and he returned to Makkah with it.

In Makkah he returned the goods to the rightful owners and asked if they had received their goods with profits and had been satisfied? Yes, they were satisfied. Now he declared that he had embraced Islam. He returned to Medina and was reunited with his wife.

### **Marriages of Zainb bint Jahash and Umm Habibah bint Abu Sufian**

Umm Habibah Ramlah Bint Abu Sufian was one of the early Muslims. She and her husband Ubaydullah ibn Jahash, who also had embraced Islam, had migrated to Abyssinia. There in Abyssinia Ubaydullah became a Christian, yet in spite of her mental agony she continued her life with her husband.

Shortly after the expeditions of the moat and of Qurayzah, the Prophet (SAS) learned that Umm Habibah had become a widow. She had no close relative there in Abyssinia, neither could she return to her parents as they were idolaters and enemies of Islam. She had become virtually destitute, living on her own with her daughter.

While on the one hand the Prophet (SAS) was concerned of a destitute Muslim woman, he on the other hand was also foreseeing the prospect of a new horizon emerging in the relations with the

Quraish, after their failure at the expedition of the confederate forces. He was indeed a foresighted statesman. So he sent Amr ibn Umayyah Al-Darmi as his emissary to King Negus of Abyssinia, to arrange his marriage with Umm Habibah. The king sent a maid of his to Umm Habibah to convey the proposal to her. She was overjoyed and presented the maid with some of her ornaments.

The marriage ceremony was performed in the presence of Jafar ibn Abi Talib and other Muslims. Umm Habibah nominated Khalid ibn Said as her guardian. The king paid the dowry of four hundred Dinars, the highest received by any of the prophet's brides. The king also threw a dinner for 'walima'. The king then sent Umm Habibah to Madinah escorted by Zayd ibn Harithah. When Abu Sufian heard of his daughter's marriage to the prophet, he was proud and did not fail to express it.

Earlier than this the Prophet (SAS) had married Zaynab Bint Jahash also. It was a marriage ordained by Allah to establish the status of an adopted son as against a real son. Zaynab was a cousin of the prophet (SAS), a member of the top aristocracy of Makkah, the Quraish, and she was self-conscious of her social status. She was given into marriage by the Prophet (SAS) to Zayd ibn Harithah, a freed slave of the prophet.

Zayd was a member of an Arab tribe, was captured at the age of ten, by another tribe in a looting expedition and was sold as a slave. He was bought for Khadijah, who after her marriage gave him to her husband Muhammad (SAS). At one time Zayd's father learned of his presence in Makkah and came to Muhammad (SAS) to ransom him out. Muhammad (SAS) said "Zayd is free to go with you without a ransom if he wants to go, but if he does not, I can't force him". Zayd's father and uncle were amazed at the generosity, but Zayd did not want to go, he was so enamored with his master's treatment. Muhammad (SAS) took them to the Kabah and declared that henceforth Zayd is a free man and he will be called Zayd ibn

Muhammad. Zayd's father and uncle went away pleased and satisfied.

The Prophet (SAS) had arranged the marriage as an example, to abolish the difference between 'Ashraf' and 'Atraf', the cast system. It was a personal endeavor of his. Zaynab had submitted to the marriage in spite of herself, as it was the prophet's wish. The marriage did not work out well, love did not grow. Zayd implored the prophet (SAS) again and again to allow him to divorce, but the prophet asked him to fear Allah and be patient. He also tried to counsel Zaynab. Ultimately however Allah instructed the Prophet (SAS) to let Zayd divorce Zaynab, and Allah ordered the marriage between the prophet and Zaynab (Al-Ahzab 33:37). The hypocrites tried to raise a hue and cry in the society that Muhammad (SAS) had married his daughter-in-law, but it was established by Allah that an adopted son was not a son in reality.

### **Hudaybiyah**

Towards the end of the sixth year after Hijrah, the Prophet (SAS) had a dream that he and his companions were visiting the Kabah and shaving or cutting their hair. He felt very happy and decided to go for Umrah. All the Muslims in and around Madinah were enthusiastic. In the month of Dhul-Qadah one thousand and four hundred Muslims set out for Makkah without arms except the usual sword in the sheath. It was a peaceful procession with seventy sacrificial camels. The Prophet (SAS) left Ibn Umm Makhtum to deputize for him in Medina. Umm Salama the prophet's wife accompanied him.

The Prophet (SAS) took all possible precautions. He sent ahead a company of twenty persons with Abbad Ibn Bishr at its head to make sure there was no danger. He also sent Bishr Ibn Sufian to spy on the movements of the Quraish.

The Quraish had got word of the Muslim procession towards Kabah. They determined to prevent them, even if it meant war. They sent

Khalid Ibn Walid and Ikrima Ibn Abu Jahl with a force of two hundred to intercept the Muslims at Kura Al-Ghanim. Two other pagan tribes also joined them. The Prophet (SAS) however got word of it and could by-pass them and reach Hdaybiyah, just one day's walk from Makkah. The Quraish were simply baffled.

At Hdaybiyah the Quraish sent four emissaries one after the other to the Prophet (SAS). Each one of them after talking to the Prophet returned and said that Muhammad (SAS) had come for pilgrimage only, with no other motive and the Quraish should not prevent them from coming to the Kabah. The Quraish leaders were more concerned about losing face rather than upholding the age old tradition of the pilgrimage, and so they treated their own envoys badly.

The Prophet (SAS) then sent Kharrash Ibn Umayyah of the tribe of Khuza'ah as his envoy. The Quraish attacked him, wounded his camel and was about to kill him, had not the Abyssinian people intervened. Even after this grave incidence of dishonoring the traditions of diplomacy and the immunity of emissaries, the Prophet (SAS) was patient, and sent as his second emissary, Uthman Ibn Affan, his own son-in-law. He had proposed Umar ibn Al-Khattab's name, but Umar said that, as Kharrash had been attacked, he might also be attacked, as the Quraish had enough of grievances against him personally. Uthman on the other hand had prominent people there in Makkah to give him protection. Uthman remained in Mecca for three days and it was rumoured that he had been killed.

It appeared that the Quraish had deliberately closed all doors of any peaceful settlement. The Prophet (SAS) called his companions to pledge to fight the Quraish to the bitter end. Even though not at all armed for combat, every one of the Muslims made the pledge. This was the famous pledge under the tree, the "Bayat Al Ridwan", the pledge earning Allah's pleasure.

Soon afterwards however Uthman returned. Uthman though detained, had been offered to do the 'Tawaf' of the Ka'bah, but he refused to do it without the Prophet (SAS). The comparatively sober ones of the Quraish leaders were not in favor of bloodshed. Even though the Muslims were virtually unarmed, not even one of them had an armor, and although the Quraish outnumbered them greatly, and with all their weapons and the facilities of environment, they dared not hope for victory against a dedicated force like the Muslims.

So they sent another delegation, the fifth, headed by Suhayl Ibn Amr. The Prophet (SAS) received the delegation well. This day the Prophet (SAS) did not care to consult his companions. Suhayl took his time in putting forward his conditions, and the Prophet (SAS) readily accepted them.

Even the Quraish delegates were surprised at the readiness of the Prophet in accepting their terms, as some of the clause seemed quite humiliating for the Muslim side. There was general mortification and some agitation on the Muslim side. Umar Ibn Al-Khattab could not contain himself. He expressed his indignation to Abu Bakar, who advised him to depend patiently on the Prophet of Allah. He then went to the Prophet himself, and asked the same questions "Aren't you the prophet of Allah? Aren't we on the right? Aren't the idolaters on the wrong? Then why should we agree to these humiliating terms? The Prophet (SAS) replied " I am Allah's servant and messenger, I shall not disobey Him and He will never abandon me".

Ali was writing the document and he found it a hard task. Suhayl objected to "Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim" and said write "In your name O Allah". The Prophet agreed. Ali wrote "This document between Muhammad the Prophet of Allah and Suhayl Ibn Amr of the Quraish". Suhayl objected "If we had accepted Muhammad as the prophet of Allah, then there would be no conflict between us and you, write Muhammad son of Abdullah". The prophet (SAS) agreed to it, but Ali could not bring himself to strike out the word "Prophet of

Allah". The Prophet (SAS) said "Show me the word and I will strike it out".

The terms of the peace agreement included:

Complete truce for a period of ten years.

If any man of the Quraish accepts Islam and goes to Madinah, he will be returned to the custody of his guardian.

If any man of the Muslims goes and joins the Quraish, he will not be returned.

Both sides will harbor good intentions towards each other.

No theft or treachery shall be overlooked.

Whoever wishes to enter into an alliance with Muhammad may do so. Whoever wants to enter into alliance with the Quraish may do so.

Muhammad shall return this year without visiting the Ka'bah. Next year Makkah will be evacuated for them for three days.

The anguish of the Muslims was multiplied by another incidence. As the document was being written Abu Jandal, the son of Suhayl Ibn Amr arrived in Hudaybiyah, dragging the chains on his handcuffs and leg shackles and sought the protection of his Muslim brothers. Suhayl wanted his son back, according to the agreement. The Prophet (SAS) argued that Abu Jandal had come before the agreement was signed. But Suhayl was adamant, he threatened that in that case there will be no agreement. He dragged his son by the collar and began to beat him. Others of the Quraish delegation protected Abu Jandal and assured Muhammad (SAS) that they will not let Abu Jandal be tortured. The Prophet (SAS) told Abu Jandal to have patience, Allah will make a way for him and for others like him.

As soon as the pact was concluded, the tribe of Khuza'ah entered into alliance with the Muslims, and that of Banu Bakar with the Quraish.

It was now time to return home without reaching Kabah. All the Muslims were mortified. The Prophet (SAS) told the companions to slaughter their animals and shave their heads, but none of them stirred. The Prophet repeated the words three times as if to deaf ears. This was a unique situation, the companions were used to doing the bidding of the prophet without hesitation, without a moment's delay. Amazed, the prophet went inside his tent and told his wife Umm Salamah of the condition of the Muslims. The mother of the believers gave him the most sound advice. She said "They are petrified by their mortification, you please go and slaughter your animal and have your head shaved, and they will Allah willing follow suit. This was exactly what happened. The Prophet of Allah (SAS) did not mind seeking advice of any of his wives.

Their stay in Hudaibiyah was a little over two weeks and they started back. Umar came to the Prophet and said "Did you not tell us that we would go to the Ka'bah and do the Tawaf?" The Prophet (SAS) replied "Did I tell you specifically that we would do it this year? You will certainly go and do it Allah willing". He was again asked "If a Muslim comes to us from Makkah we have to return him to them, but if one of us goes to them they don't have to return him, is it fair?" The Prophet (SAS) replied "If a person leaves us and goes to the idolaters, is he worth getting back? And about the Muslim we return to them, Allah will certainly provide a way."

On the way the Prophet (SAS) called Umar and told him that a sura had been revealed to him that night which is dearer to him than all things under the sun, it was the 'Sura Al-Fath' The Conquest. Allah had called the treaty of Hudaibiyah the grand

victory. Umar asked him "Is it a victory, O messenger of Allah?" "Yes, indeed it is". After a few months it began to be clear to the Muslims what a great victory it was in reality. Umar would then repent, fast, and give 'sadaqah', alms to the poor as part of repentance for his insolence with the messenger of Allah. Every one of us Muslims must remember that the understanding of us humans can never supersede the wisdom of Allah and His Messenger. Allah has set examples for us through the great companions. Eventually the companions came to understand what a great victory it really was.

For the first time in history, the Muslims enjoyed a period of peace and calm, with no threat from the Quraish.

With the Quraish away from the war path, no other tribe, not even the Jews could build up courage to confront the Muslims.

It was the Quraish who sought peace, recognizing the legitimacy of the Muslim State.

Now the Muslims were able to contact any tribe or nation with the message of Islam. The Prophet (SAS) began sending messages to kings and rulers.

The number of Muslims increased so rapidly that while at Hudaibiyah there were one thousand four hundred men, after two years they could raise an army of over ten thousand. Indeed it was clear that peace and not military confrontation was the way of winning over people to Islam.

Eventually even Makkah was conquered and the Quraish embraced Islam.

Suhayl Ibn Amr had thought that his great triumph was the clause that the prophet will have to return any man who went from the Quraish to Madinah accepting Islam. Soon he came to realize otherwise. Abu Busayr a man of Thafiq came to the prophet and

declared that he was a Muslim. Soon his tribe sent a man of the tribe of Amir with his servant to take back Abu Busayr. The Prophet (SAS) sent him back consoling him that Allah will soon make a way out for him and other Muslims like him. While returning Abu Busayr managed to kill the man of Amir and return to Madinah. The Prophet (SAS) said that he could not let him stay because of the treaty. So Abu Busayr sought a place on the coastal area of Al-Is, and began pouncing upon Quraish caravans, looting and killing. Soon the news of these attacks reached Makkah. The Quraish were dismayed that their trade route to Syria was again going to be closed. The Muslims in Makkah on the other hand thought it a welcome place to go and gather together, and give the Quraish a good turn for the torture they had endured. Gradually as many as seventy persons including Abu Jandal escaped from Makkah and assembled there. The Quraish realized that Suhayl Ibn Amr's great triumph had turned sour. They sent message to the Prophet (SAS) imploring him to abrogate that clause and call the Muslims on the caravan route to Madinah.

The Prophet (SAS) sent a messenger with a letter to Abu Busayr to return to Madinah. Abu Busayr who had sustained some serious injury in a skirmish with a caravan was in death bed. He died with the Prophet (SAS)'s letter in his hand, satisfied that his efforts had earned good results. His colleagues buried him there and went to Madinah.

The matter of the women immigrants was different from that of men. When Umm Kulthum daughter of Uqbah Ibn Abu Muayt escaped from Makkah to Madinah, and her two brothers Umarah and Al-Walid came to the prophet for repatriation, the Prophet (SAS) refused, as the clause of the treaty was specifically for men. More over when a woman becomes a Muslim and her husband remains pagan, the marriage is dissolved and the Islamic state is morally bound to provide shelter to the destitute woman

(Mumtahanah 60:10).

### **Islam spreads world-wide**

After Hdaybiyah with the prospect of peace from the major adversary the Quraish, Muhammad (SAS) began taking steps of spreading the message of Islam world-wide, and to deal with the other major adversary in the Arabian peninsula the Jews of Khybar. The Prophet of Allah (SAS) was not a man to procrastinate even for a day.

To communicate with the Kings and Emperors he had a seal made with the inscription "Muhammad the messenger of Allah". Letters were sent to Heraclius the Byzantine Emperor, Chosroes the Persian Emperor, the Arch-bishop of Alexandria. The King of Yamamah, the King of Bahrayn and other kings and rulers, in and around the Arabian peninsula.

The letters were mostly like this:

"In the name of Allah The Merciful, The Compassionate".

From Muhammad Ibn Abdullah, The Messenger of Allah, to

.....

Peace be upon those rightly guided. I call you to the religion of truth, Al-Islam. If you accept guidance you will be saved and Allah will double your reward. If you do not, the responsibility of the salvation of your subjects is on you.

"O people of the Book, respond to the basic principle that is the same between us and you, that we worship none but Allah, we do not associate partners with Him, and we erect not amongst ourselves lords and patrons besides Allah. But if they turn back, then say "Bear witness that we are Muslims", We submit ourselves to the will of Allah."*(Al-Imran 3:64)*

Emissaries like Dehyah Al-Kalbi, Abdullah Ibn Hudhafah Al-

Sahmi, Umar Ibn Umayyah Al-Damri and others spread out with the message of Islam far and wide.

### **Khaybar**

It was from Khybar that Huyayy Ibn Akhtab of the Banu Nadir Jews had taken the initiative of the expedition of the confederate forces, the 'Ahzab'. Now that a truce had been reached with the Quraish, the Prophet (SAS) thought it expedient to deal with the Jews of Khybar too.

As Huyayy Ibn Akhtab and Sullam Ibn Abu Al-Huqayq had been done away with, Usayr Ibn Rizam, the Khaybar leader began to negotiate with the Ghatafan to hatch up yet another conspiracy against the Muslims. The Prophet (SAS) sent thirty of the Ansar under the leadership of Abdullah Ibn Rawahah, to try to improve relations. Abdullah Ibn Rawahah could actually persuade Usayr to accompany him to Madinah, to sign a peace agreement with the Prophet (SAS) himself. Usayr had his entourage of thirty. On the way Usayr and his men conspired to kill Abdullah and the Muslims. But Abdullah was alert and too quick for him. He succeeded in killing Usayr instead.

Sallam Ibn Mishkam, Usayr's successor was also equally vindictive. So just a few weeks after return from Hdaybyah the Prophet (SAS) started out for Khaybar. It was the month of Muharram of the seventh Hijri year. The Prophet (SAS) said that none other than those that had taken part in Hdaybyah should accompany him in this expedition. He left Siba Ibn Arfatah to deputize for him in Madinah. They covered the one hundred and sixty kilometers, normally a journey of five days by camel, in three days and arrived in Khybar at dawn on the fourth day. The peasants who came out for working in the fields, saw the Muslims, cried and alerted their neighbors and ran back into their homes. The Muslims encamped on the road between Khybar and

Ghatafan, to preclude them from coming in aid of the Jews. Actually the Ghatafan had started out to come in help of the Jews, but had returned from the way to defend their own homes. The Prophet (SAS) had sent a small detachment to the Ghatafan area to frighten them.

Khaybar was not a concentrated city. It was divided into several sections in between fertile farms and orchards, and each section had many fortresses and castles, well protected, and most of them on hills, from the top of which they could repel any enemy at a distance, with bombardments of arrows. Those of the enemies that could come near the castles under cover of shields, were to be dealt with by throwing big stones. Their fortresses were almost impregnable.

The three main sections of Khaybar were Al-Natah, Al-Shaqq and Al-Katibah. Each section comprised of several fortresses. Now the Prophet (SAS) wanted to go near Al-Natah, but Al-Hubab Ibn Al-Mundhir advised him not to, as the sniper shooters from those fortresses could reach their arrows to a great distance, and accurately too. This same Al-Hubab Ibn Al-Mundhir had long earlier advised in selecting the strategic position at Badar too. The prophet (SAS) would always listen to good advice.

As the Muslims had reached Khaybar at dawn on the fourth day, much earlier than the Jews had anticipated, they automatically took to their fortresses. They had no chance of laying their army in battle array and they had to go to a defensive war.

The Prophet (SAS) divided his troops in many groups and assigned a small detachment to each fort to engage in the battle of archery, and concentrated the major portion to besiege one particular fortress until it surrendered. His first target was the fort of Naim, in which was the overall chief of the Jews Sallam Ibn Mishkam.

The siege lasted for seven days. At first, to make the Jews to come out and fight, the Prophet (SAS) had ordered to cut down their date palms. But even after felling some four hundred of them, when the Jews did not come out, the Prophet (SAS) halted tree-felling. As there was no equipment for mounting or breaking the high and thick walls, the gate was targeted. On the seventh day Ali was successful in breaking the gate. The most famous of the Jewish duel fighters Marhab came out and challenged any Muslim fighter. Ali fought him and killed him. Sallam Ibn Mishkam, the chief of the Jews was also killed. The Naim fort fell to the Muslims and most of its inmates fled to the next fort Al-Sa'b.

The fort Al-Sa'b also fell presently and the hero here was Hubab Ibn Al-Mundhir. The Muslims had fallen short in food supplies and here in this fort they found plenty of food like barley, dates, butter, cooking oil and honey. Besides they got large quantities of weapons too.

The next fort was Al- Zubayr, where the Jews put up a tremendous resistance. After three days seize the Muslims discovered the source of water of the fort, a stream, and diverted it. Thus the Jews were forced to come out and fight. With the fall of this fort, all Al-Natah section had fallen to the Muslims.

Now the Muslims proceeded to the Al-Shaqq section and the first fort was Ubayy. It fell under the assault of the Muslim commander Abu Dujanah.

The next fort was Al-Bari. The archers of this fort put up a great fight. The Prophet (SAS) ordered to bring out the mangonel that had been acquired from Al-Sa'b fort. It made the defenders of the fort to fly. Soon the whole of the section of Al-Shaqq was conquered. Most of the Jews fled to the last section Al-Katibah.

The first fort here was Al-Qamous. This fort the Muslims besieged for as long as twenty days, until it surrendered to Ali Ibn Abi Talib.

Here amongst the women prisoners was Safiyyah Bint Huyayy Ibn Akhtab. The Prophet (SAS) set her free and later married her.

The last two forts, Al-Watih and Sulalem also tried to resist but eventually surrendered. They were allowed to leave Khaybar and its vicinity with their women and children, leaving behind their land, money, houses and arms. After the treaty was signed, a good number of them requested the Prophet (SAS) to let them live there and work in the farms and orchards and take half of the produce. The Prophet (SAS) accepted the offer and amended the peace treaty accordingly.

As the forts of Al-Watih and Sulalem were under siege, the Prophet (SAS) sent a message to the Jews of Al-Fadak to surrender. They surrendered without any fighting and gave up half of their wealth. It was 'Faiy', and all of it went to the government treasury. Other Jewish tribes like Bahrayn and other enclaves also came under peace agreements.

After the final peace treaty with the Jews of Khaybar, a Jewish woman, Zaynab Bint Harith, wife of Sallam Ibn Mishkam presented the prophet (SAS) with a roasted goat. The Prophet with some companions sat down to eat, but as the Prophet (SAS) lifted a piece to his mouth, it told him that it was poisoned. He spat it out and told others to refrain from eating. But one of the companions Bishr Ibn Bara had swallowed a morsel. The Prophet (SAS) asked the woman and she confessed to her guilt. He pardoned her for herself, but as Bishr died, she was executed for his murder.

During the battle of Khaybar a number of pages of old Torah had fallen in the hands of the Muslims. The Jews asked the Prophet for it and he gave it to them. They were grateful. (When the Byzantine Christians had conquered Jerusalem, they had deliberately burnt the Jewish scriptures.)

The Prophet (SAS) returned to Madinah via Wadi Al-Qura, where

there was some little skirmish with the Jews, who eventually sought peace like that of Fadak. The Jews of Tayma sought protection and agreed to pay 'Jizyah'.

With the total collapse of the Jewish political power in Arabia, eventually some Jews returned to Madinah and resumed trades. The Prophet (SAS) and the Muslims sympathized with them.

After the alleviation of the major threats from the Quraish and the Jews, the Prophet (SAS) took up the task of subduing the Bedouin tribes, so that they would not take to looting and terrorizing people in settlements and on the highway. Actually highway robbery and looting was the way of their life, and what the Prophet (SAS) sought was to change their character and way of life altogether. For this purpose quite a number of expeditions were sent from time to time, under the leadership of Umar Ibn Al-Khattab, Abu Bakar, Bishr Ibn Sa'd and so on. Whenever any wrong activities would be noticed in any Bedouin tribe, they would be punished forthwith. The strength of the expeditions varied from thirty to five hundred men as necessary.

### **Reaction of the emperors**

Sending envoys to the emperors and rulers had begun before the expedition of Khaybar. Some envoys might have departed after Khaybar. Stocktaking showed a variety of responses.

Dihyah Ibn Khalifa Al-Kalbi was sent to the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius. The emperor had defeated the Persian emperor and had recovered the holy crucifix from them, and had come to Jerusalem to reinstate it. This is when the Prophet (SAS)'s envoy met the emperor. Heraclius was a Christian and knew that the last messenger of Allah was to come. He received the Prophet's envoy in honour and listened to the message, and for further confirmation he asked his people if they could find any one of Quraish in Jerusalem or near about. Abu Sufian, the leader of the pagan

Quraish happened to be found in Gaza and was brought to the court along with his entourage. Heraclius asked them if there was anybody closely related to Muhammad (SAS), who is claiming to be Allah's messenger. Abu Sufian came forward and said that he was. So Abu Sufian was asked to step forward and the others were behind him. Heraclius asked them to motion to him if Abu Sufian tells any lie. The dialogue proceeded as follows:

Heraclius : What sort of family lineage has he among you?

Abu Sufian: His ancestry is a distinguished one.

H : Was any of his forefathers a king?

A: No.

H: Has any one among you come out with a similar claim before him?

A: No.

H: Do the majority of his followers belong to the aristocracy or are they the poor people?

A: They are poor.

H: Is the number of his followers increasing or decreasing?

A: They are on the increase.

H: Does any one of them turn away from his religion after having embraced it?

A: No.

H: Have you ever known him to lie before he started to make this claim?

A: No.

H: Is he given to treachery?

A: No. We however have an agreement with him now and we do not know what he will do.

H: Have you ever fought him?

A: Yes.

H: What was the outcome?

A: Sometimes we win, sometimes he wins.

H: What sorts of commandments does he give you?

A: He tells us to worship Allah alone, without ascribing divinity to anyone else. He tells us not to follow our forefathers. He commands us to pray, to be truthful and chaste, and to be kind to fellow human beings.

H: He has distinguished ancestry and all Allah's messengers are so. As there was no such claimant before him, it can't be said that he is imitating. None of his forefathers was a king, so it is not likely that he is after a kingdom. As he was not known to lie, why should he start lying about Allah? You have said that mostly the poor are his followers; this is the case with all Allah's messengers. The fact that his followers are increasing confirms his faith is true. That nobody turns away after accepting his faith, confirms its truth further, if his claim was false some of the people would recognize it as such and leave. You testified that he is not treacherous, no messenger of Allah was ever treacherous. You also have said that he calls you to pray, to be truthful, chaste and to believe in the oneness of Allah. If what you have said is true, then he will have supremacy right here where I stand. Had it been in my power I would have certainly gone to meet him and wash his feet.

Heraclius gave a reverent reply to the Prophet (SAS) and gave gold coins to the envoy, which the Prophet (SAS) distributed

among the poor. According to some reports Heraclius had accepted Islam, but others say he did not for fear of losing his empire.

The Prophet (SAS) had sent Abdullah Ibn Hudhafah as his envoy to the emperor Khasru of Persia. Khasru was arrogant. He tore the letter of the Prophet (SAS) to pieces. He also put a basketful of soil on the head of the envoy, and Abdullah laughed and said "Thank you for giving me your soil". Khasru wrote to Badan his subordinate king of Yemen, ordering him to send two able bodied men to arrest the prophet and send him to Persia.

Badan who was comparatively sober, advised his two officers to find out the truth about the prophet. The two men travelled via Ta'if and naturally did not get good reports. They told the Prophet (SAS) that Khasru the king of kings has ordered his arrest and their king has accordingly sent them to take him to Persia. If he comes willingly then king Badan will write to Khasru the king of kings to be compassionate towards him.

The prophet (SAS) asked them why they had shaved their beard and were sporting big moustaches. They said it was by order of their lord Khasru. The Prophet (SAS) said "My Lord Allah has ordered me to keep a beard and to trim the moustache". The Prophet (SAS) told them to depart and come on the morrow.

The next day the Prophet (SAS) informed them that Khasru has been killed by his son, and told them to go to Badan and tell him to accept Islam and he will be allowed to remain as king of Yemen, that the kingdom of Islam will cover the whole of Persia. The two men left for Yemen incredulous and dumbfounded.

When the two reported to Badan, he thought the Prophet (SAS) might be a true prophet. Presently he received message from Shirwith of Persia, informing him that he had killed his father and that he was now the emperor. Badan conferred with his people

and most of them agreed to accept Islam. They conveyed the news to the Prophet (SAS) and asked for teachers, and some of the companions were sent there. Islam spread in Yemen.

The ruler of Damuscas Al-Harith Ibn Shammar, a subordinate of the Byzantine emperor was arrogant. As Shuja Ibn Wahb the Prophet (SAS)'s envoy carried the letter, he threw it to the ground and ordered to mobilize troops, and wrote to Heraclius expressing his intentions. Heraclius ordereded him not to proceed, but rather to go to Jerusalem and meet him.

The Negus of Abyssinia received the envoy Amr Ibn Umayyah Al-Damri with due respect and declared his acceptance of Islam. In fact he had already been a Muslim and had treated the Muslim emigrants there with kindness and respect, and the Prophet (SAS) was aware of the fact.

Al-Muqawqis the Archbishop ruler of Egypt in Alexandria, appointed by the Byzantine emperor was the governor as well as the chief of the church, a Coptic Christian. He received the prophet's envoy Hatib Ibn Abi Balta'ah well. He did not accept Islam, but wrote respectfully to the Prophet, and sent the Prophet presents, among which were two maidens of respectable birth of the coptics. One of the maidens was Maria Kibtia, who mothered Ibrahim, the short-lived son of the Prophet (SAS).

The ruler of Bahrain Al-Mundhir Ibn Sawa Al-Abdi, received the Prophet's envoy Al-Ala Ibn Al- Hadrami, with due respect. He became a Muslim along with a good section of the population of Bahrain.

### **Umratul Qadah**

In dul-Qadah of the seventh Hijri year, the Prophet (SAS) set out for Umrah that was postponed the previous year by the treaty of Hdaybiyah. The Prophet (SAS) commanded all of the fourteen

hundred that had been with him the previous year who were alive to accompany him. More people were eager to go, and the total number of men was about two thousand. There were a good number of women and children too. Abu Dharr Al-Ghifari was appointed the Prophet's deputy in Madinah.

Although they were to go unarmed except for swords in sheath, the Prophet (SAS) took some precautionary measures, in case the Quraish should launch an unwarranted attack. The Muslims took some armaments like shields, spears and protective head gear. These were not to be taken into Makkah. There were one hundred horses too.

The horses and the armaments were left outside the city with two hundred guards.

The Prophet (SAS) marched into Makkah on his camel Quswa, with Abdullah Ibn Rawahah holding the reins. The Quraish left the city, and took to the mountains around.

After the Prophet and the companions had completed the Tawaf and Sa'i, and had slaughtered the animals, he sent two hundred men outside, to take charge of the horses and armaments, so that those that had been in charge can come and perform the rituals of Umrah. For Zuhr prayers Bilal went on top of the Ka'bah and announced the 'Adhan'(Adil Salahi, Haykal).

The Muslims stayed in Makkah for three days as stipulated in the treaty. At this time Maymunah sister of Umm Fadal the wife of Abbas embraced Islam and entreated her brother-in-law Al-Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet to propose her marriage to the Prophet (SAS). The Prophet (SAS) accepted at a dowry of four hundred dirhams. The Prophet (SAS) invited the Quraish to a banquet, but they declined. So the marriage ceremony took place after leaving Makkah. This was the prophet's last marriage and she survived

him by fifty years.

As the Muslims were preparing to leave, a daughter of Hamzah Ibn Abdul Muttalib came running to the prophet calling him “Uncle, uncle”. Now three persons Ali, Ja’afar, and Zayd claimed guardianship of the girl. The Prophet (SAS) gave her to Ja’afar as his wife was her mother’s sister. This daughter of Hamza was later married to Salama, son of Ummul Muminin Umm Salama.

This Umratul Qadah left profound influence in the minds of the people of Makkah, the brotherly relations between people of different tribes and ethnicities was something, they had never dreamed of as possible. Their sincere devotion to one Allah was so unique and inspiring that it left many of the idolaters thinking twice.

### **Three stalwarts of Quraish**

Amr Ibn Al-As was sure that Muhammad (SAS) would eventually conquer Makkah, and so he decided to leave the city. He went to Abyssinia little knowing that the Negus had already become a Muslim. As he was taken to the presence of the king, he saw Amr Ibn Umayyah Al-Damri, the prophet’s envoy leaving court. After presenting the gifts of hides to the king he asked the king to allow him to kill the envoy. To his great perturbation, Negus flew into a rage and punched him on the nose causing it to bleed profusely, and rebuked him for being such a fool as not to see the truth and recognize the Prophet of Allah. Amr Ibn Al-As became a Muslim in the hands of the Negus and proceeded to Madinah.

When the Muslims were in Makkah for three days, Khalid Ibn Al-Walid had left his home and taken to the mountains. He knew for sure that Muhammad (SAS) would eventually conquer Mecca. When Muhammad (SAS) had evaded him and reached Hudaybiah the previous year, on that day too he had the same premonition. When he returned home crestfallen and dejected, he found a letter

left for him by his brother Walid Ibn Al-Walid, who had already become a Muslim, urging him to wake up and accept the truth. Walid also added that the Prophet (SAS) himself had enquired about him. Khalid took Uthman Ibn Talhah, the custodian of Ka'bah, who also was of the same vein with him, and set out for Madinah.

Meanwhile Amr Ibn Al-As had crossed the Red Sea, and on the way they happened to meet. All three of them together went and met the Prophet (SAS). The Prophet (SAS) was happy to receive them, and so also were the Muslims. It was in the month of Safar in the eighth year after Hijrah.

### **Mutah**

The prophet (SAS)'s envoy Al-Harith Ibn Umayr had been sent to Surahbil Ibn Amr of the tribe of Ghassan in Busra, on the south of Syria. Surahbil was protected by the Byzantine emperor and was arrogant. He violated all civil norms and tied up and beheaded the envoy. So the prophet had to mobilize force against him. A force of three thousand soldiers was sent, with Zayd Ibn Harithah as the commander. In case of his death Ja'far Ibn Abi Talib would succeed, and in case of Ja'far's death Abdullah Ibn Rawahah. If all three of them are martyred, the soldiers would elect their fourth commander.

By the time the Muslims drew near, Surahbil had amassed a great army of one hundred thousand Arabs from all the tribes under his influence and also under the influence of the Byzantine emperor. Moreover another hundred thousand of the Byzantine army also came to his help. According to some historians Hercules or his brother was there commanding the Byzantine troops.

When the Muslims came in view of the huge army they deployed their ranks in the village of Mutah. They took care that by the greatly superior numerical strength, the enemies must not by any

means encircle them from all sides. So the two flanks commanded by Qutbah Ibn Qatadah and Ubadah Ibn Malik, fought very hard. The enemy forces however put their major effort on the center of the Muslim forces, where the flag-bearing commander was. Zayd fought valiantly and laid down his life, and so also did Ja'far and Abdullah Ibn Rawahah. The Muslims then chose Khalid Ibn Walid as their commander.

As night fell and the two armies retreated, the Muslims did not go to rest. Khalid redeployed his troops, those on the right flank were brought to the left and those that were on the left to the right. In the central part too, the troops that were in the rear were brought forward and those of the front lines were moved backward. At dawn a number of men were sent far to the rear to raise enormous dust clouds, and a lot of hue and cry was raised.

In the morning as the enemies advanced, they were surprised to see new faces all around and were convinced that fresh troops had come and they were taken aback. When Khalid began to withdraw his troops backwards in a concerted and coordinated manner, the enemies did not dare to press their attack forward. They did not want to go and fight in the open desert. So the enemies too began to withdraw. On this day the Muslims were able to take the initiative and killed a large number of the enemy soldiers.

The Muslim troops came back to Madinah. They had lost only twelve martyrs in this battle, that included the three commanders. Although some people of Madinah, particularly the women and children showed their displeasure at the retreat of the army without achieving a victory, the Prophet (SAS) was very pleased with them. He called Khalid 'Saifullah' the sword of Allah. In fact Khalid's well organized withdrawal of troops was a marvel of war tactics.

This battle of Mutah inspired great respect for the Muslims among the Arabian tribes in the north like Sulaym, Ashja, Abs and Dhubyan, who started to join the Muslim ranks en-mass.

The Byzantines were also overawed by the valor of the Muslims. Never again did they feel enthusiastic to meet the Muslims in the battle field. Farwah Ibn Amr Al-Judhami, the commander of a Byzantine army division and chieftain of one of the Arab tribes, soon after the battle of Mutah, proclaimed his conversion to Islam. He was arrested by order of Heraclius and was accused of high treason. He was offered to be released honorably and reinstated if he returned to Christianity. He refused and so was put to death. As a result of his execution, Islam spread widely among the tribes around Sham. Farwah was an Arab chieftain and the love he showed for his faith, impressed most of the Arabs profoundly.

### **Dhatus-Salasil mission**

But some northern Arabian tribes like Bani Quda'ah and Bali were showing provocative military movements. So the prophet (SAS) sent a contingent of three hundred men and thirty of cavalry. Amr ibn Al-A's the new Muslim was made the commander, as his paternal grandmother was from the tribe of Bali. Amr realized that the situation was tough and sent for re-enforcements. Another two hundred men under Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah arrived from Madinah. Abu Ubaidah being senior wanted to take command, but Amr ibn Al-A's did not agree. So Abu Ubaidah agreed to follow Amr's command. When the Prophet (SAS) heard of it he was very pleased with Abu Ubaidah and prayed for him. The enemies were thoroughly defeated.

### **Attack on Khuza'ah**

To some of the Quraish of Makkah, the news of the displeasure of some people in Madinah at the return of the expedition from Mutah without achieving a victory had brought a new encouraging

meaning. They thought the Muslims were weakening. The younger generation of them in particular became reckless.

After the treaty of Hdaybiah the Banu Bakar had entered into alliance with the Quraish, while the Khuza'ah had joined hands with the Muslims; and for almost two years they had refrained from attacking each other. Now at the instigation of some of the junior leaders of the Quraish like Ikrima Ibn Abu Jahl, who also re-enforced them with arms, a clan of the Banu Bakar launched a surprise attack on the Khuza'ah, while they were camping near the well of Al-Watir, close to Makkah. The Khuza'ah people could not save their lives even after taking refuge in Makkah.

Amr Ibn Salim of the Khuza'ah ran to Madinah and related the event to the Prophet (SAS). Budayl Ibn Waraqa of Makkah and others of Khuza'ah also went to him. He assured them of prompt action.

### **Abu Sufian's efforts**

The wise elders of the Quraish realized that the consequences might turn out to be grave. They conferred and sent Abu Sufian to Madinah, just to renew the peace treaty, pretending as if nothing had happened. On the way Abu Sufian happened to meet Budayl Ibn Waraqa and his companions, and was almost certain that the Prophet had heard the news. So he decided to visit his own daughter first. With Umm Habibah his own daughter he had the shock of his life, she did not allow him to sit on the bed, for she said she could not allow an idolater to sit on the bed of the Prophet of Allah (SAS).

Next he went to see the prophet, but was not granted audience. He went to Abu Bakar, Umar and Ali, one after the other without getting any sign of encouragement. He became so frantic that he even asked Fatima to let her son Hasan a child, to intercede for him with the prophet, to no avail. Dejected and humiliated, he went

away to Makkah after announcing unilateral peace from his side, in front of the mosque, as a last resort suggested by Ali (RA).

### **Conquest of Macca**

Shortly afterwards the Prophet (SAS) began preparations for a major expedition, without divulging the destination. He asked all Muslim tribes to join. He put Umar Ibn Al-Khattab in charge of security, so that no news may go out. Umar appointed patrols on all the routs. The Prophet (SAS) employed all means possible to take the Quraysh by surprise, so that no blood is shed, and he also prayed to Allah. And of course Allah helped.

Hatib Ibn Abi Balta'ah one of the Muhajir who had emigrated with the other Muslims, had participated in the battle of Badar, wrote a letter to the Quraish leaders informing of the imminent attack, and sent it with a woman going to Makkah. Allah's angel informed the prophet (SAS) and he sent Ali Ibn Abi Talib and Zubayr Ibn Awwam, telling them where to find the woman and to retrieve the letter. They found the woman but she denied having any letter. So Ali threatened her that they would even go as far as disrobing her, if need be, for searching out the letter. At last she produced the letter from the braid of her hair.

The Prophet (SAS) called Hatib and demanded explanation. Hatib said that he had not turned to hypocrisy, nor is he a saboteur; the reason for his action was only to get kind treatment from the Quraish, for his wife and children, in case war breaks out, for he had no tribal relation there in Makkah to protect them. Umar naturally demanded execution of Hatib, because the act was one of high treason, passing on top military intelligence to the enemy at such a crucial moment. The Prophet (SAS) however pardoned Hatib, taking into consideration his past activities including his services in the battle of Badar.

The Prophet (SAS) marched with the largest army ever so far on

the Muslim side, as strong as ten thousand. Some historians have said it was twelve thousand strong. It was on the tenth day of Ramadan of the eighth Hijri year. Soon after setting out the Prophet (SAS) broke his fast and the companions followed suit. They did not fast till they reached Makkah.

Abbas Ibn Abd Al-Muttalib the Prophet's uncle who was coming from Makkah with his family as emigrants, happened to meet the Muslim army and the Prophet (SAS) on the way and accompanied him back towards Makkah. The Muslims reached Marr Al-Zahran, close to Makkah without the Quraysh knowing. Now the Prophet (SAS) thought it expedient to let the Quraysh know that any endeavor of resistance will be futile. So he ordered every man to light his own bonfire. Over ten thousand fires over a wide area would surely have a tremendous effect on any onlooker.

Abbas took the prophet's mule Duldul and set out to see if he could find any man of Quraysh, to tell him that any thought of resistance would come to no avail. It was Abu Sufian the Quraysh leader with two companions Hakim Ibn Hizam and Budayl Ibn Waraqa on patrol. Abbas heard them talking and called them to him. He convinced Abu Sufian and his companions that unconditional surrender was the only course to be taken to avoid bloodshed and total routing of the Quraysh clans. Abbas took Abu Sufian on the mule behind him and made for the tent of the Prophet (SAS). Nobody halted them as it was the prophet's own mule, but Umar intercepted as he recognized Abu Sufian. With all the bonfire it must have been as clear as daylight. Abbas said that he had given Abu Sufian protection.

In the presence of the prophet, Umar demanded execution of Abu Sufian, as there was no longer any treaty because of the violation by the Quraysh. The Prophet (SAS) gave Abu Sufian in the custody of Abbas, to bring him again in the morning. In the morning Abu Sufian professed Islam. He was made to see the

troops marching, and then he galloped ahead of them to Makkah to announce that the Prophet (SAS) had declared all who will take refuge in Abu Sufian's house will be safe, all who will take refuge at the Kabah will be safe and all that will remain inside their houses will be safe.

The Muslims marched into Makkah in four columns along four routes peacefully, with humility, not with arrogance. The Prophet (SAS) was so bowed down that his head was almost touching the neck of his camel Quswa. Sa'd Ibn Ubadah the chief of Ansar leading one of the processions shouted in ecstasy "This is the day of great clash, the day the sanctuary is overrun". The Prophet (SAS) forthwith removed him from the post and replaced him by his son Qays Ibn Sa'd.

The group led by Khalid Ibn Walid however was attacked by some hot headed Quraysh youth led by Ikrima Ibn Abu Jahl. In the short skirmish over twenty of the idolaters were killed, while the loss on the Muslim side was two. The main culprits Ikrima, Safwan and Suhayl however escaped and fled.

In Makkah the Prophet (SAS) did not enter any house, a tent was set up for him. He went to the Ka'bah and made Tawaf. He granted pardon to all, except for a few who were sentenced for specific grave offences. Of those sentenced some were executed and some were later excused.

The Prophet (SAS) touched the Idols in and around Ka'bah with a stick and each of them fell and crumbled. The pictures painted inside the Ka'bah were all erased by Umar Ibn Al-Khattab. Not one was left.

The key of the Ka'bah had been brought to the Prophet (SAS) by the custodian Uthman Ibn Talhah. Ali Ibn Abi Talib asked for the key, but the prophet gave it back to Uthman Ibn Talhah.

Bilal went on top of the Ka'bah and pronounced the Adhan, and the system of five times Adhan daily was established in Makkah.

Abu Bakar brought his old and blind father Abu Kuhafa to the Prophet (SAS) to pronounce the Shahadah of Islam. The Prophet (SAS) said to Abu Bakar "Why did you give this old gentleman the trouble? I would have gone to his place".

In a few days the majority of the people of Makkah became Muslims. The Prophet (SAS) would sit at the foot of mount Safa and take the pledge of acceptance of Islam of the men. Umar Ibn Al-Khattab took the pledge of the women.

All people of Makkah who had embraced Islam were told to destroy their household idols and they complied. All idols outside of Makkah, like the 'Uzza' of Nakhlah, 'Suwa' of Hudhayl and Manat, were destroyed. Khalid ibn Walid was sent to Nakhlah to destroy Al-Uzza. After he returned the Prophet (SAS) asked him if he had seen anything significant and he said that he had not; so he was sent again and he found a black naked woman and killed her, and thus the idol was finally destroyed. Amr ibn Al-As was sent to destroy Suwa, and Sa'd ibn Zaid Al-Ashhali was sent to Al-Mushallal to destroy Manat, and here also a black naked woman was killed.

Barely had two weeks passed in Makkah before the news came of the activities of the Hawazin and their allies.

### **Hunayn**

After the fall of Makkah, the idolaters of the Hawazin living near Ta'if and the Thaqif of Ta'if were apprehending that the Muslims would make them their next target. So they decided to go into the offensive themselves. Their leaders were proud of their strength. The tribe of Hawazin and their young leader Malik Ibn Awf in particular took the initiative. He motivated other tribes like Nasr,

Jusham, Sa'd Ibn Bakr and groups of Hilal. The clans of Kab and Kilab of the Hawazin however refused to join them. The overall commander was Malik Ibn Awf of the Hawazin. Malik Ibn Awf had a peculiar psychology. He took out all their women and children as well as all their animals and treasures, behind the army, so that they do not have to leave behind some of the troop to guard them. The wise old man of Jusham, Durayd Ibn Al- Summah could not dissuade him from this crazy plan. Malik's argument was that, with their families and the property behind them, the soldiers would do their best to protect them, which actually he himself failed to do. He was over confident of his claver plan of battle, and even threatened to commit suicide with his own sword in front of them if the people do not agree to follow his plan.

The Prophet (SAS) had commissioned Abdullah Ibn Abi Hadrad of the tribe of Aslam to gather news of the enemy. He went right into the enemy camp, even spoke to Malik Ibn Awf himself and reported that they were planning to march to a valley called Hunayn. (Could it be that Malik ibn Awf was knowingly inviting the enemy into his trap? The comment is mine and I seek Allah's forgiveness if I am wrong.)

After appointing Attab ibn Asid to govern Makkah, the Prophet (SAS) set out with a force twelve thousand strong,-- the number having enhanced by the addition of the Quraish and others of Makkah,-- on the sixth of Shawwal and reached Hunayn on the tenth. The Muslims in general were complacent with their large number, and particularly because it was after the easy victory in Makkah. They advanced to enter the valley through the narrow entrance with mountains sloping upward on both sides, in the pre-dawn darkness.

Malik Ibn Awf had already stationed his troops on the slopes out of sight of the Muslims, and the archers on strategic points. As the Muslims entered they were showered with volleys of arrows from

above and a number of them were killed and many injured. The next instant the Hawazin soldiers rushed down the slopes from the two sides with spears and swords, as if from nowhere. The Muslims in total confusion began to flee for life. (The lesson as described by Allah swt in Surah Tawbah regarding the complacency of Muslims and the consequent rebuff and fleeing should be highlighted.)

The Prophet (SAS) on his mule stood his ground. He shouted to the Muslims to come and reorganize themselves. He asked Abbas his uncle, who had a very loud voice to call the Muslims. Abbas called the Muhajirun, the Ansars who had opened their houses for their brothers the Muhajir, the people who took the pledge under the tree, and so on. His call worked miracle. The Muslims gathered together again and soon the Hawazin were on the run. Not even Malik Ibn Awf remained to protect the women and children, and the wealth. Many were killed or captured. Malik fled to Ta'if and took shelter in the fortress there. (Al-Tawbah 9:25-26) The casualty on the Muslim side was also quite heavy, because of the initial confusion and chaos that had resulted from the initial Hawazin attack. What Malik had failed to realize was that, one clever attack is not enough to win a battle.

The captives of Hawazin were over six thousand. There were twenty four thousand camels, forty thousand goats and sheep, all herded together, and four thousand ounces of silver. All of these were transported to the valley of Al-Jirana near Makkah, and kept in charge of Masud Ibn Amr Al-Ghifari.

While the majority of the Hawazin went to Ta'if, a battalion stayed in the valley of Awtas. The Prophet (SAS) to eliminate them, sent a contingent under the command of Ubayd Abu Amir Al-Ash'ari. He defeated the enemy but himself was killed in the battle. He delegated the command to his cousin Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari,

before his death.

Ta'if was a well protected city and the people of Thaqif were good marksmen with their bows and arrows. In their fortresses they had enough provisions to last for a long time. The Muslims imposed siege that continued for twenty days, after which it was lifted. The Prophet (SAS) prayed to Allah to guide the Thaqif to the true path.

On way to Makkah the Prophet (SAS) came to the valley of Jirranah, where the captives and the war booty were. Many of the people of Hawazin now became Muslims, and a delegation of them came to the Prophet (SAS) asking him to show mercy about the women and children, and their property. The prophet asked them what they wanted back, their women and children, or the property? They of course wanted back their families. The Prophet (SAS) said that he would give up his portion and the portion of his clan of Abd Al-Muttalib, and advised them to raise the matter after the Zuhar prayers. The Muhajirin and the Ansars readily relinquished their portions as the prophet had done, and others also did with some persuasion. So the women and children were saved from the life of slavery.

The Prophet (SAS) then asked the Hawazin delegation about their chief Malik Ibn Awf, and told them to send word to him that if he surrenders and accepts Islam, he will be given back his family and property as well as a gift of one hundred camels. He sneaked out of Ta'if by night and became a Muslim.

The Prophet (SAS) gifted lavishly to encourage people to join Islam, and to those who had accepted Islam lately. Abu Sufian got ten ounces of silver and one hundred camels. He asked for more for his sons Muawiyah and Yazid, and was granted similar amounts for each. Other tribal leaders were also gifted similarly. Lesser notables of the tribes were given fifty camels each. All this was given from the one fifth that was allocated for the prophet and

the state. The amount of the gift varied according to the potentiality of the person of attracting people to the path of Islam. The Bedouins asked for gifts and were gifted and managed.

The lavish gifting caused some whispering and murmuring among the Ansar. Sa'd Ibn Ubadah the chief of Ansar brought the matter to the notice of the prophet. He was instructed to assemble all Ansar together and the prophet talked to them. "Did I not come to you when you were astray and Allah has guided you to the right path? Did I not find you poor and Allah has given you riches? Did I not come to you when you were at war against each other and Allah has united your hearts?" The Ansar answered "Yes, all this is true." The Prophet (SAS) said "Why don't you say your part, O people of Ansar?" They asked "What should we say?"

The Prophet said "You can say 'when people rejected your message, we accepted it, you were rejected and banished and we gave you shelter and support, you were overburdened and we lightened your burden', and all this is true. O people of Ansar, are you aggrieved at a trifle of this world which I have given out to certain people in order to win their hearts over to Islam and left you to rely on your faith. Are you not satisfied that other people should go to their homes with camels and sheep, and you go back home with the Messenger of Allah?"

The Prophet (SAS) cried and the Ansars cried with him copiously. Some of them had apprehended that the Prophet (SAS) might choose to stay in Makkah, now that his kin had accepted Islam. Now they were reassured and satisfied. They now recalled, at the pledge of Aqabah the prophet had promised them no reward of this world, but the reward of the hereafter. The gifts of this world however large it be, is trifle in comparison with the reward of the Akherat.

The soldiers got their share of booty. Each infantry member got

four camels or forty goats, and the cavalry members got three times of it. The giving away of gifts and the distribution of booty were all made in public. Even though the distributor was The Prophet of Allah himself, questions from the public was readily entertained, and answered publicly, without delay. This is the practice of the Prophet (SAS). Alas! If we Muslims would practice it today.

Since the people of Makkah had converted only recently, the Prophet (SAS) appointed Muad Ibn Jabal of the Ansar their teacher; and Attab Ibn Asid, a young man of twenty was appointed the governor of Makkah, with a salary of one dirham a day.

### **Missions and delegations**

The Prophet (SAS) returned to Madinah with the Muhajirin and Ansar, after an absence of three months. There was a period of relative calmness, and individuals and tribes would come to meet the prophet and enter Islam.

Bujayr Ibn Zuhayr sent message to his brother Kab the poet, who had slandered the prophet and the Muslims, saying that if he comes to the Prophet (SAS) he will find him forgiving. This he did and embraced Islam.

Zayd Al-Khayl came to Madinah with some members of his tribe of Tayy. The whole clan entered Islam. The Prophet (SAS) praised him for his qualities and changed his name Zayd Al-Khayl (increase of horses) to Zayd Al-Khayr (increase of goodness).

Three months after return to Madinah the Prophet (SAS) sent Ali Ibn Abi Talib with one hundred and fifty men of Ansar to destroy the idol Al-Fuls of the tribe of Tayy. The chief Adiy ibn Hatim who had become a Christian, managed to escape with his family, but his sister was left behind. After destroying the idol Ali captured a number of the people as well as their cattle and other wealth, and

brought it all to Madinah. Among the prisoners was Sufanah the daughter of the famous philanthropist Hatim Tayy. From her confinement near the mosque she managed to talk to the Prophet (SAS). He recalled her father's good deeds, freed her, gave her clothes and money, and sent her honorably to her destination. She went to Syria with a caravan to her brother Adiy.

She rebuked her brother for having left her behind and advised him to go to the most magnanimous person Muhammad (SAS). He made up his mind and went to Madinah. With all the conquests of Muhammad, he had thought him to be a mighty king. When he saw the man and his lifestyle, and his dealings with people, he was convinced that Muhammad (SAS) was not a king, as the term goes. After his talks with the Prophet (SAS) he knew for certain that he was the Prophet promised in the scriptures, and accepted Islam.

Uyainah ibn Hisn Al-Fazari with a platoon was sent to Bani Tamim, who had become rebellious and were refusing to pay Jizyah. Some of their people were captured and brought to Madinah. Their leaders who had fled, later came to Madinah and ultimately they entered Islam.

### **The household of the Prophet (SAS)**

During this period of calmness things happened in the domestic life of the Prophet (SAS). His daughter Zaynab died. She was the wife of Abu Al-As. While trying to emigrate from Makkah to Madinah she was intercepted, her camel was made to jump, causing her to fall and have a miscarriage, the effects of which was never cured and was ultimately the cause of her death. The Prophet (SAS) was left with her last child Fatima, the wife of Ali.

In spite of the fact that the economic affairs of the Islamic state of Medina had improved considerably, the Prophet (SAS) kept on living as frugal a life as ever. His wives, who were not probably

quite aware of the difference between a king and a prophet of Allah, asked for affluence, but he was not ready to provide any of it. Besides there arose jealousy between the wives, which was the cause of some suffering for the Prophet (SAS); some of them even accused him of not being fair. Meanwhile Maria Quibtia gave birth to a son, whom the Prophet (SAS) named Ibrahim, after his forefather the prophet. Naturally the Prophet (SAS) was very happy at having a child after many years, and would be visiting Maria frequently. Some of the wives of the Prophet (SAS), who had not born(borne) a child, were not happy at the prophet's happiness, but were rather jealous; and their behavior tormented him mentally. At one time he vowed to live away from his wives for some time. It was also rumored that he had divorced his wives. The wives of the prophet (SAS) were repentant, and after one month he returned to them.

The Prophet (SAS) imposed austerity on not his wives only, but on all. Even his beloved daughter Fatimah and her husband Ali had at one time sought help from the 'Baitul mal', and he had in stead instructed them to practice the 'tasbih' of 'Subhan Allah', 'Alhamdu lillah' and 'Allahu Akbar', to tide over the difficulties. In this incidence we get a glimpse of the noble character of the Prophet's daughter. She and her husband had discussed of asking for a slave girl to assist her in her daily chores, but when she went to her father she could not make herself to utter the words, so she and Ali went again together.

### **Tabuk**

By the fifth month of the ninth Hijri year, news came of a large Byzantine force being raised to march on to Madinah. Neither the Byzantines nor the Persians had ever shown any interest on the Arabian desert. It was a sparsely populated arid area and the tribes were ever engaged in fighting between themselves. Individuals and small merchant groups from these areas often

came to the territories of these two empires, and these were the only links of their communication with the largely uneducated and unsophisticated people of this region.

The first noteworthy contact the Byzantine emperor had was the emissary of the Prophet (SAS). The major jolt the Byzantines got was at Muthah, where a puny three thousand strong Muslim army had caused heavy casualties to an army more than fifty times bigger numerically and definitely much better equipped. So as the news of the defeat of the Quraish and of the Hawazines reached them, the mighty Byzantines began to think of cutting the rising Muslim power to size, rather finishing it off. Naturally the Christians of the northern regions of Arabia, the Jews and many pagan Arabian tribes instigated them.

The emperor Heraclius began mobilization of troops. He gave his soldiers one year's advance salary. The Arab tribes of Lakhm, Judhan, Amilah and Ghassan also mobilized troops in Palestine to join the Byzantines.

When the Prophet (SAS) received definite news of the concentration of the Byzantine forces in Syria, he immediately took the decision to go into the offensive, instead of letting them come inside Arab territories. In the month of Rajab the Prophet (SAS) announced the march towards Tabuk. It was the height of summer and the harvesting season was ahead. As it was to be a very long journey, over one thousand kilometers, the people had to be informed in advance, so that they could take adequate preparations. He called on all the tribes who had accepted Islam. The long journey could not be undertaken on foot, so animals like horses and camels had to be procured. To cross the vast arid desert in this summer heat, adequate provisions and supply of water had to be ensured. So the Prophet (SAS) called on all to donate generously.

Uthman Ibn Affan contributed three hundred camels fully equipped and also ten thousand dinars in cash. Umar Ibn Al-Khattab divided his property in two halves and gave one half, and thought, for once he might be doing better than Abu Bakar. Abu Bakar brought all of what he had in his house. When the prophet (SAS) asked him what he had left for his family, he replied "Allah and His Rasool". Abdur Rahman ibn Awf contributed two hundred ounces of silver. The women gave their jewellery. Every Muslim contributed according to his ability. The Prophet (SAS) said, a small coin or a handful of dates given by a poor person may be equally valuable in the sight of Allah, to a large contribution made by a wealthy person, according to the spirit of sacrifice in him.

While the Muslims contributed to the best of their ability the Munafiqun neither contributed nor took part in the expedition. Rather they were ridiculing the poor Muslims for their small contributions, 'your one dirham and your fistful of dates will conquer the Byzantine empire'. They were planning sabotage too. They often were meeting in the house of a Jew by the name of Suwaylin. Talhah Ibn Ubaydullah and his companions set the house on fire. Abdullah Ibn Ubayy however set out with a number of his followers, but returned from the outskirts of Madinah, just as he had done in the time of Uhud.

The total strength of the Muslim contingent was thirty thousand including ten thousand of cavalry. Many Muslims could not participate as they had no means of their own and transport could not be arranged for them. As the Muslims had to take a lot of hardship, the expedition was called the "Jaysh al Usrah", the hardship army.

The Prophet (SAS) left Muhammad Ibn Maslama to govern Madinah and Ali Ibn Abi Talib as guardian of the prophet's family. Of the Muslims who had the means and ability, only four failed to accompany the expedition. Of them Abu Khaytamah was

motivated by his own conscience, set out late alone with his camel and caught up with the army as they were reaching Tabuk.

The other three were Ka'b Ibn Malik, Murrah Ibn Al-Rabi and Hilal Ibn Umayyah. They stayed in Medina and were mortified at their own failure. Every day they would be meeting the munafiqs only. When the Prophet (SAS) and the Muslims returned and the Munafiqun were putting forward excuses, these three said they had no excuses. They were punished by being boycotted by the community.

When the contingent had started, the Munafiq began taunting Ali Ibn Abi Talib for staying behind and he hurried and caught up with the Prophet (SAS). The Prophet (SAS) sent him back to Madinah. How great the commitment of the Muslims was, is illustrated by the incidence of Abu Dharr Ghifari. He was falling back as his camel could not keep pace with the contingent. When he realized that the camel was no longer any good, he left it in the desert and continued on foot to catch up, with his armaments and provisions on his own back.

As the Muslim army approached, the Byzantine forces retreated towards the safety of their own hinterland. The Prophet (SAS) had no ambition at the moment of conquering the Byzantine empire. He roamed the border areas for twenty days, and it served his purpose, the attack on Madinah had been effectively averted.

The Prophet (SAS) negotiated with the rulers of the area. Yuhanna Ibn Rubah, the governor of Aylah came to meet the Prophet (SAS) and declared his submission. The people of Jarba and Adhruh also signed treaties of submission and paid Jizyah.

The only stubborn party on the borders was Ukaydir Ibn Abd Al-Malik Al-Kindi, the Christian prince of Dumah. The Prophet (SAS) sent Khalid Ibn Al-Walid with five hundred cavalymen. They arrested Ukaydir, killed his brother Hassan, and returned to join

the Prophet (SAS) with the captive and two thousand of his camels and other wealth. The Prophet (SAS) as usual invited Ukaydir to Islam and he accepted. He was reinstated to his throne. Ukaydir later violated his pledge, and was killed by Khalid in the later encounter.

### **Masjid-e-jerar**

Before the Prophet (SAS) had set out for Tabuk, the Munafiqun of Madinah had built a mosque, not far from Quba, and had asked the Prophet to go there and inaugurate it. It was to be a meeting place of the hypocrites, and was built by instigation of Abu Amir Al-Rahib of Aws who had not accepted Islam and had fled to Makkah to join the Quraish, and later to Bizantium.

On his return journey from Tabuk, the Prophet (SAS) sent a few of his companions ahead to destroy it, and the job was done before he reached Madinah. In history the masjid has been called the 'Masjid-e-jerar', the treason mosque.

The Muslim army had stayed in Tabuk for twenty days, but the expedition took a total of fifty days; they had started out in Rajab and returned in Ramadan.

### **Those excused and those punished**

When the Prophet (SAS) returned to Madinah and went to the mosque, people who had not accompanied him in the expedition came and met him putting forward excuses. There were about eighty men and most of them were hypocrites, and the prophet (SAS) accepted their excuses. A few however were very old and infirm. There were the three who could not tell lies to the Prophet (SAS). They were Ka'b Ibn Malik, Murrah Ibn Al-Rabi and Hilal Ibn Umaiyyah. (The description of their capability to go to war and yet not going would make clear why they were punished.)

The Prophet (SAS) told all Muslims not to speak to these three.

The boycott continued and the three found it very difficult, nobody even answered their salutations. One day a man came to Ka'b from Syria with a letter from the king of Ghassan, asking him to go over to them as "you are being ill treated by your community". It only increased his sufferings and remorse. After forty days the austerity measures were further aggravated, the three were ordered to stay away from their wives, but not to divorce them. At the end of fifty days Allah's revelation came, declaring that the three had been pardoned (Al-Tawbah 9:118). They had received their full punishment in this world for their lethargy and procrastination.

This incidence of punishing the three persons was a great Jihad not only for the three of them, but was in fact for the whole of the Muslim community. For every Muslim it was a test of endurance to refrain from talking to his brother, even though they were meeting several times every day, a test that continued as long as fifty days. That it was a severe test for everybody was evidenced by the enthusiasm and competition amongst the Muslims to be the first to convey the great news to them of their forgiveness by Allah, as soon as it was declared by the Prophet (SAS) after the Fajr prayers. Their love for their punished brothers had not diminished, but had rather increased.

### **Thaqif**

On his return from Tabuk, even before he reached Madinah, the Prophet (SAS) was joined by Urwah ibn Masud, a young chief of Thaqif. He accepted Islam and stayed in Madina for some time. He expressed his desire to go to Taif and call his people to the path of Allah. The Prophet (SAS) warned him that they were likely to kill him, but Urwah was insistent, he was confident of the love of his people. His people turned out to be too arrogant to listen to his call, as predicted by the prophet (SAS). They showered him with a volley of arrows and killed him. When the news of his death

reached the prophet (SAS), he said he was like the man of 'Ya-Siin' (36:20-27).

A few months after the killing of Urwah, the Thaqif began to realize that they were the only major tribe in the Arab lands to oppose Islam, and that their position was getting more and more precarious from day to day. Many of their people in fact were now longing in their hearts to embrace Islam. The leaders felt the need of negotiating with the prophet (SAS). In their meetings they selected Yalil ibn Amr ibn Umayr as their representative, but he could not trust his tribe to accept his decision and refused to go alone. So, five more men were selected to accompany him, so that they might come to agreements concertedly.

The Prophet (SAS) lodged them in a tent near the masjid, so that they might observe the Muslims and listen to the recitation of the Quran. The Thaqif delegates argued and haggled for days, they found it very difficult to agree to give up their evil practices. They were seeking concessions. They asked for adultery, usury and wine to be permitted. They wanted to be excused of the daily five times 'Salat'. They asked their idol 'Al-Lat' to be spared for five years, three years, one year or at least one month. None of these demands was accepted, as there can never be any concession in the basic principles of Islam. The only concession the Prophet (SAS) granted was that they would not destroy the idol themselves. Mughira, Urwah's nephew (the same Urwah who was killed by them after he had called them to Islam) was sent to destroy the idol, and he did it. When the delegation left for Taif, they asked for one to lead them in 'Salat', and the youngest of them, Uthman ibn Abi al-As was appointed the 'imam'. He was the one of the delegates who would come every day to the Prophet (SAS), not to bargain but to learn.

### **Death of Abdullah ibn Ubayy**

After Tabuk another important incidence was the death of the hypocrite leader Abdulla ibn Ubayy. He fell ill and died in three weeks. His son Abdullah ibn Abdullah was a good Muslim and was loved by the prophet. The Prophet (SAS) visited Ibn Ubayy during his illness. After his death the Prophet (SAS) gave his own shirt to shroud the deadbody and led the funeral prayer, in spite of Umar (RA)'s imploring him not to. The Prophet (SAS) said that he had been given the option by Allah to pray or not to pray ( Al-Tawbah 9:80), and said "If I knew that if I prayed more than seventy times, he would be forgiven,I would do so". Later Allah sent down revelation instructing the Prophet (SAS) never to pray for a confirmed hypocrite (Al-Tawbah 9:84).

About this time Wahshi, the killer of Hamza (RA), who had taken refuge in Taif, being assured by one of Thaqif, that the Prophet (SAS) would not put to death one who repents and accepts Islam, came to Madinah and became a Muslim. Later, this Wahshi, to atone for his crime, killed Musaylamah al-kazzab, the false prophet.

Another incidence of this time was the death of the Negus Ashamah of Abyssinia, a devote Muslim. The Prophet (SAS) with the companions performed the Janazah prayers in absentia in Madinah.

Umm Kulthum (RA), the Prophet (SAS)'s daughter, and the wife of Uthman 'Zinnurain' (RA), also died about this time.

### **The year of deputations**

The ninth year of Hijrah has been called the year of delegations, as besides Thaqif many other tribes came to Madinah from all over Arabia and accepted Islam.

Amir ibn Tufayl, the man responsible for the messacre of Bir-e-Mauna also came. He was arrogant, he wanted to be named the

successor of the prophet, or wanted a part of the kingdom. When none of it was granted, he went away uttering threatening words. The Prophet (SAS) beseeched Allah to guide the people of Bani Amir, and to rid them of Amir ibn Tufayl, who died on his way of a curbacle. The tribe then sent another delegation.

There came the delegation of the tribe of Abd-al-Qays. They had already accepted Islam, and the purpose of the deputation was to acquire knowledge of Islam.

Dammam ibn Thalabah of the Bedouin tribe of Sad ibn Bakr came and asked straight forward questions about Tawhid, Resalat, Salat, Zakat, Siam and Hajj. The Prophet (SAS) and the companions appreciated the manner of his talk. He went back to his tribe and all of them accepted Islam.

Another deputation came from the tribe of Hanifah, from Yamamah, and in it was Musaylamah. He asked the prophet (SAS) to give him some position of honor, and to nominate him as the successor, and none of it was granted. Later he claimed to be a prophet and waged war after the death of the Prophet (SAS), in which many Muslims were martyred, and he too was killed.

A sixty member delegation of the Christians of Najran came to meet the Prophet (SAS). Amongst them were men of learning, nobles of the tribes and religious leaders. They stayed in the masjid, and also prayed there. They had lengthy discussions with the Prophet (SAS). About Jesus Christ there was difference of opinions. Allah revealed that the simile of Jesus was that of Adam, and commanded the prophet (SAS) to challenge the Christians to invoke Allah's curse on those who are on falsehood (Al-Imran 3:59-61). The Christians backed away. The Prophet (SAS) pointed out to them that they had changed their scriptures for material and political gains. Abu Harithah the most learned of the Najran delegation admitted that Muhammad (SAS) was right, but dared

not convert to Islam. They signed a treaty with the Prophet (SAS) agreeing to pay 'jizya' for protection. They implored the Prophet (SAS) to appoint a Muslim judge for them and Abu Ubaydah ibn Al-Jarrah was sent. (In some biography of the Prophet (SAS) it has been stated that the Najran delegation had come much earlier, shortly after the change of Quibla, and a tripartite dialogue had been held between the Muslims, the Jews and the Christians.)

Another delegation came from a clan named Tujib, a branch of Kindah, a predominant tribe of Yemen. They had brought their Zakat with them. The Prophet (SAS) gave it back to them to distribute amongst their own poor. They said that they had brought it after looking after the needs of their poor people. The Prophet (SAS) and the companions were very pleased with them.

Many more delegations came all through the tenth year after Hijra, some merely for coming into the good book of the Muslims, some to accept Islam, some others who were already Muslims but came to acquire knowledge of Islam, and yet others who were good and knowledgeable Muslims but had come only for achieving the good fortune of the Prophet (SAS)'s companionship. Such was the last delegation and the biggest delegation, comprising two hundred men of the tribe of Al-Nakha from Yemen, that came in Muharram of the eleventh year of Hijra, barely two months before the demise of the Prophet (SAS). They had accepted faith in the hands of Muadh ibn Jabal, the governor of Yemen.

### **Banning profane and vulgar practices from the precincts of Kabah**

The time of Hajj of the ninth Hijri year had come and the Prophet (SAS) had sent a team of three hundred Muslims from Madinah under the leadership of Abu Bakr (RA). With them the Prophet (SAS) had sent twenty camels for sacrifice and Abu Bakr took another five.

After Abu Bakr and the group had left, Allah sent down the initial verses of Sura Tawbah (9:1-40). It contained some very strict commands and the Prophet (SAS) deemed it expedient that the declaration should come from one of his own household, so he sent Ali (RA). When Ali overtook the contingent, Abu Bakr asked Ali if he was to replace him as the leader, and Ali said “No”, he was only to read out the passage. When all the pilgrims had assembled in Mina, Ali proclaimed the divine message, in which the idolaters were given four months respite, after which Allah and His Rasool would be free from any obligation towards them. War was declared upon them and they were to be slain or taken captive wherever they were found. Those with whom there were treaties, if they keep it faithfully, the treaties were to be held valid till the term runs out. If an idolater would seek protection, he was to be escorted to a place of security, having first been instructed in Islam. No unbeliever will be allowed to come to Hajj after this season, and none will be allowed to do ‘Tawaf’ in the nude. Abu Bakr dispatched several announcers all around, so that all people hear it on the same day.

### **Death of Ibrahim and the solar eclipse**

In the tenth year of Hijra the Prophet (SAS)’s son Ibrahim died. He was grieved and he wept. When some of the companions asked that had he not forbidden lamentation, the Prophet (SAS) said that lamentation and pulling off the hair and scratching the face and beating the chest are of course forbidden, but the tears that come out of love can never be. He consoled the bereaved mother Maria and her sister Shirin that Ibrahim would be waiting for them in paradise.

The sun was eclipsed on this very day, plunging Madinah in darkness, and some people began saying that even nature is grieving with the grief of the Prophet (SAS). When these words reached his ears, the Prophet (SAS) came out and said that it was

not true, the sun and the moon are the signs of Allah, and the eclipse was only a phenomenon of nature, and during an eclipse the people should perform Salat. The Prophet (SAS) has forbidden believing in all sorts of superstition.

### **The farewell pilgrimage**

In Dhul Qadah of the tenth year after Hijrah the Prophet (SAS) proclaimed that he himself would lead the Hajj. The enthusiasm of the Muslims knew no bounds, and they started arriving in Madinah from all over Arabia. The delight was all the more because it would be the first Hajj free from all pagan practices. The Prophet (SAS) knew that it would be the last Hajj of his life, as in the Ramadan of this year Jibrail (AS) had recited with him the whole Quran twice, instead of once, as was the usual practice.

On Saturday the twetyfifth of Dhul Qadah they left Madinah. All of the wives of the prophet (SAS) accompanied him. The estimates of the number of pilgrims vary from ninety thousand to one hundred and thirty thousand, and a similar number were waiting in Makkah. They arrived in the outskirts of Makkah on the evening of the fourth of Dhul Hajj, and entered the sacred city the following morning.

Throughout the journey the Prophet (SAS) and the Muslims kept on proclaiming the 'Talbiah' i.e. "Labbayk Allahumma labbayk, La Sharika Laka Labbayk, Innal Hamda wal Ni'mata Laka wal Mulk, La Sharika Lak". Its meaning is, "I respond to Your call my Lord, I respond to You, there is no deity other than You, all praise, grace and sovereignty belong to You, You have no partners".

On the eighth of Dhul Hajjah they went to Mina, and after sunrise of the following day they proceeded to Arafat. There from over the Mount of Mercy (Jabal-e-Rahmat) the Prophet (SAS) delivered his sermon. The sermon began with the praise and glorification of Allah, and included the followings. It was a farewell sermon,

because the Prophet (SAS) said "O people, I know not if I shall ever meet you again in this place after this year. If you hold fast to what I have left with you, the Quran and my 'sunnah', you will not go astray." He recited the passage last revealed "...This day the disbelievers despair of prevailing against your religion, so fear them not, but fear Me! This day I have perfected for you your religion and have fulfilled My favour unto you, and it has been My good pleasure to choose Islam for you as your religion..."(Maidah 5:3). "Your blood, your property, your honor are forbidden, inviolable. You will certainly meet your Lord and you will be questioned about what you do in this world. The trusts you hold and the commitments you make must be honored. Usury is forbidden, and so also is vengeance killing. You have obligations towards your womenfolk and they have towards you. Fear Allah about your womenfolk. All believers are brothers. All human beings are the children of Adam (AS). No Arab has any superiority over a non-Arab. Superiority is by virtue of fearing Allah. Let those who are present communicate what I have said, to those who are not here today. It may so happen that those who come to know of it in this way may understand it better than some of those who are listening to it."

After completion of Hajj the prophet (SAS) with the Muhajirin and Ansar, returned to Madinah, and those of other tribes went to their various places.

### **The false prophets**

Only a few weeks after their return to Madinah, Musaylimah of the Christian tribe of Bani Hanifah of Yamamah, who had earlier sought some position of honor with the prophet, sent a letter to the Prophet (SAS) claiming that he had been given prophethood by Allah, to share the earth with him. The Prophet (SAS) declared him a liar. After the death of the Prophet (SAS) Musaylimah waged war against the Muslims, in which a good number of Muslims were

killed. Musaylimah was killed by the spear of Wahshi. Abdullah the son of Nusaybah had also dealt him a mortal blow with his sword.

At about the same time there arose yet other imposters, at least two men and a woman too, who claimed to be prophets. Aswad ibn Kab of Yemen was one, who was killed by some of his own followers in a few months.

Tulayhah a chief of the Bani Asad also claimed prophethood. He was defeated by Khalid ibn Walid and returned to Islam.

The woman imposter Sajah bint Al-Harith of the tribe of Taghlib had, to gain strength joined Musaylimah and even married him. She fled from the battlefield and later died in obscurity.

### **Expedition against the Romans**

In spite of the rise of these false prophets, the Prophet (SAS) found it more necessary to send troops against the Byzantines. Farwah ibn Umar al-Juthami the governor of the Byzantine province of Ma'an had accepted Islam and had sent his messenger to the Prophet (SAS). The Byzantine emperor arrested him and put him to death by crucifixion, and left the corpse on the cross to terrorise the people. This was an act of provocation that could by no means be ignored.

All these events of highhandedness, of false claims of prophethood and of apostasy largely coincide with the illness of the Prophet (SAS). In Safar of the eleventh year of Hijra the Prophet (SAS) ordered the assembly of troops under the leadership of Usamah ibn Zaid ibn Harithah. In spite of severe headache and fever the Prophet (SAS) fixed the standard of Usamah with his own hands and sent them off. He instructed Usamah to take his army into the heartland of Palestine, reaching the area of Al-Balqa and Darum. Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, Abbas, Ali and other senior companions were under the command of

Usamah. Usamah took his detachment out of Madinah and camped at Jurf, about five kilometers from the city. Abu Bakr, Umar and other companions would come to see the Prophet (SAS) with permission of the commander Usamah.

As the condition of the Prophet (SAS) grew worse, Usamah with his troops stayed at Jurf, and the Prophet (SAS) gave approval to the delay. Some people expressed their misgivings about the commandership of Usamah because of his tender age,-- according to some reports he was only seventeen years of age and according to other reports he was in his mid twenties--, and also because his father was a slave. When the Prophet (SAS) heard about it, he summoned the people into the masjid, and assured them of Usamah's ability in spite of his age, and also pointed out to them that his father Zaid had commanded the army, and was a Muslim of distinction, a foremost Muslim.

After the prophet's death also, these people had shown their resentment of Usamah with the Khalifah Abu Bakr. Besides, some companions asked Abu Bakr to postpone the dispatch of the army against the Roman Empire, in the wake of the clouds of apostasy and the threat of the false prophets, they were worried about the protection of Madinah itself. But Abu Bakr was firm in his resolve, he would not hold back at any cost what the Prophet (SAS) had ordered to go ahead, "even if beasts of prey tear me apart after the army leaves".

To impress upon the people the honor of Usamah, Abu Bakr the Khalifah walked beside the riding Usamah for some distance, and sought Usamah's permission to retain Umar in Madinah to help him in the affairs of the state.

With Allah's help, Usamah defeated the Roman army and returned after forty days with immense amounts of spoils of war and prisoners. This triumph of the Muslims over the Romans, even

after the death of the Prophet (SAS), sent terror into the hearts of the apostates and all those who were thinking that the Muslims would no longer be quite as invincible after the prophet's demise.

### **Increase of illness**

As the illness increased, the Prophet (SAS) asked permission of his wives, to be nursed in the house of A'ishah, and they all agreed. When the fever aggravated he asked for a cold bath. Water was poured on him, while he sat in a tub. When he felt better he went to the masjid, sat on the pulpit and praised Allah, invoked the people for justice, and asked if he had ever beaten or hurt anybody, to come forward and avenge himself, so that he might meet his Lord with nothing held against him by any person.

On another occasion he praised Abu Bakr, who had done him the greatest favour in companionship and with his wealth. He also told people to close their private doors to the mosque, all except that of Abu Bakr. He also praised the Ansars and asked the Muhajirin to take care of them, and to forgive those of them who happen to commit errors, "they have been my dedicated supporters, who have given me refuge and support" he said.

When the Prophet became too weak to go to the masjid and lead the prayer, he instructed that Abu Bakr should lead the prayer. A'ishah said "Abu Bakr is a soft hearted man, when he stands in your position he may feel it too hard on him, may you please ask Umar to do the job". But the Prophet (SAS) insisted "Tell Abu Bakr to lead the prayer". Abu Bakr led the prayer seventeen times during the Prophet (SAS)'s illness.

As the condition worsened, the Prophet (SAS) would fall unconscious from time to time. Once on regaining consciousness he told A'ishah to give away in charity the five or six dinars that were with her.

When Fatimah would come, A'ishah would at times leave the father and daughter together. On one of these occasions the Prophet (SAS) whispered something to Fatimah and she wept, then he said something and she smiled. She later confided to A'ishah that he had told her that he was going to die which made her to weep, than he said she Fatimah will be the first one of the family to join him and she smiled through her tears.

### **The final moments**

At dawn on Monday the twelfth of Rabi al-Awal of the eleventh Hijri year the fever abated and on hearing the 'Adan' the Prophet (SAS) prepared to go to the masjid, and Fadl and Thawban supporting on two sides took him there. The salat had already started and as he looked at the people praying, his face lit up with happiness. Anas has said that he had never before seen the Prophet (SAS)'s face shining like this. Abu Bakr who was leading the prayer stepped back, but the Prophet (SAS) pushed him forward again bidding him to go on leading, and himself sat to the right of Abu Bakr and performed his salat. Then he returned to A'ishah's house.

(In last week before death, the Prophet(s) sat on the pulpit once or twice and advised the Muslims. He advised people to care for Ansars, not to make his grave object of worship, and so on. A vivid description of these days are on pages 555 to 558 of English version of Raheequl Maqtum. An elaborate description of these days will impress the reader.)

Usamah came from his camp in Jurf, and the Prophet (SAS) told him to set forth. He returned to Jurf and started preparations. Abu Bakr on seeing the Prophet (SAS) better, went to up town Madinah to see his wife Habibah.

Abdur Rahman ibn Abu Bakr came in and he had a green tooth stick in his hand. The Prophet (SAS) looked at it with longing. A'ishah noticed this and took the 'sewak' from her brother, chewed the end of it to make it soft and handed it to the Prophet (SAS). He brushed his teeth and laid it down on bed, and with his head on A'ishah's breast stretched his legs straight and became unconscious. After sometime he regained consciousness, uttered the words "With the supreme company in Jannah". Gradually his head grew heavier and A'ishah laid his head gently on the pillow. Inna Lillahi wa Inna Ilaihi Raajiun.

### **After death**

The news of the Prophet (SAS)'s death spread rapidly, and the whole of Madinah plunged in gloom. People assembled in the masjid. Umar was so terribly shocked that he lost his senses. He drew out his sword and intimidated the people saying "Some hypocrites are saying that the messenger of Allah has passed away, but he is not dead, he has gone to his Lord as Musa (AS) had gone to meet his Lord. He will come back and cut off the hands and legs of the hypocrites."

Abu Bakr arrived presently on horseback. He went straight to A'ishah's house, saw the Prophet (SAS), kissed him and came out to the masjid. He tried to silence Umar, but Umar would not pay any heed. So he addressed the people and the people turned to him. He praised Allah and said "O people, if any of you worship Muhammad, let him know that Muhammad (SAS) is dead. If you worship Allah, then Allah is never dying." Then he quoted the Quran "Muhammad is no more than a messenger, and indeed messengers have passed away before him. Will it be that when he dies or is slain you will turn back on your heels? He who turns back does no harm to Allah, and Allah will reward the thankful (Al-Imran 3:144).

On hearing the verse of the Quran, Umar came to his senses. He could no longer remain standing and sat down. The people were pacified.

### **Selection of the first Khalifa**

Presently news came that the Ansar were assembled in the hall of Banu Saidah and were going to take the oath of allegiance at the hands of Sa'd ibn Ubadah(RA). Abu Bakr, Umar, Abu Ubaydah and a number of Muhajirin hurried there.

When the Quraysh members arrived, the Ansar spokesman praised the Muhajirin and yet insisted that the Khalifah of the Prophet (SAS) should be of Madinah, of Ansar. Abu Bakr pointed out that Islam had already spread all over Arabia, and to them any leadership other than of Quraysh would not be acceptable, and nobody could deny the fact. He asked them to select either Umar or Abu Ubaydah. One of the Ansar at this time suggested two leaders, one from Ansar and another from the Quraysh, but it was not acceptable. Umar now intervened saying "O Ansar, you know that the Messenger of Allah ordered Abu Bakr to lead the prayer, now which of you will willingly take precedence over him?" They said "May Allah forbid that we should take precedence over him". There upon Umar (RA) seized the hand of Abu Bakr and pledged allegiance to him, followed by Abu Ubadah and other Muhajirin and the Ansar present, all except Sa'd ibn Ubadah(RA).

The next day in the masjid before the dawn prayer, Abu Bakr sat on the pulpit and Umar addressed the assembly, bidding them to pledge their allegiance to Abu Bakr, the Companion of the Prophet (SAS), the second of the two in the cave; and with one voice the whole congregation swore fealty to him.

Abu Bakr stood up and addressed the Muslims present "I have been given authority over you and I am not the best of you. If I do well help me, if I do wrong set me right. Sincere regard for truth is

loyalty and disregard for truth is treachery. The weak amongst you shall be strong with me until I have secured his rights, Allah willing. And the strong amongst you shall be weak with me until I have wrested from him the rights of others, Allah willing. Obey me so long as I obey Allah and His Messenger. If I disobey Allah and His Messenger you owe me no obedience. Arise for your prayer, may Allah have mercy upon you.” Later all Muslims took the oath of allegiance in the hands of the Khalifa. Ali took the oath sometime later.

### **The burial**

When Abu Bakr, Umar and the others had left for the hall of Banu Saidah, Ali, Abbas, Fadl ibn Abbas, Usamah and other near relatives were left behind to look after the affairs of burial. Ali, the two sons of Abbas, Usamah, Shakran and Aws ibn Khawli, a man of Ansar, took part in washing the body. (There is a narration that there was a confusion as to whether the body of the Prophet(s) should be washed keeping the garment on or not. Then all the people there dozed off and dreamed that the body should be washed keeping the garment on.) The body of the prophet (SAS) was washed with the clothes on.

There was a difference of opinion as to where to bury the Prophet (SAS). Abu Bakr said that he had heard the prophet say that all the messengers of Allah had been buried where they had died. So the Prophet (SAS) was buried inside the house of A'ishah, the very spot he had died on.

The body was never taken out of the house. Before burial people came in, in groups and said the funeral prayers individually, none led the prayers. The Janazah prayers took the whole of Tuesday, and the burial took place on Wednesday.

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Your effort is praiseworthy. While reading the text I felt benefitted. However I would like to put forward some comments which I have given in read ink in the body of te text. Some further remarks are as follows.

1. You want it to be concise. So you cannot pick up all the events and deal extensively with each of them at the same time. I think you can pick up a limited number of important events and deal with them in depth bringing out the lessons in them to impress the reader.

2. For non-Muslim readers mere reference to a Sura or verse would create a problem. Reference to a verse should be accompaied by a gist of the contents of the verse.

**3. The chapter named " Jihad the on going struggle" seems not to have been written in the style of the book itself. It appears to be a separate article. There the reader finds a repetition of many events to carry the point that Jihad is there in every part of life.**

4. Frequent use of Arabic words like muhajireen, ansar, shahadah etc may be difficult to understand for many readers. At least once the reader must be made acquainted with such terms.

**Jazk Allah khaira**

