



AL-AMEEN



40+ LESSONS

*for Building Bridges and Breaking Barriers
to Peace from the Life of*

Prophet
MUHAMMAD
(pbuh)



DA'WAH INSTITUTE OF NIGERIA



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Endorsements

“We thank Allah that He gave the team who worked on this research plenty of *Hikmah* (wisdom) which manifests in the comprehensive and integrative approach that they took to the *Seerah* or history of the Prophet (p). This research overcame three major problems that we face when we deal with the books of *Seerah*:

First is the lack of relating the *Seerah* to the Qur'an. Even though the Quran is the number one source of *Seerah*, it is often ignored or marginalized in *Seerah* studies. This is a problem that this research overcame *Alhamdulillah*.

The second is the problem of fragmented Hadith. Hadith is usually narrated in a sentence or two and rarely relates to a story or context. However, this research integrates hadith in the wider context and explains the relevant stories.

Lastly, *Seerah* books usually focus on the events, especially battles and wars, and rarely offer analysis that relates the events or battles with their historical context and the higher moral objectives of Jihad. This research brilliantly overcomes this shortcoming. *Jazakom Allah Kheir. Alhamdulillah.*”

Prof. Jasser Auda,

Professor of Maqasid al-Shari'ah

President, Maqasid Institute (www.maqasid.org)

Head of Da'wah, International Union of Muslim Scholars

“This book '*Al-Ameen*' couldn't have come at a better time than now, when the world is faced with challenges of misinformation about Islam exacerbated by media and misguided violent extremists claiming to represent Islam... A well-researched and well-written document, this book is timely, rich, valuable and therefore highly recommended for both Muslims and non-Muslims interested in knowing the true nature of Islam and its Prophet (p) in terms of peace building.”

Prof. Usman A. El-Nafaty,

Department of Chemical Engineering,

Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi.



“This work is an intrepid attempt at identifying the potholes and mines that drive society apart. It is a courageous attempt at destroying the patrimony of prejudice and hatred which are alien to the religion of Islam...The salvific relevance of this work lies in our readiness not just to subscribe to what it tells us, but our commitment to drive it for the good of humanity. I recommend it to all.”

Barrister Nurudeen Asunogie,

Former National Amir (President),

Muslim Students Society of Nigeria (MSSN), Benin.



“The book '*AL-AMEEN*' is a game changer for both teachers and students of the Prophetic biography. It is a great contribution to the library of Islamic Studies that will

undoubtedly be celebrated by future generations. Whether for a scholar of the Prophet's life or a reader looking into it for the first time, this book is a resource of unprecedented richness and easy access. The work that went into it is tremendous, and the result is stunning in its quality, accuracy and clarity. Many biographies of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) have appeared in recent years. None, however, display the scholarly depth, methodological precision and factual clarity of Da'wah Institute of Nigeria's '*AL-AMEEN*'... Indeed, the book contains convincing arguments for whomsoever Allah, the Almighty wishes guidance..."

Imam Murtada Muhammad Gusau,

Chief Imam, Sahabah Mosque; and Director,

Nagazi-Uvete Islamic Center, Okene, Kogi State, Nigeria.



"*Al-Ameen* is indeed a book that will bring a paradigm shift in inter and intra religious relations, not only in Nigeria but globally. It provides an answer to religious bigotry by interrogating and demolishing the arguments for violent extremism with Qur'anic scriptural evidence supported by examples from the life of the Prophet (pbuh).

"This book has boundless potentials to change the attitude among the youth of both religions, to create a platform for mutual understanding, respect and peaceful co-existence. I recommend it for adoption in Nigerian Secondary Schools and for use among Christian and Muslim Youth Organizations.

“I heartily commend the Da'wah Institute of Nigeria for a well-researched work that will go a long way in building bridges across religious divides.”

Hajiah Halimah Jibril,

National Ameerah (President),

Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN)



“These research publications (from the Da'wah Institute of Nigeria) provide, undoubtedly, extremely refined perspectives going back to the roots of the teachings of Islam and positioning themselves as valuable tools for Imams and preachers to fight extremism and correct commonly held erroneous beliefs.

“The present book is an in-depth research, mined from the very roots of Islamic history, specifically, Prophet Muhammad's personal dealings, commands, and examples between himself and the infant community he was building on one hand, and the non-Muslims on another. The information is finely presented in most useful perspectives that immediately clears the clog in hitherto wrongly held understanding. Some of the difficult topics for the Muslim preacher of the modern day include many of the topics discussed here. The issue of Prophet's dealing with the Jewish communities of Medina, particularly the Banu Qurayzah, is notoriously being feasted upon by western writers as a dark handle to ridicule Islam. This book has unearthed the historical facts that explain these issue succinctly and reasonably; and in an amazing way!

“I would readily recommend that this book should be taught in our schools as part of the civic education subjects and as part of courses for prospective Imams. Consequently, I strongly believe that this book should be read and used as frequently as possible and, as guidance for sermons, outreach engagements, friendly discourses, during family gatherings, etc.”

Kadi Aminu Saadu

Sharia Court of Appeal of Federal Capital of Territory, Abuja.



“This book 'Al-Ameen' is a very concise presentation of what the Noble Prophet (SAWS) stood for, and a clear demonstration and confirmation of the saying of Allah *"And verily, you (O Muhammad are on an exalted (standard of) character."* (Qur'an 68:4). The handy nature of the book, coupled with the implications that are presented after each narrative makes the book easily comprehensible and makes it stand out as a good instructional material.

“Needless to say that imbibing all the characters of the Prophet (SAWS) as exemplified in the book would go a long way in fostering better interfaith relations in a multi-religious society like Nigeria. This is in no way an attempt to give the book a local status, far from it, the teachings therein are global centered, and moreover, the Prophet (SAWS) was sent as a mercy to the entire mankind and not just a section of it.”

Imam Morufu Onike Abdul-Azeez

Chief Missioner, Nasrullahi-l-Fathi Society (NASFAT) Worldwide.

“This manuscript and book in the making inshaa-Allah, by the virtue of its content, is thought provoking and can adequately serve in straightening the crooked understanding of our sacrosanct textual proofs that have been manipulated – and are still being manipulated by extremists in the name of scholarship.

“The book is timely relevant and relevantly timely. In the light of this, I recommend it to be read and understood and explained to all and sundry.”

Shaykh Abuu Aasim, Muhammad Bin Uthman,

The Imam and Khatiib of Sahaabah Masjid, Kundila-Kano.



“This excellent and engaging book, worthy of multiple readings, and useful as a teaching aid, is full of learning and challenging inquiry. With inspiring lessons drawn majorly from the life of the best man who ever lived, Muslims are reminded, while people of other faiths are educated, that Islam emphasizes peaceful and harmonious relations between its adherents and other members of the humankind family.”

Mallam Muhammad Lawal Maidoki, Engr. Tech.,

President, Da'wah Coordination Council of Nigeria

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“He who is ungrateful to fellow men, would not be grateful to the Creator”. Thus, we wish to express our gratitude to everyone who has contributed in one way or the other to making this book see the light of day. We appreciate the relentless efforts and sacrifice of the Research and Training Department of the Da'wah Institute of Nigeria – in particular, Muhammad Attahiru Baba-Minna, Isma'il Abdulkadir, and Haleemah Oladamade Ahmad – towards the compilation of this book.

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¹ “(p)” in this material stands for “peace be upon him”

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mistakes remain therein, and pray that Allah forgives us for any oversights.

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It is unfortunately practically impossible to cite all who deserve mention – but Allah has counted them all. We pray that the reward of whatever good comes from this effort goes to everyone who contributed to it, mentioned here or not. To everyone, we say *Jazakum-Allah khayran* – May Allah reward and bless you!

Wassalamu alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu

Muhammad Nuruddeen Lemu,

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Da'wah Institute of Nigeria (DIN),

Islamic Education Trust (IET), Minna.

Preface

Muslims today live in a world where interactions between people of all faiths and nationalities are increasingly commonplace, whether through work, travel, the internet, or otherwise. Many – Muslims and non-Muslims – are of the assumption that Muslims are expected to be in a permanent state of hostility with people of other faiths, as part of the Islamic doctrine. However, a cursory look at the life and ways of the Prophet Muhammad (p) till his death, reveals otherwise.

In its attempt to respond to over two hundred (200) extremist narratives, the Da'wah Institute of Nigeria (DIN), Islamic Education Trust, Minna, Nigeria, researched and collated 27 cases of narratives from the Seerah (life history/biography) of the Prophet (p) that serve as counter-narratives against no less than 70% of arguments of violent extremists related to interfaith and intra-faith relations.

While many methodologies have been adopted to present the correct position of Islam towards Muslim and non-Muslim relations, this material represents a new dimension to addressing the same issue. It takes the approach of building resilience and preventing violent extremism among Muslim youth through education of pupils, students, parents and teachers, via the presentation of historical narratives from the

life of the Prophet Muhammad (p) and his companions. These narratives which are non-fictional real life events, illustrate the beauty and virtues of Islam as taught and practised by Prophet Muhammad (p). It also reveals the ugliness and corruption of faith as represented by the narratives of violent extremists.

Most violent extremist Muslims and many who would be convinced or recruited by them have not seen or sufficiently appreciated the beauty, wisdom, fairness, compassion, goodness and benefit (*maslahah*) of Allah and Islam, and so they easily confuse Islamic teachings with ugliness, folly, injustice, hatred, and harm (*mafsadah*) embraced and committed by some in the name of Islam.

The sources of learning for many Muslims are religious teachings and texts that focus mainly on countering the challenges of their times - social injustice, structural injustice, human rights abuses, unjust laws, political oppression and repression, despotic rulers, imperialism, economic exploitation, media biases and demonization, racism, nationalism, evangelism, xenophobia, foreign occupation, neo-colonialism, Islamophobia, unjust economic sanctions, state terrorism, etc. To counter these, much of the religious teachings related to social change have understandably been more inclined towards a “Liberation Theology”² and a

² For more on Islamic Liberation Theology, see Hamid Dabashi, *Islamic Liberation Theology: Resisting the Empire*, Routledge, 2008; Shadaab Rahemtulla, *Qur'an of the Oppressed: Liberation Theology and Gender Justice in Islam*, Oxford University Press, 2017.

preoccupation with social justice, law, politics and power. However, very little attention has been given to the counter-balancing traditions of moderation, forgiveness, love, compassion, purification of the heart, character reform, inter-faith relations building, civil society initiatives, welfare services, etc. that Islam teaches. In the absence of any teachings which counter-balance the emphasis on justice, law and power, the tendency is for groups to pursue these necessities at all costs, where the ends justify any means – including violence and terrorism.

If people cannot see or appreciate the beauty of religious teachings, they cannot recognise the corrupted forms and will therefore find it difficult to identify the distortions of Islam by violent extremists. One will find it easier to identify counterfeit money when it is put side-by-side with a genuine note. Thus, some of the most successful counter narratives and arguments against extremist positions simply juxtapose the real, historical and authoritative beauty of the teachings of the Qur'an and the Prophetic tradition with the narratives of violent extremists, and the difference is instantly clearer. Even where these events from Seerah showing the beauty of Islam do not completely counter a particular extremist's narrative, they do serve to create caution, doubt and curiosity that lead to deeper reflection and reconsideration of the claims by extremists that their ideology is based on authentic religious authority.

Therefore, this approach of presenting the Seerah (biography) cases particularly related to interfaith and intrafaith relations help to highlight the distortions of the extremist narrative; create greater resilience against extremism in general; and an ability to respond more effectively and confidently to the arguments and narratives of violent extremists in particular.

This book is in two parts. The first part, which is further divided into six themes, focuses on different instances from the Seerah of the Prophet (p) and his companions that showcase the love, kindness, forgiveness, magnanimity, and tolerance with which they dealt with people of other faiths, and even misbehaving Muslims. For each case presented, supporting texts from the Qur'an and Hadith, as well as comments of scholars on the narrative are presented for further clarification. Thereafter, the implications and lessons derivable from the narrative are also stated. After each theme, discussion questions are given to further aid comprehension and practical application of the lessons derivable from the cited cases.

The second part of the book focuses on some specific incidents from the Seerah of the Prophet (p) that have been most commonly misinterpreted by some Muslims and non-Muslims, with the view of facilitating better comprehension by putting them in their correct historical context and clarifying misconceptions and erroneous conclusions that have been arrived at, as a result of missing information or prejudiced bias in their interpretation of the Seerah.

Discussion questions are given after this part as well, to facilitate better assimilation.

It is our sincere hope and prayer that this material will go a long way to help us to achieve a more peaceful world for humanity.

PART I

Peacebuilding from the
Life of the Prophet (p) and
His Companions

THEME ONE

Respect, Fairness And Justice

This section highlights some narratives from the biography (*seerah*) of the Prophet Muhammad (p) which show that he was respectful, fair and just to Muslims and people of other faiths.

Case 1

The Prophet (p) Stood For Funeral Processions of Non-Muslims

It is narrated on the authority of Jabir bin 'Abdullah: “*There passed a bier (funeral procession) and the Prophet (p) stood up for it and we also stood up along with him. We said: Messenger of Allah (p), that was the bier of a Jewish lady. Upon this he remarked: Verily, death is a matter of bewilderment, so whenever you come across a bier, stand up!*”³

Also, the Prophet (p) was reported to have stood up when a funeral procession of a Jewish man went by. *When asked by his*

³ *Sahih Muslim*, vol.4, hadith no.2095.

*companions why he would stand up for a dead Jewish man, he answered with a rhetorical question, "But is he not a soul?"*⁴

Supporting Texts

"And We have certainly honoured the children of Adam and carried them on the land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what We have created, with [definite] preference." (Qur'an 17:70)

Comments

Ibn Hazm said: *"We encourage standing for the bier if a person sees it even if it is the funeral of an unbeliever, until it passes by him or is placed upon the ground, and if he does not stand, there is no sin."*⁵

The Prophet's response, 'But is he not a soul?' calls attention to the fact that that this unknown person of another faith was worthy of a respectful gesture from God's last and noble Prophet (p) simply because he was a human being.

Scholars have differed over the ruling of standing as mentioned by Imam al-Nawawi. Some said that it has been

⁴ *Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol.2, hadith no.399, in *Alim* 6.0; also recorded in *Al-Tirmidhi*, *an-Nasa'i*, hadith no.1924 & 1928; See other similar instances cited in Ali Mohiuddin Al-Qaradaghi, *We and the Other: Substantiating the basis of the Ideal Relation between Muslims and Non-Muslims in Light of the Islamic Jurisprudence*, (Transl. Syed Bashir Ahmad Kashmiri), Kuala Lumpur, 2015, p.197-168.

⁵ Abu Muhammad Ali bin Ahmad bin Said Ibn Hazm, *al-Muhalla bi al-Athar*, Dar al-Fikr, Beirut, n.d., vol.5, p.153, hadith no.591.

abrogated due to a narration from Ali,⁶ while others maintain that it is recommended. Imam Al-Nawawi concludes that standing is the preferred position, and so the command to stand for it is for recommendation; while sitting is in order to clarify the permissibility (of sitting).⁷

Implications and Lessons

The implication of this narrative is that everybody deserves a certain level of respect, at least for being a human. Thus, irrespective of a person's religion, and whether the person is alive or dead, everyone is worthy of a respectful gesture.

This narrative therefore negates the position of those who argue that people of other faiths are unworthy of any regard. If the Prophet (p) had considered a dead non-Muslim worthy of respect, then a living non-Muslim is worthy of even more respect.

⁶ It was narrated by Ali that, 'standing for *janazah* was mentioned until it is lowered into the grave'. Then Ali said, 'the Prophet (p) stood for *janazah*, then later, he sat down.' (*Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, hadith no.1044).

⁷ Abu Zakariyya Yahya bin Sharaf al-Nawawi, *Al-Majmu'*, Dar al-Fikr, Beirut, 1997, vol.5, p.236.

Case 2

The Prophet (p) Ruled Justly in Favour of a Jew, against a Muslim

A companion of the Prophet (p), Tu'ma bin Ubairiq reportedly stole a shield because he was desperate to join a battle in defence of Muslims, but he was poor and did not have any suitable equipment. After stealing the shield, he hid it in the store of a Jewish merchant. Within a short span of time, the shield was discovered to be with the Jewish merchant, who then led the investigators to Tu'ma, the thief. When questioned, Tu'ma accused the Jewish merchant himself of stealing the shield, but the evidence was against Tu'ma. It looked like Tu'ma was going to be convicted and the Jewish merchant exonerated. Finding himself under accusation, Tu'ma rushed to the Prophet (p) and demanded that the Prophet (p) help defend him and argue on his behalf against the Jewish merchant.

In response, the Qur'anic revelation was decisive and unequivocal. The Qur'an responded, *"We have sent to you the Book containing the truth, so that you will judge among the people as God has shown you, and do not be an advocate for the deceivers... And he who commits a mistake or iniquity and then ascribes it to one who is innocent, is guilty of calumny and brazen sin."* (Qur'an 4:105-112)

The Qur'an thus vindicated the Jewish merchant, condemned Tu'ma, and clearly commanded the Prophet (p) to stand by justice and not defend deceivers, even if the culprit is a Muslim.⁸

Supporting Text

“O you who have attained to faith! Be ever steadfast in upholding equity, bearing witness to the truth for the sake of God, even though it be against your own selves, or your parents and kinsfolk. Whether the person concerned be rich or poor, God's claim takes precedence over (the claims of) either of them. Do not, then, follow your own desires, lest you swerve from justice; for if you distort (the truth), behold, God is indeed aware of all that you do!” (Qur'an 4:135)

“Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives, and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded.” (Qur'an 16:90)

⁸ See Abu Hasan 'Ali bin Ahmad al-Wahidi, *Asbab Nuzul al-Qur'an*, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, Beirut, 2001, p.124; Muhammad bin Jarir al-Tabari, *Tafsir al-Tabari: Jami' al-Bayan 'an Ta'wil Ay al-Qur'an*, (ed. Mahmoud Muhammad Shakir), Maktabat Ibn Taymiyya, Cairo, n.d., vol.9, pp.175-199; Abu al-Hasan 'Ali ibn Muhammad al-Mawardi, *Al-Nukatu wa al-'Uyun: Tafsir al-Mawardi*, (ed. Al-Sayyid bin 'Abd al-Maqsud bin 'Abd al-Rahim), Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, Beirut, n.d., vol.1, p.527-28; Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, *al-Tafsir al-Kabir (a.k.a Mafatih al-Ghayb)*, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, Beirut, 1990, vol. 6, pt. 11:26 – 31.

Abu Hurayrah reported that the Prophet (p) said, “*The supplication of the oppressed is answered, even if he is wicked, for his wickedness is only against himself.*”⁹

Abu Dharr reported that the Messenger of Allah (p) said, “Allah the Exalted said: *O my servants, I have forbidden oppression for Myself, and I have made it forbidden among you, so do not oppress one another.*”¹⁰

Comments

Studying this incident, one would be struck by the Qur'an's insistence on justice, its rejection of chauvinistic tribalism, and its rejection of political functionalism and opportunism. Even the state of war and the Muslim's patriotic motivations could not be used to sacrifice an outsider (a Jew in this case), because doing so would be a brazen sin. It seemed that the desire to shield Muslims from honest criticism would not be an acceptable excuse to God. Furthermore, the Qur'anic logic seems to stand in sharp contrast to the logic of necessity used by terrorists to commit horrendous acts of violence.¹¹

Implications and Lessons

The action of the Prophet (p) in this narration shows the importance of justice and fairness when dealing with people,

⁹ *Musnad Ahmad*, hadith no.8577.

¹⁰ *Sahih Muslim*, hadith no.2577.

¹¹ Khalid Abou El-Fadl, *Reasoning with God: Reclaiming Shari'ah in the Modern Age*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, USA, 2014, p.11.

irrespective of their faith. It is important to reiterate the context at this point. Muslims were in a state of war; eager to join the battle, a Muslim stole the shield; a Jew and a Muslim stood accused, and the Prophet (p) was being asked to defend the Muslim. Yet, the Prophet (p) did not rule unjustly. Rather, he stood for justice, irrespective of the religion of the plaintiff and defendant.

Case 3

The Prophet (p) Refused to Punish Non-Muslims without Sufficient Evidence

Narrated Abu Laila bin Abdullah bin Abdur-Rahman bin Sahl: Sahl bin Abi Hathma and some great men of his tribe said, *"Abdullah bin Sahl and Muhayyisa went out to Khaybar as they were struck with poverty and difficult living conditions. Then, Muhayyisa was informed that Abdullah had been killed and thrown in a pit or a spring. Muhayyisa went to the Jews (of Khaybar) and said, "By Allah, you have killed my companion." The Jews said, "By Allah, we have not killed him." Muhayyisa then came back to his people and told them the story. He, his elder brother Huwayyisa and Abdur-Rahman bin Sahl came (to the Prophet (p)) and he who had been at Khaybar (Muhayyisa), proceeded to speak, but the Prophet (p) said to Muhayyisa, "The eldest! The eldest!" meaning, "Let the eldest of you speak." So Huwayyisa spoke first and then Muhayyisa. The Prophet (p) said, "The Jews should either pay the blood money of your (deceased) companion or be ready for war." After that, the Prophet (p) wrote a letter to the Jews in that respect, and they wrote back that they had not killed him. Then the Prophet (p) said to Huwayyisa, Muhayyisa and Abdur-Rahman, "Can you take an oath by which you will be entitled to take the blood money?" They said, "No." He said (to them), "Shall we ask the Jews to take an oath before you?" They replied, "But the Jews are*

not Muslims." So the Prophet (p) himself paid the diyyah (blood money) of one-hundred she-camels to the deceased's brethren. Sahl added: When those she-camels were made to enter the house, one of them kicked me with its leg.¹²

Supporting Texts

"O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what you do." (Qur'an 5:8)

Anas bin Malik narrated that the Messenger of Allah (p) said, *"Beware of the supplication of the oppressed, even if he is an unbeliever, for there is no barrier between it and Allah."*¹³

Mu'adh bin Jabal reported that the Messenger of Allah (p) said, *"Beware of the supplication of the oppressed, for there is no barrier between it and Allah."*¹⁴

Abu Hurayrah reported that the Prophet (p) said, *"The supplication of three persons are never turned down: a fasting*

¹² Malik bin Anas Abu Abdullah, *Muwatta*, (ed. Muhammad Fu'ad 'Abd al-Baqi), Dar Ihya al-Turath al-'Arabi, Cairo, hadith no.1565; Al-Baihaqi, *al-Sunan al-Sugrah*, al-Maktabah al-Shamilah, 3.13, hadith no.3332; Abu Dawud, *Sunan Abu Dawud*, Dar al-Kitab al-Arabi, Beirut, vol.4, p.300; Al-Nasa'i, *Sunan al-Nasa'i al-Kubrah*, hadith no.207; Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, hadith no. 7192; Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, hadith no. 4441.

¹³ *Musnad Ahmad*, hadith no.12140.

¹⁴ *Sahih al-Bukhari*, hadith no.4090.

person until he breaks his fast, a just ruler, and the supplication of the oppressed which is raised by Allah above the clouds. The gates of heaven are opened for it, and the Lord says; By My Might, I will help you in due course.”¹⁵

Jabir bin Abdullah reported that the Prophet (p) said, “Beware of committing oppression, for oppression will be darkness on the Day of Resurrection.”¹⁶

Comments

According to Ibn Taymiyyah, “In this life, people's situations uphold when justice prevails in their society even if they fall into various kinds of sins. However, people's situations do not uphold when injustice and lack of rights prevail in their society. That is why the saying goes: God upholds a state established on justice, even if it were a nation of disbelievers, and would not uphold a state established on injustice, even if it were a nation of Muslims. The other saying goes: 'This world lives with justice and disbelief, and does not live with injustice and Islam'. The Prophet (p) said: 'No sin has a faster divine punishment than the sin of injustice...' Thus, people of injustice fail in this life, even if they were to be forgiven in the Hereafter. This is because justice is the universal law of things.”¹⁷

¹⁵ Sunan al-Tirmidhi, hadith no.3598.

¹⁶ Sahih Muslim, hadith no 2578.

¹⁷ Ibn Taymiyyah, Kutub wa Rasa'il, vol.28, p.146.

Imam Qurtubi in his commentary on Qur'an 5:8 above said that, *"This verse shows that the disbelief (kufr) of an unbeliever does not prevent him from enjoying justice."*¹⁸

Implications and Lessons

In the narrative above, the Prophet (p) refused to take the words of Muslims against Jews without evidence. And when the Jews insisted that they were not responsible for the murder, he did not punish them unjustly.

This shows that Muslims and their leaders are not expected to be biased in their treatment of non-Muslims, even when it concerns other fellow Muslims.

¹⁸ *Tafsir al-Qurtubi*, Tafsir of Qur'an 5:8 in *Maktab Taalib al-Ilm*, CD-ROM, Ariss Computers Inc., Beirut, Lebanon, 2002.

Case 4

The Prophet (p) Condemned the Killing of Civilians, Even during War

It was narrated on the authority of Abdullah bin Umar that, *“During some of the battles fought by the Prophet (p), a woman was found killed. The Messenger of Allah (p) disapproved the killing of women and children.”*¹⁹

There is in addition, the prohibition by the Prophet (p) and his Companions of killing even during warfare, those non-Muslims who were non-combatants, such as women, children, etc.²⁰ For example, he said, *“Never kill women and children”*,²¹ *“Do not kill hermits”*,²² *“Do not slay the old and frail...”*,²³ and *“Leave them (monks) and that to which they devote themselves.”*²⁴ To this list, scholars add other non-

¹⁹ *Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol.4, book 52, hadith no.257.

²⁰ Ahmed Al-Dawoody, *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011, p.107-118.

²¹ Imam al-Tahawy, *Sharh Ma'ani al-Athar*, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 1399AH, hadith no.4770 (ed. Muhammad Zuhri al-Najjar); al-Bayhaqi, *al-Sunan al-Sugra*, hadith no. 3894.

²² Ahmad bin Hanbal, *Musnad Ahmad*, Mu'assasah al-Risalah, Beirut, 1420 A.H, vol.4, p.461.

²³ Al-Bayhaqi, *al-Sunan al-Sugra*, hadith no. 3894; al-Bayhaqi, *al-Sunan al-Kubrah*, hadith no. 17932.

²⁴ Abu Bakr Abd al-Razzaq, *Musannaf abd al-Razzaq*, hadith no. 9377; al-Bayhaqi, *al-Sunan al-Kubra*, hadith no. 18614.; *Musnad Ahmad*, hadith no. 2728; al-Tabarani, *al-Mu'jam al-Kabir*, hadith no.11396; al-Bayhaqi, *al-Sunan al-Sugra*, hadith no.3893.

combatants such as the blind, chronically ill, clergy, traders, craftsmen, farmers, the insane, peasants, serfs, etc.²⁵ Others who can be safely included are those with amnesty or peace treaties (*mu'ahid* and *dhimmi*), Emissaries and Diplomats, etc.²⁶

Supporting Texts

“And fight in the way of Allah those who fight against you, but do not transgress the limits, surely Allah does not love those who exceed the limits.” (Qur'an 2:190)

“...if anyone slays a human being – unless it be (in punishment) for murder or for spreading corruption on earth – it shall be as though he had slain all mankind; whereas, if anyone saves a life, it shall be as though he had saved the lives of all mankind. ...” (Qur'an 5:32)

“Never should a believer kill a believer; but (If it so happens) by mistake, (Compensation is due): If one (so) kills a believer, it is ordained that he should free a believing slave, and pay compensation to the deceased's family, unless they remit it freely. If the deceased belonged to a people at war with you, and he was a believer, the freeing of a believing slave (is enough). If he belonged to a people with whom ye have treaty of Mutual

²⁵ For more references and discussion, see Ibn Rushd's *Bidayah al-Mujtahid wa Nihayah al-Muqtasid* (The Distinguished Jurist's Primer), vol.1, 1994, p.458-460; Ahmed Al-Dawoody, *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011, p.107-118.

²⁶ Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, hadith no. 3166.

alliance, compensation should be paid to his family, and a believing slave be freed. For those who find this beyond their means, (is prescribed) a fast for two months running: by way of repentance to Allah: for Allah hath all knowledge and all wisdom.” (Qur'an 4:92)

Comments

Imam Shawkani said: *“Ahadith in this chapter show that it is not permissible to kill women and children; this is the view of Malik and al-Awza'i.”*²⁷

At-Tabari, in his commentary on Qur'an 2:190 above, cites Ibn Abbas' explanation of the verse as follows: *“It means do not kill women nor children nor old people nor those that meet you with peace and abstain from fighting you, for if you do so, know that you have transgressed beyond the limits.”*²⁸

Even where warfare is completely justifiable, there is clear and explicit condemnation by the Prophet (p) of killing any non-combatants including the aged, women and children. All these prove that it is not permissible for Muslims to fight non-Muslims unless they are aggressors and combatants.

²⁷ Muhammad bin Ali bin Muhammad al-Shawkani, *Nayl al-Awtar*, Idarah al-Taba'at al-Muniriyyah, vol.8, p.56.

²⁸ *Tafsirof Al-Tabari*, Tafsir of Qur'an 2:190 in *Maktab Taalib al-Ilm CD-ROM*, Ariss Computers Inc., Beirut, Lebanon, 2002.

Implications and Lessons

This narrative shows that Islam places a high premium on human life and forbids the unjust killing of anyone, irrespective of faith. The verse quoted above (Qur'an 4:92) shows the punishment for even accidentally killing someone.

It therefore contradicts the extremist arguments that non-Muslims can be killed indiscriminately, or that public places with women, children and non-combatants can be bombed.

Discussion Questions

1. Carefully reading both hadiths cited in Case 1 indicate the reasoning behind the Prophet's action of standing for the biers:
 - a) Can you articulate this reasoning?
 - b) Highlight the words in the Hadith upon which your response is based.
 - c) Can you cite a verse of the Qur'an or a hadith that is in line with this reasoning?
 - d) The question asked by the companions has an underlying belief or assumption. What could this belief or assumption be?
2. Being in a state of war is a poor excuse for committing acts of injustice.' OR 'The end does not justify the means.' Discuss either of these statements, considering the contents of case 2.

3. Discuss in light of the hadith narrated in Case 3, the statement: “In seeking to be just, one must be ready to be flexible.”
4. Some Muslims seek to justify killing women, children and other non-combatants by saying, 'Our enemies do the same'. Having read the hadith quoted in Case 4 (and the supporting texts and footnotes), what responses can you formulate for their argument and others like it?

THEME TWO

Maintaining Good Relations With Non-Muslims

This section highlights narratives and instances during the lifetime of the Prophet (p) which shows that Islam not only permits, but even encourages keeping good relations with people of other faiths who are not hostile or oppressive to Muslims.

Case 5

The Prophet's (p) Character as Testified by Non-Muslims

- a. **The Polytheists of Mecca identified and referred to the Prophet (p) as *Al-Ameen* (The Trustworthy).**

Prophet Muhammad (p), who is the most important role model (*uswatun hasanah*)²⁹ for all Muslims, was so well known for his truthfulness, integrity, honesty and fairness in his business dealings and other interactions with the polytheists of Mecca, that they even nicknamed him “*Al-Ameen*” (meaning the “Trustworthy” or “Honest one”).

²⁹ Qur'an 33:21.

This began even before his call to prophethood, and remained till the end.³⁰

b. Returning money and properties to hostile polytheists during the *Hijrah* (migration).

As a result of the persecution of Muslims in Mecca and the threats to his life by the polytheist Quraysh, the Prophet (p) and some of his companions had to escape and migrate (*Hijrah*) from Mecca to Medina. Before he left, the Prophet (p) instructed Ali to stay behind in order to return all the trusts kept with him, after which he (Ali) would join them in Medina.³¹

c. His wife Khadijah's testimony to his good treatment towards his polytheist community members.

Immediately after the Prophet (p) received the first revelation of the Qur'an in Cave Hira', he ran home terrified to his wife Khadijah bint Khuwaylid, saying

³⁰ Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ahmad Al-Qurtubi, *Tafsir al-Qurtubi*, vol.16, p.170, & vol.19, p.75, 284, Al-Maktabah al-Shamilah 3.13; Amin Duwaydar, *Suwar Min Hayat al-Rasul*, Dar al-Ma'arif, 4th edition, Cairo, p. 84. (cited in Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, p.42). See also: Ismail bn 'Umar bn Kathir, *al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah*, Maktabah al-Ma'arif, Beirut, vol.2, p.301-303; Ibn kathir, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, al-Maktabah al-shamilah, 3.13, vol.1, p.280; Ibn Hisham, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, vol.2, p.19; Safy al-Rahman Mubarakfuri, *Al-Rahiq Al-Makhtum (The Sealed Nectar: Biography of the Noble Prophet)*, Dar al-Salam Publishers, Riyadh, 1996, p.47.

³¹ Ibn Kathir, *al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah*, Maktabah al-Ma'arif, Beirut, vol.3, p.178; Ibn al-Athir, *al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh*, vol.1, p.27; Safy al-Rahman al-Mubarakfuri, *al-Rahiq al-Makhtum*, al-Maktabah al-Shamilah, 3.13, vol.1, p.128.

“Cover me up! Cover me up!” After informing his wife of his experience and expressing his fears, she comforted him with words that testified to his good treatment of all his community members, regardless of their belief, tribe or social standing.

*She said, “Allah will never forsake you, for you maintain the ties of kinship, you are true to your word, you bear the burdens of the weak, you give to people what no one else is able to give (in terms of benefits and good manners), you hospitably entertain your guests, and you help people who are afflicted with calamities.”*³²

Supporting Texts

“And Verily, you (O Muhammad (p)) are on an exalted (standard of) character.” (Qur'an 68:4)

“And they give food, in spite of their love for it (or for the love of Him), to the poor (miskin), the orphan, and the captive.” (Qur'an 76:8)

“And We have not sent you (O Muhammad (p)) except as a mercy for the worlds.” (Qur'an 21:107)

“It is not righteousness (al-birr) that you turn your faces towards east and (or) west (in prayers); but righteousness (al-birr) is (the quality of) the one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book, the Prophets and gives his wealth, in

³² Sahih al-Bukhari, hadith no.3.

spite of love for it, to the kinsfolk, to the orphans, and to the poor (al-masakin), and to the wayfarer, and to those who ask, and to set slaves free, performs the prayer (al-salat), and gives the charity (zakat), and who fulfil their pledges ('uqud) when they make them, and who are patient in misfortune and hardship, and in time of peril. Such are the people of the truth and they are the pious (al-muttaqun)." (Qur'an 2:177)

"Verily! Allah commands that you should render back the trusts to those to whom they are due; and that when you judge between people, you judge with justice. Verily, how excellent is the teaching which He (Allah) gives you! Truly, Allah is Ever All-Hearer, All-Seer." (Qur'an 4:58)

"O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is acquainted with what you do." (Qur'an 5:8)

It is reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah (p) said, *"He who believes in Allah and the Last Day should either utter good words or better keep silent; and he who believes in Allah and the Last Day should treat his neighbour with kindness, and he who believes in Allah and the Last Day should show hospitality to his guest."*³³

³³ *Sahih al-Bukhari*, hadith no.6018; *Sahih Muslim*, hadith no.182; *Musnad Imam Ahmad*, hadith no.9967; *Sunan Abu Dawud*, hadith no.5156.

Abdullah bin Mas'ud reported that Muhammad (p) said, “A person tells the truth until he is recorded as truthful, and a person tells a lie until he is recorded as a liar.”³⁴

Abu Hurayrah reported that when the verse “And warn thy nearest kindred” (Qur'an, 26: 214) was revealed, the Messenger of Allah (p) called the Quraish; so they gathered and he gave them a general warning. Then he made a particular (reference to certain tribes) and said: “O Bani Abd Shams, O Bani Ka'ab ibn Lu'ayy, safeguard yourselves against the Fire; O Bani Murrah ibn Ka'ab, safeguard yourselves against the Fire; O Bani Abd Manaf, safeguard yourselves against the Fire, O Bani Hashim, safeguard yourselves against the Fire; O Bani Abdul Muttalib, safeguard yourselves against the Fire; O Fatimah, safeguard thyself against the Fire, for I can avail you nothing against Allah. I have ties of kinship with you, and these I shall continue to honour.”³⁵

Comments

The fact that the polytheists of Mecca were keeping their belongings with the Prophet (p), despite their enmity towards him and their plot to kill him, has shown that the enemies knew in their minds that he is an upright and trustworthy person. It equally shows that they believe that he is better than them. However, blind imitation, dogmatism and being

³⁴ Sahih Muslim, hadith no.6306.

³⁵ Sahih Muslim, hadith no.522; Musnad Imam Ahmad, hadith no.8402; Al-Adab al-Mufrad, hadith no.48; Sunan al-Tirmidhi, hadith no.3185; Sunan al-Nasai, hadith no.3684.

adamantly tied to their culture and wrong beliefs made them wage war against him and even plot to assassinate him.³⁶

Implications and Lessons

That the Prophet Muhammad (p) was referred to as *Al-Ameen* by non-Muslims of Mecca has great implications to our character and interfaith relations. It requires that we ask, *“What forms of goodness and virtues would a Muslim have to exhibit towards his or her non-Muslim community, following the example of the Prophet (p), in order to be recognised and if possible given a virtuous title or nickname, as was done by the polytheists of Mecca for the Prophet Muhammad (p)?”*

Also, that the Prophet (p) returned to the Quraysh their properties, despite their persecution which led to his having to leave his homeland in the first place, shows that Muslims are expected to uphold trusts given to them, even by hostile non-Muslims.

Similarly, the description by Khadijah of the Prophet's behaviour towards the non-Muslim members of his community shows that he was of outstanding character even before prophethood. As would be shown later, these virtues did not decrease, but in fact, increased after prophethood, and even when the Prophet (p) gained power over them.

³⁶ Mustapha al-Siba'i, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah: Durusun wa 'Ibar*, al-Maktab al-Islami, Beirut, n.d, p.71.

Thus, it can be inferred from the Prophet's actions that a Muslim should be an icon of honesty and fairness to everyone, and at all times. How could anyone then claim that it is islamically permissible for Muslims to behave towards people of other faiths dishonestly, unjustly or exploitatively, if the Prophet (p) – who understood Islam better than anyone else – modelled hospitality, kindness, trustworthiness, honesty and truthfulness at all times, and to all people?

Case 6

Strengthening Ties of Kinship with Non-Muslim Relatives

- a. Narrated Asma' bint Abu Bakr: My mother came to me during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad (p), and she was a polytheist. I said to the Prophet (p) (seeking his verdict), *"My mother has come to me and she desires to receive something from me, shall I keep good relations with her?"* The Prophet (p) said, *"Yes, keep good relation with her."*³⁷ From other versions of this hadith, some scholars have concluded that Asma's mother desired to improve her relationship with her daughter,³⁸ and also brought her

³⁷ Al-Tabarani, *al-Mu'jam al-Kabir*, vol.24, p.78; Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, hadith nos.2620, 5979 and 2477; Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, hadith no.2372; Ahmad bin Hanbal, *Musnad al-Imam Ahmad*, (ed. Shu'aib al-Arnaut and others), 2nd Ed., Mua'ssasah al-Risalah, Beirut, 1999, hadith no.26915; Abu Bakr Abd al-Razzaq bin Hammam al-San'ani, *Musannaf Abd al-Razzaq*, (ed. Habib al-Rahman al-A'zami), 2nd Ed., Al-Maktab al-Islami, Beirut, 1403AH, hadith no.9932.

³⁸ Abu Zakariyyah Yahya bin Sharaf an-Nawawi, *Al-Minhaj Sharh Sahih Muslim*, Dar Ihya al-Turath al-Arabi, Beirut, 1392AH, vol.7, p.89; Sayyid Sabiq, *Fiqh al-Sunnah*, vol.3, no.103a, in *Alim* 6.0; Muhammad bin 'Ali bin Adam al-Ethiopy, *Al-Bahr al-Muhiyt al-Thajjaj fi Sharh Sahih al-Imam Muslim bin al-Hajjaj*, Dar Ibn al-Jawzi, Riyadh, 1432AH, vol.19, p.304.

gifts.³⁹ She had no desire to accept Islam and was still inclined to her polytheism (*shirk*).⁴⁰

- b. The Prophet's companion, Abu Hurayrah relates that after Qur'an 26:214 was revealed,⁴¹ the Prophet (p) summoned the Quraysh and said to them, "*O Bani Abd Shams, O Bani Ka'ab ibn Lu'ayy, safeguard yourselves against the Fire; O Bani Murrah ibn Ka'ab, safeguard yourselves against the Fire; O Bani Abdul Manaf, safeguard yourselves against the Fire, O Bani Hashim, safeguard yourselves against the Fire; O Bani Abdul Muttalib, safeguard yourselves against the Fire; O Fatimah, safeguard thyself against the Fire, for I can avail you nothing against Allah. I have ties of kinship with you, and these I shall continue to honour.*"⁴²

Supporting Texts

"As for such (of the unbelievers) who do not fight against you on account of (your) faith, and neither drive you forth from your

³⁹ Al-Qurtubi, quoted by Shaykh Abdul Fattah Abu Ghudda, *Islamic Manners*, (Trans. by Muhammad Zahid Abu Ghudda and Edited by S.M. Hassan Al-Banna), Awakening Publications, 2001, pp.76-77; See *Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol.3, no.789 for the hadith.

⁴⁰ Abu Zakariyyah Yahya bin Sharaf an-Nawawi, *Al-Minhaj Sharh Sahih Muslim*, Dar Ihya al-Turath al-Arabi, Beirut, 1392 AH, vol.7, p.89; Muhammad bin 'Ali bin Adam al-Ethiopy, *Al-Bahr al-Muhiyt al-Thajjaj fi Sharh Sahih al-Imam Muslim bin al-Hajjaj*, Dar Ibn al-Jawzi, Riyadh, 1432AH, vol.19, p.304.

⁴¹ The verse reads, "*So do not invoke with Allah another deity and [thus] be among the punished. And warn, [O Muhammad], your closest kindred.*" (Qur'an 26:213-214)

⁴² *Sahih Muslim*, hadith no.522; *Musnad Imam Ahmad*, hadith no.8402; *Al-Adab al-Mufrad*, hadith no.48; *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, hadith no.3185; *Sunan al-Nasai*, hadith no.3684.

homelands, God does not forbid you to show them kindness and to behave towards them with full equity: for verily, God loves those who act equitably.” (Qur'an 60:8)

The Prophet (p) said, “No one begins to give (charity) intending thereby to unite ties of relationship without Allah providing him with much more because of it, and no one will begin to beg, seeking thereby to gain abundance, without Allah giving him still more scarcity because of it.”⁴³

Umar bin Khattab said, 'I heard the apostle of Allah say, “an oath or vow to disobey the Lord (Allah), or to break ties of relationship, or about something over which one has no control, is not binding on you.”⁴⁴

Abu Hurayrah reported that a person said to the Prophet Muhammad (p), “I have relatives with whom I try to have close relationship, but they sever (this relation). I treat them well, but they treat me ill. I am sweet to them but they are harsh towards me.” Upon this he (the Prophet (p)) said, “If it is as you have said, then you in fact throw hot ashes (upon their faces), and there would always remain with you on behalf of Allah (an Angel to support you) who would keep you dominant over them so long as you adhere to this (path of righteousness).”⁴⁵

⁴³ Sunan al-Tirmidhi, hadith no.1319.

⁴⁴ Abu Dawud, hadith no.1448.

⁴⁵ Sahih Muslim, hadith no.6689, Musnad Imam Ahmad, hadith no.7992, Al-Adab al-Mufrad, hadith no.52, Mujam al-Awsat, hadith no.2786.

Abdullah bin 'Amr reported that the Prophet (p) said, "*Al-Wasil is not the one who recompenses the good done to him by his relatives, but Al-Wasil is the one who keeps good relations with those relatives who had severed the bond of kinship with him.*"⁴⁶

Comments

According to Ibn 'Uyainah, it was on the occasion of the above-mentioned case of Asma and her mother that the Qur'an verse 60:8 was revealed, "*As for such (of the unbelievers) as do not fight against you on account of (your) faith, and neither drive you forth from your homelands, God does not forbid you to show them kindness and to behave towards them with full equity: for verily, God loves those who act equitably.*"⁴⁷

Asthma's mother, Qutaylah was a polytheist from the hostile polytheists of Mecca when she came to visit her daughter. Asma's hesitation about admitting her mother into her home might be tied to the history of their relationship, or a concern for the safety of her father Abu Bakr and her husband Zubayr bin al-Awwam, both of whom were important figures within the Muslim community.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ *Sahih Bukhari*, hadith no.5645, *Abu Dawud*, hadith no.1699, *Tirmidhi*, hadith no.1908.

⁴⁷ Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari*, al-Maktabah al-Shamilah, 3.13, vol.8, p.16.

⁴⁸ Omar Suleiman and Mohammad Elshinawy, *How the Prophet Muhammad Rose Above Enmity and Insult*, Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research, 2016, p. 29.

Despite this concern, the Qur'anic verse and Prophet's (p) statement still encouraged Asma to show hospitality and kindness to her mother, when he said, “*keep good relations with her*”.

Another version of the hadith as related by Abu Dawud reads: “My mother came to me *ragibah* (i.e., demanding) during the period of Quraish, then, she *ragimah* (disliked - Islam) and she was a *Mushrikah* (polytheist)”. Imam Nawawi commented on the above hadith that, 'Al-Qadi said: *Ragibah* means that she is yearning and seeking for my kinship, while *ragimah* means she disliked Islam and hated it.' Then al-Nawawi said: this implies the permissibility of tying the kinship of a polytheist relative”.

Imam al-Bukhari mentioned this hadith under the chapter titled: “*Giving Presents to Al-Mushrikun (Polytheists)*”; and Imam Badr al-Din al-'Ayni said while commenting on this hadith: “*Maintaining ties of kinship with closely related people becomes permissible if there has not been betrayal, even if they are not Muslims.*”⁴⁹

Implications and Lessons

This narrative shows the permissibility of maintaining good relations, exchanging gifts, and being kind to non-Muslims. Thus, maintaining ties of kinship is something that should be actively pursued, irrespective of the difference in faith. It also

⁴⁹ Badr al-Din al-'Ayni, 'Umdah al-Qari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari, al-Maktabah al-Shamilah, 3.13, vol.22, p.402.

negates the opinion of those who claim that Muslims are not supposed to interact with people of other faiths in a generous and friendly manner.

Case 7

The Prophet (p) Visited the Sick among Non-Muslims

a.) The Prophet (p) visited a sick Jewish boy

A young Jewish boy who used to serve the Prophet (p) fell ill. The Prophet (p) visited him, and sat near his head. As he was about to pass away, the Prophet (p) asked him to embrace Islam. The boy looked at his father, who was also sitting there. The father nodded approvingly and told him to obey Abul-Qasim⁵⁰ (the Prophet (p)); the boy embraced Islam, after which he passed away.⁵¹

b.) The Prophet (p) visited a sick polytheist

It was narrated by Sa'id bin Al-Musayyib⁵² from his father that *"When Abu Talib was on his deathbed, the Prophet visited him..."*⁵³

⁵⁰ Abu al-Qasim is one of the nicknames of the Prophet (p) meaning *"The father of Qasim"* as the Prophet had a son named Qasim.

⁵¹ Al-Bukhari, *al-Adab al-Mufrad*, (ed. Muhammad Fu'ad Abd al-Baqi), Dar al-Bashair al-Islamiyyah, Beirut, 1989, hadith no.524; Al-Baihaqi, *Sunan al-Kubrah*, Maktabah Dar al-Baz, Makkah, hadith no.6389; Abu Dawud, *Sunan Abu Dawud*, hadith no.3095 and 3097; Ibn Hibban, *Sahih Ibn Hibban*, (ed. Shu'aib al-Arna), 2nd edition, Mu'assasah al-Risalah, Beirut, 1993, hadith no.4884; Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, hadith no.1356; Ahmad bn Hanbal, *Musnad al-Imam Ahmad bn Hanbal*, hadith no.13375.

⁵² Also referred to by some as Sa'id bin Al-Musayyab.

⁵³ *Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol. 7, Book 70, no. 561.

Supporting Texts

“As for such (of the unbelievers) who do not fight against you on account of (your) faith, and neither drive you forth from your homelands, God does not forbid you to show them kindness and to behave towards them with full equity: for verily, God loves those who act equitably.” (Qur'an 60:8)

Thauban, the freed slave of Prophet Muhammad (p) reported that the Prophet (p) said, *“He who visits the sick continues to remain in the fruit garden of Paradise until he returns.”*⁵⁴

It is reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet (p) said, *“He who believes in Allah and the Last Day should either utter good words or better keep silent; and he who believes in Allah and the Last Day should treat his neighbour with kindness and he who believes in Allah and the Last Day should show hospitality to his guest.”*⁵⁵

The companion Abu Musa narrated that the Prophet (p) said, *“Visit the sick, feed the hungry, and (arrange for the) release of captives.”*⁵⁶

The Prophet Muhammad (p) also said, *“Whoever believes in Allah and in the Hereafter should take care of his neighbour,”*⁵⁷

⁵⁴ *Sahih Muslim*, hadith no.1171 and 6716; *Musnad Imam Ahmad*, hadith no.22404.

⁵⁵ *Sahih al-Bukhari*, hadith no.6018, *Sahih Muslim*, hadith no.182, *Musnad Imam Ahmad*, hadith no.9967, *Sunan Abu Dawud*, hadith no.5156.

⁵⁶ *Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol. 7, hadith no.897.

⁵⁷ *Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol.8, hadith no.29 in *Alim* 6.0.

and “Jibril continued to remind me of the neighbour's rights till I thought he would tell me that the neighbour inherits from his neighbour.”⁵⁸

Comments

Al-Marwazi said: “It has reached me that Abu Abdullah (Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal) was asked about a man who had close relatives who were Christians, and if he should visit them when they are ill. He replied: Yes (he should).”⁵⁹ Furthermore, according to Imam Badr al-Din al-'Ayni, one of the lessons of this hadith is the permissibility of visiting *Ahl al-dhimmah* (non-Muslim citizens) especially if they are one's neighbours. This will show them the beauty of Islam and strengthen the bond between them and Muslims.⁶⁰

Implications and Lessons

That the Prophet (p) despite his position as Head of State still found time to visit a sick youth highlights his humility. Similarly, his practice of visiting sick people, irrespective of their faith, is part of the goodness to everyone that Islam preaches. This is contrary to the position held by some that Muslims should only show kindness to fellow Muslims.

⁵⁸ *Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol.8, hadith no.27; See also hadith no.28, in *Alim* 6.0.

⁵⁹ Muhammad bin Abu Bakr bin Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, *Ahkam ahl al-Dhimmah*, Dar Ibn Hazm, Beirut, 1418AH, vol.1, p.427.

⁶⁰ Badr al-Din al-'Ayni, *'Umdah al-Qari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari*, al-Maktabah al-Shamilah, 3.13, vol. 13, p.35.

Case 8

The Prophet (p) and Others Gave and Accepted Gifts from Non-Muslims

a) The Prophet (p) gave financial aid to Meccan polytheists during a period of hardship

During the period of the peace treaty of Hudaibiyah, the Prophet Muhammad (p) gave Abu Sufyan (the leader of the polytheists of Mecca then) the very generous sum of 500 dinars (of gold)⁶¹ to assist the poor of Mecca during their brief period of severe food shortage.⁶²

This financial aid to the Meccans was made despite their belief in idols, their past persecution and murder of Muslims, warfare and other inhuman atrocities and crimes against the Muslims of Mecca and Medina. These same Meccans were even responsible for the murder of a number of close companions and even relatives of the Prophet (p) himself.

⁶¹ 500 Dinars of gold, which was half the “blood money” (diyyah) for manslaughter, is approximately USD \$100,000 today.

⁶² Abu Bakr Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Sahl Shams al-Din Sarakhsi, *Al-Mabsut*, Dar al-Ma'rifa, Beirut, 1986, vol.10, p.92; Yusuf al-Qaradawi, *Fatawa al-Mu'asirah*, Dar al-Wafa', Al-Mansurah, Egypt 1996, vol.1, p.295; Imtiaz Ahmad, “Friendship with Non-Muslims” in *Speeches for an Inquiring Mind*, Al-Rasheed Printers, Medina, 2001, p.56.

b) Aishah gave charity to a Jewish woman

Aishah, the wife of the Prophet (p) narrated that a Jewish woman came to her begging, so she gave her something. The Jewish woman then said to Aishah, *"May Allah protect you from the punishment of the grave..."*⁶³

c) Umar gave a *Mushrik* (polytheist) a gift

It was reported by Abdullah bin Umar that, *"Umar bin Al-Khattab saw a silken dress (cloak) being sold at the gate of the Mosque and said, 'O Allah's Messenger (p)! Would that you buy it and wear it on Fridays and when delegations come to you!' Allah's Messenger (p) said, 'This is worn by the one who will have no share in the Hereafter.'"*⁶⁴ Later on, some silk dresses were brought (as a gift) to the Prophet (p), and he sent one of them to Umar. Umar said (to the Prophet (p)), *"How do you give me this to wear while you said what you said about the (silken) dress of 'Utarid?"* Allah's Messenger (p) said, *"I have not given it to you to wear."*⁶⁵ So, Umar gave it to a polytheist brother of his in Mecca."⁶⁶

⁶³ Imam Ahmad bn Hanbal, *al-Musnad*, Mua'ssah al-Risalah, Beirut, 1420AH, vol.43, p.142, hadith no.26008.

⁶² Elsewhere, the Prophet (p) had taught that wearing silk and gold is forbidden for Muslim men. However, it is permissible for silk to be used by Muslim women as well as non-Muslims.

⁶⁵ The question of what type of gift can or cannot be given to non-Muslims is outside the scope of this discussion.

⁶⁶ Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, hadith no.5522; Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, hadith no.2612.

Imam al-Nawawi, while commenting on the hadith, said that it is permissible for a Muslim to give cloth and other things to a polytheist.⁶⁷

d) The Prophet (p) accepted a gift from the King of Ailah (in Iraq)

Abu Humaid al-Sa'idi narrated that, "*The King of Ailah sent a white mule and a sheet (of cloth) for wearing to the Prophet (p) as a present ...*"⁶⁸

e) The Prophet (p) received a huge present from Muqawqas (of Egypt)

The Prophet (p) accepted gifts from Muqawqas, the Coptic Christian King of Egypt, who sent among other things, a rich present of a thousand measures of gold, twenty robes of fine cloth, and a mule.⁶⁹

f) The second caliph Umar gave welfare support to a Jew

It was reported that Umar bin al-Khattab saw an old Jewish man begging from people. Umar inquired and was informed that the man was forced into begging due to his old age and needy situation. Umar then sent him to the treasurer of the Muslims' treasury and instructed him to

⁶⁷ Abu Zakariyyah Yahya bn Sharaf al-Nawawi, *al-Manhaj Sharh Sahih Muslim bin al-Hajjaj*, 2nd Ed., Dar al-Turath al-'Arabi, Beirut, 1392 AH. vol.13, p.38.

⁶⁸ Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, hadith no.1482; Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, hadith no.6087; Ahmad bin Hanbal, *Musnad Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal*, hadith no.23604; Al-Baihaqi, *al-Sunan al-Kubrah*, hadith no.18570.

⁶⁹ Al-Tabarani, *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabir*, hadith no.3497.

give the elderly man and those who are in the same situation with him what will suffice them from the treasury. Then he (Umar) asserted: *“We are not fair to him to abandon him while he is old after we had collected Jizyah from him while he was young.”*⁷⁰

Supporting Texts

“If you disclose your Sadaqat (alms-giving), it is well; but if you conceal them and give them to the poor, that is better for you. (Allah) will expiate you some of your sins. And Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do. Not upon you (Muhammad (p)) is their guidance, but Allah guides whom He wills. And whatever you spend in good, it is for yourselves, when you spend not except seeking Allah's Countenance. And whatever you spend in good, it will be repaid to you in full, and you shall not be wronged.” (Qur'an 2:271 – 272)

“As for such (of the unbelievers) as do not fight against you on account of (your) faith, and neither drive you forth from your homelands, God does not forbid you to show them kindness and to behave towards them with full equity: for verily, God loves those who act equitably.” (Qur'an 60:8)

“And We have not sent you (O Muhammad (p)) except as a mercy for the 'Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists).” (Qur'an 21:107)

⁷⁰ Abu Yusuf, *Kitabal-Kharaj*, p.126, cited in Yusuf al-Qaradawi, *Ghair al-Muslimin fi al-Mujtama' al-Islami*, p.13.

“There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieves in Taghut and believes in Allah, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.” (Qur'an 2:256)

“Indeed in the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad (p)) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes for (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much.” (Qur'an 33:21)

“So keep your duty to Allah and fear Him as much as you can” (Qur'an 64:16)

“...And he (Allah) has not laid upon you any hardship in your religion...” (Qur'an 22:78)

Also, the Prophet (p) warned that, *“None of you should look down upon the gift sent by her neighbour, even if it were the feet of a sheep.”*⁷¹

He (p) similarly said, *“If someone is given something, he should give something in return for it, provided he can afford that. If he cannot afford that, he should praise him (the giver). He who praises him for it thanks him, and he who conceals it, is ungrateful to him.”*⁷²

⁷¹ Sahih al-Bukhari, vol.3, hadith no.740.

⁷² Abu Dawud, hadith no.2242.

Comments

When the Prophet (p) first migrated to Medina, and was concerned about the meagre resources available to assist those in poverty, he instructed his Companions to give charity only to those who accepted Islam.⁷³ In correction of this prophetic instruction, Allah revealed the verse:

“It is not for thee (O Prophet) to make people follow the right path, since it is God alone who guides whom He wills; and whatever good you may spend on others is for your own good, provided you spend only out of a longing for God's guidance. For whatever good you may spend will be repaid unto you in full and you will not be wronged.” (Qur'an 2:272)

According to several traditions reported by al-Nasa'i, Abu Dawood and others, the Prophet (p) then explicitly enjoined Muslims to give charity to all who needed it, irrespective of faith.⁷⁴ Muhammad Asad notes that, *“There is full agreement among all commentators that the above verse... lays down an injunction binding upon all Muslims.”*⁷⁵ In fact, Imam al-Razi

⁷³ This event is reported in a number of traditions quoted by al-Tabari in his *Jami' al-Bayan fi Ta'wil al-Qur'an*, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 1992, vol.3, p.94-96; *Tafsir al-Qurtubi*, Dar al-Ihya al-Turath al-Arabi, Beirut, 1985, vol.3, p.337-339; and *Tafsir Ibn Kathir (Abridged)*, Darussalam Publishers, Riyadh, vol.2, p.63, citing Al-Nasa'i in *Al-Kubra* vol.6, p.305.

⁷⁴ Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Qur'an*, The Book Foundation, England, 2003, p.73, n.260; *Tafsir Ibn Kathir (Abridged)*, Darussalam Publishers, Riyadh, vol.2, p.63.

⁷⁵ Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Qur'an*, The Book Foundation, England, 2003, p.73, n.260; *Tafsir Ibn Kathir (Abridged)*, Darussalam Publishers, Riyadh, vol.2, p.63.

derives from this verse the conclusion that withholding charity must never become a means of attracting unbelievers to Islam, for faith, in order to be valid, must be based on conviction and free choice.⁷⁶

Ibn Kathir states on the issue of one's charity possibly being used for un-Islamic purposes (if one gives to a non-Muslim):

*'Ata Al-Khurasani said that the āyah ["verse"] means, "You give away charity for the sake of Allah. Therefore, you will not be asked about the deeds [or wickedness] of those who receive it." (Ibn Abi Hatim, 3:115). This is a sound meaning... [The giver] will not be asked if the charity unintentionally reached righteous, evil, deserving or undeserving persons, for he will be rewarded for his good intention. The proof to this statement is the āyah, "And whatever you spend in good, it will be repaid to you in full, and you shall not be wronged."*⁷⁷

Sayyid Sabiq writes:

One can give *sadaqa* to the *dhimmi* and the non-dhimmi,⁷⁸ and one is rewarded for that. Allah praised a group of people (for this) when He said, "*And they feed, for His love, the indigent, the orphan,*

⁷⁶ Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Qur'an*, The Book Foundation, England, 2003, p.73, n.260; *Tafsir Ibn Kathir (Abridged)*, Darussalam Publishers, Riyadh, vol.2, p.63.

⁷⁷ *Tafsir Ibn Kathir (Abridged)*, Darussalam Publishers, Riyadh, vol.2, p.63.-64

⁷⁸ A non-Muslim subject of an Islamic state, protected by a covenant.

and the captive” [Q. 76:8]. The captive is a non-dhimmi ...⁷⁹

Imam al-Shafi'i said: *“There is nothing wrong with giving charity to a mushrik (polytheist) as a nafilah (recommended) action.... Allah praised people who, as He says: ‘... they give food, in spite of their love for it (or for the love of Him), to the miskin (the poor), the orphan and the captive’.*⁸⁰ (Quran 76:8)

Implications and Lessons

It is clear from the narratives above that Islam is not against being sympathetic and kind to people of other faiths. Thus, Muslims are permitted to assist non-Muslims in times of hardship; and maintain good relationship with them. Likewise, Muslims are forbidden to use economic pressure to force non-Muslims to accept Islam.

Also, Muslims are recommended to receive and accept gifts from non-Muslims, and even thank them for it. Similarly, Umar's compassion towards the old beggar Jew shows the fairness and magnanimity with which the early Muslim leaders dealt with the non-Muslims under them.

These cases therefore counter the argument of those who believe that Muslims are expected to be in a permanent state of hostility with non-Muslims. They also prove that Muslims

⁷⁹ Sayyid Sabiq, *Fiqh al-Sunnah*, al-Maktabah al-Shamilah 3.13, vol.1, p.428.

⁸⁰ Muhammad bin Idris al-Shafi'i, *Kitab al-Umm*, Dar al-Fikr, 1980, vol.2, p.65-66.

should be charitable and show kindness to people who are in need, irrespective of their faith. They thus show the permissibility of exchanging gifts between Muslims and non-Muslims, which is a means of promoting harmonious living with fellow human beings.

Discussion Questions

1. Considering Case 5, can you think of parallels between the examples given i.e. (a. b. and c.) in your community/country/neighbourhood? Or occasions where Muslims might need to display similar qualities?
2. Protecting yourself from oppression and maintaining your *fitrah* (innocence/purity) do not stop you from being kind or helpful to non-Muslims. Discuss.
3. What are the concerns/reasons given for advocating that Muslims should completely avoid or reduce interactions with non-Muslims, including relatives? How can these concerns be addressed while staying true to the spirit of honouring and strengthening ties of kinship?
4. Some Muslims do not give charity to non-Muslims. They believe that charity should be given to a non-Muslim only if the non-Muslim is interested in becoming a Muslim. Discuss this point in light of the evidences cited under Case 8.

THEME THREE

Forgiveness, Tolerance And Magnanimity

This section highlights narratives detailing instances where the Prophet Muhammad (p) chose to forgive those who had wronged him, particularly non-Muslims, even when he had the power to pursue justice.

Case 9

The Prophet (p) Forgave the Jewish Lady who Poisoned Him

In an incident reported by Anas bin Malik, while the Prophet (p) was in Khaybar, a Jewish lady by the name of Zaynab bint al-Harith brought a piece of roasted sheep which she had poisoned for him. He ate it, and then realized that it was poisoned. *The Prophet (p) called for her, and she was brought to him. The companions asked him, "Shall we kill her?" He said, "No", thus pardoning her. Anas bin Malik said that he continued to notice the effect of the poison on the palate of the mouth of the Messenger of Allah (p).*⁸¹

⁸¹ *Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol.3, Book 47, hadith no.786; *Al-Bayhaqi, Al-Sunan al-Kubra*, hadith no.15784; *Sunan Abu Dawud*, hadith no.4510; *Sahih Muslim*, hadith no.5834.

Supporting Texts

Allah says: *“And the food of those who were given the scripture (Jews and Christians) is permissible for you, and your food is permissible for them.”* (Quran 5:5)

Allah also says, *“The recompense for an injury is an injury equal thereto (in degree): but if a person forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is due from Allah: for (Allah) loves not those who do wrong.”* (Qur'an 42:40)

“... Let them pardon and forgive. Do you not love that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Qur'an 24:22)

“...and the Hour is surely coming, so overlook (O Muhammad (p)) their faults with gracious forgiveness.” (Qur'an 15:85)

“...whoever then (injures or) acts aggressively against you, (it is permissible to) inflict injury on him proportionate (or similar) to the injury he has inflicted on you, and be careful (of your duty) to Allah, and know that Allah is with those who guard (against evil).” (Qur'an 2:194)

Ali was reported to have said, *“If you hear the Jews and Christians dedicating their slaughtered animal to other than Allah, do not eat it; but if you did not hear them, eat it; for Allah has permitted their slaughtered animal, and He knows what they say.”*⁸²

⁸² Ahmad bin Ali al-Razi al-Jassas, *Ahkam al-Qur'an*, Dar Ihya al-Turath al-'Arabi, Beirut, 1405AH, vol.1, p.155.

The companion of the Prophet Muhammad (p), Abu Abdullah Al-Jadali said that he asked Aishah, the wife of the Prophet (p) about his character, and she replied, “*The Prophet (p) was not indecent, he was not obscene, he would not shout in the markets, and he would not respond to an evil deed with an evil deed, but rather he would pardon and overlook.*”⁸³

Someone said to Prophet Muhammad (p), “Pray to Allah against the polytheist and curse them!” *The Prophet (p) replied, “I have not been sent as an invoker of curses; I have only been sent as a mercy.”*⁸⁴

Comments

Regarding the permissibility of eating the food or slaughtered animals of the People of the Scriptures (Christians and Jews) as clearly exemplified by the Prophet (p) in the hadith above, Ibn Qayyim said: “*The earliest generation of Muslims (salaf) were in unanimous agreement that the verse (i.e. Qur'an 5:5) refers to the slaughtered animals of the People of the Book – Christians and Jews.*”⁸⁵

Related to this discussion, and while commenting on Qur'an 42:39, Ibn Kathir said: “*The Messenger of Allah forgave the eighty people who intended to harm him during the year of Al-Hudaibiyya, camping by the mountain of At-Tan'im. When he*

⁸³ *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, hadith no.2016.

⁸⁴ *Sahih Muslim*, hadith no.1192.

⁸⁵ Muhammad bin Abi Bakr bin Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, *Ahkam ahl al-Dhimma*, Dar Ibn Hazm, Beirut, 1418AH, vol. 1, p.502.

overpowered them, he set them free, even though he was in a position to take revenge on them. He also forgave Ghawrath bin Al-Harith who wanted to kill him and unsheathed his sword while he was sleeping. The Prophet woke up to find him pointing the sword at him. He reproached him angrily and the sword dropped. Then the Messenger of Allah picked up the sword and called his Companions. He told them what had happened, and he forgave the man. He also forgave Labid bin Asam who did magic to him; The Prophet (p) did not harm him when he overpowered him, and he forgave the Jewish lady who poisoned him on the day of Khaybar.”⁸⁶

Implications and Lessons

The explicit permission by Allah in the Qur'an, and the example set by the Prophet (p) by accepting and eating meat from a non-Muslim, is evidence that Islam permits goodwill and friendship between Muslims and non-Muslims.

Also, as is clear from the hadith the Prophet (p) forgave the Jewish woman who attempted to murder him by poisoning the food, despite his having the power to punish her. This shows his magnanimity, readiness to forgive, and his level of tolerance for an offence done to him personally as grave as an attempt on his life by a non-Muslim.

This shows us that while seeking justice or equitable retribution for grievous wrongdoing is permissible in Islam,

⁸⁶ Abu al-Fida' Ismail Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim*, Dar al-Tayba li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi'i, Medina, 1999/1420AH, vol.7, p. 211.

the Qur'an and examples from the Prophet's (p) life emphasize the preference for forgiveness and magnanimity where possible, especially when Muslims are in positions of power and authority. Where the pursuit of justice or retribution may be the most sensible and appropriate course of action, the Qur'an makes it categorically clear that such retribution or punishment must be proportionate to the wrong done. It is therefore prohibited for a Muslim to exact a punishment in the name of justice that is worse or more severe than the offence committed.⁸⁷

This counters the argument held by some that Muslims in positions of authority and power should always be harsh, vengeful and intolerant towards people of other faiths who have shown enmity or hostility to them.

While it may not be easy to forgive in such difficult circumstances, Muslims should always try to be forgiving towards those who insult or try to hurt them, even if the wrong done was as serious as an attempt on life.

⁸⁷ Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim*, Dar al-Taybah li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi'i, Medina, 1999/1420AH, vol.7, p.212.

Case 10

The Prophet (p) Pardoned the Bedouin who Wanted to Kill Him

The companion, Jabir bin Abdullah narrated the following incident:

“We proceeded in the company of Allah's Messenger (p) towards Najd to participate in a battle. When Allah's Messenger (p) returned, we too returned with him. Midday came upon us while we were in a valley having many thorny trees. Allah's Messenger (p) and the people dismounted and dispersed to rest in the shades of the trees. Allah's Messenger (p) rested under a tree and hung his sword on it. We all took a nap and suddenly we heard Allah's Messenger (p) calling us. (We woke up) to see a Bedouin with him. The Prophet (p) said, "This Bedouin (named Ghawrath from the tribe of Muharib) took out my sword while I was sleeping and when I woke up, I found the unsheathed sword in his hand and he challenged me saying, 'Who will save you from me?' I said thrice, 'Allah.'...”⁸⁸ Jabir, in another version of the same hadith said, “...the sword fell from his hand, so the Messenger of Allah took it and said, “Who will protect you

⁸⁸ Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, hadith no.4135 and 4139; Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, Dar al-Jil, Beirut, hadith no.6090; Ahmad bin 'Ali bin al-Muthanna, *Musnad Abu Ya'la*, (ed. Husain Salim Asad), Dar al-Ma'mun li al-Turath, Damascus, 1984, hadith no.1778; Ahmad bin Hanbal, *Musnad al-Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal*, hadith no.14335; Muhammad bin Sa'd bin Muni', *Al-Tabaqat al-Kubrah*, (ed. Ihsan Abbas), Dar Sadir, Beirut, 1968, vol.2, p.35.

*[from me]?" He said, "Be the better [victor]." He said, "Will you [now] testify that none is worthy of worship except Allah?" He said, "I will promise to never fight you, nor be with a people that fight you." At that, the Messenger of Allah (p) let him go, and so the man came to his people and said, "I have come to you from the best of people."*⁸⁹

Supporting Texts

"... Let them pardon and forgive. Do you not love that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (Qur'an 24:22)

"Let there be no compulsion in religion." (Qur'an 2:256)

"Show forgiveness, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the foolish (i.e. don't punish them)." (Qur'an 7:199)

The Prophet (p) was reported to have said, *"The strong is not the one who overcomes people by his strength, but the strong is the one who controls himself while in anger."*⁹⁰

Aishah said that, "The Prophet (p) never retaliated for a wrong done to him (personally). He only would allow a retaliation for the breaking of Allah's law."⁹¹

⁸⁹ Al-Hakim, hadith no.4322, who graded it authentic according to the criteria of al-Bukhari and Muslim. Imam al-Dhahabi agreed with him, and al-Albani authenticated it in *al-Ta'liqat al-Hisan*, hadith no.2872.

⁹⁰ Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol.8, hadith no.135.

⁹¹ Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, hadith no.3560; Abu Dawud, *Sunan Abi Dawud*, hadith no.4787.

The hadith shows that whenever the Prophet was the only victim of the wrong done, he preferred forgiveness over justice. However, whenever Allah's law is broken or the wrong done is to someone else (or the community), he would stand for justice and allow the victim the choice of justice, forgiveness alone, or forgiveness with additional goodness (*ihsan*).

Comments

According to Ibn Battal, “We learn from this hadith, the patience of the Messenger and his magnanimity and forgiveness of the ignorant (*jahil*).”⁹²

In addition, scholars such as Ibn Hajar said, “*The Prophet did not take him to account for what he did. Instead, he pardoned him.*”⁹³

Implications and Lessons

This narrative shows the level of tolerance, forgiveness and magnanimity that the Prophet (p) had even for an enemy who threatened his life. It also shows how baseless the argument is of those who claim that Islam was spread by the sword, or that a person can be forced to accept Islam “at the point of the sword”.

⁹² Abu al-Hassan Ali bin Khalaf bin al-Battal, *Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari*, Maktabah al-Rashid, Riyadh, 1423AH, vol.5, p.101.

⁹³ Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari*, al-Maktabah al-Shamilah version 3.13, vol. 11, p.464.

It shows again the magnanimity that Muslims in power or positions of strength should show to those who had earlier exhibited enmity towards them, but who they finally overcame, including people of other faiths.

It also shows the good impression that such magnanimity has on the person who receives it. Even though the Bedouin who threatened the Prophet (p) did not accept Islam at the time, he had good things to say about the Prophet (p) upon returning to his tribe - *"I have come to you from the best of people."*

Case 11

The Prophet (p) Forgave the Quraysh After the “Conquest” of Mecca

The polytheists of the Quraysh tribe of Mecca were the most hostile community towards the Prophet (p) and his Companions. They tried on several occasions to assassinate him and bring an end to his mission. They killed many of his companions. They even tried to annihilate the Muslim community in Medina 450km away, during the Battle of the Trench (*Khandaq*). After the conquest of Mecca by the Muslims, the polytheist Quraysh converged at the mosque. Prophet Muhammad (p) said, “What do you expect I will do with you?” They replied: “(You would do) good! O generous brother, who is the son of a generous brother.” Then, the Messenger of Allah said: “Go, you are all set free!”⁹⁴

Supporting Texts

“The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better (i.e. Allah orders the faithful believers to be patient at the time of anger, and to excuse those who treat them badly), then verily he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend.” (Qur'an 41:34)

⁹⁴ Al-Baihaqi, *Ma'rifah al-Sunan wa al-Athar*, al-Maktabah al-Shamilah 3.13, vol.14, p.417; Ahmad bin Hanbal, *Musnad Imam Ahmad bn Hanbal*,

“And verily, whosoever shows patience and forgives, that would truly be from the greatest of (good) deeds.” (Qur'an 42:43)

“Tell all who have attained to faith that they should forgive those who do not believe in the coming of the Days of God, [since it is] for Him [alone] to requite people for whatever they may have earned.” (Qur'an 45:14)

“Show forgiveness, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the foolish (i.e. don't punish them).” (Qur'an 7:199)

“He said: 'No reproach on you this day; may Allah forgive you, and He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy!’” (Qur'an 12:92)

The Prophet (p) said, *“Truly, it is better that a leader should err on the side of forgiveness than on the side of punishment.”*⁹⁵

Someone once said to the Prophet (p), *“Pray to Allah against the polytheist and curse them!”* The Messenger of Allah (p) replied, *“I have not been sent as an invoker of curses; I have only been sent as a mercy.”*⁹⁶

Comments

According to Al-Manawi, the benevolence shown by the Prophet (p) by the statement, *“Go, you are all set free!”*, echoes

Mu'assasah al-Qurtubah, Cairo, vol.2, p.538; Ismail bin 'Umar bin Kathir, *al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah*, Maktabah al-Ma'arif, Beirut, vol.4, p.307.

⁹⁵ *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, hadith no.1011.

⁹⁶ *Sahih Muslim*, hadith no.1192.

a similar statement by Prophet Yusuf (p) above (Qur'an 12:92), to his brothers who had plotted against him.⁹⁷

Implications and Lessons

In this episode after the conquest of Mecca, the Prophet (p) showed his magnanimity and kindness to the polytheists of Mecca who had persecuted him and his companions, driven them out of their homeland, usurped their properties, and killed many of their comrades and family members. This forgiveness even where justice and punishment was possible and justifiable, is an exemplary lesson for any Muslim who attains power over others who might have persecuted them in the past.

This prophetic example also counters the argument held by some that Muslims in power should be harsh and vengeful towards those they overpower. It teaches Muslims to be lenient and forgiving especially when they have the power to exact justice.

If despite the gravity of the offence committed by the polytheist Quraysh, the Prophet (p) still chose to pardon them, how then would less grievous offences be unpardonable?

⁹⁷ Abd al-Rauf al-Manawi, *Faydh al-Qadir: Sharh al-Jami'a al-Saghir*, al-Maktabah al-Tijariyyah al-Kubra, Egypt, 1356AH, vol.5, p.171.

Case 12

The Prophet (p) Forgave the Harsh Treatment by the People of Ta'if

Ten years after receiving his mission from Allah, the Prophet (p) set out towards al-Taif, about 60 kilometers from Mecca, in the company of his freed slave Zaid bin Haritha. He approached the noblesse among the people of the town and called them to Islam, but contrary to his expectation, they all turned a deaf ear to his message. After spending ten days in Tai'f without any success at his mission, he decided to return to Mecca. As the Prophet (p) and Zaid headed back to Mecca, they were teased, humiliated and stoned by the youths of Ta'if to the extent that blood flowed down the Prophet's (p) legs. The persecution that he and his followers were experiencing at the hands of the polytheist Quraysh, coupled with the hostility and rejection by the people of Ta'if, overwhelmed the Prophet (p) greatly.⁹⁸

This sad incident was described by the Prophet (p) himself in an authentic hadith. He said: *"...I departed, overwhelmed with excessive sorrow, and I could not relax until I found myself at a tree where I lifted my head towards the sky to see a cloud shading me. I looked up and saw Gabriel in it. He called me saying: Allah*

⁹⁸ Safy al-Rahman Mubarakfuri, *Al-Rahiq Al-Makhtum (The Sealed Nectar: Biography of the Noble Prophet)*, Dar al-Salam Publishers, Riyadh, 1996, p.137.

*has heard your people's saying to you and how they have replied, and Allah has sent the Angel of the Mountains to you that you may order him to do whatever you wish to these people. The Angel of the Mountains greeted me and he said: O Muhammad, order what you wish, and if you like, I will let the mountains fall on them." The Prophet (p) said, "No, rather I hope that Allah will bring from their descendants people who will worship Allah alone without associating partners with him."*⁹⁹

Supporting Texts

"The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better (i.e. Allah orders the faithful believers to be patient at the time of anger, and to excuse those who treat them badly), then verily he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend." (Qur'an 41:34)

"And verily, whosoever shows patience and forgives, that would truly be from the greatest of (good) deeds." (Qur'an 42:43)

"Tell all who have attained to faith that they should forgive those who do not believe in the coming of the Days of God, [since it is] for Him [alone] to requite people for whatever they may have earned." (Qur'an 45:14)

⁹⁹ Ibn Hisham, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, al-Maktabah al-Shamilah 3.13, vol.2, p.15; Safy al-Rahman Mubarakfuri, *Al-Rahiq Al-Makhtum (The Sealed Nectar: Biography of the Noble Prophet)*, Dar al-Salam Publishers, Riyadh, 1996, p.137; Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, hadith no.3231; Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, hadith no.4754.

Aishah said that, *“The Prophet (p) never retaliated for a wrong done to him (personally). He only would allow a retaliation for the breaking of Allah's law.”*¹⁰⁰

This shows that whenever the Prophet (p) was the only victim of the wrong done, he preferred forgiveness over justice. However, whenever Allah's law is broken or the wrong done is to someone else (or the community), he would stand for justice and allow the victim the choice of justice, forgiveness alone, or forgiveness with additional goodness (*ihsan*).

Comments

Mahdi Rizq al-Allah Ahmad commented on the incident of the Prophet (p) in Ta'if saying, *“The patience of the Prophet (p) with those who opposed him reached its peak. Despite the ill-attitude of the people of Ta'if towards him, he did not invoke Allah to punish them, instead he invoked Him to guide them...”*¹⁰¹

Ibn Hajar also comments that, *“This hadith demonstrates the kind-heartedness of the Prophet (p) on his people, his extreme patience and forbearance. This is in line with the verse of the Qur'an that reads, 'So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from*

¹⁰⁰ Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, hadith no.3560; Abu Dawud, hadith no.4787.

¹⁰¹ Mahdi Rizq Allah, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah fi Dao' al-Masadir al-Asliyyah Dirasah Tahliliyyah*, Markaz al-Malik Faisal li Al-Buhuth wa al-Dirasaat al-Islamiyyah, Riyadh, 1992, p.231.

about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him]¹⁰² and 'And We have not sent you (O Muhammad (p)) except as a mercy for the worlds'.¹⁰³”¹⁰⁴

Implications and Lessons

This narrative shows that despite the fact that the people of Ta'if insulted, humiliated, abused, and acted violently and inhospitably against the Prophet (p); he bore it all with patience and forgave the perpetrators. In addition, despite having the power to punish and annihilate them, he instead prayed to Allah not to punish but to guide them.

He looked beyond the difficult and painful situation he was in, and was optimistic that the youth in particular may be guided aright by Allah, even though the leadership and the youth were currently united against him.

This prophetic example therefore calls for looking beyond the present, and finding the good in others, even in difficult circumstances.

¹⁰² Qur'an 3:159.

¹⁰³ Qur'an 21:107.

¹⁰⁴ Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari*, al-Maktabah al-Shamilah 3.13, vol.10, p.16.

Case 13

The Prophet's (p) Forgiveness of, and Praying for Suraqa bin Malik

When the polytheist Quraysh leaders learnt of the Prophet's (p) escape and migration from Mecca to Medina, they promised a reward of one hundred camels for whoever brings him back to Mecca, dead or alive. Suraqa bin Malik was one of those bounty hunters in hot pursuit of the Prophet (p). When Suraqa tracked them down, Abu Bakr began weeping out of fear for the Prophet (p). Meanwhile, the Messenger of Allah (p) supplicated to Allah by saying, “O Allah, suffice us regarding them however You wish.” Miraculously, the legs of Suraqa's horse sank deep into the (otherwise) firm earth, so far that it reached the horse's stomach. Suraqa leapt off his mount and said, “O Muhammad, I have become certain that this is your doing, so supplicate for Allah to rescue me from what I am in. By Allah, I will mislead those who are after you from knowing your whereabouts. And here is my quiver, take an arrow from it, and when you come across my camels and sheep in such-and-such a place, take from them whatever you like.” The Messenger of Allah said, “I have no need for it,” and supplicated until Suraqa was released (from the ground) and he returned to his people.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, hadith no.3419; *Sahih Muslim*, hadith no.2009; And this is the wording of *Ahmad* hadith no.17627 about which Al-Arna'ut said, “Its chain is authentic according to the criteria of [Imam] Muslim.”

Supporting Texts

“The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better (i.e. Allah orders the faithful believers to be patient at the time of anger, and to excuse those who treat them badly), then verily he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend.”
(Qur'an 41:34)

“...and the Hour is surely coming, so overlook (O Muhammad (p)) their faults with gracious forgiveness.” (Qur'an 15:85)

Allah praises, *“Those who spend (in Allah's Cause) in prosperity and in adversity, who repress anger, and who pardon others; verily, Allah loves those who do good (al-muhsinun)”*.
(Qur'an 3:134)

Abdullah bin 'Amr narrated that the Messenger of Allah (p) was upon the pulpit and he said, *“Be merciful to others and you will receive mercy. Forgive others and Allah will forgive you.”*¹⁰⁶

Implications and Lessons

Despite the fact that Suraqa sought the Prophet (p) in order to get him killed by the Quraysh, the Prophet (p) still forgave him, and even prayed for him. This is another evidence of the level of mercy and forgiveness that the Prophet (p) showed towards those who showed enmity to him.

This prophetic example shows that it is encouraged to not only pardon, but also to repel evil with goodness.

¹⁰⁶ Musnad Ahmad, hadith no.7001.

Case 14

The Prophet's (p) Tolerance for a Jewish Rabbi's Rash Behaviour

Zayd bin Su'na was a great Jewish Rabbi of Medina. When Allah wished to guide him, he thought of testing the Prophet (p) by lending him eighty *mithqal* (350 grams) of gold for a fixed period. A few days before repayment was due, Zayd grabbed the Messenger of Allah (p) angrily by his cloak, in front of all the senior Companions, and said, “O Muhammad (p), *why are you not paying what is due? By Allah, I know your family well! You are all known for deferring your debts!*” The Prophet (p) said to the infuriated Umar who threatened to kill Zayd for his disrespect, “O 'Umar, we do not need this... Go with him, pay off his loan, and give him twenty additional sa' (i.e. 32kg) of dates because you frightened him.”

From that, Zayd knew that it was time to embrace Islam. He explained to Umar, “*There was not a single sign of prophethood except that I recognized it upon looking at Muhammad's face – except for two that I had not yet seen from him: that his tolerance overcomes his anger, and that intense abuse only increases him in forbearance. I have now tested these, so know – O Umar – that I accept Allah as my Lord, Islam as my religion, Muhammad (p) as my Prophet, and that half my wealth – for I*

*have much wealth – is a donation for the ummah of Muhammad (p).*¹⁰⁷

Supporting Texts

“As for such (of the unbelievers) as do not fight against you on account of (your) faith, and neither drive you forth from your homelands, God does not forbid you to show them kindness and to behave towards them with full equity: for verily, God loves those who act equitably.” (Qur'an 60:8)

“Show forgiveness, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the foolish (i.e. don't punish them).” (Qur'an 7:199)

Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet (p) said, *“Charity does not decrease wealth. No one forgives except that Allah increases his honour, and no one humbles himself for Allah's sake except that Allah raises his status.”*¹⁰⁸

Similarly, the Prophet (p) said, *“Whoever does not show mercy (yarham) will not be shown mercy (by Allah); and whoever does not forgive (yaghfir), will not be forgiven (by Allah), and whoever does not pardon (ya'afuw) will not be pardoned (by Allah); and whoever does not safeguard himself will not be protected”.*¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Ibn Hibban, hadith no.288; Al-Bayhaqi, hadith no.11066; Al-Hakim, hadith no.6547 who said, “This hadith has an authentic chain, though they (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) did not collect it.” Al-Haythami said in *Majma' al-Zawa'id* that “Ibn Majah collected a part of it, and it was narrated [entirely] by Al-Tabarani via narrators that are [all] trustworthy.”

¹⁰⁸ *Sahih Muslim*, hadith no.2588

¹⁰⁹ Imam al-Bukhari, *al-Adab al-Mufrad*, hadith no.371

Comments

Ali bin Nayif Al-Shahud commented on this hadith thus: *“Patience, pardoning and forgiveness are characteristics of the Prophet (p). In fact, he never retaliated from anybody, except when Allah's law is violated. It was reported that a Jewish man came to him, harshly asking him to refund his debt, but the Prophet (p) replied to him with patience.”*¹¹⁰

Implications and Lessons

That the Jewish Rabbi lent the Prophet (p) some money shows that Muslims can have financial dealings, borrow and lend money to trusted non-Muslims. Similarly, the Prophet's (p) treatment of Zayd despite his rash behaviour shows his level of forbearance.

This incident therefore proves that Muslims are encouraged to have dealings with non-Muslims, and even relate with them with kindness, as long as it does not contradict any fundamental teachings of Islam.

¹¹⁰ Ali bin Nayif Al-Shahud, *Mawsu'ah al-Difa' 'an Rasulillah*, Al-Maktabah al-Shamilah 3.13, vol.2, p.132.

Case 15

The Prophet's (p) Praying for His Enemies Even During a Battle

The polytheist Quraysh felt humiliated by their defeat after the battle of Badr when their army was about 1000 strong against 313 Muslims. They decided a year later, to retaliate and came all the way from Mecca, over 400kms away to Uhud, on the outskirts of Medinah. In this second major battle against the Muslims, the Battle of Uhud, the Quraysh's army was this time 3,000 strong against the Muslims' 700. They managed to ambush the Prophet (p) and his Companions in their second wave of attack. Seventy of the Prophet's (p) companions were martyred. His own front tooth was broken, his body was battered, and blood flowed down his face from his helmet which had pierced it. However, after bleeding at their hands yet another time, the Messenger of Allah (p) still had the resilience of character – as he wiped the blood off his face – to say, “O Allah, forgive my people, for they do not know.”¹¹¹

In other narrations, he was reported to have first said, “*How can a people succeed after they have gashed (or seriously wounded) their Prophet, and soaked him in blood, as he calls them to Allah?*” Then, he fell silent for a moment, before appealing to Allah with this prayer.

¹¹¹Sahih Al-Bukhari, hadith no.6530; Sahih Muslim, hadith no.1792.

After the Battle of Uhud had concluded, despite the tragic losses suffered therein, and despite the Muslims experiencing years of unthinkable torture at the hands of the polytheist Quraysh, the Messenger of Allah (p) still maintained his magnanimity. Some of his companions came to him and said as the dust of the Battle of Uhud cleared, *“Invoke curses upon the polytheists!”* He said, *“I have not been sent as an invoker of curses. Rather, I was sent as a mercy.”*¹¹²

Supporting Texts

Allah also says, *“The recompense for an injury is an injury equal thereto (in degree): but if a person forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is due from Allah: for (Allah) loves not those who do wrong.”* (Qur'an 42:40)

“And We have not sent you (O Muhammad (p)) except as a mercy for the worlds.” (Qur'an 21:107)

“...and the Hour is surely coming, so overlook (O Muhammad (p)) their faults with gracious forgiveness.” (Qur'an 15:85)

“...whoever then (injures or) acts aggressively against you, (it is permissible to) inflict injury on him proportionate (or similar) to the injury he has inflicted on you, and be careful (of your duty) to Allah and know that Allah is with those who guard (against evil).” (Qur'an 2:194)

¹¹² Sahih Muslim, hadith no.2599.

Allah praises, *“Those who spend (in Allah's Cause) in prosperity and in adversity, who repress anger, and who pardon others; verily, Allah loves those who do good (al-muhsinun).”* (Qur'an 3:134)

Uqbah bin Amir reported that the Messenger of Allah (p) said to him, *“O Uqbah, reconcile with whoever cuts you off; give to whoever deprives you, and pardon whoever wrongs you.”*¹¹³

The Prophet (p) said, *“Truly, it is better that a leader should err on the side of forgiveness than on the side of punishment.”*¹¹⁴

He (p) also said, *“No one has swallowed back anything more excellent in the sight of Allah, the Great and Glorious, than anger he restrains, seeking to please Allah the Most High.”*¹¹⁵

He (p) similarly said that, *“The best of you are those who are slow to anger and swift to cool down; and the worst of you are those who are swift to anger, and slow to cool down.”*¹¹⁶

Comments

Commenting on the Prophet's (p) prayer after the Battle of Uhud, Imam al-Qurtubi said, “If any wise person ponders over the Prophet's (p) prayer in that situation, he would understand better the statement of Allah, *“And Verily, you (O*

¹¹³ Musnad Ahmad, hadith no.16999.

¹¹⁴ Sunan al-Tirmidhi, hadith no.1011.

¹¹⁵ Sunan al-Tirmidhi, hadith no.1324.

¹¹⁶ Sunan al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 1331.

Muhammad (p)) are on an exalted (standard of) character.”¹¹⁷

This is because the Prophet (p) did not curse them (the polytheists), instead he prayed for them. In fact, he did not only pray for them, he even associated them with himself (in the words *qawmi* – “my people”) which shows his compassion. And he did not restrict it to that, but he even sought an excuse for them (in the words – “...for they do not know”).¹¹⁸

Implications and Lessons

This incident of the Prophet's (p) showing compassion and magnanimity to his enemies during Uhud also teaches Muslims to not give up on others who are misguided; to not stop praying for them; to continue to view others as part of themselves, but in need of enlightenment and compassion.

It teaches us to not be quick in cursing or praying for the damnation of those who are unrepentant in their hostility towards us. In fact, one of the supplications repeated in the Qur'an is: “O God, do not let us be the reasons that the unbelievers are led astray,”¹¹⁹ meaning, “God, do not let us, Muslims, be the very reason that people are repulsed away from the faith, and do not let us raise such animosity and hate

¹¹⁷ Qur'an 68:4.

¹¹⁸ Al-Qurtubi, *al-Mufhim li maa Ashkala min Talkhis Kitab Muslim*, al-Maktabah al-Shamilah 3.13, vol.11, p.144.

¹¹⁹ Qur'an 10:85; 60:5

in the hearts of others to the point of being the reason that they engage in wrongdoing.”¹²⁰

Similar to the Prophet's (p) magnanimity to the hostile people of Ta'if, the Prophet (p) here teaches Muslims, and any wise person for that matter, to strive at not allowing the hurt, injury and hostility of others to make them put aside the Islamic ideals of forgiveness and magnanimity. Muslims should strive to not allow anger and bitterness, even where justified, to override compassion.

¹²⁰ Al-Mawardi, *Al-Nukatu wa al-'Uyun: Tafsir al-Mawardi*, 5:517; al-Tabari, *Jami' al-Bayan Ta'wil ay al-Qur'an*, 23:319-320; al-Razi, *Al-Tafsir al-Kabir aw mafatih al-Ghayb*, vol.15, pt. 29:262-263; all cited in Khalid Abou el-Fadl, *Reasoning With God: Reclaiming Sharia In The Modern Age*, Rowman & LittleField, UK, 2014, p.14

Discussion Questions

1. It is well known that people have the right, and are encouraged, to protect themselves against aggression. This does not mean, however, that one cannot pardon such aggressors when the attempt is past and one is now in a position to seek justice or retribution. Discuss.
2. Considering Qur'an 60:8 – Should one forgive non-Muslims who plan to harm one, actually carry out the attempt and almost succeed? What about a non-Muslim who embarrasses one and makes false accusations about one and one's family? Discuss in light of the case studies on forgiveness and tolerance, and also in light of the supporting texts.
3. What benefit can there be in forgiving people who seek to harm you? Consider the case studies, relevant verses and hadiths.
4. Repaying wrong done to one with an act equal to it is permissible, but overlooking the wrong done is better. Discuss.

THEME FOUR

Treaties And Alliances

The cases from the biography of Prophet Muhammad (p) and his Companions cited in this section, show that they had alliances, constitutions, pacts and treaties with various non-Muslim communities, for the purpose of improving international and interfaith relations, protecting mutual rights and obligations, and having more peaceful societies.

Case 16

The Prophet's (p) Concessions during the Treaty of Hudaibiyah

a.) The Prophet (p) Removed His Title (“Messenger of Allah”) From an Official Document

It was narrated by the companion Al-Bara' bin 'Azib that:

“When the Messenger of Allah (p) concluded a peace treaty with the polytheists of Mecca at Hudaibiyyah, Ali bin Abu Talib was the scribe who wrote the document, and he mentioned in it the Prophet's (p) title, 'Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah.' The polytheists objected saying, 'Don't write: 'Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah', for if (we had

accepted that) you were a Messenger, we would not have fought you." The Prophet Muhammad (p) then asked Ali to rub it out, but Ali declined saying, "I cannot be the person to rub it out." The Messenger of Allah (p) thereafter rubbed it out (himself) and made peace with the Meccans on the condition that he (p) and his companions would enter Mecca and stay there for only three days..."¹²¹

b.) The Prophet (p) Sent New Muslims from Mecca Back to the Polytheists

The companions of the Prophet (p), Marwan and al-Miswar bin Makhrama narrated an incident that occurred during the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah.

Suhail bin 'Amr was the envoy and representative of the polytheists of Mecca during the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah. When he agreed to the Treaty, one of the terms he had stipulated in it then, was that the Prophet (p) would send back to them (i.e. the polytheists) anyone coming to him from Mecca, even if that person was a convert to Islam; and that the Prophet (p) would not interfere with whatever was to happen between them and that person. The Treaty also stipulated that the Meccans did not have to send back to the Muslims (or the Prophet (p)) any apostate or Muslim who wanted to leave Medina and join the polytheists of Mecca.

¹²¹ *Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol.3, Book 49, hadith no.862

While the negotiations of the Treaty were ongoing, a Meccan who had just embraced Islam, Abu Jandal, and who had been persecuted by the polytheists of Mecca, arrived on the scene and pleaded with the Prophet (p) to be granted asylum and be accepted by his fellow Muslims. Abu Jandal coincidentally was also the son of the envoy Suhail bin 'Amr. Suhail however insisted that Abu Jandal must be returned to him, as a condition to carry on with the peace negotiations.¹²²

The Muslims did not like this unfair treatment and biased condition in the treaty, and some of the companions were disgusted by it. However, Suhail did not agree to sign the Treaty except with that condition. So, the Prophet (p) agreed to it and a ten-year peace treaty was signed by both parties.

From then onwards, the Prophet (p) turned back everyone that came to him from Mecca in that period (of the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah) even if he was a Muslim.¹²³

¹²² This condition in the Treaty however was not understood to also apply to women who were escaping persecution in Mecca. When some believing women emigrants including Umm Kalthum bint 'Uqbah bin Abu Muait came to the Messenger of Allah (p). Her relatives came to the Prophet (p) and asked him to return her, but the Prophet (p) did not return her to them for Allah had revealed the following verse regarding women: *"O you who believe! When the believing women come to you as emigrants. Examine them, Allah knows best as to their belief, then if you know them as true believers, send them not back to the unbelievers, (for) they are not lawful (wives) for the disbelievers, nor are the unbelievers lawful (husbands) for them."* (Qur'an 60:10)

¹²³ Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, hadith no.2581; Al-Baihaqi, *Sunan al-Kubrah*, hadith no.18587; Al-Tabarani, *al-Mu'jam al-Kabir*, hadith no.13;

Supporting Texts

"...And fulfil (every) covenant. Verily, the covenant will be questioned about." (Qur'an 17:34)

"O you who believe! Fulfil (your) obligations..." (Qur'an 5:1)

Comments

Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah commented on this incident saying, *"Surely the envoys/emissaries of polytheists are not to be killed. Abu Sufyan was among those who broke their treaties, yet the Prophet (p) did not kill him when he came as an ambassador of his people."*¹²⁴

Imam Abu Ishaq al-Shatibi said: *"Since it is established that the rules of the Shari'ah aim to serve human interest (maslaha), it follows that human actions should be on its basis.... When an act is legitimate in both essence and appearance, no difficulty arises. However, if an act is consistent [with the law] in appearance yet contrary to human interests, it is invalid, and anyone who acts contrary to human welfare (maslaha) is engaged in an illegitimate exercise."*¹²⁵

Ahmad bin Hanbal, *Musnad al-Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal*, hadith no.18928; Abu Bakr Abd al-Razzaq bin Humam al-San'ani, *Musannaf Abd al-Razaq*, (ed. Habib al-Rahman al-A'zami), 2nd Ed., al-Maktab al-Islami, Beirut, 1403AH, hadith no.9720; Ismail bn 'Umar bn Kathir, *al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah*, Maktabah al-Ma'arif, Beirut, vol.4, p.175.

¹²⁴ Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah, *Zad al-Ma'ad fi Hady Khair al-'Ibad*, Mu'assasah al-Risalah, Beirut, 1986, vol.3, p.371.

¹²⁵ Al-Shatibi, *Al-Muwafaqat*, vol.2, p.385, cited in Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *Maqasid al-Shari'ah, Ijtihad and Civilizational Renewal*, Occasional Papers Series 20, IIIT London and IAIS Malaysia, 2012, p.28.

Therefore, the Prophet's (p) concessions during the Treaty had in mind the long-term and public benefit (*maslaha*) that could be gained from it, rather than the short-term and individual benefit (such as keeping Abu Jandal), that could be gained from not consenting to the Treaty. Also, as the ten-year Treaty period was arrived at through negotiation, Ibn Qayyim argues that this shows the permissibility of having peace treaties with non-Muslims even for a period longer than ten years.¹²⁶

The readiness of the Prophet (p) to concede his title and the rights of Muslims during the negotiations of the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah are applications of legal maxims that were later articulated by various scholars and schools of thought under the subject of al-Qawa'id al-Fiqhiyyah. These include maxims such as the following:

- The general principle conferring validity of contracts is the consent of both parties, and the effective terms and conditions are what they agreed.¹²⁷
- A specific harm is tolerated to ward off a general harm.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah, *Zad al-Ma'ad fi Hady Khair al-'Ibad*, Mu'assasah al-Risalah, Beirut, 1986, vol.3, p.371.

¹²⁷ See Muhammad al-Zuhayli, *al-Qawa'id al-Fiqhiyyah*, vol.2, p.818; Ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmu' al-Fatawa* vol.29, p.155, cited in Mohammad Akram Laldin et.al., *Islamic Legal Maxims & Their Application in Islamic Finance*, ISRA, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, p.26.

¹²⁸ Abd Al-Karim Zaydan, *Synopsis on the Elucidation of Legal Maxims in Islamic Law*, translated by MD. HabiburRahman and Azman Ismail, Kuala Lumpur, IBFIM, 2015, p.107.

- Necessities render the prohibited permissible.¹²⁹
- Need, general or specific, is treated like necessity.¹³⁰
- Averting harm takes precedence over achieving benefit.¹³¹
- Private harm is to be borne in order to ward off public harm.¹³²
- The lesser evil is preferred over the greater evil.¹³³

¹²⁹ Al-Suyuti, *al-Ashbah wa al-Naza'ir*, p.84; Ibn Nujaym, *al-Ashbah wa al-Naza'ir*, p.94; Ibn al-Subki, *al-Ashbah wa al-Naza'ir*, vol.1, p.45; al-Zarkashi, *al-Manthur*, vol.2, p.317; Ibn Taymiyyah, *al-Qawa'id al-Nuraniyyah*, Idarah Turjuman al-Sunnah, Pakistan, 2nd edition, 1982, p. 165; al-'Izz bin Abd al-Salam, *Qawa'id al-Ahkam*, Dar al-Qalam, Damascus, n.d., vol.2, p.7; al-Wansharisi, *Idah al-Masalik*, Dar Ibn Hazm, Beirut, 2006, p. 155 (all cited in Mohamad Akram Laldin et.al, *Islamic Legal Maxims & Their Application in Islamic Finance*, ISRA, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, p. 940).

¹³⁰ Al-Suyuti, *al-Ashbah wa al-Naza'ir*, p. 88; Ibn Nujaym, *al-Ashbah wa al-Naza'ir*, vol.1, p.100; al-Zarkashi, *al-Manthur*, vol.2, pp.24-25; Ibn al-Qayyim, *Zad al-Ma'ad*, vol.4, p.77, and vol.5, p.593; al-'Izz bin Abd al-Salam, *Qawaid al-Ahkam*, vol.1, pp.35,123,370 and vol.2, pp.13,238; al-Shatibi, *al-Muwfaqat*, vol.2, p.273 (all cited in Mohamad Akram Laldin et. al, *Islamic Legal Maxims & Their Application in Islamic Finance*, ISRA, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, p. 103).

¹³¹ Al-Suyuti, *al-Ashbah wa al-Naza'ir*, p. 87; Ibn al-Subki, *al-Ashbah wa al-Naza'ir*, vol.1, p.105; Ibn Nujaym, *al-Ashbah wa al-Naza'ir*, vol.1, p.99; Ahmad al-Maqari, *al-Qawa'id*, Markaz Ihya al-Turath al-Islami, Mecca, vol.2, p.443; al-Wansharisi, *Idah al-Masalik*, p.89; al-'Izz bin Abd al-Salam, *Qawa'id al-Ahkam*, Dar al-Qalam, Damascus, n.d., vol.1, pp.8-136; Ibn al-Qayyim, *I'lam al-Muwaqqi'in*, vol.5, p.5 (all cited in Mohamad Akram Laldin et.al, *Islamic Legal Maxims & Their Application in Islamic Finance*, ISRA, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, p. 117).

¹³² Shubayr, *al-Qawa'id al-Kuwaytiyyah*, vol.9, p.27 (cited in Mohamad Akram Laldin et.al, *Islamic Legal Maxims & Their Application in Islamic Finance*, ISRA, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, p. 116).

¹³³ Abd Al-Karim Zaydan, *Synopsis on the Elucidation of Legal Maxims in Islamic Law*, translated by MD. HabiburRahman and Azman Ismail, Kuala Lumpur, IBFIM, 2015, p.107.

- The greater harm is to be removed by the lesser harm.¹³⁴
- Acts of those with authority over people must take into account the interests of the people.¹³⁵

Implications and Lessons

In the interest of security and peaceful co-existence with the polytheist tribes of Mecca, the Prophet Muhammad (p) even after victory against the Meccans and their allies at the Battle of the Trench (*Khandaq*), proposed a 10-year peace treaty (referred to as the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah). He signed this treaty in the interest of greater peace for all even though it had some terms and conditions that all of his closest companions found unnecessarily compromising, humiliating and unfair to Muslims.

The Treaty of Hudaibiyyah, as well as the Sahifah (constitution) of Medina and the many treaties and alliances that the Prophet (p) and the early Muslims entered into with various communities and nations have also laid the foundation for many similar treaties, pacts, charters, contracts, constitutions, Memorandum of Understanding

¹³⁴ Shubayr, *al-Qawa'id al-Kuwaytiyyah*, vol.9, p.27, cited in Mohamad Akram Laldin et.al, *Islamic Legal Maxims & Their Application in Islamic Finance*, ISRA, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, p. 116.

¹³⁵ Al-Suyuti, *al-Ashbah wa al-Naza'ir*, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, p. 121; Ibn Nujaym, *al-Ashbah wa al-Naza'ir*, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, p.137; al-Zarkashi, *al-Manthur*, vol.1, p.309; al-Zarqa, *Sharh al-Qawa'id al-Fiqhiyyah*, p.181. (all cited in Mohamad Akram Laldin et.al, *Islamic Legal Maxims & Their Application in Islamic Finance*, ISRA, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, p. 171).

(MoU), agreements and alliances that Muslim communities and nations have gone into, both domestically and internationally, for greater peace, security and public interest (*maslahah*). Modern examples include National constitutions (e.g. the Nigerian Constitution), regional alliances (e.g. ECOWAS, European Union, ASEAN), continental charters (e.g. African Union), military alliances (e.g. NATO, WARSAW), and many others under the United Nations (UN), etc.¹³⁶

This narrative thus counters the argument of those who say that Islam is against peaceful relations and forming alliances with people of other faiths, for the advancement of humanity. The action of the Prophet (p) and his successors show that Islam encourages mutual understanding and cooperation, including making concessions where necessary, for the sake of peace and achievement of the greater Common Good (*maslaha*) or lesser evil.

¹³⁶ The question of the principles that guide the terms and conditions for any contract, treaty, constitution etc are usually decided upon by the appropriate level of leadership, and is not within the scope of this discussion. These principles are very much tied to public interest and the common good (*maslahah*), and are treated in more detail under the principles of *Qawa'id al-Fiqhiyyah*, *Usul al-Fiqh* and *Maqasid al-Shari'ah*.

Case 17

The Prophet and the Jews of Medina had a Constitution (*Sahifah*) for Peaceful Coexistence and Mutual Respect of Rights between Muslims and Jews

Even before the arrival of Prophet Muhammad (p), Yathrib, the ancient name of Medina, was already home to the polytheist Arab tribes/clans of Aws and Khazraj, as well as the Jewish clans of Banu Nadir, Banu Qaynuqa, Banu Qurayzah and other smaller tribes. Partisanship and tribal sentiments dominated the Jewish tribes so much so that they could not be united to live together as one religious group. The Aws and the Khazraj were also usually at loggerheads, but after the Battle of Bu'ath which occurred five years before the Prophet's (p) migration to Medina (the *Hijrah*), they decided to reconcile their differences. Many of these Arabs accepted Islam even before the Prophet's (p) arrival in Medina.

On arriving in Medina after his migration from the persecution of the polytheist Quraysh in Mecca, the Prophet (p) already possessed a symbolic and political power that none of the city's inhabitants could ignore.¹³⁷ Therefore, the Prophet (p) naturally assumed leadership of the city, consented to by all. Due to the multireligious nature of the

¹³⁷ Tariq Ramadan, *In the Footsteps of the Prophet*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, p.87-91.

city, the Prophet (p) and the Jews developed and agreed to a constitution which would ensure peaceful coexistence and mutual respect of rights between Muslims and Jews. Some relevant provisions of the constitution are the following:¹³⁸

“...24. The Jews shall contribute to the cost of war as long as they are fighting alongside the believers.

25. The Jews of Banu 'Awf are one community with the believers. The Jews will profess their religion, and the Muslims theirs.

37a. The Jews shall be responsible for their expenditure, and the Muslims for theirs. Each must help the other against anyone who attacks the people of this document. They must seek mutual advice and consultation, and righteousness is a protection against sinfulness.

39. Yathrib shall be a sanctuary for the people of this document

40. A stranger under protection shall be considered as his host doing no harm and committing no harm.

42. Should any disagreement arise between the signatories to this treaty, then Allah, the All-High and His Messenger (p) shall settle the dispute

¹³⁸ Safy al-Rahman Mubarakfuri, *Al-Rahiq Al-Makhtum (The Sealed Nectar: Biography of the Noble Prophet)*, Dar al-Salam Publishers, Riyadh, 1996, pp.189-190; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, *Zad al-Ma'ad fi Hady Khair al-Tbad*, Mu'assasah al-Risalah, Beirut, 1407AH, vol.3, p.58; Ibn Hisham, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, al-Maktabah al-Shamilah 3.13, vol.3, p.34.

43. *The signatories to this treaty shall boycott Quraish commercially; they shall also abstain from extending any support to them.*

44. *Each shall contribute to defending Yathrib, in case of a foreign attack, in its respective area.*

47. *This deed will not protect the unjust and the sinner. The man who goes forth to fight is safe, and the man who stays at home in the city is safe, unless either has been unjust and sinned. God is the protector of the righteous and the God-conscious, and Muhammad (p) is the Apostle of God...*¹³⁹

Supporting Texts

The relationship of Muslims with Jews as mentioned in the constitution (*sahifah*) is in line with the ruling of the Qur'an verse¹⁴⁰ where Allah says: “As for such (of the unbelievers) as do not fight against you on account of (your) faith, and neither drive you forth from your homelands, God does not forbid you to show them kindness and to behave towards them with full equity: for verily, God loves those who act equitably.” (Qur'an 60:8)

¹³⁹ Akram Diya al 'Umari, *Madinan Society at the Time of the Prophet*, (Translated by Huda al-Khattab), IIIT, Virginia, USA, vol. 1, pp.107 – 110. See the Appendix at the end of this book for the Full Text of the Madinan Charter.

¹⁴⁰ Mahdi Rizq Allah Ahmad, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah fi Daoi al-Masadir al-Asliyyah Dirasah Tahliliyyah*, Markaz al-Malik Faisal li Al-Buhuth wa al-Dirasaat al-Islamiyyah, al-Riyadh, 1992, p.316.

Allah also said: *“O you who Believe... Help you one another in virtues (Al-Birr) and righteousness (Al-Taqwa); but do not help one another in sin and transgression. And fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Severe in punishment.”* (Qur'an 5:2)

“O you who Believe, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is acquainted with what you do.” (Qur'an 5:8)

The Prophet (p) said, *“Muslims must stand by the terms of their contracts.”*¹⁴¹

Comments

Adil Salahi commented on the *Sahifah* saying, *“This agreement was the first of its kind in Arabia. It defines the sort of relationship that should exist within the Muslim community, and it defines the position of the Jews and their relationship with the Muslim state. The agreement considers the Jews as citizens within the Muslim state. They enjoyed their religious freedom and state protection. They were required to support the Muslim state against any enemy that attacked it. The Jews were also required to give sincere counsel to the Muslim state and never to conspire against it or to withhold information which was important to the security of the Muslim state.”*¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ Sahih Bukhari, hadith no.2273; Sunan al-Darqutni, hadith no.98.

¹⁴² Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, UK, 2002, p 242.

Implications and Lessons

The Prophet's (p) attitude towards the Jews from the moment he arrived in Medina teaches the general framework of the expected relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims. The Prophet (p) did not force anyone to convert, either in the early or later part of his leadership of the city-state of Medina. He instead made it clear that he wanted relations within the new society to be egalitarian.

The Prophet (p) did not resort to politicking, subjugation or humiliation of the Jews, rather, he stipulated that they fully and equally belonged to the local community (*ummah*), as it is clearly stated in the *Sahifah*.

Also, it shows that difference in religious affiliation does not in any way overrule the fundamental Islamic principles of mutual recognition and respect, as well as justice before the law or in the settlement of disputes between individuals and/or groups. Therefore, even where conflicts may occur with other groups, the inalienable principles of respect and justice remain, and it is required that Muslims should not yield to blinding passions and hatred.¹⁴³

This narrative therefore contrasts the notion that Muslims and people of other faiths cannot peacefully live together in a geographical entity. It rather teaches otherwise, and even demonstrates that non-Muslims are not to be treated unfairly simply on account of their faith.

¹⁴³ Tariq Ramadan, *In the Footsteps of the Prophet*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, p.87-91.

Case 18

The Prophet (p) Joined and Endorsed a Civil Society Organization (*Hilf al-Fudul*)

During the pre-Islamic (*Jahiliyyah*) period in Mecca and within the legal and administrative system of the “*Jahiliyyah* society” of Mecca, the Prophet (p) joined a group known as the *Hilf al-Fudul* (League of the Virtuous).¹⁴⁴ This was a group of upright individuals in Mecca who took it upon themselves to protect the rights of any victim of oppression in Mecca, whether they were visitors or citizens. Even after Islam was well-established in Medina, the Prophet (p) recounted his involvement with the *Hilf al-Fudul*, and according to Talha bin Abdullah, the Prophet (p) said that, “*If he was to be invited again to join such a group now in the time of Islam, he would respond and join them.*”¹⁴⁵ According to Ibn Hisham, “*They (members of Hilf al-Fudul) promised and pledged that they would not find any oppressed person among their people or among anyone else who entered Mecca except that they would support him. They would stand against whoever oppressed him*

¹⁴⁴ Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, pp.40-41, pp. 495-530; Tariq Ramadan, *In the Footsteps of the Prophet*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, pp. 20-22.

¹⁴⁵ Al-Baihaqi, *Sunan Al-Kubra*, hadith no.12114; *Al-Dala'il fi Gharib al-Hadith*, hadith no. 243

*until the rights of the oppressed were returned.”*¹⁴⁶ The Prophet (p) was reported by Ibn Abbas to have said, “Every pact (or treaty) from the time of Ignorance (Jahiliyyah) is definitely further strengthened and affirmed by Islam.”¹⁴⁷

Supporting Texts

“Cooperate in righteousness and piety, and do not cooperate in sin and aggression.” (Qur'an 5:20)

“And let there be [arising] from you a nation inviting to [all that is] good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be the successful.” (Qur'an 3:104)

“The believing men and believing women are allies of one another. They enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, and establish prayer and give zakah and obey Allah and His Messenger. Those - Allah will have mercy upon them. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise.” (Qur'an 9:71)

“So fear Allah as much as you are able, and listen and obey and spend [in the way of Allah]; it is better for your selves. And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul - it is those who will be the successful.” (Qur'an 64:16)

“And We have revealed to you, [O Muhammad], the Book in truth, confirming that which preceded it of the Scripture and as a criterion over it. So judge between them by what Allah has

¹⁴⁶ Ibn Hisham, *Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, vol.1, p.123; *Al-Dala'il fi Gharib al-Hadith*, hadith no.243

¹⁴⁷ *Musnad Ahmad*, hadith no.2904. Literally, the hadith reads, “Every pact from the Time of Ignorance (Jahiliyyah) is not increased by Islam except in strength and affirmation.”

revealed and do not follow their inclinations away from what has come to you of the truth. To each of you We prescribed a law and a method. Had Allah willed, He would have made you one nation [united in religion], but [He intended] to test you in what He has given you; so race to [all that is] good. To Allah is your return all together, and He will [then] inform you concerning that over which you used to differ.” (Qur'an 5:48)

The Prophet (p) said, “*The best among you (as to their human and moral qualities) during the era before Islam (jahiliyyah) are the best in Islam, provided they understand it (Islam).*”¹⁴⁸

The Prophet (p) also said that, “*Whoever amongst you sees an evil act or deed should change it with his hand. If he is not able, then he should change it with his tongue. But if he is not able to, then with his heart. And that is the weakest of faith.*”¹⁴⁹

Comments

Mahdi Rizq-Allah Ahmad commented thus, “*If people of Jahiliyyah have resisted oppression based on their natural instinct, Muslims are then more expected to resist it with their beliefs because Islam encourages justice. This is why seeing the Prophet (p) emphasizing the importance of that character is not a surprise. This is because the content of Hilf al-Fudul is one of the core values that Islam calls for....*”¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ Sahih Bukhari, hadith no.3374; Sahih Muslim, hadith no.6615.

¹⁴⁹ Sahih Muslim, hadith no. 78; Ibn Majah, hadith no.4013.

¹⁵⁰ Mahdi Rizq-Allah Ahmad, *Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah fi Dao' al-Masadir al-Asliyyah*, Markaz al-Malik Faisal li al-Buhuth wa al-Dirasat al-Islamiyyah, Saudi Arabia, 1992, p.132.

Commenting on the fact that Islam and Muslims recognize and acknowledge the good *urf* (culture) in others even if they are non-Muslims, Umar Faruq Abdullah says, “The Prophet (p) cultivated openness and objectivity toward others — this was also part of his lesson to Umar bin Al-Khattab - and such openness enabled his Companions to acknowledge the good in other cultures even when, as was the case with the Byzantine Christians (al-Rum), they were not only hostile to the rise of Islamic power on their southern flank but constituted Islam's most formidable enemy. When it was related to 'Amr ibn al-'Aas - a Companion of the Prophet (p) and victorious commander in the Byzantine wars - that the Prophet (p) had prophesied that al-Rum (specifically the Byzantines, but understood in this context as a general reference to Europeans), would predominate at the end of time, 'Amr responded to his informer: *“If, then, you have related this honestly, know that they have four excellent qualities. They are the most forbearing of people in times of discord. They are the quickest of people to recover from calamity. They are the most likely of people to renew an attack after retreat. And they are the best of people toward the poor, the orphan, and the weak.”* 'Amr then added: *“And they have a fifth attribute which is both beautiful and excellent: They are the best of people in checking the oppression of kings.”*¹⁵¹

'Amr drew attention to those European cultural traits which he knew and regarded as both compatible with Islam's ethos

¹⁵¹ Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, Dar al-Jil, Beirut, vol.8, p.176, hadith no.7461.

and universally desirable as human qualities. His response demonstrates his understanding that the future prominence of Westerners would be an outgrowth of their exceptional cultural traits, which his mind immediately began to search out after hearing Prophet Muhammad's (p) prophecy. Four came at once to his mind, and the fifth ("they are the best of people in checking the oppression of kings") occurred as an afterthought but was clearly regarded among the most important (it was viewed as "beautiful and excellent").¹⁵²

Implications and Lessons

Muslims, in whatever situation they find themselves, whether as a minority or a majority, and whether they have political influence or not, are expected to enjoin right and forbid wrong (as instructed by the Qur'an 3:104), to the best of their abilities (Qur'an 64:16), within the existing societal restrictions.¹⁵³

This narrative also indicates that Muslims must always have those amongst them who defend the legal rights of others irrespective of their faith. This is a "collective social obligation" (*fard kifayah*) required of Muslims. They should protect and assist victims of abuse and injustice even in societies where Islamic law has little or no jurisdiction. This

¹⁵² Umar Faruq Abd-Allah, *Islam and the Cultural Imperative*, An-Nawawi Foundation Paper, 2004, p.5.

¹⁵³ For further reading, see Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, p.40 – 41.

has been done successfully through advocacy and activism, within the existing legal system to make contributions to society and/or also support social, economic, legal and political reforms in many countries across the world.

Tariq Ramadan in his book *In the Footsteps of the Prophet* draws three lessons from this incident. “First, the Prophet (p) acknowledged the validity of a principle of justice and defence of the oppressed stipulated in a pact of the pre-Islamic era. Secondly, the Prophet's statement (according to Talha above) denies the trend of thought that a pledge can be ethically valid for Muslims only if it is of a strictly Islamic nature and/or if it is established between Muslims. The third consequence of this narration is that Islam is a message of justice that entails resisting oppression and protection of the dignity of the poor, and Muslims must recognize the moral value of a law or contract stipulating this requirement, whoever its authors and whatever the society, Muslim or not.”¹⁵⁴

This narrative therefore counters the argument of those who say that Muslims are not expected to form alliances, partnerships and organizations which cooperate with non-Muslims for the attainment of common good.

¹⁵⁴ Tariq Ramadan, *In the Footsteps of the Prophet*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, p.20 – 22.

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the following maxims in light of the Treaty of Hdaybiyyah:

- The general principle conferring validity of contracts is the consent of both parties, and the effective terms and conditions are what they agreed.
- A specific harm is tolerated to ward off a general harm.
- Necessities render the prohibited permissible.
- Need, general or specific, is treated like necessity.
- Averting harm takes precedence over achieving benefit.
- Private harm is to be borne in order to ward off public harm.
- The lesser evil is preferred over the greater evil.
- The greater harm is to be removed by the lesser harm.
- Acts of those with authority over people must take into account the interests of the people.

2. The *Sahifah* takes an explicit stand for justice. Highlight the term(s) which clearly states this position.

3. It is sometimes argued that it is wrong for Muslims to explicitly recognise the rights of other faiths, especially

where Muslims are in authority. Discuss this in light of the *Sahifah*.

4. It is permissible for non-Muslims to be considered as part of the same community as Muslims. Discuss.
5. Consider your local community (or state, country, region, continent, earth) and features, people and their interests needs and aspirations. In what ways/for what purposes/on what basis could you cooperate/form alliances with the non-Muslims? Give practically applicable suggestions.
6. Being an active member of the community is part of being a good Muslim, even if the community is dominated by non-Muslims. Discuss.

THEME FIVE

Intra-Faith Relations (Among Muslims)

Narratives in this section focus on how Prophet Muhammad (p) related with Muslims who behaved in an unacceptable manner, as well as how he managed relations with the hypocrites amongst them.

Case 19

The Prophet (p) would Swallow His Anger when Provoked

While distributing the booty after a battle, a man called Dhul Khuwaysira accused the Prophet (p) of being fraudulent and dividing the booty in an unfair manner. The man said, *“Be fair, O Muhammad! For this division [of shares] is not one that was done seeking Allah’s pleasure!”*¹⁵⁵ The face of the Prophet (p) reflected anger when he heard this, but he chose to simply reply to this heinous accusation by saying, *“Shame on you! Who would ever be regarded as just if I am not? May Allah bestow his mercy upon Moses; he was hurt with more than this*

¹⁵⁵ Literally, “Be fair, O Muhammad! For this division [of shares] is not one for which Allah’s face is sought”.

*and was still patient.”*¹⁵⁶ In another narration, “*You do not trust me, though I am the one trusted by He who is above the heavens?!*”¹⁵⁷

Supporting Texts

“It is not for any prophet to take illegally a part of booty (ghulul), and whosoever deceives his companions with regards to the booty, he shall bring forth on the Day of Resurrection that which he took (illegally). Then every person shall be paid in full what he has earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.” (Qur'an 3:161)

“The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (evil) with that which is better (and good)....” (Qur'an 41:34)

“And Verily, you (O Muhammad (p)) are on an exalted (standard of) character.” (Qur'an 68:4)

“And We have not sent you (O Muhammad (p)) except as a mercy for the worlds.” (Qur'an 21:107)

“O you who Believe, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is acquainted with what you do.” (Qur'an 5:8)

¹⁵⁶ Sahih al-Bukhari, hadith no.7385; Sahih Muslim, hadith no.1064.

¹⁵⁷ Sahih al-Bukhari, hadith no. 4351; Sahih Muslim, hadith no 2500; Musnad Ahmad, hadith no. 11008.

The Prophet (p) said, “No one has swallowed back anything more excellent in the sight of Allah, the Great and Glorious, than the anger he restrains, seeking to please Allah the Most High.”¹⁵⁸

A man asked the Prophet (p), “What is the worst thing that one incurs concerning God?” And the Prophet (p) said, “His wrath.” The man asked, “How do we avoid it?” the Prophet (p) said, “Do not become angry.”¹⁵⁹

Comments

Ibn Hajar commented that, “This hadith has shown that great people may be hurt by false accusation from some people. They should however reciprocate with patience and forbearance just the way Prophet Muhammad (p) did...”¹⁶⁰

Implications and Lessons

This narrative underscores the need to be patient with others and control one's anger. The fact that people belong to the same religion does not mean that there would be no differences in understanding, oppositions, false accusations and insults. Hence, there is need for greater tolerance of the shortcomings of other people, even when of the same faith.

¹⁵⁸ Sunan al-Tirmidhi, hadith no.1324.

¹⁵⁹ Hamza Yusuf, *Purification of the Heart*, Starlatch Press, USA, 2004, p.101-102.

¹⁶⁰ Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari*, al-Maktabah al-Shamilah, vol.17, p.276; A similar comment has been made in Abu Bakr Jabir al-Jazhiri, *Hadha al-Habib Muhammad Ya Muhib*, Dar al-Shuruq, Saudi Arabia, 2nd edition, 1989, p.527.

Muslims should therefore be more forbearing, patient, and forgiving of the unguarded words and insults of those who are ignorant, arrogant or trying to make mischief. Leaders in particular need to be more patient with their followers, but also with unpleasant comments from members of other Muslim groups and organizations.

Case 20

The Prophet (p) Overlooked the Shortcomings of Others

Anas bin Malik said, *"I was walking with the Messenger of Allah (p), and he was wearing a Najrani¹⁶¹ cloak with a rough collar. A Bedouin man caught up with him, then violently pulled him by his cloak, causing the cloak to tear, and leaving its collar [hanging] on the neck of Allah's Messenger (p). I looked at the Messenger of Allah's neck, and the cloak's collar had left marks from how roughly he (the Bedouin) had snatched it. Then, he said, 'O Muhammad (p), order [them] that I be given from the wealth of Allah that you have!' The Messenger of Allah (p) turned to him, smiled, and then ordered that he be given something."*¹⁶²

Supporting Texts

"Show forgiveness, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the foolish (i.e. don't punish them)." (Qur'an 7:199)

Allah praises, *"Those who spend (in Allah's Cause) in prosperity and in adversity, who repress anger, and who pardon others; verily, Allah loves those who do good (al-muhsinun)."* (Qur'an 3:134)

¹⁶¹ Najran is in the southern region of Saudi Arabia, inhabited then by mainly Christians.

¹⁶² Sahih al-Bukhari, hadith no.3149; Sahih Muslim, hadith no.1057.

“And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth easily, and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace.” (Qur'an 25:63)

Aishah reported that the Prophet (p) said, *“Verily, Allah is kind... and he gives for gentleness, what he does not give for anything else.”*¹⁶³

The Prophet (p) again said, *“Allah loves that one should be kind and lenient in all matters.”*¹⁶⁴

Comments

Imam Badr al-Din al-Ayni said concerning this narration that, *“It shows the mercy, kindness and generosity of the Messenger of Allah.”*¹⁶⁵

Implications and Lessons

This incident also shows the importance of forbearance and patience when dealing with others who are rough, ill-mannered and uncultured. This character of the Prophet (p) should serve as an inspiration for Muslims and especially the leadership, when dealing with the harsh treatment they may face from others.

¹⁶³ *Sahih Muslim*, hadith no.1186.

¹⁶⁴ *Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol 8, hadith no.53.

¹⁶⁵ Imam Badr al-Din al-Ayni, *Umdah al-Qari*, al-Maktabah al-Shamilah 3.13, vol.22, p.332.

Case 21

The Prophet (p) Forgave Treason

When the Prophet (p) learnt that the Quraysh had prepared an army of three thousand men to take revenge for their defeat at the hands of the Muslims in the Battle of Badr, he called for a consultative meeting (*shura*) to get his Companions' opinions. They had to decide to either remain in the city waiting for the enemy to enter and ambush them there, or march out of the city and directly engage them on open ground in the nearby plain beside the hill of Uhud.

After their deliberation, the Muslim army which was just 1000 strong marched out to Uhud to face an enemy of 3000. Already numerically disadvantaged, Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul then committed treason against the Muslim army, not only by deserting the battlefield himself, but also by pulling out 300 people. His preferred strategy from the beginning was for the army to wait in the city rather than march out to Uhud, and that had been rejected by the majority.

Because of the prominence of Ibn Salul in Medina before the Prophet's (p) arrival, he remained an influential leader. After setting out and just before the Battle commenced, about a third of the Muslim army deserted and followed him after he said, *“He (the Prophet) obeyed them and disobeyed me, why should we get ourselves killed?”*

Muslims faced major losses during the Battle of Uhud at the hands of the Quraysh who regarded it as a successful revenge for their loss at the earlier Battle of Badr.

Upon returning from Uhud, there were many Companions who from the calamity that had just befallen them wished for the execution of Ibn Salul for his act of treason. However, the Messenger of Allah (p) did not punish him for this capital treason – lest rumours spread that Prophet Muhammad (p) kills his own followers; and he (p) also held on to the hope that some of the hypocrites would turn over a new leaf.¹⁶⁶

Supporting Texts

“And by the Mercy of Allah, you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from you; so pass over (their faults), and ask (Allah’s) Forgiveness for them; and consult them in the affairs. Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah, certainly, Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him).”
(Qur'an 3:159)

Allah also says, *“The recompense for an injury is an injury equal thereto (in degree): but if a person forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is due from Allah: for (Allah) loves not those who do wrong.”* (Qur'an 42:40)

¹⁶⁶ Omar Suleiman & Mohammad Elshinawy, *How the Prophet Muhammad Rose above Enmity and Insult*, Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research, 2016, p.29.

“...and the Hour is surely coming, so overlook (O Muhammad) their faults with gracious forgiveness.” (Qur'an 15:85)

Comments

Ibn Qayyim said that the Prophet (p) did not kill the hypocrites although there is benefit in it, because of what it will lead to, i.e. it will chase people away from him...”¹⁶⁷

Implications and Lessons

Despite the fact that Ibn Salul and the other hypocrites' actions had a great impact on the outcome of the battle which was not in favour of the Muslims, the Prophet (p) still refused to punish Ibn Salul for this capital offense.

This was in consideration of the fact that Ibn Salul still openly professed Islam, and in the hope that some of those following him would realize their mistakes and change.

It also shows the encouragement of seeking alternative ways of addressing crisis situations rather than resorting to violence and bloodshed.

¹⁶⁷ Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah Muhammad bin Abu Bakr, *I'lam al-Muwaqqi'in 'an Rabb al-'Alamin*, Maktabat al-Kuliyat al-Azhariya, Cairo, vol.3, p.167.

Case 22

The Prophet (p) Prayed over Abdullah Bin Ubayy Bin Salul

It was reported that when the arch-opponent of the Prophet (p) and “leader of the hypocrites” in Medina, Abdullah bin Ubayy, was dying, he sent his son to the Prophet (p) with the request that the Prophet (p) should give him his shirt, so that he might be buried in it, and that the Prophet (p) should pray over him after his death. The Prophet (p) took this request as a sign of Ibn Salul's repentance, and gave him his shirt and later led the funeral prayers over his body.

When 'Umar bin al-Khattab vehemently protested against this clemency of the Messenger (p) towards the man whom all the believers had regarded as "God's enemy", the Prophet (p) answered, *"God has granted me a choice in this matter (a reference to Qur'an 9:80 below), and so I shall pray [for him] more than seventy times."*¹⁶⁸

Supporting Text

"Ask forgiveness for them, [O Muhammad], or do not ask forgiveness for them. If you should ask forgiveness for them

¹⁶⁸ Several variants of this Tradition are to be found in Bukhari, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Ibn Hanbal, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas; Bukhari and Muslim, on the authority of Ibn 'Umar; Muslim, on the authority of Jabir ibn 'Abd Allah; and in various other hadith compilations.

seventy times - never will Allah forgive them. That is because they disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger, and Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.” (Qur'an 9:80)

Comments

Muhammad Asad in his commentary on the verse above said, *“Since Abdullah bin Ubayy died sometime after the Prophet's return from Tabuk, while verse 84 - like most of this surah - was revealed during the campaign, it is clear that the prohibition expressed in this verse relates only (as the sequence shows) to those who "were bent on denying God and His Apostle, and [who] died in this their iniquity" - that is, to unrepentant sinners.”*¹⁶⁸

The Prophet (p) therefore regarded Ibn Salul's request as a sign of his repentance and therefore did not count him among those unrepentant hypocrites that the verse prohibits the Prophet (p) from praying for.

¹⁶⁹ Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Qur'an*, The Book Foundation, England, 2003, p.309, n.116 to Qur'an 9:84.

Discussion Questions

1. From the narrations in this section (Theme 5) and some other sections, it appears to have been the Prophet's way to lean more towards forgiveness, tolerance, controlling anger, etc. Even when the behaviour of someone clearly angered or bothered him, he controlled himself. *What benefits arose from this Sunnah? What objectives was he trying to accomplish?* Carefully consider the various narratives.
2. In what circumstances (consider current and past events; consider trends/events in your local community or national/global contexts) would Muslims benefit from following the Sunnah of forbearance exemplified by the Prophet (p) in this theme?

THEME SIX

General

This section contains narratives on other actions by the Prophet (p) and his companions that depict the normative behaviour that Islam expects from Muslims, especially towards peaceful and friendly non-Muslims.

Case 23

Islam Permits Some Interfaith Marriages

Islam permits a Muslim man initiating and having a relationship as close and intimate as that of marriage with a Christian or Jewish woman in spite of the difference in faith. It is narrated that despite having married Muslim women previously, the third Caliph, Uthman bin 'Affan married a Christian woman Na'ila bint al-Furafisa, of the tribe of Kalb. Another companion, Talha bin Ubaid-Ullah also married a Jewish lady.¹⁷⁰

Similarly, it was narrated that Hudhaifah bin al-Yaman married a Jewish lady. However, when Umar found out about it, he wrote to Hudhaifah asking him to divorce the woman.

¹⁷⁰ Al-Baihaqi, *al-Sunan al-Kubrah*, hadith no.14360.

Hudhaifah wrote in reply that, *“Is she haram (prohibited) for me (to be married to her)?”* Umar replied: *“No, but I fear that you may take the immoral ones among them”*.¹⁷¹ In another version of this hadith, Umar also added in his reply that his objection was tied to the fact that such marriages were not in the best interest of Muslim women who are in need of getting married to Muslim men, and could therefore be left at a disadvantage.¹⁷²

Supporting Texts

Allah says in Qur'an 5:5, *“... (Lawful unto you in marriage) are (not only) chaste women who are believers, but (also) chaste women among the People of the Book, revealed before your time, - when you give them their due dowers, and desire chastity, not lewdness, nor secret intrigues...”*

“And among His Signs is this, that He created for you wives from among yourselves, that you may find repose in them, and He has put between you affection and mercy. Verily, in that are indeed signs for a people who reflect.” (Qur'an 30:21)

“...They are clothing for you and you are clothing for them...”
Qur'an 2:187

Comments

Imam Ibn Jarir al-Tabari, in his commentary on Qur'an 5:5 above asserts that Muslim men are permitted to marry chaste

¹⁷¹ Al-Baihaqi, *al-Sunan al-Kubrah*, hadith no.14361.

¹⁷² Al-Baihaqi, *al-Sunan al-Kubrah*, hadith no.14361.

Christian and Jewish women, whether they are Arabs or not.¹⁷³

Implications and Lessons

The explicit permissibility of such interfaith marriages, and its subsequent practice by the Companions is testimony to a number of things. Firstly, it is proof that Islam allows genuine friendship with non-Muslims, for marriage is one of the strongest and most intimate form of human relationship, which the Qur'an characterizes as a relationship of “*tranquillity*” and “*mutual love and mercy*” (Qur'an 30:21) – qualities that also characterize close friendship.

Secondly, it is proof that the Prophet (p) and the earliest Muslims, along with the classical scholars of Islam, recognized that difference in faith was not a justifiable basis for withholding love, affection, respect, compassion, intimacy, friendship and cooperation. Thirdly, it is proof of the interest of Islam to keep the door open to interfaith engagement and building human relationships across the boundaries of religion.¹⁷⁴

Therefore, this narrative as well as the Qur'anic verses above counter the arguments made by some Muslims that Islam is

¹⁷³ Muhammad bin Jarir al-Tabari, *Jami' al-Bayan Fi Tawil al-Qur'an*, Mu'assasah al-Risalah, Beirut, 2000, vol.9, p.581.

¹⁷⁴ It is noteworthy that this fact is not diminished by the position held by most Muslim scholars that interfaith marriage is only permissible for Muslim men but not for Muslim women. The wisdom behind this is usually associated with the fact that an Islamic court has limited jurisdiction over the responsibilities of a non-Muslim husband.

against friendliness and harmonious relationships between Muslims and people of other faiths. It also counters the position held by some that Muslims are supposed to be in a perpetual state of hostility and warfare with others. On the contrary, the evidence above shows that Muslims are encouraged to live in peace and prosperity, as neighbours and even as family members with non-Muslims, as long as they are not hostile, aggressive or oppressive.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁵ While such interfaith marriages are originally permissible, many Muslim scholars, depending on their contexts, have discouraged or even prohibited them due to the often negative impact and consequences of such marriages. The positions of Islamic jurisprudence on interfaith marriages is not the subject of this discussion. For more on this, see: Da'wah Institute of Nigeria, *Muslim Relations with Christians, Jews and Others*, Islamic Education Trust, Minna, Nigeria, 2018, p.58-62; Yusuf al-Qaradawi, *The Lawful and Prohibited in Islam*, IIFSO, Kuwait, 1992, pp. 184-186.

Case 24

The Prophet's (p) Love for His Kind Polytheist Uncle, Abu Talib

It was narrated by Sa'id bin Al-Musayyib¹⁷⁶ from his father that, *"When the time of the death of Abu Talib approached, the Messenger of Allah (p) went to him and found Abu Jahl bin Hisham and Abdullah bin Abi Umayyah bin Al-Mughira by his side. The Messenger of Allah (p) said to Abu Talib, 'O Uncle! Say: None has the right to be worshipped but Allah, a sentence with which I shall be a witness for you before Allah.'*" Abu Jahl and Abdullah said, *"O Abu Talib! Are you going to denounce the religion of Abdul Muttalib?"* The Messenger of Allah (p) kept on inviting Abu Talib to say it (i.e. 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allah') while they (Abu Jahl and Abdullah) kept on repeating their statement till Abu Talib said as his last statement that he was on the religion of Abdul Muttalib and refused to say, 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allah.' Then the Messenger of Allah (p) said, *"I will keep on asking Allah's forgiveness for you unless I am forbidden (by Allah) to do so."* So, Allah revealed Qur'an 9:113 concerning him, *"It is not fitting for the Prophet and those who believe that they should invoke (Allah) for forgiveness for polytheists even though they be next of kin, after it has become clear to them that they are companions of the fire."*¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁶ Also referred to by some as Sa'id bin Al-Musayyab.

¹⁷⁷ Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 2, book 23, hadith no.442.

Supporting Text

Allah says in Qur'an 28:56, “*Verily, you cannot guide aright everyone whom you love (man ahabta), but it is Allah who guides whom He wills, and He is fully aware of all those who receive guidance.*”

Major Qur'an commentators cite the context of the revelation of this verse as being related to the Prophet's polytheist uncle Abu Talib who supported him and whom he loved dearly but could not convince to become a Muslim, as evident in the narration above.¹⁷⁸

Comments

Commenting on this verse, Ibn Kathir said, “Allah knows who will be guided and who will not. It is established in Sahih Bukhari and Muslim, that this verse was revealed in reference to Abu Talib, the Prophet's (p) uncle who used to protect, support and stand by him, and he loved him intensely – natural love, not a love of his faith.”¹⁷⁹

While the Prophet (p) loved his uncle as a person, he also naturally loved that he should be guided.¹⁸⁰ The verse

¹⁷⁸ Al-Tabari, Muhammad bin Jarir, *Jamiu al-Bayan fi Ta'wil al-Qur'an*, Mua'ssasah al-Risalah, 2000, vol. 19, p. 598; Abu al-Fida' Ismail Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim*, Dar al-Tayba li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi'i, Medina, 1999/1420AH, vol. 6, p.246; Abd al-Rahman bin Nasir al-Sa'di, *Taysir Karim al-Rahman*, Mua'ssasah al-Risalah, 2000, p. 620

¹⁷⁹ Abu al-Fida' Ismail Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim*, Dar al-Tayba li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi'i, Medina, 1999/1420AH, vol. 6, p.246

¹⁸⁰ Al-Nawawi, *Sharh al-Nawawi 'Ala Muslim*, Dra Ihya' al-Turath al-Arabi, Beirut, 1392, vol.1, p.97; Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari*, al-Maktabah al-Shamilah, vol.13, p.293.

therefore also, “stresses the inadequacy of all human endeavours to 'convert' any other person, however loving or loved, to one's own beliefs, or to prevent him from falling into what one regards as error, unless that person wills to be so guided.”¹⁸¹

Implications and Lessons

The narrative above clearly indicates that the Prophet Muhammad (p) loved a polytheist, despite the fact that he refused to accept Islam. Also, the verse above (28:56) is an acknowledgment by Allah of the existence of the feeling of love by the Prophet (p) for his polytheist uncle. It shows that a person's lack of interest in accepting Islam is therefore not a reason to distance oneself from them or despise them.

It also teaches that Islam does not expect Muslims to expunge the natural feelings of love and affection they have towards their relatives and friends, just because they profess another faith.

The case of the Prophet's (p) love for his uncle acknowledged in the verse is therefore proof that people of other faiths are among those whom Muslims may love and hold close relationships with.¹⁸² This teaching is contrary to the claim of

¹⁸¹ Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Qur'an*, The Book Foundation, England, 2003, p.668, n.55 to Qur'an 28:56

¹⁸² Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary* (Revised by The Presidency of Islamic Researches, IFTA,

some Muslims that Islam frowns at such closeness in interfaith relations.

Call and Guidance), King Fahd Holy Qur'an Printing Complex, Madinah, 1411H, p.1136, n.3388.

Case 25

The Prophet (p) Received and Allowed Non-Muslims in his Mosque in Medina

a.) The Prophet (p) Hosted the Christians of Najran in His Mosque

Prophet Muhammad (p) hosted a delegation of 60 Christians from Najran in his Mosque in Medina; they spent three days there.¹⁸³ This was during the last (9/10th) year after the Prophet's (p) migration to Medina.

Ibn Ishaq said, "Muhammad bin Ja'far bin Al-Zubair said that, *"The (Najran) delegation came to the Messenger of Allah (p) in Medina, and entered his Masjid (mosque) wearing robes and garments, after the Prophet (p) had prayed the Asr prayer. They accompanied a caravan of camels led by Bani Al-Harith bin Ka'b. The Companions of the Messenger of Allah (p) who saw them said that they never saw a delegation like them after that. When their worship time came, they stood up to perform their worship*

¹⁸³ Seerah bin Hisham, (1/573, 584); Seerah bin Kathir (4/100, 108); Tafsir bn Kathir (1/367, 371); Tabaqat Ibn al-Sa'ad (1/357); Zad al-Ma'ad (3/629) – all cited in Ali Muhy al-Din Al-Qaradaghi, *We and the Other: Substantiating the basis of the Ideal Relation between Muslims and Non-Muslims in Light of the Islamic Jurisprudence*, (Transl. Syed Bashir Ahmad Kashmiri), Kuala Lumpur, 2015, p.196. See also: Ibn al-Qayyim, *Ahkam Ahl al-Dhimmah*, Dar al-Ilm Lilmalayin, Beirut, 1964, p.691

*in the Prophet's (p) Mosque. The Messenger of Allah said: "Let them (worship)" and they prayed towards the East."*¹⁸⁴

b.) The Prophet (p) Allowed the Polytheists from Ta'if into His Mosque

The Prophet Muhammad (p) allowed polytheists from the Arab tribe of Banu Thaqif from Ta'if, and many other non-Muslim communities, into his Mosque (Masjid al-Nabawiy) in Medina during the 9th year of *Hijrah* for peace talks and treaty agreements.¹⁸⁵ The Prophet did not view their polytheistic beliefs as a barrier to their entering his Mosque for interfaith dialogue and peace-building purposes! It is clear that he did not hold the view espoused by some Muslims that people of other faiths are "not pure enough" to enter any mosque.

¹⁸⁴ Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim*, Dar al-Tayba li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi'i, Medina, 1999/1420AH, vol. 2, p.50; Muhammad bin Abi Bakr bin Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, *Zad al-Ma'ad*, Mu'assasah al-Risalah, 1994, vol.3, p.629. Regarding the narration that the Christian delegates prayed in the mosque, some scholars have questioned the strength of the narration. For example, Abdulqadir and Shuaib al-Arnaut in their editing of *Zad al-Ma'ad*, said that the chain is broken because Muhammad bin Jafar bin Zubayr bn Awwam, the narrator of this narration did not meet any of the companions as said by Ibn Hajar in his *Taqrib al-Tahzib*, Dar al-Rashid, Halab, 1406AH, vol.1, p.1, and vol.2, p.471, no: 5782.

¹⁸⁵ Imtiaz Ahmad, "Friendship with Non-Muslims" in *Speeches for an Inquiring Mind*, Al-Rasheed Printers, Madinah, 2001, p.57; Safy al-Rahman Mubarakfuri, *Al-Rahiq Al-Makhtum (The Sealed Nectar: Biography of the Noble Prophet)*, Dar al-Salam Publishers, Riyadh, 2002, p.522.

c.) The Prophet (p) Welcomed Christian Visitors from Abyssinia

*According to Ibn Ishaq, "...About twenty Christian men from Abyssinia came to see the Messenger of Allah (p) while he was in Mecca. News of him had reached them in Abyssinia, and so they came to Mecca and found him in the Mosque. They sat with him and spoke to him, and asked him questions while men from the Quraish were in their meeting places around the Ka'bah..."*¹⁸⁶

d.) A Non-Muslim War Captive was Kept in the Prophet's Mosque in Medina

The companion Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet (p) sent a cavalry of troops towards Najd and they arrested a man from the tribe of Banu Hanifah who was called Thumama bin Uthal. He was the chief of Banu Hanifah who had assassinated a number of the Prophet's (p) Companions, and even plotted to kill the Prophet (p) himself.¹⁸⁷

He was brought to Medina and tied to one of the pillars of the Prophet's (p) Mosque. *The Prophet (p) went to see him and said, "What have you got, O Thumama?" He replied, "I have got a good thought, O Muhammad! If you should kill me, you would kill a person who has already killed somebody (among you), and if you should set me free, you would do a favour to one who is grateful; and if you want property, then ask me whatever*

¹⁸⁶ Ibn Hisham, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah*, vol.2, p.236.

wealth you want." He was left till the next day when the Prophet (p) said to him, "What have you got, Thumama?" He said, "What I told you, i.e. if you set me free, you would do a favor to one who is grateful." The Prophet (p) left him till the day after, when he said again, "What have you got, O Thumama?" He said, "I have got what I told you." On that the Prophet (p) said, "Release Thumama." So he (i.e. Thumama) went to a garden of date-palm trees near the Mosque, took a bath, then returned to the Mosque and said, "I testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah, and also testify that Muhammad is His Apostle! By Allah, O Muhammad! There was no face on the surface of the earth most disliked by me than yours, but now your face has become the most beloved face to me. By Allah, there was no religion most disliked by me than yours, but now it is the most beloved religion to me. By Allah, there was no town most disliked by me than your town, but now it is the most beloved town to me. Your cavalry arrested me (at the time) when I was intending to perform the 'Umra. And now what do you think?" The Prophet (p) gave him good tidings (congratulated him) and ordered him to perform the 'Umra. So when he came to Mecca, someone said to him, "You have become a Sabian?" Thumama replied, "No! By Allah, I have embraced Islam with Muhammad, the Apostle of Allah. No, by Allah! Not a single grain of wheat will come to you from

¹⁸⁷ Al-Bukhari, *Sahih Bukhari*, hadith no.4372; Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, hadith no.1764.

Yamamah (in the Najd area) unless the Prophet (p) gives his permission."¹⁸⁸

Supporting Texts

"Let there be no compulsion in religion..." (Qur'an 2: 256)

"There has come to you enlightenment from your Lord. So whoever will see, does so for [the benefit of] his soul, and whoever is blind [does harm] against it. And [say], "I am not a guardian over you." (Qur'an 6:104)

"The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better (i.e. Allah orders the faithful believers to be patient at the time of anger, and to excuse those who treat them badly) then verily he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend." (Qur'an 41:34)

"...Unto every one of you have We appointed a (different) law (Shari'ah) and way of life (Minhaj). And if God had so willed, He could surely have made you all one single community, but (He willed it otherwise) in order to test you by means of what he has revealed unto you. Compete, then, with one another in

¹⁸⁸ Al-Baihaqi, *al-Sunan al-Sugrah*, al-Maktabah al-Shamilah 3.13, vol. 3, p.374; Al- Baihaqi, *al-Sunan al-Sugrah*, Maktabah Dar al-Baz, Makkah, vol.1, p.171; Abu Dawud, *Sunan Abu Dawud*, Dar al-Kitab al-Arabi, Beirut, vol.3, p.9; Ahmad bin Shu'aib Abu Abd al-Rahman al-Nasa'i, *al-Sunan al-Kubrah*, (edited by Abd al-Gafar Sulaiman al-Bandawi and Sayyid Kusrawi Hasan), Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 1991, vol.1 p.107; Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, (edited by Muhammad Zuhair bin Nasir al-Nasir), Dar Tawq al-Najat, vol.1, p.472.

doing good works! Unto God you all must return, and then he will make you truly understand all that on which you were wont to differ..." (Qur'an 5:48-49)

"As for such (of the unbelievers) as do not fight against you on account of (your) faith, and neither drive you forth from your homelands, God does not forbid you to show them kindness and to behave towards them with full equity: for verily, God loves those who act equitably." (Qur'an 60:8)

The Prophet (p) said, *"Truly, it is better that a leader should err on the side of forgiveness than on the side of punishment."*¹⁸⁹

Comments

Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali said, "It is understood from this hadith that Thumamah was a polytheist when he was tied in the Mosque, but embraced Islam after he had been set free. So, there is a proof in this hadith that a polytheist can be allowed into the mosque if permitted by Muslims. The Prophet (p) had once allowed non-Muslim delegates of Thaqif into the Mosque in order to ease or soften their hearts. Waqi' reported from Sufyan (who reported) from Hassan who said that a delegation came to the Prophet (p) from Thaqif, and they entered the Mosque to meet him... This is similar to other Arab non-Muslim delegations and the Christian deputation from Najran, all of whom were allowed into the Mosque of the Prophet (p) and they sat therein with the Prophet (p). Also,

¹⁸⁹ *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, hadith no.1011.

when the polytheists of Quraish came to ransom the captives of the Battle of Badr, they slept in the Mosque.”¹⁹⁰

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah said, “*In this (incident of the Christians of Najran) is a (precedence of) permission for them to enter the mosques of Muslims; it makes it possible for them to offer their prayers in the presence of Muslims and in their mosques too, if the situation incidentally demands that.*”¹⁹¹ It is necessary to emphasize that the place of worship in this case is the Prophet's Mosque in Medina, which is the second most venerated mosque in the world.¹⁹²

Ibn Kathir notes that what is prohibited for non-Muslims to enter is (only) the *Masjid al-Haram* (the Inviolable Mosque in Mecca).¹⁹³ Thus, the majority of Muslim scholars are of the opinion that non-Muslims are not allowed to visit the sacred mosque in Mecca based on an interpretation of verse 9:28 in the Qur'an.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁰ Abd al-Rahman bin Shihab al-Din, Ibn Rajab, *Fath al-Bari*, (edited by Abu Mu'adh Tariq bin 'Iwad Allah bin Muhammad), Dar Ibn al-Jawzi, Saudi Arabia, 1422AH, vol.2, p.560.

¹⁹¹ Ibn Qayyim, *Zad al-Ma'ad*, Mu'assasah al-Risalah, Beirut, 1994, vol. 3, p.638. Also cited in Ali Mohiuddin Al-Qaradaghi, *We and the Other: Substantiating the basis of the Ideal Relation between Muslims and Non-Muslims in Light of the Islamic Jurisprudence*, (Transl. Syed Bashir Ahmad Kashmiri), Kuala Lumpur, 2015, p.196-197.

¹⁹² *Sahih al-Bukhari*, hadith no.1190; *Sahih Muslim*, hadith no.3325; *Sunan Ibn Majah*, hadith no.1404; *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, hadith no.325.

¹⁹³ *Tafsir Ibn Kathir (Abridged)*, Darussalam Publishers, Riyadh, vol.4, p.388.

¹⁹⁴ Ibn Ashur, *Al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir*; Alusi, *Ruh al-Ma'ani*; Nasafi, *Madarik al-Tanzil*; Abu Suud, *Irshad al-Aql al-Salim*; Abu Hayyan, *Bahr al-Muhit*; Suyuti, *Tafsir Jalalayn* under commentary of Qur'an 9:28 in *Al-Maktabah al-Shamilah*, 2nd Edition, 2007.

With regard to other mosques, some *fuqaha'* (jurists) say that it is permissible because there is nothing to indicate that it is not allowed; others say that it is not permissible, drawing on the analogy with the Masjid al-Haram.¹⁹⁵

In conclusion, it is permissible to allow people of other faiths into the mosque if it serves the interests of *shari'ah* or meets a valid need, such as a person hearing something that may invite him to enter Islam, or because he needs to drink water in the mosque, etc. There are many benefits offered by doing this: *"They could hear the speeches and sermons of the Prophet (p), see people praying and reciting Qur'an, and other benefits that are gained by those who visit the mosque."*¹⁹⁶

Implications and Lessons

The narratives above show the permissibility of non-Muslims entering mosques. Also, the fact that Thumama was not forced to convert to Islam, despite being at the mercy of the Muslims, exemplifies the Qur'an's prohibition of forceful conversion.

¹⁹⁵ According to scholars from the Hanafi School of Law (madhhab) however, *"There is nothing wrong with non-Muslims (dhimmis) entering the Haram of Makkah (al-Masjid al-Haram) and all other mosques. This is the sound opinion in the Madhhab, as mentioned in al-Muhit of Sarakhsi."* (Al-Shaikh Nisam and a group of Indian Scholars *al-Fatawa al-Hindiyyah*, vol.5, p.346). See also Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Azim*, (ed. Mahmud Hassan), Dar Fikr, Beirut, 1994, vol. 2, p.422.

¹⁹⁶ Ahmad ibn Abdul Razaq al-Dawish, *Fatawa lajnah al-Daimah li al-Buhuth al-'Ilmiyyah wa al-Ifta*, vol.31, p.265, Fatwa Number 16005, Maktabah al-Shamilah 3.13.

Commenting on the case of Thumama, Ibn Hajar lists some lessons for Muslims which include forgiving non-Muslim captives without receiving any ransom or compensation in exchange for their freedom, and how kindness to an existing enemy can eliminate hatred and bring love.¹⁹⁷

Although a number of Christian or Jewish teachings are not accepted in Islam, the Prophet's (p) actions demonstrate an exceptional degree of tolerance and respect for them especially. As earlier explained by Ibn Qayyim, Jews and Christians may be permitted to worship in their own way, even in a Muslim place of worship.

If the Prophet (p) could accommodate various people of other faiths in his Mosque, the second most sacred mosque on earth, then which other site – Muslim home, hall, mosque, or venue – should non-Muslims be prohibited from, on account of the difference in faith?

Today, millions of non-Muslim visitors and tourists visit many great mosques across the world in Egypt, Turkey, Oman, Bahrain, and Malaysia, etc.¹⁹⁸ Some Muslims (and Mosque Tour Guides) leverage on this rare opportunity to educate the visitors about Islam and clarify common misconceptions they might have about the religion.

¹⁹⁷ Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, *Fath al-Bari*, al-Maktabah al-Shamilah 3.13, vol. 8, p.88.

¹⁹⁸ See AWARENESS THROUGH MOSQUE TOURS ("ATMT") from www.discoverislam.net; www.alfateh.gov.bh

Also, the fact that the Prophet (p) welcomed non-Muslim delegates for peace talks and interfaith dialogues is proof that Muslims and people of other faith can meet in any suitable environment for promoting better mutual understanding and peaceful co-existence.¹⁹⁹

199 For more on non-Muslims entering the mosque, see: Da'wah Institute of Nigeria, *Muslim Relations with Christians, Jews and Others*, Islamic Education Trust, Minna, Nigeria, 2018, p.90-93

Case 26

The Prophet (p) Received a Loan from a Jew and Gave his Shield as Collateral

The wife of Prophet Muhammad (p), Aishah narrated that, *“The Prophet (p) bought some foodstuff from a Jew on credit for a limited period and mortgaged his shield for it.”*²⁰⁰ In another narration, she said, *“The Prophet (p) passed away while his armour was mortgaged to a Jew for thirty units of barley.”*²⁰¹

Supporting Texts

“...whereas Allah has permitted trading and forbidden Riba (usury)...” (Qur'an 2:275)

“As for such (of the unbelievers) as do not fight against you on account of (your) faith, and neither drive you forth from your homelands, God does not forbid you to show them kindness and to behave towards them with full equity: for verily, God loves those who act equitably.” (Qur'an 60:8)

²⁰⁰ Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, 3rd Ed., (edited by Mustafa Dib al-Bagha), Dar bin Kathir, al-Yamamah, Beirut, 1987, hadith no.2374; Al-Baihaqi, *al-Sunan al-Kubrah*, Majlis Da'irah al-Ma'arif al-Nizamiyyah al-Ka'inah fi al-Hind bi Balad Haidar Abad, 1344 AH, hadith no.11414; Muhammad bin Yazid Abu Abdullah al-Qazwini, *Sunan bin Majah*, (edited by Muhammad Fu'ad abd al-Baqi), Dar al-Fikr, Beirut, hadith no.2436; Ahmad bin Shu'aib Abu Abd al-Rahman al-Nasa'i, *Sunan al-Nasa'i*, 2nd Ed., (edited by Abd al-Fatah Abu Guddah), Maktab al-Matbu'at al-Islamiyyah, Halab, hadith no.4609.

²⁰¹ *Sahih Bukhari*, hadith no.2759.

Comments

Al-Qadi 'Iyad said regarding this narration, “The hadith shows permissibility of transactions with Jews, *Ahl al-Dhimma* (people of covenant) and the remaining polytheists.”²⁰²

Imam Ash-Shawkani said, “The hadith shows the permissibility of having transactions with unbelievers on what is not prohibited.”²⁰³

Implications and Lessons

This narrative shows the permissibility of transacting with non-Muslims, even when the Prophet (p) had the choice to deal with only Muslims. There were many companions of the Prophet (p) who were wealthy, including his closest friends such as Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman; and yet, he chose to deal with a Jew.

The fact that the Prophet (p) chose to buy on credit from a non-Muslim, and even gave his shield as collateral, despite the fact that there was no pressing need for such, it was not as a last resort, nor was it because there were no Muslim selling foodstuff or from whom he could borrow, shows that this was completely permissible and a part of his tradition (*sunnah*). In fact, this was a period when the Prophet (p) was in a position

²⁰² Al- Qadi 'Iyad, *Ikmal al-Mu'lim Sharh Sahih Muslim*, al-Maktabah al-shamilah 3.13, vol.5, p.159.

²⁰³ Muhammad bin Ali Ash-Shawkani, *Nayl al-Awtar*, Idarat al-Tiba'a al-Muniriyyah, Damascus, Syria, vol.5, p. 289.

of power and authority. It thus shows the Prophet's (p) willingness to transact in mutually beneficial business relationships which is another example of interfaith bridge-building.

It should be borne in mind that this transaction occurred towards the end of his life, and as such is not abrogated by anything. In fact, when the Prophet died, his shield was still in the hands of the Jew.²⁰⁴

This is contrary to the argument used by some that an Islamic economy should ideally marginalize or be to the detriment of people of other faiths.

²⁰⁴ *Sahih Bukhari*, hadith no.2916.

Case 27

The Prophet (p) Trusted a Non-Muslim with His Life

The wife of Prophet Muhammad (p), Aishah narrated that:

“The Prophet (p) and Abu Bakr employed a man (by the name Abdullah bin Uraiqit) from the Bani Al-Dil and the tribe of Bani 'Abd bin 'Adi as a guide. He was an expert guide, and he broke the oath of contract which he had to abide by with the tribe of Al-'Asi bin Wail, and he was on the religion of the Quraysh polytheists. The Prophet (p) and Abu Bakr had confidence in him, gave him their riding camels and told him to bring them to the Cave of Thaur after three days. So, he brought them their two riding camels after three days and both of them (the Prophet (p) and Abu Bakr) set out accompanied by 'Amir bin Fuhaira and the Dili guide who guided them below Mecca along the road leading to the sea-shore.”²⁰⁵

He safely led them to Medina through the desert during their *Hijrah* (migration), even though the polytheist Quraysh leaders had promised a reward of one hundred camels for whoever brings him back to Mecca, dead or alive.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁵ Al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, vol.3, hadith no. 464, in *Alim* 6.0.

²⁰⁶ Safy al-Rahman al-Mubarakfuri, *al-Rahiq al-Makhtum*, al-Maktabah al-Shamilah 3.13, vol.1, p.131.

Supporting Text

“(But) they are not all alike: among the followers of earlier revelation, there are upright people...” (Qur'an 3:113)

“Among the followers of earlier revelation are some who, if entrusted with a hoard of gold, will (readily) pay it back; others, who, if entrusted with a single silver coin, will not repay it unless you constantly stand over them demanding it.” (Qur'an 3:75)

“Cooperate in goodness and piety, and do not cooperate in sin and aggression.” (Qur'an 5:2)

Comments

The choice of Abdullah bin Uraiqit as the guide was because of the trust Abu Bakr and the Prophet (p) had in him as well as his competence and readiness to carry out the assignment given to him.²⁰⁷

The author of the renowned work, *Fiqh us-Sunnah*, Sayyid Sabiq, states:

“In his book, *Al-Adab ash-Shari'ah*, Ibn Muflih writes that Sheikh Taqiuddin Ibn Taymiyyah said: 'A credible Jew or Christian who has medical expertise may treat a sick Muslim. Such a person may, likewise, be entrusted with funds or other financial transactions, for Allah the Exalted, says: “Among the

²⁰⁷ Munir Muhammad Gadhban, *Fiqh al-Sirah al-Nabawiiyyah*, Jami'ah Umm al-Qurah, Saudi Arabia, 1419AH, p.336.

People of the Book are some who, if entrusted with a hoard of gold, will (readily) pay it back; others, who, if entrusted with a single silver coin, will not repay it unless you constantly stand over them demanding it.” (Qur'an 3:75). We find in a sound hadith that the Prophet (p), hired a polytheist as a guide at the time of his migration to Medina, so he entrusted him with his life and money. The people of the tribe of Khuza'ah, who were both Muslims and polytheists, acted as scouts for the Messenger of Allah (p). It is also reported that the Prophet (p), ordered Muslims to seek treatment from Al-Harith ibn Kildah, who was a disbeliever.²⁰⁸

This same principle can be applied when one has to entrust a person with funds or deal with him in business. If a Muslim has to confide in or turn to someone from the People of the Book for medical treatment, he may do so. It is not prohibited to befriend Jews and Christians. And when the Muslim has an opportunity to talk to them, he should address them in ways that are polite and sincere. Indeed, Allah the Exalted, says: *“And do not argue with the people of the Book, except in ways that are best.”* (Qur'an 29:46). In a hadith on the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah, Abu Al-Khattab tells us that, *“The Prophet (p) sent a man of the Khuza'ah tribe to gather intelligence, and the Prophet (p) accepted his report despite the fact that he was a disbeliever.”* This proves, according to Abu Al-Khattab, that it

²⁰⁸ Sayyid Sabiq, *Fiqh al-Sunnah*, vol.4, hadith no. 6A in *Alim* 6.0.

is quite permissible to take the advice of a non-believing physician for diagnosis and treatment, provided he is not suspected and his fidelity is not doubtful.

Implications and Lessons

These narratives, and the Qur'anic verses, show that people of other faiths can be trusted with life and property. However, such dealings should be based on the personal level of trustworthiness of the individual involved, irrespective of the faith.²⁰⁹

Contrary to the opinion held by some, a person's religious affiliation or state of disbelief, therefore, does not imply that he is not trustworthy. The Prophet's (p) life was at stake, yet this particular polytheist was trustworthy, and the Prophet (p) trusted him. Other trusted non-Muslims during that time include Abu Talib, the Prophet's (p) beloved uncle, who gave the Prophet (p) protection and security in Mecca, and Mut'im bin 'Adi, who was one of the leaders of Mecca that sympathized and helped the Prophet (p) and other Muslims especially during the years of the Boycott by the Meccans.²¹⁰

²⁰⁹ Muhammad bin Sa'd bin Muni' Abu Abdullah al-Basri al-Zuhri, *al-Tabaqat al-Kubrah*, (edited by Ihsan 'Abbas), Dar Sadir, Beirut, 1968, vol.1, p.229; Al-Hakim al-Naisaburi, *al-Mustadrak 'Ala al-Sahihain*, (edited by Mustafa Abd al-Qadir 'Ata), Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 1990, vol.3, p.9; Al-Tabarani, *al-Mu'jam al-Kabir*, vol.23, p.24; Safiy al-Rahman al-Mubarakfuri, *al-Rahiq al-Makhtum*, al-Maktabah al-Shamilah, 3.13, vol.1, p.132; Sulaiman bn Ahmad bin Ayyub bin Matir al-Lakhmi al-Shami, *al-Mu'jam al-Kabir*, al-Maktabah al-Shamillah 3.13, vol.16, p.336.

²¹⁰ Ibn Abidin, *Hashiyah*, vol.5, p.265 - cited by Salim Al-Bahnasawy, *Non-Muslims in the Shari'ah of Islam*, Dar an-Nashr li al-Jami'at, Egypt, 2004,

It is also a well-known historical fact that the Prophet (p) trusted the Christian Ethiopian King (the Negus), Ashamah bin Abjar al-Najashi, with the lives of the first group of Muslim refugees escaping persecution from the polytheists of Mecca.²¹¹ And even as late in the sequence of revelation as the Farewell Hajj, the Prophet (p) asked Al-Harith bin Kaladah, a non-Muslim physician, to treat the illness of his close companion Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas.²¹²

Similarly, it was reported that Mukhayriq, a Jewish rabbi from the Jewish clan of Tha'labah fought alongside the Prophet (p) and the companions in the Battle of Uhud, where he died.²¹³ Moreover, the cases of the Jews of Banu Qaynuqa' who fought alongside the Prophet (p) after Badr,²¹⁴ the Jewish Rabbi who fought and called upon his fellow Jews to fight alongside the Prophet (p) against the attack by the Quraysh at the battle of

p.67; Meraj Mohiudeen, *Revelation: The Story of Muhammad*, Whiteboard Press, USA, 2016, p.149 & 179; Safy al-Rahman Mubarakfuri, *Al-Rahiq Al-Makhtum (The Sealed Nectar: Biography of the Noble Prophet)*, Dar al-Salam Publishers, Riyadh, 1996, p.158-161.

²¹¹ Safy al-Rahman Mubarakfuri, *Al-Rahiq Al-Makhtum (The Sealed Nectar: Biography of the Noble Prophet)*, Dar al-Salam Publishers, Riyadh, 2002, pp.118-123; www.readthespirit.com/interfaith-peacemakers/king-negus-ashama-ibn-abjar-of-abyssinia.

²¹² Al-Qurtubi, *Tafsir al-Qurtubi*, vol.11, p.112 - cited in Salim Al-Bahnasawy, *Non-Muslims in the Shari'ah of Islam*, Dar an-Nashr lil-Jami'at, Egypt, 2004, p.67.

²¹³ Meraj Mohiudeen, *Revelation: The Story of Muhammad*, Whiteboard Press, USA, 2016, p.232; Ibn Ishaq, cited on www.islamcity.org/11251/why-would-a-rabbi-ally-with-prophet-muhammad; See also: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mukhayriq.

²¹⁴ See al-Shafi'i, *Al-Umm*, vol. 4, p. 261; al-Nawawi, *Al-Majmu'*, vol. 21, p. 37; al-Mawardi, *Al-Hawi*, vol. 14, p. 130; al-Hifni, *Mawsu'ah al-Qur'an*, vol. 2, p. 1905AH – (all cited in Ahmed Al-Dawoody, *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011).

Uhud, the group of Jews who fought with the Prophet (p) and received a share of the war spoils,²¹⁵ and the many idolaters who fought with the Prophet (p) at Hunayn and al-Ta'if are all examples of the Prophet (p) trusting and co-operating with people of other faiths to achieve a mutually beneficial common goal.²¹⁶ It is on the basis of the aforementioned incidents that jurists agree on the permissibility of people of other faiths, fighting alongside a Muslim army.

These examples show that the Prophet (p) and the early Muslims (*salaf*) worked and cooperated with people of other faiths in various capacities. They also trusted and consulted with them and assigned to them positions of responsibility at the private and governmental level and in fields such as medicine, administration and political treaties, transport, agriculture, trade and industry, security and military, etc. In such areas, however, it is also encouraged that Muslims

²¹⁵ See Ibn Ahmad, *Al-Ahadith al-Mukhtarah*, vol. 7, p. 189; al-Salihi, *Subul al-Huda*, vol. 9, p. 121; Ibn Mansur, *Sunan Sa'id Ibn Mansur*, vol. 2, p. 331; Ibn Muflih, *Al-Mubdi'*, vol. 3, p. 336; al-Shawkani, *Nayl al-Awtar*, vol. 8, pp. 43. See also, for Jews and idolaters fighting alongside the Prophet against the Muslims' enemies, Ibn Qudamah, *Al-Mughni*, vol. 9, p. 207; al-Ghazali, *Al-Wajiz*, vol. 2, p. 190; al-Ghazali, *Al-Wasit*, vol. 7, p. 16 – (all cited in Ahmed Al-Dawoody, *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011).

²¹⁶ See al-Shaybani, *al-Siyar*, p. 249; al-Nawawi, *Al-Majmu'*, vol. 21, p. 37; al-Nawawi, *Rawdah al-Talibin*, vol. 10, p. 239; Ibn Qudamah, *Al-Mughni*, vol. 9, p. 207; al-Shawkani, *Nayl al-Awtar*, vol. 8, pp. 42 – 45; Ibn 'Abidin, *Hashiyah Radd al-Muhtar*, vol. 4, p. 148; al-'Abdari, *Al-Taj wa al-Iklil*, vol. 3, p. 353; 'Amir, *Ahkam al-Asra*, pp. 57 – 59; al-Qaradawi, *Al-Halal wa al-Haram*, p. 295; Shuman, *Al-'Alaqa al-Dawliyyah fi al-Shari'ah*, p.57; al-Qaradawi, *Fiqh al-Jihad*, vol. 1, pp.703 – 711. – (all cited in Ahmed Al-Dawoody, *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011).

should collectively strive to avoid complete reliance on others and gain independent strength vis-à-vis their status in comparison to non-Muslims, as this is in the interest of greater social equity, self-determination and effective political and economic interdependence.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the reasons/proofs usually given for barring non-Muslims from entering Mosques?
2. Do you have any reservations or concerns about allowing non-Muslims to enter Mosques? Discuss these reasons, concerns or reservations in the light of Case 25 a-d, supporting texts, comments etc.
3. Commitment to Islam and love for non-Muslim relatives are not mutually exclusive. Discuss.
4. In light of Case 26, discuss how you would respond to the claims of those Muslims who say that we should do business or buy from non-Muslims only if we cannot find Muslims to do these with.
5. In certain aspects of human endeavour, the expertise and reliability of the person concerned, - not religious belief - is a major consideration when deciding who to work with. Discuss.

PART II

The Contexts of Violence and
Warfare in the Seerah

Introduction

This book has tried to represent the beautiful and noble character of the Prophet (p) and some of his respected companions, especially regarding interfaith relations and positive peacebuilding. We are however aware that some non-Muslims and Muslims have attempted to cite instances from the Seerah that give a completely contrary view of the Prophet (p) and his companions in their pursuit of a more just and peaceful multi-religious society. Those who view the Prophet (p) as hostile or duplicitous in his interfaith relations would therefore consider the cases cited in this book as a product of cherry-picking and an attempt to only highlight those positive cases while deliberately avoiding more embarrassing and damning instances in the Seerah.

All verses of the Qur'an that relate to fighting and battles at the time of the Prophet (p) had specific well-known contexts captured in the Sunnah and found in the authenticated hadith and Seerah. According to scholars (such as ...) who have studied each of these battles and violent encounters, all of the instances of fighting at the time of the Prophet (p) were defensive (*jihad al-daf'*), and not provocative, aggressive or offensive (*jihad al-talab*) towards people of other faiths. This should make it abundantly clear that no verse of the Qur'an or authentic hadith of the Prophet (p) should be interpreted to justify unprovoked aggression and hostility towards peace-loving people of other faiths,²¹⁷ as this has no backing in the

²¹⁷ See Ibn Taymiyyah, *Qā'idah Mukhtasarah fī Qitāl al- Kuffār*, pp. 96, 134; Ibn Qayyim al- Jawziyyah, *Hidayah al-Hayārā*, pp. 137 f.; al- Marāghī,

Seerah. On the contrary, a complete and thorough study of the Prophet's battles and their contexts reconfirm the just and peacebuilding mission of the Prophet (p) and his companions.

This section therefore has tried to identify the most commonly misinterpreted aspects of the Seerah, with a view of putting them in their correct historical contexts and clarifying misconceptions and erroneous conclusions that have been arrived at, as a result of missing information or prejudiced bias in their interpretation of the Seerah. This is necessary in order to get a fuller picture and more comprehensive understanding of the Prophet's (p) mission for greater peace and justice. Clarifying these issues also strengthens the argument that the Prophet (p) was sent as a role model of justice and compassion, and with a mission against all forms of extremism, including religiously motivated violent extremism.

Tafsīr al- Marāghī, Vol. 10, p. 92; Mahmassani, *Al- Qānūn wa al- 'Alāqāt*, p. 177; al- Zuhayli, "Majālat al- 'Alāqāt," p. 199; Sābiq, *Fiqh al- Sunnah*, Vol. 3, pp. 18 f.; Afifi, *Al- Mujtama' al- Islāmī*, p. 148; al- Ghunaimi, *Qānūn al- Salām fī al- Islām*, p. 59; Ghunaym, *Al- Jihād al- Islāmī*, pp. 32 f.; Tabliyyah, *Al- Islām wa Huqūq al- Insān*, p. 72; al- Firjānī, *Usūl al- 'Alāqāt*, pp. 77, 82 f.; al- Rikābī, *Al- Jihād fī al- Islām*, pp. 125 f.; al- Amīn, "Mawqif al- Islām," p. 311; Weeramantry, *Islamic Jurisprudence*, p. 147; Stewart, *Unfolding Islam*, p. 92; Alsumaih, "The Sunni Concept of Jihad," pp. 41, 271, 276. Rudolph Peters indicates that modern Muslim writers "show that all military campaigns, raids and expeditions of Mohammed and the first Caliphs were purely defensive." See Peters, "Djihad," p. 286; al- Qaradāwī, *Fiqh al- Jihād*, Vol. 1, pp. 339–364, 380; all cited in Ahmed Al-Dawoody, *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011, p.39

On the Prophet's (p) *Ghazawat* (“raids” or “battles”) and *Saraya* (“expeditions”)

Some people regard the Prophet (p) as a war-monger who was more interested in bloodshed, aggression, violence and war, as opposed to peacebuilding. They argue that according to historical sources, the Prophet (p) participated in 27 *ghazawat* (“raids”, “expeditions” or “battles”) which by their very nature, were expected to undermine peaceful co-existence between Muslims and people of other faiths, especially in a multi-religious society. Did the Prophet (p) really engage in 27 battles?²¹⁸

Biographers generally refer to the incidents of fighting between Muslims and their enemies during the Prophet's (p) lifetime as *al-ghazawat* or *al-saraya*. *Ghazawat* (sing. *ghazwah*), which has the same meaning as *maghazi*, usually means raids. Here, it refers to any of the missionary and military campaigns, and in fact other trips, in which the Prophet (p) took part. *Saraya* (sing. *sariyah*) refers to expeditions allegedly sent by the Prophet (p) but in which, unlike the *ghazawat*, he did not take part.²¹⁹

²¹⁸ In our response to this question, we relied heavily on Ahmed Al-Dawoody, *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011, pp. 11-41.

²¹⁹ Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi, *Al-Saraya al-Harbiyyah fi al-'Ahd al-Nabawi*, Al-Zahra li al-I'lam al-Arabi, Cairo, 1990, p.21; Husayn Mujib al-Masri, *Ghazawat al-Rasul Bayn Shu'ara al-Shu'ub al-Islamiyyah*, Dar al-Thaqafiyyah li al-Nashr, Cairo, 2000, p.32.

Regarding the *Saraya*, it includes expeditions sent for several objectives, such as to preach Islam, get news of what the Quraysh were planning, return stolen property, fight against those who were preparing to attack Medina, kill an individual for the same reason, fight those who killed one of the Prophet's messengers, and, in five instances, to destroy Quraysh idols after the taking of Mecca.

In most instances, biographers give their account in the form of a narration of the incidents, without explaining the background and objectives of these expeditions, and they give different totals for these incidents, such as 35, 38, 47 and 56. These differences indicate that each biographer arrived at his own conception of what constituted a *sariyah*. For example, Ibn Sa'd at the beginning of his book, following his teacher al-Wāqidī, states that the number of *sarāyā* sent by the Prophet was 47, but he ends up referring to 56 *sarāyā*. Some biographers used the word *ghazwah* to refer to incidents others called *sariyah*, while some used the word *ba'th* (delegation) in the same context. In many incidents, no encounter at all occurred with the clans. A number of incidents involved fighting and in some cases the number of victims is not given. These accounts of *sarāyā* are a much less credible source than those of the *ghazawāt*, not only because of the lack of clarity and details about the reasons for and objectives of such minor incidents, but also because the narrations are not scrutinized and in some cases are unconvincing as stories.

For example, in the *sariyah* of Abdullah bin Jahsh, the Prophet sent 8 Muslims to Nakhlah, a place between Mecca and al-Ta'if. The point to be addressed here is the objective of this *sariyah*. Ibn Ish'aq's wording of the phrase expressing the objective of this *sariyah*: “*ārsud bihā Qurayshā, hattā ātīh minhum bi- khabar*” is translated by Guillaume as “Lie in wait there [at Nakhlah] for the Quraysh and find out for us what they are doing.” But Watt and many Western researchers base their study of this incident on al-Wāqidī's wording of the phrase expressing the aim of this *sariyah* as “*fatarassad bihā 'aīr Quraysh*.” They incorrectly understand this phrase to mean “ambush a Meccan caravan.” It is worth adding here that all the biographical sources use the former phrase and even al-Wāqidī, the source of the second phrase, mentions a narration that confirms the first report.

The point here is that biographers were not primarily concerned with describing what happened but rather with reporting what was said about what happened, and contradictory or inaccurate reports are unreliable sources for constructing theories on the tradition of war in Islam. In dealing with such narrations, researchers use their imagination to determine what actually happened so that they can construct their theories. These imaginative approaches to interpreting, and then assessing, these incidents are the origin of the many polemical theories on the tradition of war in Islam, which are determined, to a great extent, by whether the researchers interpret and assess these incidents within their contexts and according to the norms,

culture, and mentality of the people involved in the incidents, or whether they approach them with the mindset of the 21st century.²²⁰

As for the Prophet's *ghazawat*, it is noteworthy that the word *ghazwah* has many meanings in Arabic, and has been used to describe raids and military campaigns. It has however, also been used in the past, to describe missionary outings to preach Islam, travel for pilgrimage, scouting and security patrols, expeditions, and visits to make and negotiate peace treaties, etc. The most common mistake by many contemporary non-Muslim authors and some Muslims too, has been to interpret each instance of a *ghazwah* as an unjustified raid or military campaign, which was known to be customary among pre-Islamic Arabs. So while the traditional meaning of *ghazwah*, as used by the early biographers of the prophetic history (seerah) accommodated both the benign, peaceful and also hostile encounters and raids, the modern meaning in Arabic lexicons has retained only its negative meaning, i.e. raids and aggressive military expeditions.

Early biographers actually used the word *ghazwah* to denote all the Prophet's (p) travels as well as many of his encounters with non-Muslims, and they give different figures for the total number of these *ghazawat*, such as 18, 19, 26 and 27. Different names are also given to the same incident, referring either to the name of the clan or tribe involved, or to the locality where

²²⁰ Ahmed Al-Dawoody, *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011, pp. 29 - 31

it took place. It is also common for the biographers to give different chronologies to the events.²²¹ They even differed on what constitutes a single *ghazwah*, in the sense that, if the Prophet (p) left Medina and encountered two tribes before returning to Medina, some considered this one *ghazwah*, while others considered it two.

It is worth mentioning here that the main concern of the early biographers of the Prophet (p) such as Ibn Ishaq, al-Waqidi, Ibn Sa'd, and al-Dhahabi was just to record all the accounts relevant to the life or the person of the Prophet (p). They merely aimed at transferring tens of thousands of reports and organizing them chronologically according to topic. They give different chronologies and in some cases, details that could lead to different conclusions on the reasons for and objectives of some of these *ghazawat* and *saraya*. They did not attempt to examine the various reports in order to inform the reader of what they considered to be the reasons or justifications for these incidences. One reason that these early biographers did not give adequate explanatory information about these incidents could be because they were addressed to Muslims, who might have been expected to be aware of the relevant background information.

The term *ghazwah* could be used to refer to a journey. It is noteworthy, for instance, that Ibn Ishaq included the *umrah*

²²¹ See Jones J.M.B., "The Chronology of the Maghazi – A Textual Survey," pp. 193–228; cited in Ahmed Al-Dawoody, *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011, p.22, f.77.

(lesser pilgrimage) performed by the Prophet (p) in the year 7 AH among the Prophet's 27 *ghazawat*, which has led some to regard it as a “raid”, and not just an expedition.²²² Indeed, Ibn Ishaq was not mistaken here because this was one meaning of the word *ghazwah* at the time he was writing. Moreover, al-Waqidi also called it *ghazwah al-Qadiyyah* (i.e. the fulfilled *umrah ghazwah*).²²³ In this case, the Prophet's journey for *umrah* is called a *ghazwah*, even though it had nothing to do with fighting. Thus, the word *ghazwah* can also mean a journey such as a pilgrimage and does not necessarily mean a hostile raid. Hence, this meaning of the word *ghazwah* is one of the meanings the biographers had in mind when they attempted to describe every single instance of the Prophet's travels or encounters with non-Muslims, but this meaning is no longer found in any modern standard Arabic lexicon.

The term *ghazwah* could also be used to refer to any of the Prophet's (p) expedition to preach Islam and make peace treaties with different tribes. Nine of the Prophet's 27 *ghazawat* were actually of this nature, which were successful in two cases. In *ghazwah al-Abwa*, the Prophet made a written peace treaty with the clan of Banu Damarah²²⁴ and in

²²² Guillaume A., *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1955, p. 659.

²²³ Muhammad bin Umar al-Waqidi, *Kitab al-Maghazi*, edited by Muhammad Abd al-Qadir Ata, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 2004, vol.2, pp.185 – 192. See also Ibn Sayyid al-Nas, *Uyun al-Athar*, vol. 2, p.203.

²²⁴ For a translation of this treaty, see Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, Oxford University Press, Karachi, 1981, p. 354.

ghazwah al-Ushayr, he made peace treaties with the clan of Banu Mudlaj. In 6 of these 9 *ghazawat*, the Prophet (p) did not actually meet the clans or tribes he intended to. This could have been due to the geography of the region and culture of these tribes, for they were mobile nomads, so when the Prophet (p) knew that they would be at a certain place (usually where their animals could find water), he would go to meet them. But by the time the Prophet (p) reached these places, they had already moved on. The Prophet (p) did not make contact with the clans in any of the following *ghazawat*: Buwat, Banu Sulaym in al-Kudr, Dhu Amarr, also called Ghatafan, al-Furu of Buhran, Dhat al-Riqā, and Dumah al-Jandal. Yet, these are still listed among his *ghazawat*.

In the *ghazwah* of Dhat al-Riqā, as the Prophet (p) was traveling to meet three clans, he met one on his way, but the two parties were fearful of each other. They made no contact and the Prophet (p) prayed with the Muslims “the prayer of fear.”

In some of these *ghazawat*, biographers add that the Prophet (p) stayed for a period of a few days, a month, or even two. Staying for a period of up to two months might suggest that he was involved in preaching and teaching. Mahmud Shakir indicates that the aim of such early *ghazawat* was to learn about each new place and preach Islam to the surrounding tribes; and to ensure that the tribes would not support the Quraysh if a war took place between the Quraysh and the

Muslims.²²⁵ There is no evidence of any fighting or hostility in these *ghazawat*.

The term *ghazwah* was also used to refer to some incidents where the Prophet (p) went out with an army, but didn't meet the enemy. In what historians now refer to as the “First *ghazwah* of Badr”, a non-Muslim by the name of Kurz bin Jabir al-Fihri raided the pasturing camels of Medina.²²⁶ The Prophet (p), along with thirteen of the emigrants, searched for him until they reached the valley of Safwa, close to the neighbourhood of Badr; but in vain, they returned to Medina.²²⁷ In *ghazwah al-Sawiq*, Abu Sufyan, accompanied by 200 (or, in some versions, 400) riders from the Quraysh, attacked a Medinan suburb at night, murdered two Muslim farmers and burnt some palm trees. The Prophet (p) and a party of Muslims went out after them but were unable to catch up with them, as they had already returned to Mecca.²²⁸ These

²²⁵ Mahmud Shakir, *Al-Tarikh al-Islami: Qabl al-Ba'thah wa al-Sirah*, 8th ed., Al-Maktab al-Islami, Beirut, 2000, p.164.

²²⁶ Muhammad bin Ishaq, *Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, edited by Abd al-Malik bin Hisham and annotated by Fu'ad bin Ali Hafiz, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 2000, vol. 1, p. 176; Guillaume A., *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1955, p. 286.

²²⁷ Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, p.246.

²²⁸ Muhammad bin Ishaq, *Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, edited by Abd al-Malik bin Hisham and annotated by Fu'ad bin Ali Hafiz, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 2000, vol. 3, p.23; Meraj Mohiudeen, *Revelation: The Story of Muhammad*, Whiteboard Press, USA, 2015, p.215; Guillaume A., *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1955, p. 361.

incidents are counted as part of the Prophet's *ghazawat* simply because the Prophet (p) took part in a search for the attackers, even though no encounter took place at all.

Likewise, the day after the Battle of Uhud, the Prophet (p) went out with the Muslims in pursuit of the enemy until they reached a place called Hamra al-Asad. They stayed in the area for three days and then returned to Medina without meeting the Quraysh. This incident is called *ghazwah Hamra al-Asad*.

Similarly, at the battle of Uhud, Abu Sufyan vowed to fight the Muslims again at the fair (trading place) of Badr the following year. Thus, in what is known as the “Last *ghazwah* of Badr”, the Prophet (p) and Muslims attended the fair while Abu Sufyan and the men accompanying him turned back before reaching Badr.²²⁹ Calling such an incident a *ghazwah* of the Prophet (p), even though the parties did not see each other, thus confirms that the word *ghazwah* was used to refer to any trip or expedition that the Prophet (p) made and does not necessarily mean a “raid” or “fighting” as it now implies in modern Arabic and as used by most orientalist and Muslims who have not carefully studied the way the word *ghazwah* was traditionally used by the early biographers. Therefore, these examples show that using the word “raid” to translate

²²⁹ Muhammad bin Ishaq, *Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, edited by Abd al-Malik bin Hisham and annotated by Fu'ad bin Ali Hafiz, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 2000, vol. 3, pp. 121–123; Guillaume A., *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1955, pp. 447–449.

ghazwah in the context of these incidences is often inaccurate and indeed misleading.

Almost all biographers agree that fighting took place in only 9 of the Prophet's 27 *ghazawat*, namely: Badr, Uhud, Khandaq/Ahzab, Qurayzah, Mustaliq, Khaybar, Fath Mecca, Hunayn, and Ta'if.²³⁰ Both classical and contemporary Muslim scholars, such as Imam Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah, Sayid Sabiq amongst others, who have studied each of these 9 fighting incidents (*ghazawat*) have concluded that the Muslim's engagement in all these hostilities during the Prophet's lifetime were clearly defensive.²³¹

Would there have been any outbreaks of hostility in early Islam if the Prophet (p) and the Muslims had not been persecuted and had been permitted to practise their new

²³⁰ Ahmed Al-Dawoody, *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011, p.38.

²³¹ See Ibn Taymiyyah, *Qā'idah Mukhtasarah fī Qitāl al- Kuffār*, pp. 96, 134; Ibn Qayyim al- Jawziyyah, *Hidayah al- Hayārā*, pp. 137 f.; al- Marāghī, *Tafsīr al- Marāghī*, Vol. 10, p. 92; Mahmassani, *Al- Qānūn wa al- 'Alāqāt*, p. 177; al- Zuhaylī, "Majālāt al- 'Alāqāt, p. 199; Sābiq, *Fiqh al- Sunnah*, Vol. 3, pp. 18 f.; 'Afīfī, *Al- Mujtama'al- Islāmī*, p. 148; al- Ghunaimi, *Qānūn al- Salām fī al- Islām*, p. 59; Ghunaym, *Al- Jihād al- Islāmī*, pp. 32 f.; Tabliyyah, *Al- Islām wa Huqūq al- Insān*, p. 72; al- Firjānī, *Usūl al- 'Alāqāt*, pp. 77, 82 f.; al- Rikābī, *Al- Jihād fī al- Islām*, pp. 125 f.; al- Amīn, "Mawqif al- Islām," p. 311; Weeramantry, *Islamic Jurisprudence*, p. 147; Stewart, *Unfolding Islam*, p. 92; Alsumaih, "The Sunni Concept of Jihad," pp. 41, 271, 276. Rudolph Peters indicates that modern Muslim writers show that all military campaigns, raids and expeditions of Mohammed and the first Caliphs were purely defensive." See Peters, "Djihad, p. 286; al- Qaradāwī, *Fiqh al- Jihād*, Vol. 1, pp. 339–364, 380. (Cited in Ahmed Al-Dawoody, *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011, p.213, f.199.)

religion freely in Mecca? Would there have been any war in Medina if one of the leaders of the Quraysh Abu Jahl had not forced the Quraysh to go to war with Muslims at Badr, or if the 3 major Jewish clans had abided by the Constitution of Medina (*Sahifah*) which they had agreed to, and not attempted to assassinate the Prophet (p) or support the Quraysh against the Muslims in the Battle of the Trench?²³² From all the available evidence, taking up arms by the Prophet (p) and his Companions was clearly to defend their lives, properties and secure the freedom to practise their religion without any form of oppression.

Also, none of the wars that the Prophet (p) engaged in can be described as a “holy war” in the sense of a war waged to propagate a religion or merely because the enemy held a different religion. The cases of the Jews of Banu Qaynuqa who fought alongside the Prophet (p) after Badr,²³³ the Jewish Rabbi, Mukhayriq, who fought and called upon his fellow Jews to fight alongside the Prophet (p) against the attack by

²³² Ahmed Al-Dawoody, *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011, p.37.

²³³ Muhammad bin Idris al-Shafi'i, *Al-Umm*, 2nd ed., Dar al-Ma'rifah, Beirut, 1393AH, vol.4, p.261; Muhyi al-Din bin Sharaf al-Nawawi, *Al-Majmu: Sharh al-Muhadhdhab*, edited by Mahmud Matraji, Dar al-Fikr, Beirut, 2000, vol.21, p. 37; Ali bin Muhammad bin Habib al-Mawardi, *Al-Hawi al-Kabir: Fi Fiqh Madhhab al-Imam al-Shafi'i Radi Allah 'anh wa huwa Sharh Mukhtasar al-Muzni*, edited by Ali Muhammad Mu'awwad and Adil Ahmad Abd al-Mawjud, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 1999, vol. 14, p. 130; Abd al-Munim al-Hifni, *Mawsu'ah al-Qur'an al-Azim*, Maktabah Madbuli, Cairo, 2004, vol.2, p.1905; all cited in Ahmed Al-Dawoody, *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011, p.39-40).

the Quraysh at the battle of Uhud, the group of Jews who fought with the Prophet (p) and received a share of the war spoils,²³⁴ and the many idolaters (or polytheists) who fought beside the Prophet (p) at Hunayn and Ta'if, are all examples that oppose and refute the idea that these were wars fought for the spread of a certain religion. Why would Jews and polytheists fight alongside the Prophet (p) and Muslims, if the aim was to propagate Islam?

In conclusion, a meticulous study of the Prophet's (p) *ghazawat* reveals that the meaning of the word has been confused with its pre-Islamic meaning, as biographers used the word *ghazwah* to refer to all the Prophet's journeys from Medina, whether to make peace treaties and preach Islam to the tribes, to go on *umrah*, to pursue enemies who attacked Medina, or to engage in the 9 battles.

²³⁴ See Ibn Ahmad, *Al-Ahadith al-Mukhtarah*, Vol. 7, p. 189; al-Salihi, *Subul al-Huda*, Vol. 9, p. 121; Ibn Mansur, *Sunan Sa'id Ibn Mansur*, Vol. 2, p. 331; Ibn Muflih, *Al-Mubdi'*, Vol. 3, p. 336; al-Shawkani, *Nayl al-Awtar*, Vol. 8, pp. 43 f. See also, for Jews and idolaters fighting alongside the Prophet against the Muslims' enemies, Ibn Qudamah, *Al-Mughni*, Vol. 9, p. 207; al-Ghazali, *Al-Wajiz*, Vol. 2, p. 190; al-Ghazali, *Al-Wasit*, Vol. 7, p. 16; 'Uthman, "I'tida' Saddam," p. 183; al-Qattan, "Al-Isti'anah bi-ghayr al-Muslimin," p. 201. – (all cited in Ahmed Al-Dawoody, *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011, p.39-40, notes 201-203).

On the Battle of Badr

Some believe that the Battle of Badr was as a result of the Prophet's (p) offensive attack on the Quraysh, by trying to intercept the Quraysh's caravan, thus stalling the Meccan's commerce and economy. This is regarded as a form of sabotage and aggression against the “innocent” Meccans.

Did the Prophet (p) really initiate war against the Quraysh polytheists? How could he condone raiding of trade caravans? Why did he even engage in battles at all? Did the Prophet (p) intend to fight at Badr and what were the circumstances that actually led to the Battle of Badr?

In a bid to understand the rationale behind the raiding of specifically Meccan trade caravans, and the different battles fought; it is pertinent to investigate the context and relations between the earliest Muslims and their communities, including how the non-Muslims reacted to the emergence of the religion of Islam and, more importantly, the occasions when fighting took place between the Muslims and their enemies during the lifetime of the Prophet (p).

Historical records describe the kinds of torture to which oppressed, socially weak Muslims (*al-mustad'afin*) were subjected.²³⁵ Bilal, a slave who accepted Islam was severely

²³⁵ Sohail H. Hashmi, “Islam, Sunni” in *Encyclopedia of Religion and War*, edited by Gabriel Palmer-Fernandez, Routledge, New York, 2004, p. 217.

tortured by his master to force him to abandon the “new” religion and worship the famous Quraysh idols al-Lat and al-Uzza. Ammar bin Yasir's whole family, was also reported to have been brutally tortured, until his mother Sumayyah bint al-Khayyat, known as the first female martyr in Islam, and her husband, Yasir, were killed under torture because of their adamant refusal to abandon the religion of Islam.²³⁶

As recorded by Muslim and non-Muslim historians, Abu Jahl, the influential Quraysh leader and staunch enemy of Islam,²³⁷ and many others among the Quraysh, employed various ways of fighting Islam. Whenever he discovered that a noble and well-connected person had embraced the new religion, he reprimanded, scorned, and threatened to defame the person. When a merchant embraced Islam, Abu Jahl threatened to boycott and destroy his business. He also beat weak Muslims and incited others against them.²³⁸ Some Meccan idolaters

On the religious persecution and torture of the Muslims during the Meccan period, see: Nadiyah Husni Saqr, *Falsafah al-Harb fi al-Islam*, Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, Cairo, 1990, p.9-21.

²³⁶ Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, p.132; Muhammad Rashid Rida, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Hakim: Al-Shahir bi al-Tafsir al-Manar*, Dar al-Manar, Cairo, 1932, vol.2, p. 317; Abd al-Munim al-Hifni, *Mawsu'ah al-Qur'an al-Azim*, Maktabah Madbuli, Cairo, 2004, vol.2, p.1910.

²³⁷ See Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1968 (reprint), p. 134; Montgomery Watt, “Abu Djahl” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New ed., vol. 1, p. 115.

²³⁸ Muhammad bin Ishaq, *Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah*, edited by Abd al-Malik bin Hisham and annotated by Fu'ad bin Ali Hafiz, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 2000, vol.1, p.236; Guillaume A., *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1955, p.145. See Lawrence, *The Qur'an*, p. 41.

were even determined to kill those who embraced Islam. The Meccan idolaters' systematic collective torture of anyone who followed Islam is described as follows: “*Every clan which contained Muslims - attack them [the Muslims], beating, starving, imprisoning, and exposing them to the burning heat of Mecca, so as to seduce them from their religion. Some gave way under the pressure of persecution, and others resisted them, being protected by God.*”²³⁹ Under all these kinds of torture and threat of murder, some Muslims were forced to abandon the religion of Islam and to declare that their gods were the idols al-Lat and al-Uzza, and not the One God.²⁴⁰ The Qur'an (16:106) addressed this by affirming that such cases of apostasy under torture are excusable.

Faced with such torture and persecution, and with no hope of stopping this aggression, the Prophet (p) asked some Muslims to flee to Abyssinia because its King, the Negus, was a righteous man who would not allow anyone to be oppressed in his territory. Thus, “*Being afraid of apostasy and fleeing to God with their religion,*”²⁴¹ about 83 Muslims fled to Abyssinia,

²³⁹ Muhammad bin Ishaq, *Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, edited by Abd al-Malik bin Hisham and annotated by Fu'ad bin Ali Hafiz, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 2000, vol.1, p.233; Guillaume A., *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1955, p.143.

²⁴⁰ Muhammad bin Ishaq, *Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, edited by Abd al-Malik bin Hisham and annotated by Fu'ad bin Ali Hafiz, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 2000, vol.1, p.236; Guillaume A., *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1955, p.145.

²⁴¹ Muhammad bin Ishaq, *Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, edited by Abd al-Malik bin Hisham and annotated by Fu'ad bin Ali Hafiz, Dar al-Kutub al-

thus described as the first asylum seekers in the history of Islam. This is known as the “first *Hijrah* (migration)” in Islam. In fact, the Meccan idolaters were determined to get the emigrants back from Abyssinia, and so they sent AbdAllah bin Abu Rabi'ah and Amr bin al-As bin Wa'il, described as two determined men, with presents for the Negus in order to get him to return the Muslim asylum seekers back to Mecca. The justification these two men gave to the Negus was that the emigrants were a group of people who rejected idol-worship and did not accept his religion, i.e. Christianity; but that they had invented a new religion, i.e. Islam. However, after the Negus heard from the Muslim emigrants themselves, he refused to send them back and promised to continue to protect them.²⁴²

With time, the number of those who accepted Islam inside and outside Mecca increased; so the Quraysh decided to boycott the clans to which the Prophet (p) and most of the early Muslims belonged - Banu Hashim and Banu al-Muttalib. They hung a document up on the Ka'abah announcing that members of the Quraysh should not marry

'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 2000, vol.1, p.237; Guillaume A., *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1955, p.146.

²⁴² Muhammad bin Ishaq, *Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, edited by Abd al-Malik bin Hisham and annotated by Fu'ad bin Ali Hafiz, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 2000, vol.1, pp. 247–251; Guillaume A., *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1955, pp. 150–153; Muhammad Husayn Haykal, *The Life of Muhammad*, trans. from the 8th edition by Ismail Ragi al-Faruqi, North American Trust Publication, 1976, pp. 98–100; Abd al-Halim Mahmud, *Al-Jihad fi al-Islam*, 2nd ed., Dar al-Ma'arif, Cairo, 1988, pp. 6–8.

into these two clans, nor sell to them, nor buy from them.²⁴³ Persecution of the Prophet (p) and the Muslims increased after the deaths of the Prophet's (p) protector, his uncle Abu Talib, and the Prophet's (p) wife Khadijah in the 10th year of his prophethood.²⁴⁴ The Prophet (p) continued preaching Islam to the neighbouring tribes and to those who came to trade in Mecca, calling them to God and asking them for their protection. Many rejected his call to Islam and humiliated him, but others believed and agreed to protect the Prophet (p) from any aggression.²⁴⁵

Support for Islam at this time came from the *Ansar* (literally, the helpers or supporters); the name given to the new Muslims from Yathrib (Medina), who hosted the Muslims from Mecca and the Prophet (p) after they fled there in the

²⁴³ Muhammad bin Ishaq, *Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, edited by Abd al-Malik bin Hisham and annotated by Fu'ad bin Ali Hafiz, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 2000, vol.1, p. 260; Guillaume A., *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1955, pp.159–161.

²⁴⁴ Muhammad bin Ishaq, *Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, edited by Abd al-Malik bin Hisham and annotated by Fu'ad bin Ali Hafiz, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 2000, vol. 2, pp. 14; Guillaume A., *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1955, p.191; Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1968 (reprint), p.137; Reuven Firestone, *Jihad: The Origin of Holy War in Islam*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1999, p. 109.

²⁴⁵ Muhammad bin Ishaq, *Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, edited by Abd al-Malik bin Hisham and annotated by Fu'ad bin Ali Hafiz, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 2000, vol. 2, pp. 17–30; Guillaume A., *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1955, pp. 192–199; Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1968 (reprint), p.140.

second *Hijrah*. Several new Muslim delegations also pledged to support Islam and to protect the Prophet (p) and the Muslims.²⁴⁶ Upon discovering this new secure place, the Prophet (p) commanded the Muslims in Mecca to migrate to Medina and escape persecution.

When the Meccan idolaters realized that Islam had started to gain protectors outside Mecca, they assembled to deliberate on strategies to stamp out the new religion and put an end to the issue. After listening to some suggestions on how to get rid of the Prophet (p), they unanimously agreed that, "... each clan should provide a young, powerful, well-born, aristocratic warrior; that each of these should be provided with a sharp sword; then each of them should strike a blow at him [the Prophet] and kill him."²⁴⁷ This plot appealed to all the conspirators because the Prophet's (p) clan would not be able to seek revenge from all of these warriors' clans. While the warriors were waiting by the Prophet's (p) door to assassinate him during his sleep, the Prophet (p) survived the plot by miraculously passing through the warriors without their

²⁴⁶ Muhammad bin Ishaq, *Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, edited by Abd al-Malik bin Hisham and annotated by Fu'ad bin Ali Hafiz, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 2000, vol. 2, pp. 24–53; Guillaume A., *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1955, pp. 197–213.

²⁴⁷ Muhammad bin Ishaq, *Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, edited by Abd al-Malik bin Hisham and annotated by Fu'ad bin Ali Hafiz, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 2000, vol. 2, pp. 64–65; Guillaume A., *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1955, p.222.

being able to see him.²⁴⁸ Then the Prophet (p) received a divine command to escape to Medina. He ordered Ali bin Abi Talib to stay in Mecca for three more days to return all the valuables and goods that the Meccan people had deposited for safekeeping with the Prophet (p) due to his widely acknowledged honesty.²⁴⁹

The Prophet (p) accompanied by his companion Abu Bakr, left by the back door of the latter's house and hid for three days in the cave of Thawr, on a mountain below Mecca. Their plot having been foiled, the Meccans offered a reward of one hundred female camels for whoever could capture the Prophet (p), dead or alive.

These events clearly indicate that the Meccan idolaters initiated hostility and a state of war against the Muslims and Islam. One of the reasons for their aggression toward the Muslims was religious, because the Muslims had abandoned idolatry, the religion of the leaders of the Quraysh and their ancestors, so in a sense, this state of aggression could be described as a holy war against the Muslims. Moreover, they saw in this “new” monotheistic religion a profound challenge

²⁴⁸ Muhammad bin Ishaq, *Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, edited by Abd al-Malik bin Hisham and annotated by Fu'ad bin Ali Hafiz, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 2000, vol. 2, pp. 66–68; Guillaume A., *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1955, p.224. See also Qur'an 8:30 and 36:1–9.

²⁴⁹ Muhammad bin Ishaq, *Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, edited by Abd al-Malik bin Hisham and annotated by Fu'ad bin Ali Hafiz, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 2000, vol. 2, p. 69; Guillaume A., *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1955, p.224.

to their current religious, economic, and political power,²⁵⁰ because Islam's call to the worship of the One God implied a threat to their economic and business interests (mostly derived from the pilgrims' visits to the shrines around the Ka'abah). This in turn would jeopardize the position of honour in which the Meccan Quraysh were held among the Arab tribes.

It is significant to note that the *Hijrah* itself signified a state of war. Ordinarily, *Hijrah* may just mean “a change of location,” but to the Arabs then, it was seen as “a change of relationship to one's tribe — to make the *Hijrah* was to leave one's tribe and attach oneself to the *ummah*.”²⁵¹ It should be added here that the political system in Arabia was characterized by tribal or clan affiliation.²⁵² The tribe or the clan was the source of an individual's security and sense of belonging. Thus, anyone expelled from a tribe was compelled to find another with which to ally himself.²⁵³ Each tribe or clan formed a separate and absolutely independent body.²⁵⁴ A state of war was the

²⁵⁰ Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1968 (reprint), p.134-136; John L. Esposito, *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2002, p.29

²⁵¹ Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, Oxford University Press, Karachi, 1981, p. 242.

²⁵² See Afzal Iqbal, *Diplomacy in Early Islam*, 4th ed., Institute of Islamic Culture, Lahore, 1988, p.42.

²⁵³ Mahmud Shakir, *Al-Tarikh al-Islami: Qabl al-Ba'thah wa al-Sirah*, 8th ed., Al-Maktab al-Islami, Beirut, 2000, p. 91.

²⁵⁴ T.W. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam: A History of the Propagation of the Muslim Faith*, 2nd ed., Constable & Company, London, 1913, p. 31; Mahmud Shakir, *Al-Tarikh al-Islami: Qabl al-Ba'thah wa al-Sirah*, 8th ed., Al-Maktab al-Islami, Beirut, 2000, p. 91. See also Majid Khadduri, *War*

norm between all tribes unless there was a peace treaty.²⁵⁵ This explains the pre-Islamic practice of weaker tribes having to make tribute payments to stronger ones for their protection.²⁵⁶ Exile from the tribe, therefore, violated the deepest sanction of Arabia; it attacked the core of the Muslim's identity.²⁵⁷

In other words, for the Prophet (p) and the Muslims, being forced to leave their beloved Mecca, the holiest of all places, meant the initiation of war. Thus, while no fighting took place in the Meccan period, a state of war and hostility had already been initiated by the Quraysh, and the enmity escalated especially with the total boycott and subsequently the expelling of the Muslims and the Prophet (p) from Mecca, with the consequent confiscation of their land and property by the Meccans.²⁵⁸

and Peace in the Law of Islam, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1955, p. 62; Montgomery Watt, "Badw" in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New ed., vol. I, pp. 889-892.

²⁵⁵ See Fred McGraw Donner, "The Sources of Islamic Conceptions of War", in *Just War and Jihad: Historical and Theoretical Perspectives on War and Peace in Western and Islamic Traditions*, edited by John Kelsay and James Turner Johnson, Greenwood Press, Westport, 1991, p. 34. According to Michael Bonner, "Islam arose in an environment where warfare — or at any rate, armed violence with some degree of organization and planning — was a characteristic of everyday life" (Michael Bonner, *Jihad in Islamic History: Doctrines and Practices*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2006, p.7).

²⁵⁶ Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, Oxford University Press, Karachi, 1981, p. 246.

²⁵⁷ Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad: A Prophet for our Time*, HarperCollins, New York, 2006, p.116.

²⁵⁸ See Muhammad Hammidullah, *The Battlefields of the Prophet Muhammad, with Maps, Illustrations and Sketches: A Continuation to*

Regarding the Prophet's condoning raiding of specifically Meccan trade caravans, it should be borne in mind that the Quraysh had earlier violated the rights and honour code respected by all the clans in the peninsula, by seizing the property and belongings which the Muslim emigrants had left behind in Mecca when they escaped persecution. The Prophet (p) had to ensure that the “Emigrants” (*Muhajirun*) did not become a drain upon the economy of Medina, even though the “Helpers” (*Ansar*) were very supportive of their brothers who had joined them from Mecca. Left with no choice, the emigrants would attack the Meccan caravans passing near Medina in order to take back the equivalent of their belongings confiscated in Mecca. The aim here was not to shed blood, but to secure some income from their earlier persecutors by capturing camels, merchandise and prisoners, who could be held for ransom.²⁵⁹

Regarding the justification for the Prophet's engaging in battles, the state of war that had existed in Mecca between the Quraysh and the Muslims culminated in a series of attacks on the Muslims in Medina. Thus, the fact that they had been persecuted and driven out of their homes and tribes solely because of their beliefs was the Qur'anic justification for

Muslim Military History, Kitab Bhavan, New Delhi, 2003, p.16; Abdulrahman Muhammad Alsumaih, “*The Sunni Concept of Jihad in Classical Fiqh and Modern Islamic Thought*”, PhD thesis, University of Newcastle Upon Tyne, 1998, pp.191.

²⁵⁹ Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad: A Prophet for our Time*, HarperCollins, New York, 2006, p.114.

permitting the Muslims to fight back in their own defense against their oppressors (Qur'an 22:39–40).

It is noteworthy that despite the hostility and aggression of the Quraysh against the Muslims in Mecca, the Muslims were commanded not to resort to arms in any confrontation with the non-believers. One major reason that has been advanced for such a policy is that Muslims were not in a position of strength, where self-defense would be a wise course of action. The use of force might have led to numerous little family wars, as the believers still lived with their own families and clans. Since the Muslims were still small in number, they might have been totally exterminated.²⁶⁰

Most of the Muslims had fled Mecca and had to leave their properties behind. Most of these were seized and usurped by the polytheists. The Quraysh also did not remain idle while the new state in Medina acquired increasing strength as it built alliances with others, which some of them concluded could threaten Meccan economic interests. Some among the Quraysh also concluded that the Islamic city-state of Medina was going to challenge their supremacy in Arabia, hence they viewed the growth of Medina as a political threat to Mecca. In the absence of any peace treaty, the state of war was in place and constant aggression against the Muslim community in Medina was inevitable.

²⁶⁰ Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, p.243.

The Battle of Badr

Almost two years after the *Hijrah*, information reached the Prophet (p) that a rich trade caravan, in which every clan in the Quraysh had a share, was returning to Mecca after completing a successful business trip to Syria. The caravan was led by Abu Sufyan bin Harb, a leader in Mecca and chief of the Umayyah clan. In light of the existing state of war and Meccan hostility, the Prophet (p) suggested to his companions that they should intercept the caravan, and 313 men marched out with him.

When Abu Sufyan learnt that a Muslim force had marched to intercept his caravan, he took two steps at a time. He hired a messenger called Damdam bin Amir of Ghifar to go with a message to Mecca asking the Quraysh to provide him with protection. He and his men also took extreme care by changing their route, taking the coastal way, in the hope of avoiding the Muslims.

Within days, over 1,000 Meccan troops arrived at Badr to protect their property. Then, they received a new message from Abu Sufyan to the effect that he had succeeded in evading the Muslims. The caravan had passed Medina and was returning safely to Mecca, thus the Quraysh could return home. Upon receiving the news, many of the Meccans wanted to return home, but one of the influential Meccan leaders, Abu Jahl, refused. He had greater ambitions and incited the army to advance in battle against Medina. In his own words, Abu Jahl wanted, *“The Arabs to hear about the Quraysh’s march and*

*the huge gathering [army] so that they [the Arabs] would always be in awe of us [Quraysh] forever after.”*²⁶¹

Not all of the Quraysh leaders were keen on a confrontation with the Muslims, however, Abu Jahl and his supporters had greater influence. Nonetheless, two Qurayshi clans, Zuhrah and Adi, withdrew completely from the march against Medina once they were sure that the caravan was safe. The others, incited by Abu Jahl, opted to fight the Muslims.

The Prophet's (p) army, which had left Medina expecting a simple caravan raid, in order to recoup some of their usurped wealth, were now faced with an imminent battle totally unprepared, and outnumbered three-to-one. The Prophet (p) tried to discourage the Quraysh from choosing battle; thus, he sent Umar bin al-Khattab to suggest to the Quraysh that they should turn back and avoid confrontation.²⁶² There was also an understandable hesitation among many of the men in the Meccan army regarding fighting their own relatives, but Abu Jahl roused their feelings of vengeance and urged them on. Faced with making the decision to fight, the Prophet (p)

²⁶¹ Muhammad bin Ishaq, *Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, edited by Abd al-Malik bin Hisham and annotated by Fu'ad bin Ali Hafiz, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 2000, vol. 2, p. 192; Guillaume A., *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1955, p.296; Abd al-Rahman bin Khaldun, *Tarikh bin Khaldun: Al-Musamma Diwan al-Mubtada' wa al-Khabar fi Tarikh al-'Arab wa al-Barbar wa man 'Asarahum min Dhawi al-Sha'n al-Akbar*, edited by Khalil Shihadah, Dar al-Fikr, Beirut, 2000, vol.2, p.428.

²⁶² Tariq Ramadan, *In the Footsteps of the Prophet*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, p.104.

consulted his companions, they argued that it was time to confront the Meccan army, and they pledged their support for him, if he decided to go for battle.²⁶³ With the Qurayshi army insistent on attacking the Muslims in Medina, the Prophet (p) was left with no choice but to prepare to fight back. The battle ensued, and at the end of the day, Allah granted a decisive victory to the Muslim army.

In conclusion, it can be safely inferred from the sequence of these events that the Meccan Quraysh were the aggressors of the Muslim community, which started with persecution and killings during the Meccan period. The caravan raids were merely the emigrants' means of getting back their usurped properties during the state of war which existed; and that the Prophet (p) and his Companions were left with no option at Badr but to defend themselves and their city when they were confronted by the Qurayshi army.²⁶⁴

²⁶³ Meraj Mohiudeen, *Revelation: The Story of Muhammad*, Whiteboard Press, USA, 2015, p.201.

²⁶⁴ For more on the events leading to the battle of Badr and its aftermath, see: Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, pp. 253-273; Tariq Ramadan, *In the Footsteps of the Prophet*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, pp.100-105; Meraj Mohiudeen, *Revelation: The Story of Muhammad*, Whiteboard Press, USA, 2016, pp.198-210; Safy al-Rahman Mubarakfuri, *Al-Rahiq Al-Makhtum (The Sealed Nectar: Biography of the Noble Prophet)*, Dar al-Salam Publishers, Riyadh, 1996, pp.210-233; Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Fiqh-u-Seerah: Understanding the Life of Prophet Muhammad*, IIPH, Riyadh, 1997, p.230-254.

On The Prophet's (p) Treatment of the Jews of Medina, especially Banu Qurayzah

Historical records show that various Jewish tribes were already inhabitants of Medina before the Prophet's (p) arrival, but at different times after the Prophet's (p) arrival, they were exiled from their settlements. Some assume that for anti-Jewish (“anti-Semitic”) reasons, the Prophet (p) expelled the Jewish tribes in general, and executed the Jewish clan of Qurayzah in particular.

What was the Prophet's general disposition towards Jews? Why did he expel them from Medina? What was Banu Qurayzah's crime? Did the Prophet (p) influence Sa'd's decision to execute Banu Qurayzah? Was the execution of Banu Qurayzah an act of genocide? Was the entire clan of Qurayzah actually executed? Were the Prophet (p) and his Companions anti-Jewish or anti-Semitic?

Before the arrival of the Prophet (p), Yathrib, the ancient city that was later renamed Medina, was already inhabited by Jews and Arabs. The three (3) major Jewish clans were Nadir, Qaynuqa and Qurayzah, with other smaller tribes of Jews such as Jasham, Tha'labah, and Murid, amongst others. The Arab tribes were the Aws and Khazraj.²⁶⁵ Initially, there was

²⁶⁵ Akram Diya' al-'Umari, *Madinan Society at the Time of the Prophet (Vol.1): Its Characteristics and Organisation*, International Institute of Islamic Thought, Virginia, 1991, p.43-46.

mutual mistrust and suspicion between the Arab tribes; and tensions, skirmishes and full-blown battles were commonplace. However, the First and Second Pledges (treaties) of Aqabah²⁶⁶ had unified the Aws and Khazraj, just before the migration (*Hijrah*) of the Prophet (p) to Medina. Upon the Prophet's arrival, and in a bid to bring the entire community closer together, the Prophet (p) drafted the *Sahifah* (Medinan Charter) which all the tribes – Jewish and Arab – agreed to, and signed. The terms of the treaty stipulated amongst others that, *“Should a conflict with the polytheists break out, they were all to stand together and not to enter into separate (or conflicting) alliances or peace agreements.”*²⁶⁷

However, shortly after the Battle of Badr, the Banu Qaynuqa broke several terms of the treaty. First, to facilitate the new economy, the Prophet (p) had established his own market, which, unlike the one controlled by Banu Qaynuqa, charged no tax on transactions and no interest on loans. The Prophet's (p) move was not intended to antagonize Banu Qaynuqa, it

²⁶⁶ For more on the First and Second pledges of Aqabah, see: Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, pp. 197-208; Tariq Ramadan, *In the Footsteps of the Prophet*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, pp.74-76; Meraj Mohiudeen, *Revelation: The Story of Muhammad*, Whiteboard Press, USA, 2016, pp.167-173; Safy al-Rahman Mubarakfuri, *Al-Rahiq Al-Makhtum (The Sealed Nectar: Biography of the Noble Prophet)*, Dar al-Salam Publishers, Riyadh, 1996, pp.154-162; Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Fiqh-u-Seerah: Understanding the Life of Prophet Muhammad*, IIPH, Riyadh, 1997, pp.157-165.

²⁶⁷ Tariq Ramadan, *In the Footsteps of the Prophet*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, p.89.

was rather one of his strategies to narrow the divide between the ridiculously rich and the absurdly poor. However, this tax-free market eventually became a point of conflict between the Prophet (p) and Banu Qaynuqa.

After the Muslims' decisive victory against the pagan Quraysh at Badr, the Banu Qaynuqa challenged the Muslims to a fight, saying, *"O Muhammad! Do not deceive yourself; you merely fought a party of the Quraysh who were inexperienced at war. But if you want to fight us, then know that we are an entire people! And indeed you have not met with anyone like us before."*²⁶⁸ Then, the Qur'an verses 8:58-61 were revealed concerning the betrayal of Banu Qaynuqa.²⁶⁹

The growing hostility between Banu Qaynuqa and the Muslims intensified after a fight in the Banu Qaynuqa marketplace in which a Muslim came to the defence of a Muslim woman who had been assaulted by a Jewish merchant; and both the Muslim man and the Jewish man got killed. The Companions suggested that the Prophet (p)

²⁶⁸ Meraj Mohiudeen, *Revelation: The Story of Muhammad*, Whiteboard Press, USA, 2016, p.211.

²⁶⁹ *"And if you fear treachery on the part of a people, then throw back to them on terms of equality; surely Allah does not love the treacherous. And let not those who disbelieve think that they shall come in first; surely they will not escape. And prepare against them what force you can and horses tied at the frontier, to frighten thereby the enemy of Allah and your enemy and others besides them, whom you do not know (but) Allah knows them; and whatever thing you will spend in Allah's way, it will be paid back to you fully and you shall not be dealt with unjustly. And if they incline to peace, the incline to it and trust in Allah; surely, He is the Hearing, the Knowing"* (Qur'an 8: 58 - 61)

arbitrate the matter, as stipulated in the *Sahifah* (Medinan Charter), but the Qaynuqa refused to abide by the terms of their pact with him, and they fortified themselves in preparation for battle. Thereafter, a siege was laid on their fortress, and the Banu Qaynuqa finally surrendered after a two-week standoff. They were exiled from Medina and ultimately resettled in the oasis of Wadi al-Qura' near the Syrian border.²⁷⁰

A careful study of the chain of events towards the expulsion of Banu Qaynuqa makes it clear that they were not expelled because they refused to accept Islam, or because they were Jews. The true reason for their expulsion was their breach of their treaty and open hostility, which convinced the Prophet (p) that it was impossible to live with them in peace, without jeopardizing the security of the city-state of Medina.²⁷¹

It is interesting to note that the two other main Jewish tribes – Banu Nadir and Qurayzah - did not attempt to help Banu

²⁷⁰ For more on the actions and subsequent expulsion of Banu Qaynuqa, see: Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, pp. 299-313; Tariq Ramadan, *In the Footsteps of the Prophet*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, pp.107-109; Meraj Mohiudeen, *Revelation: The Story of Muhammad*, Whiteboard Press, USA, 2016, pp.211-214; Safy al-Rahman Mubarakfuri, *Al-Rahiq Al-Makhtum (The Sealed Nectar: Biography of the Noble Prophet)*, Dar al-Salam Publishers, Riyadh, 1996, pp.238-240; Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Fiqh-u-Seerah: Understanding the Life of Prophet Muhammad*, IIPH, Riyadh, 1997, pp.254-261

²⁷¹ Akram Diya' al-'Umari, *Madinan Society at the Time of the Prophet (Vol.1): Its Characteristics and Organisation*, International Institute of Islamic Thought, Virginia, 1991, p.124.

Qaynuqa in their confrontation with the Prophet (p). This, in itself, is evidence of the treachery of the Qaynuqa Jews. The other Jews were no less hostile to Islam than the Qaynuqa tribe, although they did not show it at the time. If the case of treachery was not clear cut, the other Jews would at least have mediated between the Prophet (p) and their fellow Jews. The fact that these tribes remained neutral suggests that they understood that the Qaynuqa Jews were guilty, and deserved their punishment of exile.²⁷²

Regarding the Jewish tribe of Banu Nadir, they were expelled from Medina for attempting to assassinate the Prophet (p). As soon as the Prophet (p) arrived in Medina, Ka'b bin Ashraf, the Jewish leader of Nadir, became one of the Prophet's (p) most vocal critics, and would write and recite provocative poetry against the Prophet (p) and the Muslims. The victory of the Muslims at Badr irritated and angered Ka'b, and he visited Mecca, where he used to ridicule the Prophet (p) and incite the Quraysh to seek revenge for their loss at the Battle of Badr. By rallying the Meccans against the Muslims, Ka'b's actions were tantamount to treason and declaration of war on the Muslims, thus breaking the existing peace treaty. Hence, he alone was executed for his role in undermining peace and threatening security.²⁷³

²⁷² Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, p.308.

²⁷³ Meraj Mohiudeen, *Revelation: The Story of Muhammad*, Whiteboard Press, USA, 2016, p.220; Akram Diya' al-'Umari, *Madinan Society at the Time of the Prophet (Vol.1): Its Characteristics and Organisation*, International Institute of Islamic Thought, Virginia, 1991, p.128-134.

The Prophet (p) in his characteristic manner, did not blame the entire clan of Banu Nadir for Ka'b bin Ashraf's crime; in fact, he renewed his treaty with them. However, they soon made an attempt to assassinate the Prophet (p) during a dinner they had invited him and some companions to. The Prophet (p) received divine inspiration regarding their plot (Qur'an 5:12), and was saved from their scheme of throwing a big rock onto him from the nearby rooftop. Thereafter, the entire clan was given a 10-day ultimatum to leave the city, because of their treachery. After they resettled in the Northern Jewish stronghold of Khaybar, Banu Nadir continued to rally support against the Prophet (p), and they played a considerable role in the formation of the great confederacy (*ahzab*) that besieged Medina, in a bid to annihilate the Muslim community, during the Battle of the Trench (*Khandaq*).²⁷⁴

Again, it is abundantly clear that Banu Nadir's expulsion from Medina was not due to any anti-Jewish sentiments but due to their own disloyalty and treachery of the covenant. In fact, during the siege, they reached out to their old allies for help -

²⁷⁴ For more on the actions and subsequent expulsion of Banu Nadir, see: Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, pp. 314-318, 378-388; Tariq Ramadan, *In the Footsteps of the Prophet*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, pp.130-132; Meraj Mohiudeen, *Revelation: The Story of Muhammad*, Whiteboard Press, USA, 2016, pp.240-242; Safy al-Rahman Mubarakfuri, *Al-Rahiq Al-Makhtum (The Sealed Nectar: Biography of the Noble Prophet)*, Dar al-Salam Publishers, Riyadh, 1996, pp.301-304; Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Fiqh-u-Seerah: Understanding the Life of Prophet Muhammad*, IIPH, Riyadh, 1997, p.292-296.

the Jewish tribe of Qurayzah and the Arab tribe of Ghatafan, but their Jewish brethren refused to break their covenant with the Prophet (p), and the Ghatafan did not bother to answer their call.²⁷⁵

As for Banu Qurayzah, theirs was a case of betrayal and treachery of such magnitude that had it been successful, the entire Muslim community of Medina would have been completely annihilated. Two years after the Battle of Uhud, the Quraysh decided to launch a major offensive to crush the Prophet (p) and his Companions once and for all. They assembled a total of about 10,000 soldiers – three times larger than anything the Muslim army had ever seen - from various tribes, including the earlier expelled Banu Nadir, to launch a unified, decisive attack on Medina.

The entire city was in danger, and following the Persian military defense strategy suggested by Salman al-Farisi the Prophet's (p) companion from Persia, the Muslims began to dig a trench around the city of Medina to make entry into the city difficult for the invading army. Initially in support of the Muslims, the Banu Qurayzah lent its excavating equipment to the Muslims to speed up the digging of the trench. However, during the long siege of Medina that ensued, Banu Qurayzah, with the encouragement of Banu Nadir and the confidence

²⁷⁵ Meraj Mohiudeen, *Revelation: The Story of Muhammad*, Whiteboard Press, USA, 2016, pp.240-242; Akram Diya' al-'Umari, *Madinan Society at the Time of the Prophet (Vol.1): Its Characteristics and Organisation*, International Institute of Islamic Thought, Virginia, 1991, pp.128-134.

that the Quraysh and their confederates would be able to conquer the Muslims, decided to break their treaty with the Muslims. This happened even after the Prophet (p) had sent their former allies amongst the Muslims – the leaders of Aws (Sa'd bin Mu'adh) and Khazraj (Sa'd bin Ubadah) – to discourage them from such a course of action and warn them of the already-known customary consequences of such a betrayal.

The Banu Qurayzah did not listen to the plea and warning of the Muslim emissaries, and subsequently opened Medina's southern border (their own area) to the allied enemy forces.

Through some very clever political tactics, a Meccan leader from the Ghatafan tribe, Nu'aym bin Mas'ud, who had secretly accepted Islam was able to break the trust and alliance between the Banu Qurayzah and the Quraysh. This mistrust made it impossible for the allied forces to co-operate with Banu Qurayzah in their plan to penetrate Medina from the southern border. In the frustration that ensued and the strong winds and sandstorm that followed which blew their tents away and made it difficult for them to sustain the siege of Medina, the Meccan army and their confederates were forced to disperse. Thus did the Muslims survive the attack with the help of Allah.

Immediately after it became clear that the Meccan allied forces were no more a threat, it became necessary for the Muslims to make a decision on the fate of their former allies,

Banu Qurayzah, after their betrayal and failed collaboration with the enemy forces to destroy Medina. The Prophet (p) ordered the Muslim army to march to the fortress of Banu Qurayzah.

Thereafter, a siege was laid on Banu Qurayzah for their callous treachery, which lasted for 25 days. Upon their surrender, the members of Banu Aws had pleaded with the Prophet (p) for leniency, as he had shown to Banu Qaynuqa and Banu Nadir. The Prophet (p) then recommended that the judgment be decided by Sa'd bin Mu'adh, the leader of Banu Aws, who were former allies of Banu Qurayzah. Both the Banu Aws and Banu Qurayzah agreed to this. It was however understood by some of the respected companions that the leniency shown by the Prophet (p) to others such as Banu Qaynuqa and Banu Nadir in the past had partly contributed to the audacity of Banu Qurayzah and their readiness to take the risk of breaking their treaty with the Muslims.

The customary punishment within the Arab communities at the time for such betrayal and treachery during time of war was that all male fighting members of the tribe be executed, the women and children are taken as slaves/captives, and their property as booty.²⁷⁶ This was actually the punishment that

²⁷⁶ Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet*, Phoenix, London, 1991, p.207-208; Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad, Prophet for our Time*, Harper Perennial, London, 2006, p.162. See also, William Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, Oxford University Press, 1956, p. 296; Norman Stillman, *The Jews of Arab Lands: A History and Source Book*, Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1979, p.14-16; Bernard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam*, University of

Sa'd bin Mu'adh of Aws and Sa'd bin Ubadah of Khazraj had warned the Banu Qurayzah leadership about when they tried to dissuade them from breaking their treaty with the Muslims during the Battle of the Trench. This punishment was also that which was prescribed by Jewish/Mosaic law at the time, and which was cited by Sa'd bin Mu'adh when he issued his judgment on Banu Qurayzah.²⁷⁷

The Mosaic Law states:

“But if the city makes no peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it; and when the Lord your God gives it into your hand, you shall put all its males to the sword, but the women and the little ones, the cattle, and everything else in the city, all its spoil, you shall take as booty for yourselves; and you shall enjoy the spoil of your enemies, which the Lord your God has given you.” (Deuteronomy 20:12-14)

After securing the confidence and assurance that the Prophet (p) and the members of his tribe Banu Aws would accept and not interfere with his final judgment on Banu Qurayzah, Sa'd bin Mu'adh ruled that the fighting men should be executed,

Chicago Press, 1991, p.191; Maxime Rodinson, *Muhammad: Prophet of Islam*, Tauris Parke Paperbacks, 2002, p. 213; Rudi Paret, *Mohammed und der Koran, Geschichte und Verkündigung des arabischen Propheten*, W. Kohlhammer GmbH, Germany, 2005, p.122-124 - cited in http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Banu_Qurayza

²⁷⁷ Martin Lings, *Muhammad: His life based on the earliest sources*, The Islamic Text Society, Cambridge, 1991, p.232

their women and children be taken captives and their property be taken as booty.

Contrary to the common misconception that it was the Prophet (p) that ordered the judgment on Banu Qurayzah, all historical records show that both the Prophet and Banu Aws had agreed that the judgment of Sa'd bin Mu'adh would be final. Thus, while this judgment is indeed severe, it was considered within the context to be the most appropriate deterrent for treachery during war. This, and not anti-Semitic prejudice against Jews, was the basis of Sa'd's judgment.²⁷⁸ It should be noted that after this incident, for the rest of the life of the Prophet (p), no other tribe ever broke a treaty with the Muslims, during a time of war.²⁷⁹

In the details of what actually occurred, not only were the women and children spared, but so were all adult men among the Banu Qurayzah who were opposed to the actions of their leadership. Those members who were given amnesty by their friends amongst the Muslims were also spared.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁸ Ismail Buyukcelebi, *Living in the Shade of Islam*, The Light Inc., New Jersey, 2005, p.143.

²⁷⁹ Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad: Prophet for our Time*, Harper Perennial, London, 2006, p.162-163; Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet*, Phoenix, London, 1991, p.209; See also, William Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*, Oxford University Press, 1961, p.170-176; Rudi Paret, *Mohammed und der Koran, Geschichte und Verkündigung des arabischen Propheten*, W. Kohlhammer GmbH, Germany, 2005, p.122-124; William Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, Oxford University Press, 1956, p.217-218 - cited in http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Banu_Qurayza

²⁸⁰ Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet*, Phoenix, London, 1991, p.207; Martin Lings, *Muhammad: His life based on the*

As the crime of Banu Qurayzah was committed by them alone, none of the other Jewish tribes, in or around Medina, were punished or in any way prejudiced against, as a result of Sa'd's judgment on Banu Qurayzah. The seventeen other (smaller) Jewish tribes of Medina remained there, living on friendly terms with the Muslims for many years, and the Qur'an continued to insist that Muslims remember their spiritual kinship with the People of the Book [Qur'an 29:46].¹⁸¹

The historical accuracy however of some of the details in the above narrative has been challenged by some Muslim historians. The absence of sufficient historical data on the exact number of the fighters among Banu Qurayzah that were killed has left a lot of it to mere speculation, with numbers ranging from just over 20 men to as many as 900. Available records also indicate that those to be executed were initially kept in the house of one of the companions, Usamah bin Zayd. This fact casts further doubt on the authenticity of those records that cite a large number of people to be executed. In

earliest sources, The Islamic Text Society, Cambridge, 1991, p.231; Muhammad Husayn Haykal, *The Life of Muhammad*, (transl. Isma'il Raji A. Al-Faruqi), North American Trust Publications, USA, 1976, p.314.

²⁸¹ Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad: A Prophet for our Time*, HarperCollins, New York, 2006, pp.149-151. See also, William Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, Oxford University Press, 1956, p.217-218; Cecil Roth (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia Judaica*, Keter Publishing House, 1997, Vol. XI, col. 1212; Rudi Paret, *Mohammed und der Koran, Geschichte und Verkündigung des arabischen Propheten*, W. Kohlhammer GmbH, Germany, 2005, p.122-124 - cited in http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Banu_Qurayza

addition, with so many Jewish women and children as slaves in Medina as a result of Sa'd's verdict on them, it would naturally be expected that historical records, hadiths and athar of sahabah would say more about their fate and lives in Medina. The records however, appear to be silent on this issue. For this reason also, some scholars have questioned the scale of the executions associated with the punishment of Banu Qurayzah.

Regarding this issue, Adil Salahi in his *Muhammad: Man and Prophet* submits:

“Reports that all adult males of the Qurayzah Jews were killed while all their women and children were enslaved are quoted in practically all books on the Prophet's life and its events... However, a more careful examination of these reports proves that this could not have been the case. The number of those who were killed could not have been more than twenty-five, if not less.

“We find two statements speaking of Sa'd's judgment. Both state that he ruled that 'their fighters were to be killed and their offspring to be taken captive'. Where Ibn Ishaq's report goes wrong is to interpret this judgment as applying to every single person of the Qurayzah Jews, thus making the death sentence applicable to all adult males and the captivity to all women and children. There is nothing

in either the Qur'an or the Hadith texts to confirm this. The Qur'an speaks of some being killed and some taken prisoners [33:26-27], while the two hadith traditions speak of executing the fighters and imprisoning their offsprings.

“Several points in Ibn Ishaq's report call it into question. To start with, he mentions that prior to their execution, the men were placed in Usamah ibn Zayd's house, while the women were placed in Kayyisah bint al-Harith's home. How many people could these two homes accommodate? The number of the Qurayzah men mentioned in these reports ranges between 600 and 900. What sort of home would take all these people?

“...Al-Waqidi (130-207 H) was a prominent historian who wrote extensively about the history of Islam... Al-Waqidi gives us the names of nine people executed as a result of Sa'd ibn Muadh's ruling... He also mentions that two people were sent to each of several clans of the Ansar where they were executed. This brings the total number to less than 25. When we relate this information to the most reliable wording of Sa'd Ibn Muadh's ruling, which condemns the Qurayzah fighters to be killed, we conclude that these were the actual fighters who took an active part in the treachery that aimed to eradicate Islam and all Muslims.

“Ibn Ishaq's account of the life of the Prophet Muhammad was the main source on which later historians relied as they analysed events that took place during the Prophet's lifetime... The first reason for rejecting this report is that meting out such a collective punishment is contrary to Islamic teachings and to the Prophet's own practice. Islam does not condone punishing a group of people for the crime of one, or punishing many for the crime of the few. It punishes all those who actually take part in a crime.

“Ibn Ishaq's report suggests that all women and children were taken captive. The question arises: what happened to them after that? In the universal tradition of the time, they would have become slaves and given to those who took part in the siege of the Qurayzah forts. Yet Islam had already established a rule for the prisoners of war, requiring Muslims to set them free, either against ransom or as a gracious gesture. We have no report to suggest that they stayed in Madinah as slaves. There is not a single story on any such woman going through a problem with the family where she might have been placed. The children involved would have been raised as Muslims. We do not have a single report of any of them distinguishing himself in any field of life. Nor do we have any report of any conversation between

the Prophet's Companions referring to the punishment of the Qurayzah Jews or to the fate of their families. How can this absence of reporting be explained? We note that a similar lack of reporting applies to the other two Jewish tribes that were evacuated from Madinah. The same must have applied to the Qurayzah Jews.

“We therefore conclude that after the execution of the perpetrators of the treachery, the rest of the tribe were allowed to leave Madinah on similar terms to other Jewish tribes which were previously evacuated.”²⁸²

Therefore, the execution of the fighting men of Banu Qurayzah – whatever their actual numbers - was not, as it has so often been presented, reflective of an intrinsic religious conflict between Prophet Muhammad (p) and the Jews. Rather, this conflict had far more to do with political alliances and economic ties than with a theological debate over scripture.²⁸³ There were obviously other Jews who had respected the Charter/Constitution (*sahifah*) of Medina, and had not taken part in any act of treachery. Such were allowed to stay in Medina as long as they did not participate in any hostile action against Islam or the Muslims. They were

²⁸² Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, pp.467-473

²⁸³ Meraj Mohiudeen, *Revelation: The Story of Muhammad*, Whiteboard Press, USA, 2015, p.259

allowed to work and practise their religion freely, without any pressures. Indeed, when the Prophet (p) died a few years later, his own shield was pledged as collateral with a Jewish trader whom he had purchased foodstuff from on credit.²⁸⁴ It is also on record that years later, during the Caliphate of Umar bin al-Khattab, he ordered for a stipend/pension to be given from the Bayt al-Mal to all elderly Jews (*ahl al-dhimmah*) who were in need of financial assistance.

From the foregoing, it is abundantly clear that the Prophet (p) did not have any reservation for the Medinan Jews on account of their tribe or religion; he rather treated them in line with the Qur'anic injunctions of dealing in kindness and fairness towards non-hostile people of other faiths.

²⁸⁴ Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, p.473-474

On the Attack on Banu Mustaliq

It has been reported in several authentic hadiths that *“the Messenger of Allah (p) led a surprise attack on the Banu Mustaliq while they were unawares and their cattle were drinking water. Their fighting men were killed and their women and children were taken captives.”*²⁸⁵

Some have concluded from this hadith that the battle against Banu Mustaliq was not defensive but an offensive action, for the Banu Mustaliq were not expecting to fight the Prophet (p), otherwise, why were they grazing their cattle, instead of engaging in battle preparations?

Also, it is generally believed that in warfare, surprise attacks are used to cause terrible damage, devastation and bloodshed, such that the enemy is completely subdued, if not annihilated. Thus, many have questioned on moral grounds, the Prophet's action of launching a surprise attack on Banu Mustaliq.

What is the true context of this hadith? What were the circumstances that led to the attack on Banu Mustaliq?

²⁸⁵ *Sahih Bukhari*, vol.3, Book 46, hadith no.717, p.431-432; *Sahih Muslim*, vol.3, Book 17, hadith no.4292, p.942; *Abu Dawud*, vol.2, hadith no.227, p.727-728;.

**Why did the Prophet (p) launch a surprise attack?
What was the aftermath of the battle?**

As noted by Muhammad al-Ghazali in the Introduction to his *Fiqh-u-Seerah*, with regards to the attack on Banu Mustaliq “the narrations of the hadith suggest that the Prophet (p) suddenly attacked that tribe without first offering them the Da'wah or without any breaking of a treaty or anything to raise suspicion occurring in their part. A battle begun by the Muslims in such a manner finds disapproval in the logic of Islam and is far removed from the character of the Prophet (p)...The hadith as narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim can have no other explanation than its being the description of a second phase of the incident. In other words, taking them by surprise came only after hostilities had begun between that tribe and the Muslims...”²⁸⁶

After the defeat²⁸⁷ of the Muslims at Uhud by the Meccan Quraysh, the Prophet (p) and his Companions were faced with internal and external threats. The internal threats came from the Jews and hypocrites of Medina, who taunted and

²⁸⁶ Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Fiqh-u-Seerah: Understanding the Life of Prophet Muhammad*, IIPH, Riyadh, 1997, p.13

²⁸⁷ Various historical accounts of the Battle of Uhud acknowledge that the Muslim army were defeated by the Quraysh, at this battle; and many reasons have been advanced for this defeat. For more on this see: Zakaria Bashier, *War and Peace in the Life of Prophet Muhammad*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2006, pp. 93 -99; Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, pp. 357-365; Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Fiqh-u-Seerah: Understanding the Life of Prophet Muhammad*, IIPH, Riyadh, 1997, pp.275 - 282; ; Tariq Ramadan, *In the Footsteps of the*

ridiculed them for their loss; but the Muslims, who were firm in faith, were unperturbed by this.

The external danger, however, was becoming more serious for many tribes considered that they had not much to fear from the Muslims and adopted a hostile attitude towards them. The Bedouin tribes in the area close to Medina felt that they could launch looting raids on the outskirts of city without fearing any great punishment.

The tribe of Asad were the first to contemplate such a looting raid, but their threat was neutralized by the Muslims. Then, Khalid bin Sufyan of the Banu Hudhayl started raising a large force to attack Medina, and he was killed in the process. The Hudhayl tribe were embittered about the death of their leader and decided to avenge. They connived with two other tribes – Banu Adal and Banu al-Qarah – who deceived the Prophet (p) by convincing him to give them some companions to teach them more about Islam. The 6 Muslims sent to them were then handed to the Hudhayl tribe at al-Raji, and they were all murdered, in different circumstances. Similar treacherous plots followed this. About 40 (or as much as 70) companions of the Prophet (p) were ambushed and murdered in cold blood at B'ir Ma'unah, where only one of them was spared.²⁸⁸

Prophet, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, pp. 126 - 127. There are however alternative interpretations by some who believe that it was not really a defeat *per se*. for more on this, see Meraj Mohiudeen, *Revelation: The Story of Muhammad*, Whiteboard Press, USA, 2016, p. 231

²⁸⁸ For more on the ambushes at Ar-Raji and Bi'r Ma'unah, See: Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet*

These events showed that the enemies of Islam and Medina were not ready for a peaceful compromise. The Quraysh's victory at Uhud encouraged them and gave them more confidence. They were determined to sustain attacks against the Muslims of Medina, hoping that with every victory, the Muslims would weaken and their end would be in sight.²⁸⁹

The Prophet (p) received information that the tribe of Banu Mustaliq, under the leadership of its chief, al-Harith ibn Abi Dirar, was preparing to launch an attack on Medina. He sent Burayhah bin al-Husayb al-Aslami to verify the reports, and it was confirmed to be true. In fact, Banu Mustaliq had already set out towards Medina but had settled for the night along the way. The Prophet (p) meanwhile quickly mobilized some of his men to pre-empt their attack and neutralize their military capabilities before they got fully organized and too close to Medina.

The Muslim army marched until they reached a spring called al-Muraysi' where al-Harith and other members of the tribe had camped. They carried out a successful surprise attack in which only 10 soldiers of Banu Mustaliq were killed, before

of Islam, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, pp. 366-377; Meraj Mohiudeen, *Revelation: The Story of Muhammad*, Whiteboard Press, USA, 2016, pp.238-239; Safy al-Rahman Mubarakfuri, *Al-Rahiq Al-Makhtum (The Sealed Nectar: Biography of the Noble Prophet)*, Dar al-Salam Publishers, Riyadh, 1996, pp.297-300; Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Fiqh-u-Seerah: Understanding the Life of Prophet Muhammad*, IIPH, Riyadh, 1997, pp.287-292

²⁸⁹ Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, p.375

the whole tribe were subdued and taken captive. Only 1 Muslim soldier died in the incident.²⁹⁰ Thus, we see that this strategy of surprise used by the Prophet (p) helped to reduce the possibility of full-blown battle with many deaths.²⁹¹

In line with Arab custom of the times, the Prophet (p) asked for the hand in marriage of the captive daughter of the leader of Banu Mustaliq. This gesture was customarily understood to be a sign of complete forgiveness and an extension of magnanimity to the conquered tribe. It implied that the conquered and humiliated leadership of the enemy, who are now captives, have been accommodated into the membership of the household of the victor as equals. It was a major offer towards permanent peace and reconciliation. Barrah, daughter of al-Harith, Chief of Banu Mustaliq, accepted to marry the Prophet (p). She was later known as Juwayriyyah.

When the Muslims realized what the Prophet (p) had done, they found it difficult to regard the captives of Banu Mustaliq as their slaves since they were now considered relatives and members of the household of the Prophet (p). They set them all free, and upon regaining their freedom, the entire tribe of Mustaliq, including the chief al-Harith who masterminded

²⁹⁰ Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, p.404-405

²⁹¹ Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, pp.405-406

the attack against the Muslims in the first place, all accepted Islam.²⁹²

²⁹² For more on the invasion of Banu Mustaliq, see: Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, pp. 403-407; Meraj Mohiudeen, *Revelation: The Story of Muhammad*, Whiteboard Press, USA, 2016, p.263; Safy al-Rahman Mubarakfuri, *Al-Rahiq Al-Makhtum (The Sealed Nectar: Biography of the Noble Prophet)*, Dar al-Salam Publishers, Riyadh, 1996, p.330; Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Fiqh-u-Seerah: Understanding the Life of Prophet Muhammad*, IIPH, Riyadh, 1997, pp.298-306

On the “Conquest” of Mecca

Some history books relate the events which led to the surrender of Makkah to the Prophet (p) in a chapter entitled 'The Conquest of Makkah'. This gives the impression that the Prophet (p) attacked, overpowered, and took over the city by force; along with the various atrocities that are characteristic of conquests.

What circumstances led to the Conquest? How did the Prophet (p) deal with his former oppressors after gaining victory over them?

The persecution and hostilities by the Quraysh against Muslims and Islam continued to escalate through the Meccan period and into the Medinan period; and ended with battles such as Badr, Uhud and Khandaq. To end this escalation, and trajectory of violence and insecurity, in the 6th year of hijrah, the Prophet (p) proposed the 10-year Peace Treaty of Hudaibiyyah with the Quraysh. The Qur'an describes the Treaty as “a clear victory”. What the Muslims achieved in that peace campaign was that for the first time they were able to address people with their message without having to contend with the people's fear of the Quraysh.

For greater security and self-preservation, many tribes had various peace alliances with their neighbours. A critical understanding with these peace treaties was that the group of

allied tribes and nations would come to the rescue and support of any member of the alliance that was attacked by another tribe from outside the alliance. This was in many ways similar to contemporary security alliances such as NATO, WARSAW, and the UN Peacekeeping Forces, etc.

While the Quraysh had their various alliances with their neighbouring tribes and communities, and the Muslims also had theirs. If one tribe from one alliance attacked another from a different alliance, the alliance of the aggressor is expected to punish the aggressing tribe, and ensure that the victim is adequately compensated. Silence by the alliance of the aggressor was understood to imply consent. If however, the aggressor was supported by the members of their alliance, then, they were all regarded as aggressors.

This is basically what happened after the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah. While the Meccans had their alliances, they had also agreed to a peace treaty with the Muslims who had their own alliances. Banu Bakr had alliances with the Meccan Quraysh, while Banu Khuza'a had alliances with the Muslims of Medina. Banu Bakr and Banu Khuza'a lived on the outskirts of Mecca, and were age-long opponents of each other. They were usually locked in mutual hostility, vendetta and reprisal attacks against each other, since pre-Islamic times. Although hostilities ceased between them a few years before the signing of the Hudaibiyah peace agreement, they still harboured ill feelings towards each other.

About 2 years after the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah, a branch of the Banu Bakr known as the clan of Dayl, steered by their leader, Nawfal ibn Mu'awiyah, organized a surprise raid against Banu Khuza'a as their men were gathering at a water spring called al-Watir, and killed quite a number of them. Instead of rebuking and punishing Banu Bakr for their aggression, the Quraysh rather joined them and supported them with weapons. The Quraysh had long been displeased with the fact that Banu Khuza'a had joined the Muslim alliance.

This attack on a member of the Muslim alliance by the Quraysh and Banu Bakr broke the peace treaty agreed to at Hudaibiyyah. The Muslims had no choice but to come in full force against those who had attacked their allies. This was a moral and legal responsibility that showed Muslim loyalty and allegiance to fulfilling the conditions of the treaties they have within their own alliances. This was the cause of the so-called "conquest" of Mecca.

The Prophet (p) mobilized over 10,000 men from Medina and some of the allied tribes to march to Mecca. When the Prophet (p) heard that one of his commanders, Sa'd ibn 'Ubadah, was threatening revenge against some of the Meccans, he replaced him with his son. He made it absolutely clear to all his commanders and his soldiers that they were not to fight unless attacked. The sheer number of the Muslim troops and the safety that the Prophet (p) had assured the leadership of Mecca if they did not attack or threaten the Muslims ensured that the Muslims took over the city of Mecca with no organized resistance.

The Meccan leadership and political structure was left in place after the leader Abu Sufyan and subsequently other members of the leadership gradually accepted Islam. The Prophet (p) forgave and encouraged the other Companions to forgive the atrocities committed against them by the Meccans.

The word 'conquest' suggests a hard military battle, yet there was very little fighting to speak of in this particular conquest. However, it is clear from the event leading to, and after the “conquest” of Mecca that this was actually a peaceful take-over, and not a conquest in the traditional sense, where property is plundered and lives are lost. Indeed, it is more appropriate to speak of it as the 'conquest of the hearts' of people of Makkah, for that was the real objective of the campaign.

What the Prophet's treatment achieved was an instant change of attitude by every person in Makkah. Hence, many people started to come to the Prophet (p) to declare their acceptance of Islam. It was an individual process at first, but in a few days, the majority of the people of Makkah wanted to become Muslims. No one was forced to come, but people realized that they had been in the wrong for too long, and that the wise course was for them to acknowledge their mistake and make amends.²⁹³

²⁹³ For more on the “conquest of Mecca”, see: Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, pp.603-646; Tariq Ramadan, *In the Footsteps of the Prophet*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, pp.174-179; Meraj Mohiudeen, *Revelation: The Story of Muhammad*,

That sort of moral victory could have been achieved only with the remarkable attitude shown by the Prophet (p) and his Companions to their old enemies: an attitude of clemency, love, mercy and a profound desire to show these old enemies the way to their own happiness.

Whiteboard Press, USA, 2016, pp.305-311; Safy al-Rahman Mubarakfuri, *Al-Rahiq Al-Makhtum (The Sealed Nectar: Biography of the Noble Prophet)*, Dar al-Salam Publishers, Riyadh, 1996, pp.388-402; Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Fiqh-u-Seerah: Understanding the Life of Prophet Muhammad*, IIPH, Riyadh, 1997, pp.382-396

On the Other Battles that the Prophet (p) Participated in

What is the context surrounding the other battles of the Prophet (p)?

After meticulous study of the biography of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), scholars have agreed that he personally participated in only nine (9) battles, all of which are defensive.²⁹⁴ The circumstances leading to those battles not already discussed are hereby explained.

The Battle of Uhud

The Battle of Uhud was a direct consequence of the Battle of Badr. Revenge-seeking was so typical of the pre-Islamic Arabian cultures that the Battle of Uhud should not come as a surprise. The Quraysh were shocked and dismayed at their

²⁹⁴ See Ibn Taymiyyah, *Qā'idah Mukhtasarah fī Qitāl al- Kuffār*, pp. 96, 134; Ibn Qayyim al- Jawziyyah, *Hidayah al- Hayārā*, pp. 137 f.; al- Marāghī, *Tafsīr al- Marāghī*, Vol. 10, p. 92; Mahmassani, *Al- Qānūn wa al- 'Alāqāt*, p. 177; al- Zuhaylī, "Majālāt al- 'Alāqāt", p. 199; Sābiq, *Fiqh al- Sunnah*, Vol. 3, pp. 18 f.; 'Afifī, *Al- Mujtama' al- Islāmī*, p. 148; al- Ghunaimi, *Qānūn al- Salām fī al- Islām*, p. 59; Ghunaym, *Al- Jihād al- Islāmī*, pp. 32 f.; Tabliyyah, *Al- Islām wa Huqūq al- Insān*, p. 72; al- Firjānī, *Usūl al- 'Alāqāt*, pp. 77, 82 f.; al- Rikābī, *Al- Jihād fī al- Islām*, pp. 125 f.; al- Amīn, "Mawqif al- Islām," p. 311; Weeramantry, *Islamic Jurisprudence*, p. 147; Stewart, *Unfolding Islam*, p. 92; Alsumaih, "The Sunni Concept of Jihad," pp. 41, 271, 276. Rudolph Peters indicates that modern Muslim writers show that all military campaigns, raids and expeditions of Mohammed and the first Caliphs were purely defensive." See Peters, "Djihad, p. 286; al- Qaradāwī, *Fiqh al- Jihād*, Vol. 1, pp. 339–364, 380. (Cited in Ahmed Al-Dawoody, *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011, p.213, f.199.)

heavy losses at the hands of the inferior Muslims army at Badr that they were determined to avenge their dead. They were further incited by some of the Jews of Banu Qaynuqah. The Quraysh did not only suffer the terrible humiliation and defeat at Badr, but they also suffered economic losses due to the blockade of their vital commercial routes to the north and south. Hence, the agony of the Quraysh and their resolve to wage their war of vengeance reached a climax. Thus did they set out for Medina, aiming to crush the Prophet (p) and his followers; with an army of about 3000 soldiers, of whom 700 were in full armour, and 200 were on horseback. They were accompanied by 3000 camels, and were joined by some of their women, singing and cheering them on. In fact, it was al-Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet (p) who was fearful for the fate of his nephew and the Muslims, who sent a messenger from Mecca to warn the Prophet (p) of the advancing army. In this situation, the Prophet (p) and his people were left with no choice but to protect themselves and their community, hence, the Battle of Uhud, which took place just outside Medina.²⁹⁵

²⁹⁵ This summary only seeks to explain the justification for the battle. For full details on the Battle of Uhud and its aftermath, please see: Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, pp. 323 – 365; Tariq Ramadan, *In the Footsteps of the Prophet*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, pp.122 - 127; Meraj Mohiudeen, *Revelation: The Story of Muhammad*, Whiteboard Press, USA, 2016, pp. 222 - 238; Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Fiqh-u-Seerah: Understanding the Life of Prophet Muhammad*, IIPH, Riyadh, 1997, pp. 265 - 286; Zakaria Bashier, *War and Peace in the Life of Prophet Muhammad*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2006, pp. 66-104; Ahmed Al-Dawoody, *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011, p.24 – 41.

The Battle Of Khandaq/Ahzab

Despite the fact that the Battle of Uhud ended with the Muslims suffering major losses, the Quraysh's failure to kill the Prophet (p), as they had boasted they would do, left the Quraysh unsatisfied with their military efforts to exterminate the Prophet (p) and the Muslims.

Similarly, those Jews who had been expelled from Medina following their treachery, especially the Banu Nadir were filled with hatred for the Muslims, and wanted to see the end of the Muslim community. Seeing that they had a common goal, these Jews reached out to the Quraysh promising their support to exterminate the Muslims once and for all.

In order to ensure that the Muslim community would be unable to survive this onslaught, they reached out to other Bedouin tribes for support, and their army was boosted with forces from the clans of Sulaym, Ashja', Murrah, Asad, Sa'd and Fazarah. Thus did the confederates set out to wipe out the Prophet (p) and his companions at the Battle of /Khandaq/Ahzab (The Trench/ The Confederates). In this situation, the only option for the Prophet (p) and the Muslims was to fight back in defence. The best defence strategy of the city of Medina and its inhabitants was for the Muslims to dig a trench round the city; hence, the name of the Battle – *Khandaq* (trench).²⁹⁶

²⁹⁶ This summary only seeks to explain the justification for the battle. For full details on the Battle of Ahzab and its aftermath, please see: Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet*

The Battle of Khaybar

Although the Jewish tribes of Medina had initially entered the *Sahifah* covenant with the Prophet (p), many of them broke the terms of the Treaty one after the other, and were thus expelled from Medina. Upon leaving the city, they went to swell the Jewish settlements in the north of Arabia – Khaybar, Fadak, Umm al-Qura, and others; establishing new colonies there. Khaybar was the largest Jewish settlement in the region. From there, they continued to incite sedition and war against the Prophet (p) and the Muslims of Medina.

The struggle against Banu Qurayzah and the events of the Battle of Khandaq in Medina made it absolutely clear that the Prophet (p) could not ignore the Jewish threat from Khaybar, given the major role which the Jews of Khaybar played in inciting and mobilizing the Quraysh and the Bedouin forces, and also joining the attack against the Muslims at Khandaq.

The Prophet (p) made significant efforts to reach some kind of peaceful accord that would end the hostilities and pave way for peaceful efforts, and even wrote a letter to the Jews of Khaybar in this respect. But his letter went unanswered and

of Islam, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, pp. 428 - 456; Tariq Ramadan, *In the Footsteps of the Prophet*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, pp. 136 - 144; Meraj Mohiudeen, *Revelation: The Story of Muhammad*, Whiteboard Press, USA, 2016, pp. 251 - 262; Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Fiqh-u-Seerah: Understanding the Life of Prophet Muhammad*, IIPH, Riyadh, 1997, pp.306 - 322; Zakaria Bashier, *War and Peace in the Life of Prophet Muhammad*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2006, pp. 143 - 190; Ahmed Al-Dawoody, *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011, p.24 - 41.

his efforts came to naught. This left the Prophet (p) with no other option but to lay siege upon them and neutralize their threat.²⁹⁷

The Battle of Hunayn

When the Prophet (p) and the Muslim army set out from Medina to take over Mecca, the Prophet (p) did not disclose his destination. Hence, some of the neighbouring clans who had been plotting against him and felt they could be the target became fearful, and started to raise an army in defence.

Such was the case of the great inland tribe of Hawazin to the east of Mecca which assembled their soldiers, just in case. When however, the Muslim army turned towards Mecca and took over the city, one would have expected that the Hawazin army would lay down their arms; rather, they increased their troop to 20, 000 men, and even brought along their women, children and animals, and advanced to attack the Muslim army.

²⁹⁷ This summary only seeks to explain the justification for the battle. For full details on the Battle of Khaybar and its aftermath, please see: Mahmud Shakir, *Al-Tarikh al-Islami: Qabl al-Ba'thah wa al-Sirah*, 8th Ed., Beirut, AL-Maktab al-Islami, 2000, p.286; Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, pp. 531 - 550; Tariq Ramadan, *In the Footsteps of the Prophet*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, pp. 162 - 163; Meraj Mohiudeen, *Revelation: The Story of Muhammad*, Whiteboard Press, USA, 2016, pp. 286 - 291; Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Fiqh-u-Seerah: Understanding the Life of Prophet Muhammad*, IIPH, Riyadh, 1997, p. 352 - 361; Zakaria Bashier, *War and Peace in the Life of Prophet Muhammad*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2006, pp. 205 - 214; Ahmed Al-Dawoody, *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011, p.24 - 41.

Thus, the Prophet (p) and his army, which has been further reinforced with 2000 new converts as well as some polytheists of Mecca, marched to meet the advancing army at Hunayn.²⁹⁸

The Battle of Ta'if

Banu Thaqif, the inhabitants of Ta'if had been resistant to the Prophet's (p) mission from the very beginning. During the Meccan period, the Prophet (p) along with Zayd bin al-Harith, had gone to Ta'if to preach Islam. Not only was his message rejected, but they sent the youth and children after them, who pelted them with stones on their way out of Ta'if so much so that blood flowed down the Prophet's (p) leg. In this overwhelming state, the Prophet (p) was given the chance to order the Angel of the Mountains to crush two mountains over Ta'if and destroy its inhabitants, but the Prophet (p) chose to forgive their aggression.

After the conquest of Mecca, a companion named Urwah bin Mas'ud who was from Ta'if, sought the Prophet's (p)

²⁹⁸ This summary only seeks to explain the justification for the Battle of Hunayn. For full details on the battle of Hunayn and its aftermath, please see: Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, pp. 647 - 661; Tariq Ramadan, *In the Footsteps of the Prophet*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, pp 181 - 187; Meraj Mohiudeen, *Revelation: The Story of Muhammad*, Whiteboard Press, USA, 2016, pp. 312 - 316; Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Fiqh-u-Seerah: Understanding the Life of Prophet Muhammad*, IIPH, Riyadh, 1997, p. 396 - 405; Zakaria Bashier, *War and Peace in the Life of Prophet Muhammad*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2006, pp. 245 - 254; Ahmed Al-Dawoody, *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011, p.24 - 41.

permission to go and preach Islam to his people. Urwah returned to his people, only to be killed by them. The Prophet (p) then marched to Ta'if with his army and laid siege on the city.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁹ This summary only seeks to explain the justification for the battle. For full details on the Battle of Ta'if and its aftermath, please see: Adil Salahi, *Muhammad, Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2002, pp. 647 - 661; Tariq Ramadan, *In the Footsteps of the Prophet*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, pp. 181 - 187;; Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Fiqh-u-Seerah: Understanding the Life of Prophet Muhammad*, IIPH, Riyadh, 1997, pp. 405 - 407; Zakaria Bashier, *War and Peace in the Life of Prophet Muhammad*, The Islamic Foundation, Markfield, UK, 2006, pp. 254 – 255; Ahmed Al-Dawoody, *The Islamic Law of War: Justifications and Regulations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2011, p.24 – 41.

Discussion Questions

1. What is the challenge with translating “*ghazawat*” as “raids” or “battles”?
2. What is the challenge with the cases of “*saraya*” during the life of the Prophet (p)?
3. Organize the 9 *ghazawat* of the Prophet (p) earlier mentioned in a tabular or diagrammatic form to represent the various reasons put forward for the *ghazawat*.
4. If someone argues that the Prophet's battles were fought to propagate Islam, what response/reasons can you give for taking a different position?
5. The expulsion of Banu Qaynuqa, Nadir and Qaynuqa from Medina is one facet of the Prophet's dealings with Jews in Medina. What other dealings of his show that he did not harbor anti-Jewish sentiments?
6. Why have some historians considered the handling of the Banu Qurayzah as blameworthy, and why do others argue otherwise?
7. Discuss the arguments around the Battle of Badr regarding whether it was a battle initiated by the Muslims or not.

8. Considering contemporary military definition of 'surprise attack', would you consider the attack on Banu Mustaliq as a surprise attack or not? Why?
9. What lessons can contemporary Muslim leaders draw from the conduct of the Prophet (p) during the conquest of Mecca?

Appendix:

The Prophet's *Sahifah*

Here is the full text³⁰⁰ of the Prophet's Constitution (*Sahifah*) between the Muhajirun, the Ansar, and the Jews:

كتابه صلى الله عليه وسلم بين المهاجرين والأنصار واليهود

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نص الوثيقة:³⁰¹

1. هذا كتاب من محمد النبي (رسول الله) بين المؤمنين والمسلمين من قريش (وأهل) يثرب ومن تبعهم فلحق بهم وجاهد معهم.
2. إنهم أمة واحدة من دون الناس
3. المهاجرون من قريش على ربعتهم يتعاقلون بينهم وهم يفدون عانيهم بالمعروف والقسط بين المؤمنين.
4. وبنو عوف على ربعتهم يتعاقلون معاقلهم الأولى، وكل طائفة تفدي عانيهم بالمعروف والقسط بين المؤمنين.
5. وبنو الحارث (بن الخزرج) على ربعتهم يتعاقلون معاقلهم الأولى وكل طائفة تفدي عانيها بالمعروف
6. وبنو ساعدة على ربعتهم يتعاقلون معاقلهم الأولى وكل طائفة تفدي عانيها بالمعروف والقسط بين المؤمنين.

³⁰⁰ *Majmu'at Al-Watha'iq al-Siyasiyah*, p. 41-47 (cited in Akram Diya' al-'Umari, *Madinan Society at the Time of the Prophet (Vol.1): Its Characteristics and Organisation*, International Institute of Islamic Thought, Virginia, 1991, p.107-110). For the discussion on the authenticity of the *Sahifah*, and why different scholars have considered it credible, see Akram Diya' al-'Umari, *Madinan Society at the Time of the Prophet (Vol.1): Its Characteristics and Organisation*, International Institute of Islamic Thought, Virginia, 1991, p.99-106.

³⁰¹ *Majmu'at Al-Watha'iq al-Siyasiyah*, p. 41-47 (cited in Akram Diya' al-'Umari, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah al-Sahihah*, Maktabah al-'Ulum wa al-Hikam, al-Madinah al-Munawwarah, 6th Edition, 1415AH, p. 282 – 285.

7. وبنو جشم على ربعتهم يتعاقلون معاقلمهم الأولى وكل طائفة تفدي عانيها بالمعروف والقسط بين المؤمنين
8. وبنو النجار على ربعتهم يتعاقلون معاقلمهم الأولى وكل طائفة تفدي عانيها بالمعروف والقسط بين المؤمنين
9. وبنو عمرو بن عوف على ربعتهم يتعاقلون معاقلمهم الأولى وكل طائفة تفدي عانيها بالمعروف والقسط بين المؤمنين
10. وبنو النبيت على ربعتهم يتعاقلون معاقلمهم الأولى وكل طائفة تفدي عانيها بالمعروف والقسط بين المؤمنين
11. وبنو الأوس على ربعتهم يتعاقلون معاقلمهم الأولى وكل طائفة تفدي عانيها بالمعروف والقسط بين المؤمنين
12. وإن المؤمنين لا يتركون مفرحا بينهم أن يعطوه بالمعروف من فداء أو عقل (12 ب) وأن لا يحالف مؤمن مولى مؤمن دونه.
13. وإن المؤمنين المتقين (أيديهم) على (كلّ) من بغى منهم أو ابتغى دسيسة ظلم أو اثما أو عدوانا أو فسادا بين المؤمنين، وإن أيديهم عليه جميعا، ولو كان ولد أحدهم.
14. ولا يقتل مؤمنا في كافر، ولا ينصر كافرا على مؤمن.
15. وإن ذمة الله واحدة يجير عليهم أدناهم، وإن المؤمنين بعضهم موالي بعض دون الناس.
16. وإنه من تبعنا من يهود فإن له النصر والأسوة غير مظلومين ولا متناصر عليهم.
17. وإن سلم المؤمنين واحدة، ولا يسالم مؤمن دون مؤمن في قتال في سبيل الله إلا على سواء وعدل بينهم.
18. وإن كل غازية غزت معنا يعقب بعضها بعضا.
19. وإن المؤمنين يبئى بعضهم عن بعض بما نال دماءهم في سبيل الله.
20. وإن المؤمنين المتقين على أحسن هدي وأقومه. (21 ب) وإنه لا يجير مشرك مالا لقريش ولا نفسا ولا يحول دونه على مؤمن.
21. وإنه من اعتبط مؤمنا قتلا عن بيعة فإنه قود به إلا أن يرضى ولي المقتول (بالعقل) وإن المؤمنين عليه كافة ولا يحل لهم إلا قيام عليه.
22. وإنه لا يحل لمؤمن أقر بما في هذه الصحيفة، وأمن بالله واليوم الآخر أن ينصر محدثا أو يؤويه، وإن من نصره أو آواه. فإن عليه لعنة الله وغضبه يوم القيامة، ولا يؤخذ منه صرف ولا عدل.
23. وإنه مهما اختلفتم فيه من شيء فإن مرده إلى الله وإلى محمد.
24. وإن اليهود ينفقون مع المؤمنين ماداموا محاربين

25. وإن يهود بني عوف أمة مع المؤمنين، لليهود دينهم وللمسلمين دينهم مواليهم وأنفسهم إلا من ظلم نفسه وأثم فإنه لا يوتغ إلا نفسه وأهل بيته.
26. وإن ليهود بني النجار مثل ما ليهود بني عوف.
27. وإن ليهود بني الحارث مثل ما ليهود بني عوف.
28. وإن ليهود بني ساعدة مثل ما ليهود بني عوف.
29. وإن ليهود بني جشم مثل ما ليهود بني عوف.
30. وإن ليهود بني الأوس مثل ما ليهود بني عوف.
31. وإن ليهود بني ثعلبة مثل ما ليهود بني عوف إلا من ظلم وأثم، فإنه لا يوتغ إلا نفسه وأهل بيته.
32. وإن جفنة بطن من ثعلبة كأنفسهم.
33. وإن لبني الشطيبة مثل ما ليهود بني عوف وإن البر دون الإثم.
34. وإن موالي ثعلبة كأنفسهم.
35. وإن بطانة يهود كأنفسهم.
36. وأنه لا يخرج منهم أحدا إلا بإذن محمد (36 ب)- وأنه لا ينحجز على ثأر جرح، وأنه من فتك فينفسه وأهل بيته إلا من ظلم وإن الله على أبرّ هذا
37. وإن على اليهود نفقتهم، وعلى المسلمين نفقتهم، وإن بينهم النصر على من حارب أهل هذه الصحيفة وإن بينهم النصح والنصيحة والبر دون الإثم.
- (37 ب) وأنه لا يأتهم أمرؤ بحليفه وإن النصر للمظلوم.
38. وإن اليهود ينفقون مع المؤمنين مادواموا محاربين.
39. وإن يثرب حرام جوفها لأهل هذه الصحيفة
40. وإن الجار كالنفس غير مضار ولا آثم.
41. وأنه لا يجار حرمة إلا بإذن أهلها.
42. وإن ما كان بين أهل هذه الصحيفة من حدث، أو اشتجار يخاف فساده فإن مرده إلى الله وإلى محمد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وإن الله على أتقى ما في هذه الصحيفة وأبره.
43. وأنه لا تجار قریش ولا من نصرها.
44. وإن بينهم النصر على من دهم يثرب.
45. وإذا دعوا إلى صلح يصلحونه ويلبسونه، وإنهم إذا دعوا إلى مثل ذلك، فإن لهم على المؤمنين إلا من خارب في الدين.
- (45 ب) على كل أناس حصتهم من جانبهم الذي قبلهم.
46. وإن يهود الأوس مواليهم وأنفسهم على مثل ما لأهل هذه الصحيفة مع البر المحض من أهل هذه الصحيفة وإن البر دون الإثم لا يكسب كاسب إلا على نفسه وإن الله على أصدق ما في هذه الصحيفة وأبره.

47. وإنه لا يحول هذا الكتاب دون ظلم أو آثم، وإنه من خرج آمن ومن قعد آمن بالمدينة، وإلا من ظلم آثم، وإن الله جار لمن بر واتقى، ومحمد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم .

BismiAllah al Rahman al Rahim (In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful)

Clause:

1. This is a document from Muhammad, the Prophet (governing the relations) between the believers and Muslims of Quraysh and Yathrib, and those who followed them and joined them and struggled with them.
2. They are one community (*ummah*) to the exclusion of all men.
3. The Quraysh Muhajirun, according to their present custom, shall pay the blood money within their number and shall redeem their prisoners with the kindness and justice common among believers.
4. The Banu 'Awf, according to their present custom, shall pay the blood money they paid hitherto, and every section shall redeem its prisoners with the kindness and justice common among believers.
5. Banu al Harith (Ibn al Khazraj), according to their present custom, shall pay the blood money they paid hitherto and every section shall redeem its prisoners with kindness and justice.

6. Banu Sa'idah, according to their present custom, shall pay the blood money they paid hitherto, and every section shall redeem its prisoners with the kindness and justice common among believers.
7. Banu Jusham, according to their present custom, shall pay the blood money they paid hitherto, and every section shall redeem its prisoners with the kindness and justice common among believers.
8. Banu al-Najjar, according to their present custom, shall pay the blood money they paid hitherto, and every section shall redeem its prisoners with the kindness and justice common among believers.
9. Banu 'Amr ibn 'Awf, according to their present custom, shall pay the blood money they paid hitherto, and every section shall redeem its prisoners with the kindness and justice common among believers.
10. Banu al-Nabit, according to their present custom, shall pay the blood money they paid hitherto, and every section shall redeem its prisoners with the kindness and justice common among believers.
11. Banu al-Aws, according to their present custom, shall pay the blood money they paid hitherto, and every section shall redeem its prisoners with the kindness and justice common among believers.
- 12a. Believers shall not leave anyone destitute among them by not paying his redemption money or blood money in kindness.

- 12b. A believer shall not take as an ally against him the freed-man of another Muslim.
13. The God-fearing believers shall be against the rebellious or anyone who seeks to spread injustice, or sin, or enmity, or corruption between believers; the hand of every man shall be against him even if he be a son of one of them.
14. A believer shall not slay a believer for the sake of an unbeliever, nor shall he aid an unbeliever against a believer.
15. God's protection is all-embracing, the least of them may give protection to a stranger on their behalf. Believers are friends and protectors one to the other, to the exclusion of outsiders.
16. To the Jews who follow us, belong help and equality. He shall not be wronged nor shall his enemies be aided.
17. The peace of the believers is indivisible. No peace shall be made when believers are fighting in the way of God. Conditions must be fair and equitable to all.
18. In every foray a rider must take another behind him.
19. The believers must avenge the blood of one another shed in the way of God.
- 20a. The God-fearing believers enjoy the best and most upright guidance.

- 20b. No polytheist shall take the property or person of Quraysh under his protection nor shall he intervene against a believer.
21. Whosoever is convicted of killing a believer without good reason shall be subject to retaliation unless the next of kin is satisfied (with blood money), and the believers shall be against him as one man, and they are bound to take action against him.
22. It shall not be lawful to a believer who holds by what is in this document and believes in God and the last day, to help an evil-doer or to shelter him. The curse of God and His anger on the day of resurrection will be upon him if he does, and neither repentance nor ransom will be received from him.
23. Whenever you differ about a matter, it must be referred to God and to Muhammad.
24. The Jews shall contribute to the cost of war so long as they are fighting alongside the believers.
25. The Jews of the Banu 'Awf are one community with the believers (the Jews have their religion and the Muslims have theirs), their freed-man and their persons except those who behave unjustly and sinfully, for they hurt but themselves and their families.
26. The Jews of Banu al-Najjar are like the Jews of Banu 'Awf.
27. The Jews of Banu al-Harith are like the Jews of Banu 'Awf.

28. The Jews of Banu Sa'idah are like the Jews of Banu 'Awf.
29. The Jews of Banu Jusham are like the Jews of Banu 'Awf.
30. The Jews of Banu al-Aws are like the Jews of Banu 'Awf.
31. The Jews of Banu al-Tha'labah are like the Jews of Banu 'Awf, except for whoever behaves unjustly and sinfully, for they hurt but themselves and their families.
32. Jafnah, a clan of the Tha'labah, are as themselves.
33. The Jews of Banu al-Shutaybah are like the Jews of Banu 'Awf. Righteousness is a protection against sinfulness.
34. The freedmen of Tha'labah are as themselves.
35. The close friends of the Jews are as themselves.
- 36a. None of them shall go out to war save with the permission of Muhammad.
- 36b. But he shall not be prevented from taking revenge for a wound. He who slays a man without warning slays himself and his household, unless it be one who has wronged him, for God will accept that.
- 37a. The Jews must bear their expenses and the Muslims their expenses. Each must help the other against anyone who attacks the people of this document. They must seek mutual advice and consultation; and righteousness is a protection against sinfulness.
- 37b. A man is not liable for his ally's misdeeds. The wronged must be helped.

38. The Jews must pay with the believers so long as war lasts.
39. Yathrib shall be a sanctuary for the people of this document.
40. A stranger under protection shall be as his host doing no harm and committing no crime.
41. A woman shall only be given protection with the consent of her family.
42. If any dispute or controversy likely to cause trouble should arise, it must be referred to God and to Muhammad, the Apostle of God (may God bless him and grant him peace), God accepts what is nearest to piety and goodness in this document.
43. Quraysh and their helpers shall not be given protection.
44. The contracting parties are bound to help one another against any attack on Yathrib.
- 45a. If they are called to make peace and maintain it, they must do so; and if they make a similar demand on the believers, it must be carried out except in the case of one engaged in combat for the sake of the religion.
- 45b. Everyone shall have his portion from the faction to which he belongs.
46. The Jews of al-Aws, their freed-men and thus themselves, have the same standing with the people of this document and the same loyalty from the people of this document. Righteousness is the protection against

sinfulness: each person bears responsibility for his actions. God approves of this document.

47. This deed will not protect the unjust and the sinner. The man who goes forth to fight is safe and the man who stays at home in the city is safe, unless either has been unjust and sinned. God is the protector of the righteous and God-conscious, and Muhammad is the Apostle of God (may God bless him and grant him peace).

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 Tear off the perforation and mail to the address on **page ii** of this book.

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ABOUT THE BOOK

Recognized as the Last of God's messengers to mankind, and having being certified by God himself as the 'best in conduct,' Muslims all over the world look up to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) for guidance as to their own conducts in their daily affairs.

This book highlights the bridge-building and peace-making efforts of the Messenger (p), in his dealing with Muslims as well as people of other faiths. In doing so, the misconception that Islam forbids harmonious relationship with peaceful people of other faiths is allayed.

The fact that Islam preaches the ideals of freedom of faith and peaceful co-existence is brought home with references to the actual lived history and biography (Seerah) of the Prophet Muhammad (p), who embodied Islamic ideals. Selecting and analysing several authentic cases from the Seerah from which we can draw a profound picture, this book underscores the significance of the Prophetic example for some of the contemporary challenges faced by Muslims, especially those living in multicultural and multireligious societies and those interested in building resilience against violent extremism.

And considering the amount of misconceptions and deliberate distortions that have surrounded some of the battles that the Prophet (p) engaged in, as well as the portrayal of him by some as a warmonger; this book also analyzes the justifications and circumstances that surrounded some of the most misunderstood of these battles, proving as classical scholars have confirmed that all the battles engaged in by the Prophet (p) were defensive, just and in protection of peace, and not offensive.

DA'WAH INSTITUTE OF NIGERIA

The Da'wah Institute of Nigeria (DIN) is the research and public enlightenment department of the Islamic Education Trust (IET). The DIN partners with other organizations for comprehensive capacity building and promoting peaceful co-existence.



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