

Miscellaneous skirmishes till the Battle of Badr

It is narrated through authentic chains of narrators from Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) and Imam Ali Naqi (a.s.) that a person who vows to bestow much in charity must give eighty dirhams; for in the Qur'an it is declared:

لَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي مَوَاطِنَ كَثِيرَةٍ

“Certainly Allah helped you in many battlefields...”¹

“We counted the places,” say these Imams, “where the Prophet fought against idolaters and Allah helped him, and have found the number to be eighty.” Shaykh Tabarsi in *Majmaul Bayan* states that the Prophet was present in person in twenty-six battles or military expeditions; namely: (1) Abwa (2) Bawata (3) Asheerah (4) Badr-e-awla (5) Badr-e-Kubra (6) Bani Sulaym (7) Suwaiq (8) Zee Amr (9) Uhud (10) Bahraan (11) Asad (12) Bani Nuzayr (13) Zat-ul-Raqa (14) Badr-e-akhirah (15) Domatul Jandal (16) Khandaq (17) Bani Quraiza (18) Bani Lahyan (19) Bani Qard (20) Bani Mustaliq (21) Hudaibiya (22) Khyber (23) conquest of Mecca (24) Hunain (25) Taif and (26) Tabuk. In nine of these battles, he engaged personally in the fight.

First, in the Battle of Badr-e-Kubra, on Friday, the seventeenth of Ramadan, in the second year of the Hijrat. Second, in the Battle of Uhud, in the month of Shawwal, the third year of the Hijrat. Third and fourth, at the battles of Khandaq and Bani Quraiza, in Shawwal, the fourth of Hijrat. Fifth, in the Battle of Bani Mustaliq in the month of Shaban, fifth year of the Hijrat. Sixth, in the Battle of Khyber, the sixth year of the Hijrat.

Seventh, in conquest of Mecca, in the month of Ramadan, the eighth year of the Hijrat. Eighth and ninth, in the battles of Hunain and Taif, in Shawwal, the eighth year of the Hijrat. The warlike expeditions he sent out, but did not attend in person, were thirty-six in number.²

Kulaini has through good chains narrated that the slogan was, “O Muhammad! O Muhammad!” In the battles of Badr and Uhud, it was, “O help of God, be near!” In the Battle of Bani Nuzayr, “O Holy Spirit,

give ease!” In the Battle of Bani Qinqaa, the shout was, “O Lord, let not the infidels conquer your army!”

In the Battle of Taif, it was, “O the one who is pleased.” In the Battle of Hunain, it was: “O sons of Abdullah.” In the Battle of Ahzab, it was: “Ha Mim and they will not be helped.” In the Battle of Quraiza, it was: “O Salam (secure) give them security.” In the Battle of Marisi also known as Battle of Mustaliq, it was: “O the affair lies with Allah.”

In the Battle of Hudaibiya it was: “Now the curse of Allah is on the unjust.” In the Battle of Khyber, it was: “O high one, bestow them with thirst.” In the conquest of Mecca, it was: “We are the true servants of Allah.” In the Battle of Tabuk, it was: “O the One O the self sufficient.” In the Battle of Bani Maloh, it was: “Ummah, Ummah.” In the Battle of Siffeen, it was: “O Help of Allah.”³

And slogan of Imam Husain (a.s.) was “O Muhammad,” and the same is our slogan. And Kulaini has narrated through authentic chains of narrators from Imam Ja’far Sadiq (a.s.) that a delegation of the people of Medina came to the Prophet who asked them: “What is your battle cry?” “Haraam,” said they. He said: “Make it ‘Halaal’.

In another tradition, it is mentioned that during the Battle of Badr, the cry of the Muslims was: “O helper of the Ummah!” During the Battle of Uhud, Muhajireen used to call: “O Prophet of Allah, O servant of Allah, O sons of Abdur Rahman.” And the people of Aws tribe used to say: “O Bani Abdullah.”

It is mentioned in reliable traditions from Imam Ja’far Sadiq (a.s.) that the Holy Prophet (S) before sending an army used to pray for them, gave them instructions, and enjoined them to fear God and keep His commandments. He then told them, “Go in the name of Allah and for the pleasure of the Messenger of Allah (S) and fight every infidel.

Practice no stratagems, and do not steal from the public plunder. Do not mutilate the infidels you kill, and slay not the old, women or children. Put not to death ascetics that live in caves and mountains. Cut down no trees except from absolute necessity. If a Muslim gives quarter to an infidel, let him have opportunity to hear the word of God; if he embrace your religion, then he is your brother in the faith; if he refuses, send him to his own asylum and invoke divine aid in killing him.

According to another tradition, the Prophet commanded the armies he sent forth on military expeditions: Burn no date-trees, nor flood them to destroy them; cut down no fruit trees, nor burn any fields of corn; there will be times enough when you will need these resources. Destroy no animals whose flesh is lawful, except what are necessary for food.

When you meet the enemy, offer them three conditions, which if they accept, leave them unmolested. First, summon them to become Muslims; if they consent, offer them no violence, but direct them to go to the capital of Islam after embracing the faith. If they refuse to remove, and prefer to remain in their own country. they will be classed with the desert Arabs, and not be entitled to any share in the spoils taken by the Muslim armies till they go and dwell at the capital of Islam.

If they will not receive the faith, offer them the condition of tribute, and the grade of servitude if they are people possessing a divine book. Should they agree to this, do not attack them; but if they refuse the condition of tribute likewise, seek help from Allah and fight them as truth requires.

When you besiege a fortified place, and its garrison and people surrender, make one of your number arbiter in the case, as you may not know the will of God in the matter, and if you pledge them security, do it on your own account and not on the authority of Allah and the Prophet.”

And it is narrated from Amirul Momineen (a.s.) that the Prophet forbade poisoning the water of infidels, and he never surprised and cut off his enemy by night. Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) says that the Prophet had three hundred and thirteen men at the Battle of Badr; six hundred at the Battle of Uhud, and nine hundred at the siege of Khandaq.

It is mentioned in reliable traditions from Imam Reza that when Khyber was taken, the inhabitants were laid under a tribute of half their annual produce, besides a tithe and half for the poor Muslims. When the people of Taif embraced Islam, they were only allotted these taxes. And when he entered Mecca as a conqueror, all the people became his prisoners but he emancipated and forgave all them.

It is narrated from Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) in a reliable tradition that Prophet sent an army of Muslims to fight the infidels and when it returned the Prophet said, “Happy are those who have overcome in the lesser Jihad, and will conquer in the greater Jihad with their own carnal desires.”

From another chain it is narrated from the same Imam that the Messenger of Allah (S) made peace with the inhabitants of the desert, on condition that they might dwell in their own region, and yield their services in war when they should be needed, without sharing the spoils. And it is narrated from the same Imam that: “The Prophet took ladies with him to war, to attend the wounded, but he gave them no share in the spoil except small presents.”

Other respectable traditions declare that people asked the Prophet about the interpretation of the following verse:

وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ

And prepare against them what force you can...”4

The Messenger of Allah (S) said: “It implies archery.” It is mentioned in other reliable traditions that the Holy Prophet (S) entered camels and horses for the race, and bet upon them, his object being to increase the power of those animals for war. And it is mentioned in Qur'anic verses and traditions that in the beginning of religious wars a rule was established that a hundred Muslims should not flee before a thousand infidels.

Afterwards the Almighty Allah sent an order that one hundred Muslims should engage two hundred infidels, but if the enemy was more than double their number, they fled. But the enemy outnumbered them more than this, they had the choice to either face them or flee.

Shaykh Tusi has narrated through authentic chains of narrators from Habba Arfi that the Messenger of Allah (S) wrote a letter to Haqiba, an Arab noble, and he sewed the letter (a piece of leather) in layer of his leather bucket. His daughter said: "This is the way you deal with the letter of best of the Arabs? Very soon you will fall into a calamity."

Suddenly the army of the Prophet attacked him and his extensive wealth was plundered by the Muslim soldiers and at last he came to the Prophet and accepted Islam. The Holy Prophet (S) said: "Here is your property, which the Muslims have not divided among themselves. You can take it back."

Kulaini has narrated through authentic chains of narrators from Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) that the Messenger of Allah (S) sent a force to the tribe of Khatham and when it reached there, they took refuge through Muslim ritual prayer. Muslims paid no heed and killed a number of them. When the Holy Prophet (S) learnt about it, he ordered that half of the blood money should be paid, because of their prayers, and said: "I am aloof from that Muslim who lives with the infidels in the abode of war."

Shaykh Tabarsi relates that the first expedition which the Prophet dispatched against the idolaters was a party of mounted men, thirty in number, under the command of his uncle Hamza bin Abdul Muttalib. They were sent to the sea-shore in the region of Jahina, where they met a caravan in which was Abu Jahl and a hundred and thirty idolaters.

Majdi bin Amr kept the parties from engaging, and the Muslims returned without fighting. The Prophet himself, in the month of Safar, the twelfth month of the Hijrat, started on an expedition against the Quraish and Bani Zumrah, and advanced as far as Abwa, and returned without engaging the enemy. This was the first expedition he made in person.

In Rabiul Awwal he next sent Ubaidah bin Harith, with sixty mounted Muhajireen and not a single Ansar with them, to fight the idolaters. The Prophet made his first banner for this expedition. Abu Ubaidah met the infidels at Ahya where the enemy was commanded by Abu Sufyan. A number of arrow shots were exchanged, but the parties did not come to a close and decisive engagement.

In the month of Rabius Sani, the Prophet went on another expedition against the Quraish, and advanced to a place called Bawat, and returned without an engagement. He then made an expedition to Ashirah, a place of Yani, for the purpose of intercepting a caravan of the Quraish. At Ashirah he stopped there for the whole month of Jamadiul Awwal and some days of Jamdius Sani, and having concluded a peace with the Bani Madlaj and Bani Zumra returned.

It is narrated from Ammar Yasir that he said: I was with Amirul Momineen (a.s.) in the Battle of Ashira. The Imam said to me: O Abul Yaqzan, come let us check how the Bani Madlaj do at their water hole. I

went with him and watched them for sometime but we felt sleepy and going inside a date orchard we went to sleep.

Suddenly the Holy Prophet (S) awoke us and was dusting the garments of Amirul Momineen (a.s.) saying: "O Abu Turab get up! And he said: O Abu Turab, shall I tell you about the worst of men?" "Yes, O Messenger of Allah (S)." The Holy Prophet (S) said: "The worst of men was Sarkhak Thamud who killed the she-camel of Prophet Salih (a.s.) and the worst man of this Ummah is one who will hit you here," and he placed his hand on the head of Imam Ali (a.s.), "and will make this wet with blood," saying this, he drew his hand on the beard of Imam Ali (a.s.).

After that they returned to Medina and not ten days had passed when Qarz bin Harith Fahri having made a descent on Medina and carried off cattle, the Prophet pursued him to the valley of Safwan, belonging to the district of Badr; hence this expedition is called the first Badr. In this affair, Ali bin Abi Talib (a.s.) was standard bearer, and Zaid bin Haritha was the Prophet's Caliph in Medina.

Not overtaking Qarz, the party returned to Medina, where the Prophet remained the rest of Jamadi II, and the months of Rajab and Shaban. During this time, he dispatched Saad bin Abi Waqqas with eighty men who returned without fighting.

The Prophet now sent a detachment under Abdullah bin Hajish, who was not ordered to fight, as this was a month when war was unlawful among Arabs. The Prophet gave Abdullah sealed orders, commanding him not to open them till after two days' march. On opening the letter, he found this order: Go to Nakhlah and send me whatever news you hear of Quraish.

"So be it," said Abdullah; and then addressing his men, said, "Whoever desires martyrdom, let him come with me." His party accordingly advanced with him to Nakhlah. To this place, four men: Amr bin Khazrami, Hakam bin Kisan, Uthman and Mughira, sons of Abdullah were coming with a quantity of skins, raisins and provisions, which they had purchased at Taif and were carrying them to Mecca. Seeing the Muslims, they feared to approach.

But Waqid bin Abdullah from the Muslims shaved off his head to signify that they had come on a pilgrimage, and not for war, the idolaters, being assured of security, joined the party of Islam. This was the last day of Rajab, a sacred month. The Muslims consulted together, saying, if we kill them at this unlawful time, we shall be slain for the deed; if we let them alone, they will enter Mecca tomorrow and escape us altogether.

And according to the narration of *Majmaul Bayan* the Muslims were in doubt if Rajab had commenced; however, they came to the conclusion of putting the merchants to death, and Waqid bin Abdullah, who had beguiled them into security, discharged an arrow and killed one of them, upon which the other three fled, but two of them were overtaken and made prisoners.

The Muslims plundered their caravan and carried the spoils to Medina. According to the report of Ali bin

Ibrahim this occurred on the 1st of Rajab. The Prophet reproved them for what they had done, and would not accept the plunder they had brought, all of which made the party ashamed. The Quraish infidels then wrote a letter to the Prophet, reproaching him for shedding blood and taking spoils in a sacred month; upon which the Almighty Allah sent him this verse:

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

“They ask you concerning the sacred month about fighting in it. Say: Fighting in it is a grave matter, and hindering (men) from Allah’s way and denying Him, and (hindering men from) the Sacred Mosque and turning its people out of it, are still graver with Allah, and persecution is graver than slaughter...”⁵

After this verse was revealed, the Prophet took the spoils that had been brought, and freed the two prisoners. This was two months before the Battle of Badr.

According to some reliable books, among the events of the second year of the Hijrat, Ali and Fatima were betrothed to each other at the close of the month of Safar, and were married in the month of Zilhajj. Some say that the betrothal was in the fifth month of Hijrat, and the marriage was after the Battle of Badr, while others place those events in the second year of the Hijrat.

Traditions affirm that the birth of Imam Hasan (a.s.) was in the second year of the Hijrat, or, as some say in the third year, and that the birth of Imam Husain (a.s.) was in the fourth year of the Hijrat. The truth of all this will be stated in its proper place. In the second year of Hijrat, the Qiblah was transferred from Baitul Maqdas to Kaaba. The reason of this change was that the Prophet when in Mecca, turned to both toward Baitul Maqdas and the Kaaba in prayer, but after his flight to Medina, when he could no longer pray towards both places, the Almighty Allah commanded him to turn to Baitul Maqdas for the purpose of conciliating the Jews, and that they might not charge him with falsehood, for in their books they had read that the Prophet would be the master of the two Qiblahs.

The Prophet preferred the Kaaba, which was the Qiblah of Ibrahim and the Prophet’s illustrious ancestors. Baitul Maqdas was the Qiblah for seven months, or sixteen months, or eighteen months, or nineteen months, for such is the diversity of accounts about this matter, and then the Kaaba was restored as the Qiblah of Muslims, as declared in the Holy Qur’an. Shaykh Tusi has narrated in *Tahdhib* from Imam Ja’far Sadiq (a.s.) that people asked him: When did the Prophet face the Kaaba in prayer? Imam (a.s.) replied that the change took place after the Battle of Badr.

And Kulaini has narrated through good chains that Imam Ja’far Sadiq (a.s.) was asked: “Did the Prophet

pray facing Baitul Maqdas?” “Yes,” said the Imam. “Did he turn his back to the Kaaba?” he said: “As long as he was in Mecca, he did not turn his back to it but when he came to Medina, he turned his back to Kaaba and faced Baitul Maqdas till the Almighty Allah commanded him to face the Kaaba.”

Ibn Babawayh has narrated that the Messenger of Allah (S) prayed facing Baitul Maqdas for thirteen years in Mecca and nineteen months in Medina, so the Jews told him that he was in fact following them. So the Prophet was much aggrieved and he came out and glanced at the sky waiting for divine revelation. Next morning he prayed the Morning Prayer and waited for revelation till it was time for Zuhr and he had completed two rakats when Jibraeel arrived with the verse:

قَدْ نَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ ۚ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا

“Indeed We see the turning of your face to heaven, so We shall surely turn you to a Qiblah which you shall like...”⁶

During the prayer itself, Jibraeel held the hand of the Prophet and turned him to the Kaaba. Those who were following him also turned to the Kaaba. Men took the place of women and women took the place of men. The first two rakats were prayed facing Baitul Maqdas and the last rakats were prayed facing the Kaaba.

This report reached to the other Masjids of Medina and people of those places also had prayed two rakats and during prayers they also faced the Kaaba. This occurred at the Masjid denominated from this fact, the Masjidul Qiblatayn, or Masjid of two Qiblas. People asked: “Were the prayers we prayed facing Baitul Maqdas invalid?” The Almighty Allah revealed the following verse:

وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ

“...and Allah was not going to make your faith to be fruitless...”⁷

It is mentioned in trustworthy traditions that among those who had prayed facing two Qiblas was Abdul Ashal. There are many traditions regarding this. Some say that Masjid Quba was erected after the change of Qiblah and the Messenger of Allah (S) himself helped in its construction. And it is said that it was in the 2nd year of Hijrat during the month of Shaban and the same year fasting during the month of Ramadan became obligatory. In the same year Zakat Fitra became obligatory and the same year the Messenger of Allah (S) prayed the Eidul Fitr Prayer in open.

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1. Surah Taubah 9:25
 2. The author says: There are traditions which mention engagements not enumerated in the above accounts of the Prophet's battles.
 3. The author says: Slogans are words that are repeated during the battle so that in the darkness of the dust, soldiers of a particular army may recognize each other and; persons of the opposing parties may be differentiated.
 4. Surah Anfal 8:60
 5. Surah Baqarah 2:217
 6. Surah Baqarah 2:144
 7. Surah Baqarah 2:143

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