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Ka'bah or Kaaba **كعبه**: the first house of worship built for mankind, the cubic-shaped structure which is the most sacred to the Muslims of the world. It was originally built by Adam and was rebuilt by Abraham and his son Ishmael because it was damaged by torrential rain. It has the Black Stone which is believed as having been brought by an angel for Adam from another planet. The stone has been subjected to tests and analyses which all proved that it was unlike any other on our planet, thus proving the Muslims' claim that it is not earthly but cosmic.

It is located in Mecca, the city located in Hijaz to which all Muslims of the world turn as they perform their five daily prayers and all other prayers, obligatory or optional. Mecca now is a very modern city with luxury hotels, malls, commercial centers and all modern facilities, and its people are most courteous, kind, generous and hospitable. Many pilgrims did not like to leave it once they had completed their pilgrimage rituals, so they married there and lived happily ever after.

Kaffara **كفارة**: atonement from sin, a penalty for wrongdoing. It is great if sinners pay for their sins in this short life for the price they will have to pay in the Hereafter will be quite dear. Kaffara sometimes is done by paying a certain amount of money determined by a jurist which will be distributed to the poor and needy. Other ways of paying it may be with performance of rituals such as prayers, fast, pilgrimage, etc.; so, dear reader, if you have committed a sin—who has not?! —, try to atone for it before it is too late.

Kafir **كافر**: infidel, apostate, atheist, one who does not believe in the existence of the Creator. The noun *kufr* denotes a person who refuses to submit to the will of Allah (God), who disbelieves in God. It also means one who deliberately covers up the truth while fully knowing it.

Kalam or Kalaam **كلام**: Talk or speech as in "kalamu–Allah". It also means logic or philosophy.

Kalima or Kalimah **كلمه**: Synonymous to "*shahada*," it is a Muslim's declaration of faith (that is, to testify that there is no god except Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah), and it is always pronounced in Arabic.

Kantar **قنطار**: in Arabic, it is *qintar*, a varying weight of 100 *rais* (rotls); a *ral* in Syria is roughly 3.202 kg.,

whereas in England it is 449.28 grams, and in Lebanon it is 2.566 kg.

Khabir or Khabeer خبير: expert, learned, informed, connoisseur (of), specialist

Khafaqan خفقان: palpitation (of heart, etc.)

Khala`a or Khalaa`ah خلاعه: indecency, immorality, debauchery

Khaleefa or Khalifah خليفة: caliph; the word "khalifah" refers to the successor of Prophet Muhammad (ص) or simply to any ruler who claims that he rules the Muslims according to the will of the Almighty, whether he is justified in his claim or not. History has proven that most of these claims are false! This person sees himself as the head not only of his country but of the entire Muslim nation, so let us leave him enjoying this thought! Another title for the khalifah is "Amir Al-Mu'mineen", Commander of the Faithful, which is explained above.

Khalis خالص: whole, clear, pure, candid, genuine, exclusive

Khandaq خندق: ditch, moat. This word reminds the Muslims of the "Battle of the Khandaq" which took place during Islam's early years, that is, in 627 A.D. First of all, there are two theories about how contemporary Jews went to and settled in Mecca and Medina. One theory says that they fled the persecution of the Romans who had by then subjected Jerusalem, which Jews call Ur-shalom, the city of peace, and went to Arabia where they felt confident that the Romans would not chase them there. Arabia at that time did not have much to attract foreign invaders. Another theory says that these Jews, who spoke Arabic besides Hebrew and Yiddish, had actually fled away from the persecution of cruel and fanatical Christian rulers of Nejran, southern Yemen, who were at the time appointed by the emperors of Abyssinia (Ethiopia).

In Medina, most Jews settled within small fortified towns. Upon settling down at Khaibar, one of their tribes, Banu Nadir, decided to seek revenge against the Muslims because of an incident which had taken place at Medina's main bazaar: A Jewish shop owner went from behind a Muslim woman and pulled her gown up, exposing her private parts. A Muslim man noticed the incident, attacked the Jew and killed him. The Jews went into a riot and contacted the Meccans. Twenty Jewish leaders and 50 others from pagan Quraish made a covenant in the Ka`ba that as long as they lived, they would fight Muhammad and the Muslims.

Then the Jews and Quraish contacted their allies and sent emissaries to a number of tribes. Banu Ghatfan, Banu Asad, Banu Aslam, Banu Ashja`, Banu Kinanah and Banu Fizarah readily responded. The Meccans, four thousand strong, including three hundred cavaliers and fifteen hundred camels, were joined by six thousand allies from among the Jews and the bedouin tribes. The three armies set out, ten thousand strong, under the command of Abu Sufyan in the beginning of the month of Shawwal, 5 A.H. (the end of February 627 A.D.) to attack Medina.

When news of these preparations reached Medina, the Prophet consulted his companions, as he always did during such situations. There was hardly sufficient time to make preparations for the war. He decided this time to remain within the city and fight back. The stone houses of the city were built adjacent to one another so as to make a high and continuous strong wall for a long distance except in the north-west where a wide open space could afford the enemy an easy entry.

At this place, with the suggestion of Salman al-Farisi, who was familiar with the mode of defending cities in other countries such as his home country (Persia), a trench, fifteen feet in width and fifteen feet in depth, was dug up. Muslims were divided into parties of 10 each, and each party was allotted 10 yards to dig. The Prophet himself participated in this task, carrying the excavated earth away.

The *khandaq* (moat) was completed in the nick of time: just 3 days before the host of the enemies reached Medina. The houses outside the city were evacuated, and the women and children were accommodated for safety on the tops of the double-storied houses at the entrenchment. Muslims could muster only three thousand men to face this huge army, and they immediately took cover behind the ditch. The Prophet camped in the center of the entrenchment in a tent of red leather on a space shaped like a crescent. The camp had the rising ground of Sila` on its rear and the trench in the front.

Huyaiy ibn Akhtab, head of Banu Nadir Jews of Medina, met secretly with Ka`b ibn Asad, head of Banu Quraizah, another Jewish tribe which was still in Medina. Huyaiy was the most antagonistic Jew towards the Prophet (ص). Banu Quraizah, on his instigation, tore down the treaty which they had concluded with the Muslims. The Jews decided that they would assist the pagan Quraishites after ten days' preparations and would attack the rear of Muhammad's army from the north-western side of the city which was located on the south-east side of their fortress and which was easily accessible to them.

Rumours reached the Prophet about the Jews' schemes, so he sent two chiefs, one from the Aws and one from the Khazraj, namely Sa`d ibn Mu`ath and Sa`d ibn `Abadah (by the way, the reader may remember this same Sa`d ibn `Abadah whom I mentioned in my book titled *Allah: The Concept of God in Islam* while discussing the jinns) respectively, to ascertain the truth.

Both men proceeded to meet the Jews. Having made searching inquiries and some scouting of their own, they returned to report to the Prophet that the temper of the Jews was even worse than it had been feared. This news alarmed the Prophet. It was then necessary to take precautions against any surprise attack or treachery from the side of those Jews. The north-western part of the city, which was located on the side of the Jewish stronghold, was the weakest of all defences.

In order to protect the families of his followers throughout the city, the Prophet, as a meager measure of precaution, had no choice except to send a considerable number of his men from his already small army of three thousand to afford them such protection. His men's supplies were hardly adequate due to the length of the siege of the entrenchment which formed his defense line. Still, he had no choice except to detach two parties, one of three hundred men under the command of Zayd ibn Harithah, his freed slave

whom he raised since childhood, and another of two hundred men under the command of a chieftain from Medina. Their job was to patrol the streets and the alleys of the city night and day.

This treachery and danger from inside Medina, when Muslims were surrounded by the combined armies of pagans and Jews of all of Arabia on the outside, had a telling effect on the Muslims. The enemy was astonished to see the moat because it was a novel military tactic for the Arabs. They camped on the outside for 27 (or 24) days. Their number increased day by day, and many Muslims were extremely terrified, as the Qur'an portrays for us. Surat al-Ahzab (Chapter 33 of the Holy Qur'an) describes various aspects of this siege. For example, read the following verses:

When they came upon you from above you and from below, and when the eyes turned dull, and the hearts rose up to the throats, you began to think diverse thoughts about Allah. There, the believers were tried, and they were shaken a tremendous shaking. (Qur'an, 33:10-11)

At that time, many hypocrites, and even some Muslims whose faith was weak and who are unfortunately described by some scholars as being *sahaba*, companions of the Prophet, asked permission to leave the ranks of the Muslims and to go home:

A party of them said: O people of Yathrib! There is no place for you to stand. And a party of them asked permission of the Prophet saying: Verily our houses are exposed, and they were not exposed; they only (thus) described (them in order) to flee away. (Qur'an, 33:13)

The bulk of the army, however, steadfastly withstood the hardship of inclement weather and rapidly depleting provisions. The coalition's army hurled arrows and stones at the Muslims.

Finally, a few of Quraish's more valiant warriors, `Amr ibn Abdwadd, Nawfal ibn Abdullah ibn Mughirah, Dhirar ibn Khattab, Hubairah ibn Abu Wahab, `Ikrimah ibn Abu Jahl (an unbelieving cousin of the Prophet) and Mirdas al-Fahri, succeeded in crossing the moat.

`Amr called for battle; nobody responded; he was considered equal to one thousand warriors. History accounts state that all the Muslims were as though birds were sitting on their heads: they were too afraid to raise their heads.

Three times did the Prophet exhort the Muslims to battle `Amr. Three times it was only Ali who stood up. In the third time, the Prophet allowed Ali to go. When Ali was going to the battlefield, the Prophet said: "The whole faith is going to fight the whole infidelity; the embodiment of the former bounds is to crush the entirety of the latter." The Prophet put his own turban on Ali's head, his own coat of mail over Ali's body, and he armed Ali with his own sword, Thul-Fiqar, then he sent him to meet his opponent. Then the Prophet raised his hands to supplicate thus: "O Allah! `Obaydah, my cousin, was taken away from me in the Battle of Badr, Hamzah, my uncle, in Uhud. Be Merciful, O Lord, not to leave me alone and undefended. Spare Ali to defend me. You are the best of defenders."

Ali invited `Amr to accept Islam or to return to Mecca, or to come down from his horse since Ali had no horse and was on foot.

“Nephew,” said `Amr to Ali, being a friend of Ali’s father Abu Talib, “By God I do not like to kill you.” Ali replied, “By God, I am here to kill you!” `Amr, now enraged at this reply, alighted from his horse. Having hamstrung his horse, a token of his resolve never to run away from the battlefield but either to conquer or to perish, he advanced towards Ali. They were immediately engaged in a duel, turning the ground underneath them into a cloud of dust, so much so that for a good while, only the strokes of their swords could be heard while they themselves could not be seen. `Amr succeeded once in inflicting a serious cut on Ali’s head. At last, Ali’s voice was heard shouting, “*Allahu Akbar! Allahu Akbar!*” That was his cry of victory. It always is Muslims’ cry of victory.

Seeing how the most brave among them has been killed by Ali, the other pagans who crossed the moat now took to their heels with the exception of Nawfal whose horse failed to leap; it fell into the moat. As the Muslims showered him with a hail of stones, he cried out thus: “I rather die by the sword than by the stones!” Hearing this, Ali leaped into the moat and fulfilled his last wish, dispatching him to hell!

Ali, contrary to the Arab custom then, did not, however, strip either men from their armour or clothes. When `Amr’s sister came to her brother’s corpse, she was struck with admiration at the noble behaviour of her slain brother’s adversary and, finding out who he was, she felt proud of her brother having met his fate at the hands of the person who was known as the unique champion of spotless character. She said, as recorded in *Tarikh al-Khamis*, “Had his conqueror been someone else other than the one who killed him, I would have mourned `Amr for the rest of my life. But his opponent was the unique spotless champion.” Ali, the “Lion of God,” thus distinguished himself as on previous occasions: in the battles of Badr and of Uhud. About this battle, the Prophet said: “Verily, one attack of Ali in the Battle of Khandaq is better than the worship of all human beings and jinns up to the Day of Resurrection.”

No further activity was attempted by the enemy that day, but great preparations were undertaken during the night. Khalid ibn al-Walid, with a party of cavaliers, attempted during the night to clear the ditch for crossing the next day. The next morning, the Muslims found the entire enemy force arrayed in fighting formations along their line of entrenchment. The enemies tried to overrun the Muslim side of the trench but were repelled at every point. The ditch served its purpose; it could not be crossed. During the entire military campaign, by the way, only five Muslims were martyred. The Muslims’ vigilance paralyzed the enemies despite their numeric superiority. Numeric superiority is not always a prerequisite for victory. The Almighty grants victory to whosoever He pleases.

But the Muslims were running out of provisions. The Prophet had to tie a stone on his stomach in order to minimize the pangs of hunger. Abu Sa`eed al-Khudri said: “Our hearts had reached our throats in fear and in desperation.” On the other hand, the besieging army was getting restive, too; it could not put up any further with the rain and cold; its horses were perishing daily and provisions nearing depletion.

The Prophet went to the place where the Mosque of Victory (Masjidul-Fath) now stands and prayed to Allah. The Prophet said, "O Lord! Revealer of the Sacred Book, the One Who is swift in taking account, turn the confederate host away! Turn them to flight, O Lord, and make the earth underneath them quake!"

A fierce storm raged, uprooting the tents of the enemies; their pots and belongings went flying in all directions; it blew dust in their faces, extinguished their fires, and their horses were running around as though they were possessed. An unbearable terror was cast in their hearts. In the fourth night, after having finished his prayers, Muhammad asked Abu Bakr if he would go to the enemy's camp to discern and report their activities. He replied saying, "I ask pardon of Allah and of His Messenger."

The Prophet promised Paradise to be the reward of anyone who would venture out for that purpose, then asked `Omer ibn al-Khattab if he would do it. `Omer's answer was similar to that of Abu Bakr. The Prophet's request is actually an order, a divine one, since it is coming from one who does not say anything or do anything without the Will of the Almighty. These facts are recorded in *Tafsir al-Durr al-Manthur*, *As-Sira al-Muhammadiyah*, *As-Sira al-Halabiyya*, *Tarikh al-Khamis*, and *Rawdat al-Ahbab* for all to review.

The third person the Prophet asked was Huthayfah al-Yemani who readily responded to the request and proceeded to the enemy camp in the darkness of the night where he saw the devastation wrought by the storm. He saw Abu Sufyan looking very depressed. When he came back to his camp and reported in detail to the Prophet what he had seen, the Prophet was delighted to find out that his plea to Allah was answered.

Either feeling the pain of the severity of the weather or struck with terror at that storm which was interpreted as a manifestation of the Divine Wrath, Abu Sufyan decided to lift the siege and to march back at once. Summoning the chiefs of his allies, he announced his decision to them, issuing orders to dismantle the camp. He and all the Meccans with him, as well as the pagan tribes that allied themselves under his command, fled away. The first to flee was Abu Sufyan himself who was so upset that he tried to ride his camel without first untying its rope.

Khalid ibn al-Walid guarded the rear of the armies with two hundred cavaliers against a pursuit. The Ghatfan tribesmen and the bedouin allies returned to their deserts; not a single person remained on the battlefield in the morning. It was with great joy that in the morning the Muslims discovered the sudden disappearance of the enemy, finding themselves unexpectedly relieved. The siege lasted for twenty-four long days and ended in March of 627 A.D.

This episode is referred to in the Qur'an in this *ayat*:

O ye who believe! Remember the bounty of Allah unto you when came upon you the hosts, so We sent against them a strong wind and hosts that ye saw not, and Allah sees all what you do. (Qur'an, 33:9)

And also in *ayat* 25 which says:

And God turned back the unbelievers in their rage; they did not achieve any advantage, and Allah sufficed for the believers in fighting, and Allah is Strong, Mighty. (Qur'an, 33:25)

Abdullah ibn Mas`ud was interpreting this thus: "And God sufficed the believers (through Ali ibn Abu Talib) in their fight," as we read in *Tafsir al-Durr al-Manthur*.

As a direct result of this defeat of the infidels' combined forces in the Battle of Khandaq (moat, or the Battle of Ahzab, coalitions), Quraish's influence waned, and those tribes who were till then hesitating to accept Islam out of fear of Quraish began to send deputations to the Prophet. The first deputation came from the tribe of Mazinah, and it consisted of four hundred persons. They not only accepted Islam but were ready to settle down in Medina. The Prophet, however, advised them to return to their homes.

Likewise, a deputation of a hundred persons came from the Ashja` and embraced Islam. The tribe of Juhainah lived near them, so they were influenced by their conversion. One thousand of the latter's men came to Medina to join the fraternity.

Kharab خراب: destruction, ruin, desolation, doom, waste

Khardal خردل: mustard

Khariq خارق: extraordinary, exceptional, remarkable, piercing, penetrating

Khasir خاسر: loser, loss-making, unprofitable

Khaskhasa خصخصة: privatization

Khasm خصم: opponent, disputant, foe

Khat خط: line, path, method, style, writing, route

Khatib or Khateeb : خطيب orator, speaker, one who delivers the "khutba", sermon, whether during the Friday prayer service or any other service

Khawarij خوارج: defectors, apostates, renegades, an extinct group of individuals who split from the Islamic nation and declared a rebellion on elected Caliph Ali ibn Abu Talib (ع). Literally, the word means "Those who Went Out": a controversial term which is described by some Muslim scholars differently, each according to his level of education and extent of bias and prejudice. If you are sincere about researching who these rogues were, you can start with p. 278, Vol. 3, of Tabari's famous book *Tarikh al-Umam wal Mulook* (famous as simply *Tarikh*). There are many editions of this book available for reviewers, but the one I have is the newest; it is published by the Dar Al-Amira for Publication and Distribution, Beirut, Lebanon, and is dated 1426 A.H./2005 A.D.

Their history started in the year 37 A.H. (which then corresponded to the year 658 A.D.) when they first reverted against the then elected caliph, Ali, but returned to obedience after he had reasoned with them just to revolt against him again and one of them, namely Ibn Muljim, killed caliph Ali on a Friday, 11th, 13th or 17th of the month of Ramadan of 40 A.H., according to various narratives.

Their ideology could not withstand the intellectual challenges of the time, so it gradually weakened and died away. I think they do not deserve more space than this much here! To hell with them and with all those who apply this term to any Muslims, whoever they may be and from any sect at all, presently or in the future. The **خوارج** Khawarij and their ideology are both dead and decayed; so, there is no need to beat on a dead horse.

Khayr **خير**: good, goodness, well-being, welfare, prosperity, benefit; in some verses of the Holy Qur'an, it means "money" which, of course, can be a good tool for the doing of righteousness and for helping people.

Khazaf **خزف**: ceramic

Khida` **خداع**: deceit, deception, trickery, cheating, fooling, double-dealing

Khilaf **خلاف**: dispute, disagreement, feud, variance (of opinion, etc.), discrepancy

Khilafa or Khilaafah **خلافه**: succession, [Islamic] caliphate

Khiraj **خراج**: religious tax collected at the end of the Islamic lunar year for *baytul-mal*

Khitam **ختام**: conclusion, end, termination

Khitan **ختان**: circumcision

Khiyara **خيره**: choice, option, prime, best

Khulud or Kholood **خلود**: immortality, eternity, forever

Khums **خمس**: one-fifth of one's savings and is now paid only by Shi`a Muslims; see Chapter 8, verse 41 of the Holy Qur'an. It is set aside from one's annual income or increase in wealth. It is divided into 2 equal parts: One, called "sahm as-Sadat", is payable to needy *Sadat* (or Sayyids), descendants of the Prophet who are not allowed to receive charity (*sadaqa*) and are too dignified to ask for it. The other half, called "sahm al-Imam (عج)", is to be spent on promoting the Islamic creed, such as paying expenses for writing, translating, editing, publishing and printing of books or the building of schools, religious seminaries, libraries, etc. *Khums*, moreover, is collected from one's profits or gains which he earn, as well as from the following: minerals, treasure troves, amalgamation of *halal* (permissible) wealth with what is *haram* (prohibitive), gems obtained from sea diving, spoils of war, land which a *thimmi* (a non-Muslim living under the protection of Islamic Government) purchases from a Muslim. There are many

rules and regulations about the collection of, exemption from and distribution of this *khums* which, according to 8:41 of the Holy Qur'an is not optional, as some ill-informed individuals claim, but compulsory. Here is this verse for you:

وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ
وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَأَبْنِ السَّبِيلِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ آمَنْتُمْ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا يَوْمَ الْفُرْقَانِ
يَوْمَ التَّقَىٰ الْجَمْعَانَ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

And know that out of all the booty that you may acquire (in war), a fifth share is assigned to God! and to the Messenger, and to near relatives, to the orphans, the needy, and the wayfarer! if you believe in Allah and in the Revelation We sent down to Our servant on the day of testing! the day of the meeting of the two forces, for Allah has power over all things. (Qur'an, 8:41).

What is stated in the Holy Qur'an as permissible or not permissible remains so till the Day of Judgment, and if you disagree, it is your own burden which you will carry and not mine. If you have the *risala* (compilation of edicts) of Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali al-Husayni as-Sistani, refer to his "Kitab al-Khums" (Chapter on the *khums*) which starts on p. 387, Vol. 1, of the Arabic text of his 4-volume *Minhaj as-Saliheen* (published in the Hijri year 1427 which coincides with the year 2006 A.D. by the Grand Ayatollah's office in Holy Mashhad, Iran). If you do not have a copy of the said *risala*, the Internet can provide you with a wealth of information on this subject.

Khushu` خشوع: state of submission and full attention, humility, of being in reverence

Khusuf or Khosoof خسوف (القمر): eclipse of the moon

Khutba خطبة: a speech or sermon. It is sometimes used to refer to the sermon given during the Friday congregational prayer.

Kuffar كفار: plural form of *kafir*, apostate

Kufr كفر: showing ungratefulness to Allah and not to believe in Him and in His religion, to deliberately hide the truth while fully knowing it with the ability to show the truth

Kunya كنية: the use of "Abu " (father of) or "Umm " (mother of) someone, often used as a prefix for one's name

Kursi كرسي: Literally, it means "chair", theologically, however, it refers to the symbol of the Almighty's Seat of Judgment and Authority; see Holy Qur'an, 2:255 (*ayat al-Kursi*, verse of the Throne).

Kusuf كسوف (الشمس): eclipse of the sun

Khutba **خطبه**: lecture, sermon; a speech delivered on a specific occasion

Kufr **كفر**: apostasy, infidelity, disbelief, the deliberate covering/hiding of the truth

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