

## Battle of Khandaq

Ali bin Ibrahim, Shaykh Mufeed and Shaykh Tabarsi have narrated that the expedition entitled Ahzab or Khandaq was undertaken in the month of Ramadan, in the fifth year of Hijrat, and was occasioned in the following manner: When the Bani Nuzayr<sup>1</sup> were expelled from Medina, some of them went to Khyber and their chief, Huyy bin Akhtab, went to Mecca, and induced Abu Sufyan to organize an expedition against the Prophet; supporting his cause by the mention that Muslims have driven them out of Medina and confiscated their property; he also added that 700 men of Bani Quraiza who remained behind in Medina have a treaty with the Prophet but they are brave fighters, I will persuade them to violate the treaty so that they may help us against Muhammad.

You attack from one side of Medina and they will attack from the other side and together you can finish off Muhammad and his men. The Bani Quraiza locality was two miles from Medina and it was known as Ber-e-Abdul Muttalib. Ibn Akhtab in the similar manner met the other Arab chiefs along with the infidels of Mecca till he had mobilized 2000 men from Quraish, Kanana, Aqra bin Habis, Abbas bin Mardas with Bani Sulaym.

According to the report of Shaykh Mufeed and Shaykh Tabarsi, Salam bin Abil Haqiq, Huyy bin Akhtab, Kanana bin Rabi, Hawda bin Qays, Abu Ammara with a group of Bani Nuzayr and Bani Walia gathered in Mecca and started the dialogue with Abu Sufyan, because his enmity with the Prophet and his precedence in fighting him was known to all, therefore they were seeking his co-operation in this regard.

Abu Sufyan assured them of his assistance and told them to persuade the Quraish. So they came to Quraish chiefs and said: “All of us are with you and agree with you that we should get rid of Muhammad.” Quraish said, “You are former People of the Book and you are aware of our religion and the religion of Muhammad. Tell us which religion is better and who is more rightful?” At that juncture, the following verse was revealed:

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْجِبْتِ وَالطَّاغُوتِ وَيَقُولُونَ  
لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هُوَ أَهْدَىٰ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوا سَبِيلًا. أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ ۖ وَمَنْ

يَلْعَنُ اللَّهُ فُلْنَ تَجِدَ لَهُ نَصِيرًا.

***“Have you not seen those to whom a portion of the Book has been given? They believe in idols and false deities and say of those who disbelieve: These are better guided in the path than those who believe. Those are they whom Allah has cursed, and whomever Allah curses, you shall not find any helper for him.”***<sup>2</sup>

Thus the Quraish were elated that the Jews had certified their faith. Abu Sufyan said: “Now the Almighty Allah has made you overpower Muhammad. These Jews have arrived and entered into a league with you on the condition that either they will be killed or destroy Muhammad and his men.” After that, the Jews moved to the Ghitfan tribe and informed them that Quraish has joined their confederation, they also assented.

Thus Quraish came out under the leadership of Abu Sufyan and Bani Ghitfan came with Uyyana bin Hasan Qarari, Harith bin Awf bin Murra, Masher bin Jabla came with his Ashja tribe and then they went to their confederates from Bani Asad. Talha came with his followers from Bani Asad. Quraish wrote to Bani Sulaym, Abul Awar Salmi arrived with his men.

When the Prophet heard what a powerful army was advancing against him, he held a council of war with his companions, who were in all seven hundred men. Salman the Farsi observed, “A small force cannot withstand a large one.” “What shall we do then?” said the Prophet. Salman replied, “Let us entrench ourselves in such a manner that we can be attacked only in one quarter.”

Jibraeel descended and pronounced the plan of Salman excellent and declared it must be executed. The ground was then marked out from Uhud to Rayah, and divided into sections of twenty or thirty feet, each section being assigned to a particular party for excavation. The Muslims began the work with spades and pickaxes, the Prophet himself laboring in a section of the Muhajireen.

The second day they came to a rock which the Prophet broke to pieces with a pickaxe, as has been related in the chapter on miracles. According to Jabir there was a flash of lightning when the Prophet hit that stone with his pickaxe and so bright was the light that we saw the palaces of Shaam.

On the second blow we saw the palaces of Madayan and the third time we saw the palaces of Yemen. The Holy Prophet (S) said: You will conquer those places. The Muslims were pleased to hear this. Hypocrites said: “He is promising the palaces of Caesar and Kisra, but is digging a trench in fear of the enemy! At that juncture, the Almighty Allah revealed the following verse in refutation of the hypocrites:

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكِ الْمُلْكِ

***“Say: O Allah, Master of the Kingdom!”<sup>3</sup>***

Ibn Babawayh has narrated that the first time the Holy Prophet (S) hit with a pickaxe and the stone broke a little, he said: “Allahu Akbar, the Almighty Allah has given me the keys of Shaam and I can see their red palaces. Then he hit the second time and 1/3 broke. The Holy Prophet (S) said: Allahu Akbar. The Almighty Allah has given me the keys of Fars.

And by Allah I can see the white palaces of Madayan. When he hit the third time, the whole stone broke. The Holy Prophet (S) said: Allahu Akbar. The Almighty Allah has give the keys of Yemen to me and I can see the gates of Sana. Kulaini has narrated through authentic chains of narrators from Imam Ja’far Sadiq (a.s.) that the Holy Prophet (S) took the pickaxe either from Amirul Momineen (a.s.) or Salman and gave a hit, with which the stone broke into three pieces.

He said: With this same blow the treasures of Caesar and Kisra have opened for me. Abu Bakr and Umar said: “Because of fear, we can hardly go out to relieve ourselves and he is promising the kingdoms of Rum and Iran.” Shaykh Tabarsi has narrated that when the Holy Prophet (S) drew the line for the trench, he allotted four feet of digging to every man.

There was an argument among the Muhajireen and Ansar with regard to Salman, because he was a public figure. The Muhajireen used to say that he was from them and the Ansar claimed that he belonged to them. The Holy Prophet (S) said: “No, Salman is from us, Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). Thus Ali bin Ibrahim narrated further that Jabir says: That stone was pulverized into small particles and I felt that the Prophet was hungry.

I said: “O Prophet, is it possible for you to take breakfast at my home?” he asked what I was having and I told him that I had a kid and a Saa of barley. He said: “All right, go and prepare whatever you have. Jabir says that he went home and explained the matter to his wife who grinded the barley while he slaughtered the goat.

When the bread and meat was ready Jabir went to the Prophet and said: “May my parents be sacrificed on you, O Messenger of Allah (S), food is ready, please come and also take whoever you like.” The Holy Prophet (S) stood on the edge of the trench and announced: O Muhajireen and Ansar, Jabir has invited all of you for dinner.”

There were 700 persons present at that time. All of them emerged from the trench and started for my residence. Whoever happened to cross the path of the Prophet was also invited for the feast. According to different reports 700 or 800 or 1000 persons came to eat. Jabir ran and told his wife, who asked him if he had informed the Prophet what provision he had prepared. “Yes,” said he.

“Then it is his business,” added the woman, “and he knows better than ourselves what to do.” The Prophet directed all the people to sit outside the house and himself entered the house with Amirul Momineen (a.s.) and according to another report took all of them inside then gestured to the wall to retire

as successive groups came in.

He then cast saliva into the oven, and ordered Jabir to uncover the pot, and his wife to take out the bread, loaf by loaf. He passed them to Imam Ali (a.s.) who broke them in bowls. Three times he called for the shoulder, and the fourth time Jabir said, “a sheep has but two shoulders, and I have already produced three.” “If you had been silent,” remarked the Prophet, “the whole company had been feasted on shoulders.”

The people ate in parties of ten from the same dish, and when all were satisfied, the Prophet, Ali and Jabir ate; still the food was undiminished, and lasted the family many days. Ali bin Ibrahim narrates that Ammar Yasir was busy in digging the trench when Uthman passed from there and keeping his sleeve at his nose he went away from there. When Ammar noticed his distaste, he recited the following Rajaz:

“One who built a mosque and stayed there with ruku and Sujood and when he passed through the dust, he went away from there in distaste cannot be same.”

When Uthman heard this, he turned and abused Ammar: “O son of a black woman. You are saying this about me?” Then he came to the Holy Prophet (S) and said: “We have not entered the fold of Islam to be abused by others.” The Holy Prophet (S) said: “If you don’t like Islam, I don’t care about your turning to infidelity, go wherever you like. At that juncture, the Almighty Allah revealed the following verse:

يَمُنُونَ عَلَيْكَ أَنْ أَسْلَمُوا ؟ قُلْ لَا تَمُنُوا عَلَيَّ إِسْلَامَكُمْ ؟ بَلِ اللَّهُ يَمُنُّ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ  
هَدَاكُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ. إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ  
بَصِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ.

***“They think that they lay you under an obligation by becoming Muslims. Say: Lay me not under obligation by your Islam: rather Allah lays you under an obligation by guiding you to the faith if you are truthful. Surely Allah knows the unseen things of the heavens and the earth; and Allah sees what you do.”***<sup>4</sup>

The reason of revelation of these verses as mentioned in their interpretation by Ali bin Ibrahim is that the Almighty Allah wanted to imply that your claim of having accepted the faith is false, and in fact you have not embraced Islam.

Kulaini and Ali bin Ibrahim have through correct chains of narrators narrated from Imam Ja’far Sadiq (a.s.) during this work in Ramadan, the month of fasting, Uhud martyr, Abdullah bin Jubair’s brother Khawat bin Jubair fainted in consequence of having eaten nothing the previous night. The rule as first instituted was that no one should eat or drink who slept at night in Ramadan; but it was now modified by the following verse:

وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ

***“...and eat and drink until the whiteness of the day becomes distinct from the blackness of the night at dawn...”***<sup>5</sup>

Thus Ali bin Ibrahim narrates that the entrenchment was finished three days before the coming up of the Quraish and that it had eight gateways, at each of which the Prophet stationed a Muhajir and an Ansar, with a party as a guard. The Quraish, with their Jew allies, in all ten thousand strong, encamped between Jarf Raghayah. The Holy Prophet (S) came out of Medina with 3000 men. Ibn Shahr Ashob has narrated that the infidel army was 18000 strong. The majority has reported that it was 10000 strong.

While they were encamped at Aqiq, Huyy bin Akhtab visited Bani Quraiza to induce them to join the confederation against the Prophet. The tribe was in league with the Prophet and enjoyed his protection. Huyy arrived at their castle in the night, and after knocking a while roused Kaab bin Usaid, who perceiving who the visitor was, remarked to his family, “This man ruined his own tribe, and has now come to bring calamity upon us by urging us to break our league with the Prophet, who has been faithful and kind to us, and it is not right that we should practice deceit with him.” Kaab then went to hold a conference with Huyy, who said to the former, “I have come to proffer you exalted fortunes.”

“Perhaps you have rather come,” retorted Kaab, “to cause our degradation and ruin.” Huyy then exaggerated the number and power of the allies, and that it was impossible the Prophet could escape an utter overthrow. To this Kaab replied, “Go back the way you came, for I will never open the gate to you.” “Nothing prevents your doing it,” retorted Huyy, “but the young gazelle you are roasting and which you fear hospitality will require you to share with me.

But do not be alarmed at that, for I will not rob you of your gazelle.” “May God curse you!” returned Kaab, “for overreaching me in a way that compels me to open to you in order to preserve my own honor as a hospitable man.” Huyy was now admitted into the fortified place, and again urged Kaab to break his league with the Prophet.

The chiefs of the tribe, namely Ghazal bin Shamul, Yasir bin Qays, Wafa bin Zaid and Zuhair bin Nata were assembled and after assuring Kaab of their fealty to him as superior, declared they would follow his opinion and example in the case, whatever it was. An old and experienced Jew now arose and said, “I have read in the Taurat which has come to us from God, that He will send a Prophet in the last days who will remove from Mecca to Medina.

He will ride an ass without a saddle, wear old clothes, and satisfy the wants of nature with dry bread and dates. He will be noted for smiling, have redness in each of his eyes, and will cause the death of many. Between his shoulders will be the seal of prophecy. He will lay his sword on his shoulder and repel all that attack him, and his kingdom will extend throughout the earth. If Muhammad be that Prophet, he will

not shrink before the vast multitude assembled against him, and were the very mountains to war on him, he would overcome them.”

Ibn Akhtab replied, “This man cannot be the predicted Prophet, for he is to be of the Bani Israel; Muhammad is of the Bani Ismail, whom the Bani Israel will never obey, for God has given them superiority over all other men, and has committed to them prophecy and royalty. Moreover, Musa has obligated us never to believe in any Prophet who does not bring the sign of a sacrifice consumed by fire from heaven.

But Muhammad is attended with no miracle at all, and has gathered a deluded multitude about him by sorcery, through which he hopes to overcome the world.” By addresses of this sort, Huyy at length brought the tribe into his views and demanding their written treaty with Muhammad, tore it to pieces, saying, “Now you have no alternative but to fight.”

News of the defection of Bani Quraiza much depressed the Prophet and his companions. He sent two men, one of whom was Saad bin Maaz, to learn the true state of the matter, and charged them, if they found reports correct, on their return to inform none of it but himself, and to signify it to him by the password “Azul and Alqarah” which were the names of two Quraish clans who once professed Islam, but had practiced deceit and become infidels.

On reaching Bani Quraiza, the messengers were derided by Kaab, who reviled their Prophet in very abusive terms. They returned to the Prophet and gave the concerned password, on which, by way of policy, he exclaimed, “A curse on them! I ordered them to do so.” This was said with the design that the Quraish spies, who were always about him, might suspect there was a collusion between him and the Bani Quraiza, and that they were laying a plot to ensnare the Quraish.

Huyy bin Akhtab, after his success with Bani Quraiza, informed Abu Sufyan, who with the rest of the Quraish, were rejoiced at the accession of another ally. A man by the name of Naeem bin Masud Ashjai visited the Prophet, and declared he had three days ago become a Muslim, but had concealed the fact from the Quraish and that he was now ready to perform any service the Prophet should require, and if permitted, would create dissension between Quraish and Bani Quraiza.

The Prophet accordingly directed him to go and say what he might think expedient. He then went to Abu Sufyan who knew nothing of his having become a Muslim, and said to him, “You know my friendship for you, and how much I wish that God would favor you with His aid against your enemies. Verily, I have heard that Muhammad has formed a treaty with Jews that, when they are admitted into your ranks, they shall unexpectedly attack you, and thus enable him to overcome you. On condition of this treachery, he has promised them houses and lands taken from Bani Nuzayr and Bani Qinqaa.

My advice is that you don't permit them to enter your army until they have delivered to you some of their chiefs, to be sent as hostages to Mecca, and thus secure yourselves from their treachery.” Abu Sufyan replied, “May God give you favor and a good reward for your counsel!” After that he came to Bani

Quraiza and they were unaware of his conversion. He said: “O Kaab, you know my friendship to you.

Abu Sufyan has decided to drive those Jews from their forts and made them confront Muhammad and if they are victorious, it would be our victory. And if Muhammad wins, only they will be killed as they will be in the forefront and we will run away. And you must not join his forces till you don't take some hostages from their chiefs so that if Muhammad is not defeated, they should not be allowed to go free.

And till the treaty between you and Muhammad is not fulfilled anew. If Quraish flees without defeating Muhammad, Muhammad will definitely kill all of you.” Kaab said: “You have done me a favor. We will not leave the fort before taking ten hostages from them.” And according to the report of Shaykh Tabarsi he told Abu Sufyan: “I have heard that Bani Quraiza is regretting their violation of treaty and they have sent a message to Muhammad that they will take ten hostages from you and send them to Muhammad so that he can eliminate him.

And that they will support him in the battle to make amends to him. And it is narrated from Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s.) in *Qurbul Asnad* that Amirul Momineen (a.s.) said: Whatever I narrate from the Holy Prophet (S) is absolutely correct. Even if I fall down from the sky or if a bird plucks me up, I would prefer it to attribute falsehood to him. If I say anything during a battle, it may be against the facts because the battle depends on deceit and trickery.

Indeed, when the Holy Prophet (S) came to know that Bani Quraiza has entered into a league with Abu Sufyan that they would support them when he confronts Muhammad, the Holy Prophet (S) recited a sermon and said: Bani Quraiza has told us that when we confront Abu Sufyan they would help us. When Abu Sufyan was informed about this, he said: The Jews are trying to deceive us and another cause of their flight was this only.

Shaykh Mufeed and Shaykh Tabarsi have narrated that the Quraish army came and halted near the trench and camped there for more than twenty days. Except for exchange of arrows and stones there was no battle. When the Holy Prophet (S) observed the weakness of Muslims and expression of hypocrisy of the hypocrites he proposed peace with Atba bin Hasan and Harith bin Auf, who were the chiefs of Ghitfan tribe on the condition that if they go back they will be given a third of the agricultural produce of Medina. And he took counsel about this from Saad bin Ubadah Ansari.

Saad said: “O Messenger of Allah (S), if this peace is from the Almighty Allah we have no choice but to accept it. The Holy Prophet (S) said: “Revelation has descended about this but because all Arabs, are from everywhere ready to shoot you all from all sides, I want to remove their awe from your hearts.”

Saad bin Maaz said: “When we were idolaters and did not recognize the Almighty Allah they did not vie our property, and now when the Almighty Allah has honored us with Islam and through you bestowed respect on us, would we give our property to them. By Allah, we would give nothing but the swords, till the Almighty Allah decides between us.”

The Holy Prophet (S) said: “I also wanted to confirm your steadfastness. So remain firm on this, indeed the Almighty Allah will not leave His Prophet alone and He will make my religion dominate over all the other religions as He has promised.” After that the Holy Prophet (S) stood up determined and motivated them to confront the enemies of faith promising them about help from the Almighty Allah.

Some vile elements of Quraish came to fight in the battlefield including Amr bin Abde Wadd, Akrama bin Abi Jahl and Hubaira bin Abi Wahab, Zarar bin Khattab and Mardas Fehri. They put on the arms and mounting their horses came to Bani Kanana and persuaded them to fight saying: “Come to the battlefield so that it is known who the he-man is.”

When they came to the trench they said: “This is a trick unknown to Arabs. This is a plot of that man from Fars.” Then they toured the edge of the ditch till they noticed a narrow opening. From there they jumped their horses to reach the other side. Amr bin Abde Wudd was famed among the Arabs for his valor and might and he was considered equal to a thousand mounted men.

He was given the title of the victor of Yalyal because once he was with a caravan going to Shaam when they reached Yalyal, one thousand robbers attacked and Amr bin Abde Wudd faced and drove them alone by holding a young camel as a shield. Thus he came reciting the Rajaz and asked for his equal. When Muslims saw him, they came behind the Prophet.

At that time Umar bin Khattab said to Abdur Rahman bin Auf: “Do you see that Satan, Amr bin Abde Wudd; no one would be able to escape him. Let us hand over Muhammad to him and we can go back to our people.” At that juncture, the following verse was revealed:

قَدْ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ الْمُعَوِّقِينَ مِنْكُمْ وَالْقَائِلِينَ لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ هَلُمَّ إِلَيْنَا ۚ وَلَا يَأْتُونَ الْبَأْسَ إِلَّا  
قَلِيلًا. أَشِحَّةً عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ فَإِذَا جَاءَ الْخَوْفُ رَأَيْتَهُمْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ تَدُورُ أَعْيُنُهُمْ كَالَّذِي  
يُغْشَى عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ ۚ فَإِذَا زَهَبَ الْخَوْفُ سَلَقُوكُمْ بِاللُّسِنَةِ كَمَا دَارَ أَشِحَّةً عَلَى  
الْخَيْرِ ۚ أُولَئِكَ لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا فَأَحْبَطَ اللَّهُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرًا.

***“Allah knows indeed those among you who hinder others and those who say to their brethren: Come to us; and they come not to the fight but a little. Being niggardly with respect to you; but when fear comes, you will see them looking to you, their eyes rolling like one swooning because of death; but when the fear is gone they smite you with sharp tongues, being niggardly of the good things. These have not believed, therefore Allah has made their doing naught; and this is easy to Allah.”***<sup>6</sup>

Thus Amr bin Abde Wudd planted his spear in the ground and began to walk here and there; then recited the following Rajaz:

“My throat has gone bad screaming out to you to send someone to fight me. And I am standing while the stalwarts are full of fear. In such a terrible occasion when all run away; I remain firm. Indeed, valor and forgiveness are the best qualities of a hero.”

The Messenger of Allah (S) said to the Muslims: “Who among you can finish off this dog?” When no one replied, Amirul Momineen (a.s.) came forward and volunteered to finish him. Imam Ali (a.s.) said: “O Ali, this is Amr bin Abde Wudd.” Ali (a.s.) said: “I am Ali Ibn Abi Talib.” The Holy Prophet (S) said: “All right, come to me.” He tied a turban to him and handed the Zulfiqar and said: “Go and fight him.” And pray that the Almighty Allah may protect him from all sides. Imam Ali (a.s.) came to the field without any delay and recited the following Rajaz:

“Don’t make haste, because one who has come to confront you is one who is not helpless to fight you. One who is owner of righteousness and seer of the right path. One who is truthful and savior of the successful ones. Indeed I hope that very soon people will attend to your last rites. With the sharp blow that remains famous even after the battles.”

Amr bin Abde Wudd asked: “Who are that dares to confront me?” “I am Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.), cousin and son-in-law of the Messenger of Allah (S).” He said: “By Allah, your father was my friend and I don’t want to raise you on my spear and suspend you between the earth and the sky so that you neither die nor live.” Imam Ali (a.s.) said: “My cousin, the Holy Prophet (S) has informed me that if you kill me, I will go to Paradise and you will go to Hell and if I kill you, I will go to Paradise and you will go to Hell.”

Amr bin Abde Wudd remarked in ridicule: “Both ways you stand to benefit. It is your misfortune that you are prepared to accept.” Imam Ali (a.s.) said: “Shut up, I have heard that once you held the curtain of the Kaaba that if anyone offers you three conditions in a battle, you will accept one condition. So I offer you three conditions from which you may accept one.”

“What are those?” he said: “Either you testify for the oneness of Allah and prophethood of the Prophet and become a Muslim.” He said, “This I cannot do. Forget it.” Ali (a.s.) said: “Go back and persuade your forces to lift the siege. If the Holy Prophet (S) is true and his religion is established, it will bring honor to all of you and you know him very well.

And if he is a liar and he is not a prophet the bandits and thieves of Arabs will save you from his mischief. That unfortunate one said: “I reject this option because the women of Quraish will ridicule and poets will versify my cowardice that I did not help those who had appointed me as their chief. Imam Ali (a.s.) said: “The third condition is that you are mounted and I am on foot.

You also come down that we may duel on foot.” He jumped down and hamstringed his beast, saying: “This is a condition I never expected from any Arab.” Then he launched an attack which the Imam stopped at the shield. He attacked again and gave such a blow that the Imam’s helmet was cut into two injuring his head. Since deceit is allowed in battle, Amirul Momineen (a.s.) said: “Were you not content to have earned medals of bravery among Arabs and non-Arabs that you had to compel a young man

like me to face you. And you have also brought a helper?"

He turned to see whom he was referring to. So the Imam slashed at his legs severing them, and he fell down on the ground. So much dust arose that both were hidden in it and people could not know who had killed whom. The hypocrites said that Ali has been killed. When the dust settled, people saw Amirul Momineen (a.s.) mounted on his chest holding his beard, cutting off his head.

Amirul Momineen (a.s.) came to the Prophet with the severed head and his head was also bleeding and blood was dripping from his sword. He was saying: "I am the son of Abdul Muttalib, death is better than flight." The Holy Prophet (S) said: "O Ali, did you trick him?" He said: "Yes, battles depend on deceit." After that the Messenger of Allah (S) sent Zubair to Hubaira.

Zubair killed him with a blow. Umar was asked to confront Zarar. When Zarar came before him, Umar he took out an arrow and Zarar said: "What rule permits use of arrow in a duel?" If you are a man, take out your sword and let us fight a duel. If you shoot an arrow, I will slay all the enemies in Mecca."

As soon as he heard this he fled from there and Zarar took his spear pursued him and poked it into his back and said: "Remember, I caught you but didn't kill you. I have sworn that as far as possible, I will not kill anyone from Quraish." That is why Umar used to acknowledge his favor and when he obtained Caliphate, appointed him a governor.<sup>7</sup>

Ibn Babawayh has narrated in *Khisal* through Amirul Momineen (a.s.) that Quraish came with Arab tribes and made a firm covenant that till they do not slay the Prophet with all the issues of Abdul Muttalib, they would not return. They came armed in multitudes and besieged Medina and they were over-confident of their numbers and strength. Before their arrival, Jibraeel had informed the Messenger of Allah (S) about them.

The Holy Prophet (S), Muhajireen and Ansar dug a trench around Medina and Quraish camped by the side of the trench besieging us. They used to threaten the Muslims. The Holy Prophet (S) used to call them to the Almighty Allah and adjure them for the sake of their relationship. This increased their rebellion and neither they accepted Islam nor agreed to return without fighting.

At that time Amr bin Abde Wudd was their greatest warrior who was challenging the Muslims in various ways. No one dared to accept his challenge. At last the Holy Prophet (S) sent me to confront him. I was made to wear the turban and Zulfiqar was handed to me. When I stepped into the battlefield, women began to wail because they feared for me.

Finally the Almighty Allah had him killed through me, even though Arabs did not consider anyone his equal. Then he pointed to his head said: He slashed me here. I also attacked him and because of my blows, the infidels of Quraish fled from there. Then he turned to the companions if it was not true? All said that it was indeed true.

Shaykh Mufeed, Shaykh Tabarsi, Ibn Shahr Ashob and Ibn Abil Hadid and all Shia and Sunni tradition scholars have narrated that when Amr bin Abde Wudd (l.a.) jumped into the battlefield and challenged the Muslims to send anyone as his equal, the Holy Prophet (S) asked: "Who will volunteer to face him?" But no one offered any reply.

Amirul Momineen (a.s.) came forward and volunteered the task. But the Holy Prophet (S) said: "Sit down, this is Amr bin Abde Wudd. Perhaps someone else will take up the challenge." Again the foe repeated his challenge. "Where is your Paradise which you claimed that your killed ones go to?" Amirul Momineen (a.s.) arose and said: "O Messenger of Allah (S), I will go."

"Sit down," said the Prophet. At last he was permitted the third time. The Holy Prophet (S) dressed him in his coat of mail. Put on his turban, entitled Sahaab and handed his sword, Zulfiqar and said: "Go." And he prayed to the Almighty Allah to protect him. According to Ibn Abil Hadid when Amirul Momineen (a.s.) went to fight the Battle of Heeja, the Messenger of Allah (S) said: "Complete faith is going to confront complete infidelity."

When Amirul Momineen (a.s.) reached the battlefield, Amr bin Abde Wudd recognized him and said: "Go back, and send someone else. I don't want to kill a noble man like you. And I don't want to slay the son of my friend." Imam Ali (a.s.) says: "But I want to slay you as long as you are an idolater." Ibn Abil Hadid says: When I mentioned this tradition to my teacher, he said that accursed one was a liar.

When he saw Imam Ali (a.s.) and he remembered his blows of Badr and Uhud, he chickened out and wanted to escape through this pretext. But he was infuriated by this reply. So he jumped down from the horse and attacked the Imam with his sword as a result of which his helmet split and his head was injured.

Imam Ali (a.s.) at once attacked him and cut off his head. Imam Ali (a.s.) raised the call of Allahu Akbar and people came to know that he has killed Amr bin Abde Wudd. When he brought his severed head to the Prophet, he said: "O Ali, good cheers to you that if this act of yours is compared to the deeds of my whole community, your act will be heavier than all.

Because there is no house among infidels that is not shocked by his slaying and there is no house from the houses of Muslims, which is not strengthened through this." And it is mentioned in continuous traditions that the Holy Prophet (S) said: "Each blow of Ali (a.s.) on the day of the Battle of Khandaq is better than all the worship acts of Jinn and men till Judgment Day."

And it is narrated from Abu Bakr bin Ayyash that Ali delivered such a blow which no blow can compete and it was on the head of Amr and he received such a blow that no blow can be worst than that and that was the blow of Ibn Muljim (l.a.). And it is narrated that Imam Ali (a.s.) was asked why he had not plundered the coat of mail of Amr bin Abde Wudd according to custom of Arabs.

Imam Ali (a.s.) said: "I could not stand making him naked." And when the sister of Amr bin Abde Wudd

saw that he had not been stripped, she said: “He is killed by a man of noble descent.” When she came to know that he was killed by Amirul Momineen (a.s.) she was elated and she said: “If anyone else had killed him, I would have mourned for him till eternity.”

It is narrated from Jabir that when Amr fell, his companions fled and crossed the trench and Naufal bin Abdullah fell in the trench. When Muslims began to stone him, he said: “Don’t hit me in such a humiliating manner, let someone come and fight me like a man.” Amirul Momineen (a.s.) descended into the trench and dispatched him to Hell with a single blow. Hubaira was hit on the knot holding his coat of mail, which made him drop the armor and he fled from there. Jabir said: “How much does this resemble the slaying of Jalut by Dawood (a.s.)!”

Shaykh Tabarsi etc. have narrated that when Naufal was killed, idolaters sent a message to the Holy Prophet (S) to give the last remains of Naufal in exchange of 10000 dirhams. The Messenger of Allah (S) said: “We don’t accept money of a corpse. You can take it away.”

Ahle Sunnat have narrated from Rabia Saadi that he said: I said to Huzaifa bin Yaman: “When we narrate the excellence of Ali (a.s.), the people of Basra say that we are exaggerating. Do you narrate a tradition about him?” Huzaifa said: “O Rabia, what question you ask about Ali (a.s.)? By the one in whose hands is my life, since the Almighty Allah raised up the Prophet, if all the deeds of companions of the Prophet are weighed against the deeds of Ali (a.s.), the latter will come out heavier.” Rabia said: “No one can bear such a tradition.”

“Why not, you fool? Where were Abu Bakr, Umar, Huzaifa and all companions when Amr Ibn Abde Wudd was challenging the Muslims? No one rose up to confront him and except for Ali (a.s.), and the Almighty Allah had him killed at his hands. By the one in whose hands is the life of Huzaifa, the reward of killing him is greater than the reward of all the good deeds performed by the Ummah of Muhammad till Judgment Day. Ahle Sunnat have narrated through many chains that Ibn Masud used to recite this verse as follows:

**“...and Allah sufficed (*through Ali*), the believers in fighting; and Allah is Strong, Mighty.”**

Ibn Abil Hadid has narrated that when Umar came to fight Zarar and fled from there, Zarar poked him with a spear and said: “This is a favor, you should thank for and remember it forever, O son of Khattab, because I have taken a vow not to kill anyone from Quraish.” Ibn Abil Hadid has said that Zarar did the same to him in Uhud also. Both these incidents are also quoted by Waqidi his *Maghazi*.

Qutubuddin Rawandi has narrated from Imam Ja’far Sadiq (a.s.) that when Amirul Momineen (a.s.) killed Amr Ibn Abde Wudd, he gave his sword to Imam Hasan (a.s.) and said: Give it to your mother so that she may wash it. When he came home, and wanted to replace the sword in the sheath, he saw a spot of blood still on it and thought that perhaps Fatima (s.a.) had not washed it.

When told that she had washed it, he asked why a spot of blood still remained. The Holy Prophet (S)

said: "Ask the Zulfiqar about it." Imam Ali (a.s.) moved the sword and it said: "She did, but since you have not killed anyone as hated as Amr by the angels they told me to drink his blood. Thus whenever you unsheathe it and the angels see the spot, they would invoke blessings upon you."<sup>8</sup>

Some Sunni historians have narrated that when Abu Sufyan came to know that Amr was killed, he fled to Mecca without any delay. And Ali bin Ibrahim, Shaykh Tabarsi and Qutub Rawandi have narrated that after his killing, the infidels continued the siege for fifteen or more days and Muslims were in difficult situation because of cold and shortage of rations.

During those days the Messenger of Allah (S) displayed many miracles about increase in food as mentioned in the chapters of miracles. Ibn Babawayh has narrated through authentic chains of narrators from Imam Ali Reza (a.s.) that Amirul Momineen (a.s.) said: We were busy in digging the trench in the company of the Prophet when Lady Fatima (s.a.) brought a piece of bread for the Holy Prophet (S) he asked from where she had brought it and she said that she had cooked it for Hasan and Husain and from that she has also brought a piece for him.

The Messenger of Allah (S) said: "This is the first thing I have eaten in three days." Qutub Rawandi has narrated that when the trench was being made and hunger overcame the Muslims, the Holy Prophet (S) asked for a handful of dates and spread a cloth and placed the dates on it. Then he had it announced to people to come and take breakfast. All the people of Medina gathered and ate to satiation. But still the dates spilled out of it.

Ali bin Ibrahim and others have narrated that when the siege prolonged, Abu Sufyan said to Huyy bin Akhtab, "O Jew, where are your people?" Huyy came to Bani Quraiza and said: "Come out of the fort, you are still inside after breaking the treaty with Muhammad. Neither you remained with Muhammad nor joined the Quraish."

Kaab said: "We will not come out till Quraish does not gives us ten hostages, so that they may not leave without defeating Muhammad and strengthening our treaty. If we don't come out to help, it is possible Muhammad may have mercy on us and accept our treaty once again." Ibn Akhtab said: "This is nonsense, Quraish can never agree to this and neither will Muhammad have a league with you." Kaab said: "This is the misfortune of your advice. You run around with Quraish leaving us in our town at the mercy of Muhammad." Ibn Akhtab said: "By the covenant of Allah and Musa, if Quraish cannot subdue Muhammad, I will stay in the fort with you and bear all that you have to bear." Kaab said: "I will not change my view.

We will support only if the Quraish sends us ten hostages, otherwise we will not leave the fort." At last Ibn Akhtab returned to Quraish with Kaab's reply. Abu Sufyan said: "This is the first trick. Naeem bin Masud had said the truth. I don't need these monkeys and pigs." Thus when the siege intensified and hunger and fear began to bear heavily on them and hypocrites began to ridicule and threaten them as the Almighty Allah has said.

And except for a few, all companions of the Prophet turned hypocrites, and the Holy Prophet (S) had predicted at the outset that Arab tribes will come as a confederation and Jews would ditch them, at that time they will have to bear many difficulties but at last they would be successful. When Quraish arrived and the Jews broke their pledge, the hypocrites said: "Allah and Prophet had not promised us deceit." Most hypocrites had houses around Medina.

They said: "O Messenger of Allah (S), allow us to go to our homes as our houses are on the boundaries of Medina and we dread that enemies may resort to plunder." Some said: "Let us run away from here and take refuge in villages, because all the promises of Muhammad have become invalid." The Holy Prophet (S) appointed some men to patrol Medina at night. And Amirul Momineen (a.s.) used to take rounds with the army the whole night in vigilance.

He confronted any person from Quraish who was seen there. He crossed the trench and Quraish saw him but he didn't care about them. Most nights he stood praying the whole night and returned to his position in the morning. A Masjid of Amirul Momineen (a.s.) is well known at that place.

One who goes there comes to know where the Imam used to pray. It is some distance from Masjid Fath in the direction of Masjid Aqiq. Thus when the Holy Prophet (S) saw that the prolonged siege was weighing heavily on his people, he went to Masjid Fath which is situated on a hill and invoked the Almighty Allah as follows:

"O refuge of the trouble stricken and one who accepts the supplication of the aggrieved, and one who removes the severity of sorrow. You are my master and master of my ancestors. Please remove our problems and through Your power, remove the hardships of these people."

Jibraeel came down and said: "The Almighty Allah has heard your entreaty and accepted your supplication and ordered the wind along with the angels to drive away the Quraish and their army. So the wind uprooted the tents of idolaters and all of them prepared to run away from there. Jibraeel informed the Prophet and he called for Huzaifa, who was sleeping with Ali (a.s.) that is why he gave no reply.

The Holy Prophet (S) called him again and received no reply. The third time Huzaifa said: "Here I am, O Messenger of Allah (S)." The Holy Prophet (S) said: "I am calling you, but you don't reply." He said: "May my parents be sacrificed on you, I could not speak due to the severity of cold and hunger." The Holy Prophet (S) said: "Go and find out the circumstances of Quraish and don't do anything before returning to me.

I have received divine information that the Almighty Allah has sent a sharp wind on them and they are running away." Huzaifa said: "I am trembling of cold, how can I cross the trench?" At last he set out from there and by the miracle of the Holy Prophet (S) when he crossed the trench, he became so warm, as if he was in a heated bath. When he entered the army of Quraish, he saw a huge tent and he walked towards it.

Huzaifa says: I saw that they had prepared a fire which went of and on. When I looked carefully, it was Abu Sufyan's tent. That accursed man was sitting near the fire and shivering of cold and saying: "O Quraish, if according to the view of Muhammad, we are fighting the folks of heavens, the fact is that we don't have the power to fight the folks of heavens. If the confrontation is with folks of the earth we can do it."

Then he said: "Just make a thorough check so that a spy of Muhammad may not have infiltrated our camp." Huzaifa says: "I was standing between Amr bin Aas and Muawiyah. I turned to my right and asked: "Who are you?" He said: "I am Amr bin Aas." I turned to my left and asked: "Who are you?" He said: "I am Muawiyah."

I asked before anyone could ask me who I was. Then Abu Sufyan mounted his camel whose leg was tethered. If the Messenger of Allah (S) had not emphasized that I should not do anything before returning to him, I would have killed that accursed man. Then Khalid bin Walid said to Abu Sufyan: "It is better if I stay back to defend your weak ones."

He said: "Get ready and load your luggage." Thus all loaded up their luggage and fled from there. In the morning the Holy Prophet (S) told the Muslims: "Don't make a move yet." But people disobeyed and all returned to Medina by sunrise and very few remained with him. Kulaini has narrated through good chains that during the Battle of Ahzab the Messenger of Allah (S) was standing on a hillock where Masjid Fath is located.

It was a very cold and dark night. He asked: "Who will bring me information about Quraish? Paradise will become incumbent on him." No one volunteered. Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) moved his hands and asked: "What can be more than that?" At last the Holy Prophet (S) asked: "Who is sleeping here?" Huzaifa said: "It is I." The Holy Prophet (S) said: "You continued to hear me the whole night but did not reply? Come here."

Huzaifa arose and sought pardon and said that he could not reply during to cold and exhaustion. The Holy Prophet (S) said: "Go and listen to the conversation of Quraish and inform me about them. When Huzaifa started from there, the Holy Prophet (S) prayed: O Lord, protect him from all sides till You convey him back to me."

The Messenger of Allah (S) emphatically ordered Huzaifa not to do anything till he returned to him. So Huzaifa took his weapons and set out from there. Huzaifa says: At that time I neither felt hunger nor cold till I crossed the trench and Muslims and idolaters had gathered there. On the other hand the Messenger of Allah (S) was praying:

"O refuge of the trouble stricken and one who accepts the supplication of the aggrieved, and one who removes the severity of sorrow. You are my master and master of my ancestors. Please remove our problems and through Your power, remove the hardships of these people."

Jibraeel came and said: “O Messenger of Allah (S), the Almighty Allah has accepted your supplication and saved you from the enemies. The Holy Prophet (S) sat down on his knees and untied his turban and began to weep: “I thank You for the mercy that You bestowed on me and my companions.”

Then the Holy Prophet (S) said: “The Almighty Allah sent a wind upon them from the first sky carrying sharp stone particles and sent another wind from the fourth heaven containing big stones. Huzaifa says: When I crossed the trench, I saw fire lighted in the army of Quraish. And I saw that the infidel camp was being thrashed by a wind containing small particles of rock and sand. It put out the fire and uprooted the tents and their spears fell down.

They covered their heads in order to escape the pebbles. Huzaifa sat down between two idolaters. Suddenly Satan stood up among them in the form of an idolater chief and said: “O people, you have camped near a sorcerer and a liar (refuge of Allah!) This is not the year of camping. All the quadrupeds are dead and he cannot escape your clutches and he will be cornered if not this year, next year.”

So before anyone could ask, Huzaifa took precedence to ask the names of those who sat on both his sides. One said: I am Muawiyah. And another said: I am Suhail bin Amr. Huzaifa says: During that time, an army of the Almighty Allah came and began to rain huge stones upon them. Abu Sufyan leaped and mounted his beast screaming to the Quraish to load up soon. Talha said: “Muhammad has sent a terrible scourge on you.” He jumped and mounted his camel and called out to the Ashjai tribe to buck up.

Uyyana bin Hasan, Harith bin Auf Mazni and Aqra bin Habis ordered their respective tribesmen to flee and there was an apocalypse type of situation among them. Huzaifa witnessed all this and he returned to the Prophet and reported. It is mentioned in the miracles of the Prophet that after the idolaters ran away, he said: “They will never come to fight us. On the contrary we will go out to confront them.” And this is what happened.

Ali bin Ibrahim etc. have narrated that in the Battle of Khandaq, Hayyan bin Qays bin Arqa shot an arrow to Saad bin Maaz and it pierced his hand cutting off his vein connecting to the head. Saad said: “May Allah burn you in Hell.” Much blood was lost and Saad became very weak.

He held the vein and prayed: “O Lord, if there remains any life in this battle of Quraish, keep me also alive, so that I can fight them. Because I don’t like fighting with anyone as I like fighting those who fight Allah and His Messenger. If the battles with Quraish are over, make this wound a cause of my martyrdom so that my eyes may be pleased with the killing of Bani Quraiza. So the bleeding stopped and his limbs got swelling. The Holy Prophet (S) pitched a tent for him and supervised his cure. At that juncture, the Almighty Allah revealed the following verses:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَاءَتْكُمْ جُنُودٌ فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا

وَجُنُودًا لَمْ تَرَوْهَا ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرًا ﴿٩﴾ إِذْ جَاءُوكُمْ مِنْ فَوْقِكُمْ  
وَمِنْ أَسْفَلَ مِنْكُمْ وَإِذْ زَاغَتِ الْأَبْصَارُ وَبَلَغَتِ الْقُلُوبُ الْحَنَاجِرَ وَتَظُنُّونَ بِاللَّهِ  
الظُّنُونًا ﴿١٠﴾ هُنَالِكَ ابْتُلِيَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَزُلْزِلُوا زَلْزَالًا شَدِيدًا ﴿١١﴾ وَإِذْ يَقُولُ  
الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ مَا وَعَدَنَا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا ﴿١٢﴾ وَإِذْ  
قَالَتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ يَا أَهْلَ يَثْرِبَ لَا مُقَامَ لَكُمْ فَارْجِعُوا ۚ وَيَسْتَأْذِنُ فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمُ النَّبِيَّ  
يَقُولُونَ إِنَّ بُيُوتَنَا عَوْرَةٌ وَمَا هِيَ بِعَوْرَةٍ ۚ إِنَّ يُرِيدُونَ إِلَّا فِرَارًا ﴿١٣﴾ وَلَوْ دَخَلَتْ  
عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ أَقْطَارِهَا ثُمَّ سَأَلُوا الْفِتْنَةَ لَآتَوْهَا وَمَا تَلَبَّثُوا فِيهَا إِلَّا بَسِيرًا (14)

***“O you who believe! call to mind the favor of Allah to you when there came down upon you hosts, so We sent against them a strong wind and hosts, that you saw not, and Allah is seeing what you do. When they came upon you from above you and from below you, and when the eyes turned dull, and the hearts rose up to the throats, and you began to think diverse thoughts of Allah. There the believers were tried and they were shaken with severe shaking. And when the hypocrites and those in whose hearts was a disease began to say: Allah and His Apostle did not promise us (victory) but only to deceive. And when a party of them said: O people of Medina! there is no place to stand for you (here), therefore go back; and a party of them asked permission of the prophet, saying. Surely our houses are exposed; and they were not exposed; they only desired to fly away. And if an entry were made upon them from the outlying parts of it, then they were asked to wage war, they would certainly have done it, and they would not have stayed in it but a little while.”***<sup>9</sup>

After that the Almighty Allah revealed many verses in condemnation of hypocrites, some of which were mentioned before. Then He said:

مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ فَمِنْهُمْ مَن قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُ وَمِنْهُمْ  
مَن يَنْتَظِرُ ۚ وَمَا بَدَّلُوا تَبْدِيلًا

***“Of the believers are men who are true to the covenant which they made with Allah: so of them is he who accomplished his vow, and of them is he who yet waits, and they have not changed in the least;”***<sup>10</sup>

It is narrated from authentic chains of narrators from Imam Ja’far Sadiq (a.s.) and Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s.) that this verse was revealed about His Eminence, Hamza and Amirul Momineen (a.s.) and it is that the promise of Allah was complete that is his last moments arrived and he was martyred. It implies His Eminence, Hamza and Ja’far; and those who wait imply Amirul Momineen (a.s.). Then Ali bin

Ibrahim said: the Almighty Allah revealed this verse as follows:

**“And Allah turned back the unbelievers (*from Medina*) in their rage; they did not obtain any advantage, and Allah sufficed the believers (*through Amirul Momineen and he killed Amr Ibn Abde Wudd etc.*) in fighting; and Allah is Strong, Mighty.”<sup>11</sup>**

According to traditions the digging of the trench seems to have occurred during the month of Ramadan and it is well known that the battle was fought during the month of Shawwal. The siege lasted for 20 days and according to some it was for 24 days and some even say that it lasted for 27 days, but Allah knows best.

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1. A group of Jews who had descended from the progeny of Harun (a.s.).
  2. Surah Nisa 4:51–52
  3. Surah Aale Imran 3:26
  4. Surah Hujurat 49: 17–18
  5. Surah Baqarah 2: 187
  6. Surah Ahzab 33: 18–19
  7. The author says: No other report mentions the trickery of Imam Ali (a.s.) to Amr bin Abde Wudd. And most Sunni tradition scholars have also not mentioned it. But since Ali bin Ibrahim has quoted this report, I have also followed suit. Most historians say that Amirul Momineen (a.s.) also killed Hubaira and some say that after slaying Amr bin Abde Wudd, Imam Ali (a.s.) attacked Hubaira and Zarara and the two of them fled. Since there is difference in reports regarding the killing of Amr bin Abde Wudd, it is necessary to mention other reports also. (Please read the report following it, which is narrated from Ibn Babawayh.
  8. The author says: It is not unlikely that Imam Hasan (a.s.) being an Imam was able to handle a sword and convey the message at a young age of 2 or 3 years.
  9. Surah Ahzab 33:9–14
  10. Surah Ahzab 33:23
  11. Surah Ahzab 33:25

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