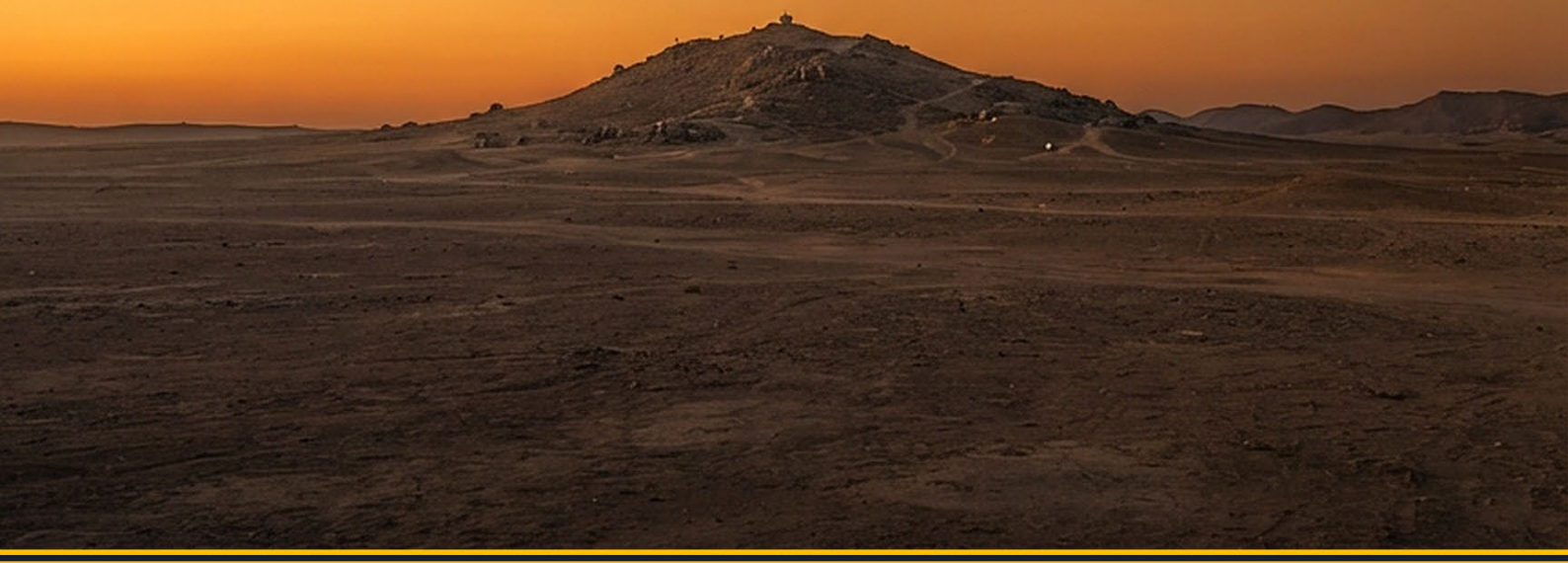
THE PROPHET'S SIRAH — COMPLETE COLLECTION

VOLUME 4

From Hunayn to His Passing

Series 22–30



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

THE PROPHET'S SIRAH — COMPLETE COLLECTION

VOLUME 4

FROM HUNAYN TO HIS PASSING

Series 22–30: From the Battle of Hunayn to the Passing of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, According to the Qur'an and Authentic Hadith

ثُمَّ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُۥ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِۦ وَعَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَأَنزَلَ جُنُودًا لَّمْ تَرَوْهَا
وَعَذَّبَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَآءُ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ

"Then Allah sent down His tranquillity upon His Messenger and upon the believers and sent down soldiers angels whom you did not see and punished those who disbelieved. And that is the recompense of the disbelievers."

SURAH AT-TAUBAH 9:26

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praise is due to Allah, who sent us a Messenger from among ourselves, to whom our hardship is grievous and who is deeply concerned for our good. Blessings and peace be upon our master, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and upon his family and Companions, who witnessed his life and then preserved it and passed it on to us with complete trustworthiness.

This eBook is specially dedicated to my beloved wife,

ZAHARAH MOHD LATIF;

my dear children,

MUHAMMAD HAFIZ, NOOR HAZWANI, ABDUL HAKIM, NOOR HIDAYAH, NOR AQILA and **NOR ATIQAH**;

and my sons- and daughters-in-law,

FAZILAH, MALEK, HANIN, FAIRIZAL and **FIRWAN**.

This book gathers Series 22 to 30 of The Prophet's Sirah into one volume: the Battle of Hunayn and the siege of Ta'if, the spoils of Hunayn and the Ansar, the Expedition of Tabuk, Ka'b ibn Malik and Masjid ad-Dirar, the Year of Delegations, Abu Bakr's Hajj and Bara'ah, the Farewell Pilgrimage and its sermon, and the passing of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. The references of every series are kept. May this book bring us closer to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and be a continuing charity for all who help, read and share it.

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ABOUT THE COVER OF THIS BOOK

This book's cover does not depict any human being or animal. It shows a wide desert plain just after sunset: a rocky hill stands alone in the middle of the plain, the sky slowly turns from golden orange to the blue of night, and the first stars begin to appear.

The hill in the middle of the plain recalls 'Arafah, where the Messenger of Allah ﷺ delivered his sermon during the Farewell Pilgrimage and where the verse on the perfection of the religion was revealed. The fading light of dusk stands for his last days with his ummah: the sun of his life set, but the light of the message he left behind still shines today.

The dark blue band at the bottom, framed by fine gold lines, is where the author's name appears. The titles on all five volumes of this collection share the same style, size and gold colour, so that the five books look like one set when placed together.

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SUPPORT & DONATIONS

Colour guide: green box = verses of the Qur'an; gold box = Hadith; brown box = note (weak report or further explanation); blue table = comparison. Underlined blue narrator names can be clicked to open the narrator's page on sunnah.com.

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PART ONE

The Battle of Hunayn and the Siege of Ta'if

The Prophet's Sirah — Series 22

The Test of Numbers, the Prophet's ﷺ Steadfastness and Tranquillity from Heaven, According to the Qur'an and Authentic Hadith

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THE BATTLE OF HUNAYN AND THE SIEGE OF TA'IF

Books 20 and 21 told of ***the Conquest of Makkah*** — the greatest victory of the sirah, almost without bloodshed. But that victory was soon tested. Only a few weeks later, the largest Muslim army ever assembled ***nearly lost*** in a narrow valley called ***Hunayn***.

This Book 22 tells of ***the Battle of Hunayn*** and ***the siege of Ta'if***: how admiration for their own numbers led to an initial defeat, how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood firm when many retreated, how al-'Abbas's call brought the Companions back, and how Allah sent down ***tranquillity and unseen soldiers***. It is also the story of Ta'if — the city that had stoned the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ten years earlier.

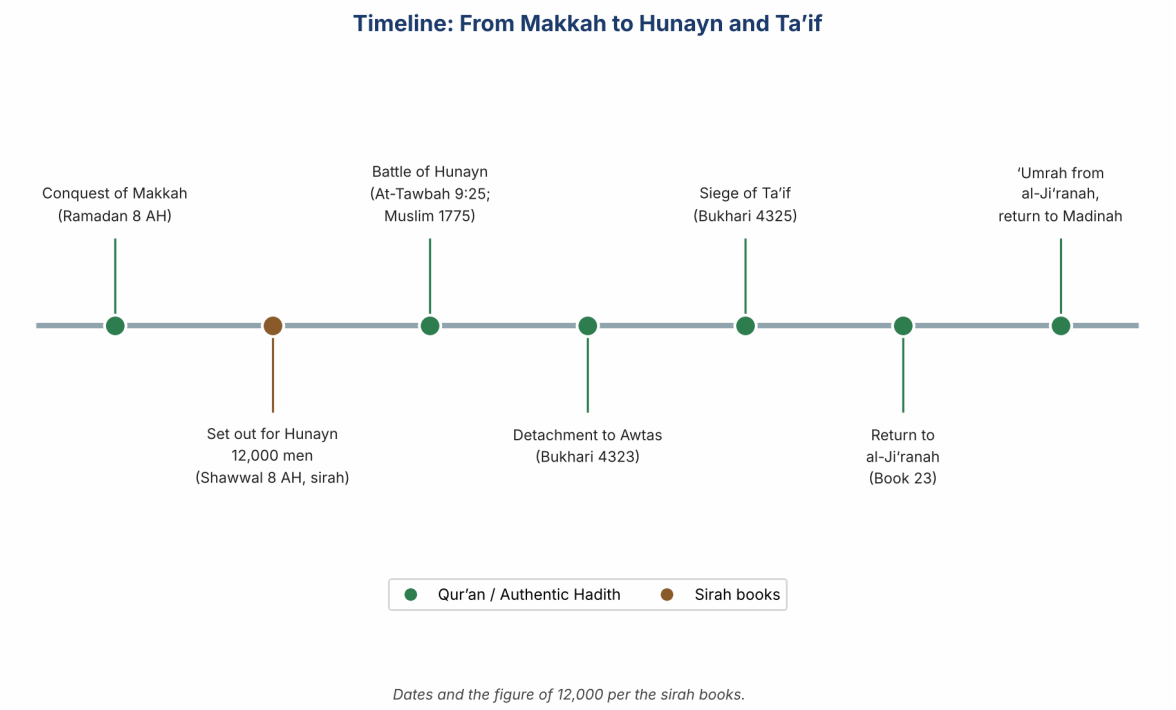

Figure 1: Timeline from Makkah to Hunayn and Ta'if.

Note: The Qur'anic translation in this eBook is Sahih International. The grade of every Hadith is stated in its box. Information from the books of sirah — such as Durayd ibn as-Simmah's advice, the size of the armies and the story of ash-Shayma' — is placed in brown "Sirah Note" boxes, since most of it is narrated without a connected chain or with a debated one.

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AFTER THE CONQUEST OF MAKKAH

The opening of Makkah shook all of Arabia. Most tribes waited to see which way the wind would blow. But two great tribes south and east of Makkah made a different decision: ***Hawazin*** and ***Thaqif***.

Hawazin was a large confederation of Bedouin tribes famed for their archery. In one of its branches, Banu Sa'd, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had been nursed by Halimah as-Sa'diyyah as a child. ***Thaqif*** were the people of ***Ta'if***, a fortified city in the fertile highlands, a rival of Makkah in trade and prestige, and keepers of the idol ***al-Lat***.

For these two tribes, the fall of Makkah was not a signal to surrender, but ***a threat*** to be confronted at once. They said: "Muhammad has finished with his people; next he will come to us. Better that we strike first." So they gathered a great army.

The lesson: ***victory is not the end of trials***. After one success comes another test — sometimes heavier. The believer does not rest in victory, but keeps preparing and trusting in Allah.

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MALIK IBN 'AWF AND DURAYD'S ADVICE

The army of Hawazin was led by a young man of about thirty, ***Malik ibn 'Awf an-Nasri***. He made an extraordinary decision:

SIRAH NOTE: WOMEN, CHILDREN AND HERDS ON THE BATTLEFIELD

The sirah authors relate that Malik ibn 'Awf ordered that ***women, children, camels and sheep*** be brought to the battlefield and placed behind the army. His reasoning: every man would then fight to defend his family and property, and not flee.

In the army was an old, blind warrior, ***Durayd ibn as-Simmah***, famed for his experience of war. When he heard the sound of camels, sheep and crying children, he asked why, then said: ***"A shepherd! Can anything stop a man who is routed? If you win, only men with their swords and spears will be of use; if you lose, you are disgraced in your family and wealth."*** Malik rejected his advice.

This story is ***a sirah report***. Authentic Hadith (Sahih Muslim 1059 and Sahih al-Bukhari 4337) confirm that Hawazin came with their women, children and livestock.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Expeditions of Hunayn and Ta'if; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.

Durayd's advice proved right. Malik's decision, born of ***pride and haste***, ended with all of Hawazin's families and wealth falling into the Muslims' hands. Yet Malik ibn 'Awf's story did not end there — he later embraced Islam and was reappointed chief of his people (Book 23).

The lesson: a good leader ***listens to experienced counsel***, even from a frail old man. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself constantly consulted his Companions, and Allah commanded him: "And consult them in the matter" (Al 'Imran 3:159).

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SAFWAN'S BORROWED ARMOUR

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ quickly prepared to face Hawazin. He set out from Makkah with the ten thousand who had come with him from Madinah, plus some two thousand Makkans — most of them newly Muslim, and some not yet Muslim at all. According to the sirah books, they numbered ***twelve thousand***.

To equip the army, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ borrowed ***coats of armour*** from ***Safwan ibn Umayyah***, who had not yet embraced Islam. Safwan asked: "Is this a seizure, O Muhammad?" He replied: ***"No, a loan that is guaranteed (to be returned)."*** (Sunan Abi Dawud 3562, graded sahih by al-Albani)

See ***the justice of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ, even as a victorious leader. He could have taken the weapons by force, but he borrowed them lawfully, guaranteeing their return, from a man not yet Muslim. This Hadith became ***the basis of the law of loans ('ariyah)*** in fiqh: a borrowed item must be cared for and returned.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also appointed ***'Attab ibn Usayd*** as governor of Makkah during his absence (according to the sirah books). A young Qurashi newly Muslim was given a great trust — a sign of confidence in the newly Muslim people of Makkah.

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THE TREE OF DHAT ANWAT

On the way, a small incident occurred that holds a great lesson about ***tawhid***. Many in the army had only just left disbelief, and traces of pre-Islamic thinking still lingered in their hearts. Abu Waqid al-Laythi رضى الله عنه relates:

HADITH — JAMI' AL-TIRMIDHI, NO. 2180

حَدَّثَنَا سَعِيدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ الْمَخْزُومِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ، عَنْ سِنَانِ بْنِ أَبِي سِنَانٍ، عَنْ أَبِي وَاقِدٍ اللَّيْثِيِّ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم لَمَّا خَرَجَ إِلَى خَيْبَرَ مَرَّ بِشَجَرَةٍ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ يُقَالُ لَهَا ذَاتُ أَنْوَاطٍ يُعَلِّقُونَ عَلَيْهَا أَسْلِحَتَهُمْ فَقَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ اجْعَلْ لَنَا ذَاتَ أَنْوَاطٍ كَمَا لَهُمْ ذَاتُ أَنْوَاطٍ. فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم «سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ هَذَا كَمَا قَالَ قَوْمُ مُوسَى : (اجْعَلْ لَنَا إِلَهًا كَمَا لَهُمْ آلِهَةٌ) وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَتَرْكَبُنَّ سُنَّةَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Waqid al-Laythi رضى الله عنه narrated that when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went out (this manuscript reads: to Khaybar; other narrations: to Hunayn), he passed by a tree of the idolaters called ***Dhat Anwat***, on which they hung their weapons. They (some Companions) said: "O Messenger of Allah, make for us a Dhat Anwat as they have a Dhat Anwat." The Prophet ﷺ said: **"Subhan Allah! This is like what the people of Musa said: 'Make for us a god just as they have gods.' By the One in whose hand is my soul, you will surely follow the ways of those who came before you."**

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Sa'id ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman al-Makhzumi, from Sufyan ibn 'Uyaynah, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from Sinan ibn Abi Sinan, from Abu Waqid al-Laythi رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in Jami' at-Tirmidhi, Chapters on Trials, Chapter: You Will Follow the Ways of Those Before You, Hadith No. 2180; also Ahmad No. 21897 (with the wording "to Hunayn").

GRADE: SAHIH — Imam at-Tirmidhi graded it hasan sahih; also narrated by Ahmad and graded sahih by Shaykh al-Albani.

Source: https://sunnah.com/tirmidhi:2180

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LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ likened that request to the request of the Children of Israel to the Prophet Musa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: ***"O Moses, make for us a god just as they have gods"*** (Al-A'raf 7:138) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 7:138.

They did not ask to worship the tree; they only wanted a tree from which to ***seek blessing*** by hanging their weapons on it. Yet the Messenger of Allah ﷺ declared that ***their words were the same as the words of the Children of Israel***. This shows how firmly Islam closes the doors that can lead to idolatry, however small they may seem.

This Hadith also contains a warning: ***"You will surely follow the ways of those who came before you."*** Scholars take it as a reminder for Muslims to beware of practices resembling superstition — such as seeking blessing from trees, stones or graves in ways not prescribed.

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THE TEST OF NUMBERS

For the first time, the Muslims went out to war with an army ***far larger*** than the enemy's. At Badr they had been only 313; at Uhud about 700; at al-Khandaq 3,000. Now they were twelve thousand. Pride began to creep into some hearts.

> **SIRAH NOTE: "WE WILL NOT BE DEFEATED TODAY FOR LACK OF NUMBERS"**
>
> Some sirah books relate that a man in the army said: ***"We will not be defeated today for lack of numbers."*** These words grieved the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.
>
> This report is ***mentioned by sirah authors and exegetes***, but its chain is debated. What is certain is that the Qur'an itself says they were ***"pleased with their great number"***.
>
> **REFERENCES:**
> Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Expeditions of Hunayn and Ta'if; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.

Allah says: ***"Allah has already given you victory in many regions and [even] on the day of Hunayn, when your great number pleased you, but it did not avail you at all"*** (At-Taubah 9:25) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:25.

This verse recalls a principle Allah established long ago: ***"How many a small company has overcome a large company by permission of Allah"*** (Al-Baqarah 2:249) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 2:249.

Hunayn teaches that ***victory comes from Allah, not from numbers***. Great numbers, full equipment and careful planning are only means; if the heart relies on them rather than on Allah, they ***"avail nothing at all"***. This lesson applies to our lives: wealth, knowledge and position do not guarantee success without Allah's help.

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AMBUSH IN THE VALLEY

The Muslim army entered ***Wadi Hunayn*** in the darkness before dawn. The valley was narrow, surrounded by slopes and gullies. Malik ibn 'Awf had placed Hawazin's archers behind the rocks and on those slopes, waiting. Al-Bara' ibn 'Azib رضى الله عنهما recounts what happened:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 2864

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ، حَدَّثَنَا سَهْلُ بْنُ يُوسُفَ، عَنْ شُعْبَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ،. قَالَ رَجُلٌ لِلْبَرَاءِ بْنِ عَازِبٍ ـ رضى الله عنهما ـ أَفَرَرْتُمْ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَوْمَ حُنَيْنٍ قَالَ لَكِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم لَمْ يَفِرَّ، إِنَّ هَوَازِنَ كَانُوا قَوْمًا رُمَاةً، وَإِنَّا لَمَّا لَقِينَاهُمْ حَمَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فَانْهَزَمُوا، فَأَقْبَلَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ عَلَى الْغَنَائِمِ وَاسْتَقْبَلُونَا بِالسِّهَامِ، فَأَمَّا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَلَمْ يَفِرَّ، فَلَقَدْ رَأَيْتُهُ وَإِنَّهُ لَعَلَى بَغْلَتِهِ الْبَيْضَاءِ وَإِنَّ أَبَا سُفْيَانَ آخِذٌ بِلِجَامِهَا، وَالنَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَقُولُ «أَنَا النَّبِيُّ لاَ كَذِبْ أَنَا ابْنُ عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبْ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Ishaq said: A man asked al-Bara' ibn 'Azib رضى الله عنهما: "Did you flee from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on the day of Hunayn?" He said: "But ***the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not flee***. Hawazin were a people of archers. When we met them we charged at them and they were routed. Then the Muslims turned to the spoils, and they met us with arrows. As for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he did not flee. I saw him on his white mule, with Abu Sufyan (ibn al-Harith) holding its bridle, while the Prophet ﷺ was saying: ***"I am the Prophet, no lie; I am the son of 'Abd al-Muttalib."***"

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Qutaybah ibn Sa'id, from Sahl ibn Yusuf, from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from Abu Ishaq as-Sabi'i, from al-Bara' ibn 'Azib رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Jihad and Expeditions, Chapter: Leading Another's Mount in Battle, Hadith No. 2864; also Nos. 2930, 4315–4317 and Muslim No. 1776.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:2864

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LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

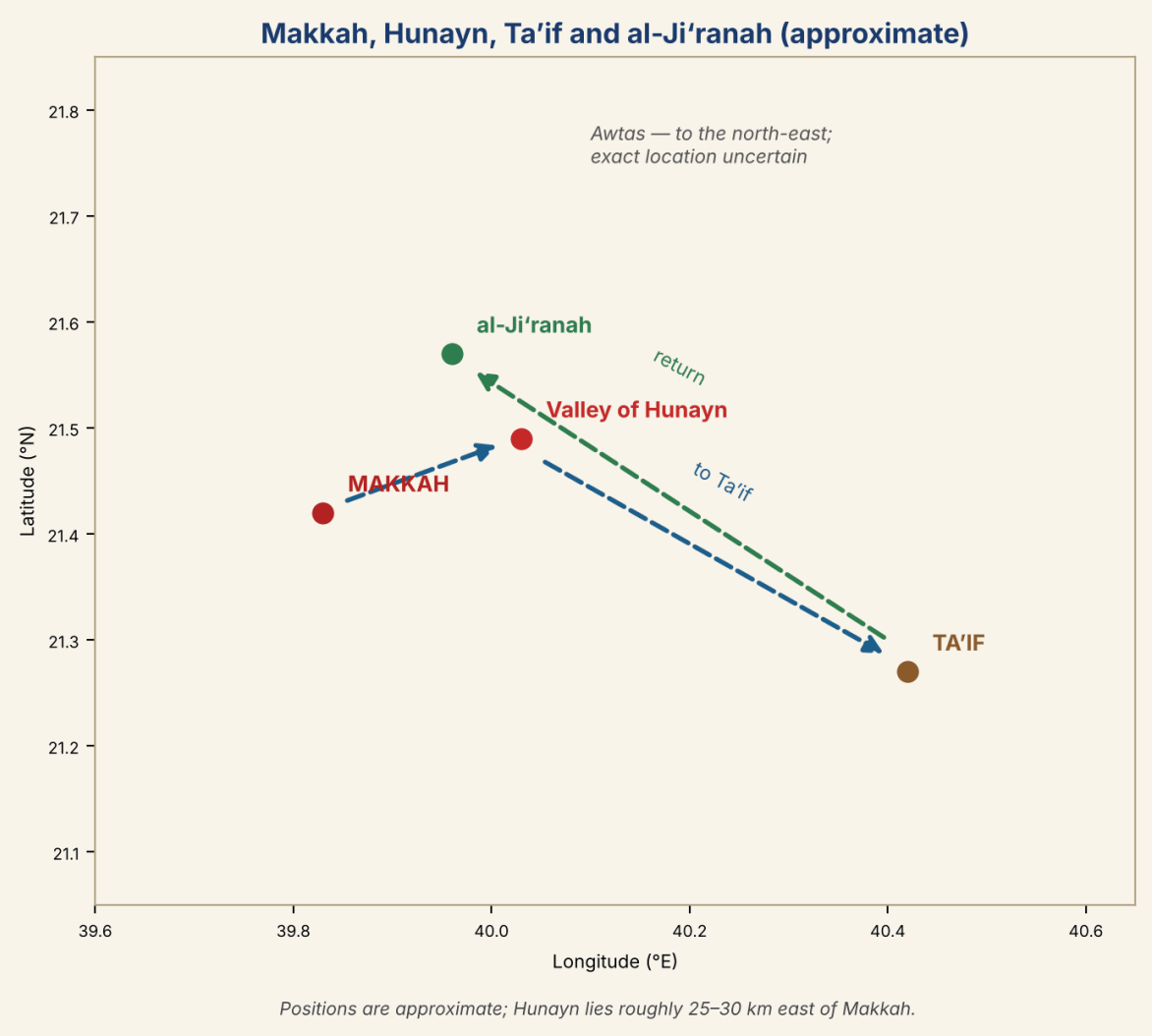

Figure 2: Makkah, Hunayn, Ta'if and al-Ji'ranah (approximate).

Al-Bara' honestly explains the cause of the initial defeat: the Muslims were at first successful, but ***they turned to the spoils*** before the enemy was truly beaten, and were met by a rain of arrows. It recalls the archers' mistake at Uhud (Book 10), when they left the hill for the spoils.

The camels panicked and wheeled about, the front ranks — many of them newly Muslim Makkans — fell back in panic, and confusion spread through the whole army. In an instant, the army of twelve thousand broke apart. This is the moment the Qur'an describes: ***"the earth was confining for you with its vastness; then you turned back, fleeing"*** (At-Tawbah 9:25).

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WHY DID THE ARMY RETREAT?

How could the very army that opened Makkah without resistance break apart in an instant at Hunayn? Scholars of sirah and tafsir mention several causes, most of which are stated or indicated in the Qur'an and authentic Hadith.

CAUSE	EXPLANATION
Admiring their numbers	Stated clearly in At-Tawbah 9:25
Rushing for the spoils	Mentioned by al-Bara' (Bukhari 2864)
Ambush in a narrow valley	Hawazin's archers on the slopes
The darkness before dawn	The army entered before light (sirah books)
A mixed army	Many newly Muslim (Muslim 1809)
The enemy's archery	"Hawazin were a people of archers" (Bukhari 2864)

Notice that ***the main cause*** named by the Qur'an is not the enemy's strength, not the darkness, and not the terrain — but ***the state of the heart***: admiration of one's own numbers. The other causes were only the means by which that test came about.

The same had happened at Uhud, and Allah says of those who turned back then: ***"it was Satan who caused them to slip because of some [blame] they had earned"*** (Al 'Imran 3:155) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 3:155.

That verse continues: ***"But Allah has already forgiven them"***. The initial defeat was not the end; it was ***a lesson***. Allah let them taste the consequence of a fault of the heart, then helped them when they returned to Him. So too in our lives: failure is often the most effective teacher.

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"I AM THE PROPHET, NO LIE"

In the midst of that chaos was a sight the Companions never forgot: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***stayed in his place***, on his white mule, even spurring it ***towards the enemy***, calling out:

"I am the Prophet, no lie; I am the son of 'Abd al-Muttalib."

Why did he ride ***a mule***, not a swift horse? Scholars explain: a mule is not a mount for fleeing or for a swift charge. By choosing a mule, he showed that ***he had no intention of fleeing***. And by loudly proclaiming his name and lineage in the middle of the field, he made himself ***a clear target*** — so that the retreating army would know where their leader was, and return to him.

The words "I am the Prophet, no lie" also mean: ***Allah's promise to me is true***, and Allah will not abandon His Messenger. Al-Bara' said in another narration: "By Allah, when the fighting grew fierce we would shield ourselves behind him, and the bravest among us was the one who stood level with him" (Sahih Muslim 1776).

This is ***true courage***: not the absence of fear, but trust in Allah that overcomes fear. A leader is tested not when everyone follows him, but when everyone leaves him.

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THE CALL TO THE PEOPLE OF THE SAMURAH

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was not entirely alone. A few Companions and family members stayed by his side. His uncle ***al-'Abbas*** رضى الله عنه held the mule's bridle. Al-'Abbas himself recounts what happened next:

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1775

وَحَدَّثَنِي أَبُو الطَّاهِرِ، أَحْمَدُ بْنُ عَمْرِو بْنِ سَرْحٍ أَخْبَرَنَا ابْنُ وَهْبٍ، أَخْبَرَنِي يُونُسُ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي كَثِيرُ بْنُ عَبَّاسِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ، قَالَ قَالَ عَبَّاسٌ شَهِدْتُ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَوْمَ حُنَيْنٍ فَلَزِمْتُ أَنَا وَأَبُو سُفْيَانَ بْنُ الْحَارِثِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَلَمْ نُفَارِقْهُ وَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم عَلَى بَغْلَةٍ لَهُ بَيْضَاءَ أَهْدَاهَا لَهُ فَرْوَةُ بْنُ نُفَاثَةَ الْجُذَامِيُّ فَلَمَّا الْتَقَى الْمُسْلِمُونَ وَالْكُفَّارُ وَلَّى الْمُسْلِمُونَ مُدْبِرِينَ فَطَفِقَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَرْكُضُ بَغْلَتَهُ قِبَلَ الْكُفَّارِ قَالَ عَبَّاسٌ وَ أَنَا آخِذٌ بِلِجَامِ بَغْلَةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم أَكُفُّهَا إِرَادَةَ أَنْ لاَ تُسْرِعَ وَأَبُو سُفْيَانَ آخِذٌ بِرِكَابِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم «أَىْ عَبَّاسُ نَادِ أَصْحَابَ السَّمُرَةِ». فَقَالَ عَبَّاسٌ وَكَانَ رَجُلاً صَيِّتًا فَقُلْتُ بِأَعْلَى صَوْتِي أَيْنَ أَصْحَابُ السَّمُرَةِ قَالَ فَوَاللَّهِ لَكَأَنَّ عَطْفَتَهُمْ حِينَ سَمِعُوا صَوْتِي عَطْفَةُ الْبَقَرِ عَلَى أَوْلاَدِهَا. فَقَالُوا يَا لَبَّيْكَ يَا لَبَّيْكَ - قَالَ - فَاقْتَتَلُوا وَالْكُفَّارَ وَالدَّعْوَةُ فِي الأَنْصَارِ يَقُولُونَ يَا مَعْشَرَ الأَنْصَارِ يَا مَعْشَرَ الأَنْصَارِ قَالَ ثُمَّ قُصِرَتِ الدَّعْوَةُ عَلَى بَنِي الْحَارِثِ بْنِ الْخَزْرَجِ فَقَالُوا يَا بَنِي الْحَارِثِ بْنِ الْخَزْرَجِ يَا بَنِي الْحَارِثِ بْنِ الْخَزْرَجِ. فَنَظَرَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَهُوَ عَلَى بَغْلَتِهِ كَالْمُتَطَاوِلِ عَلَيْهَا إِلَى قِتَالِهِمْ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم «هَذَا حِينَ حَمِيَ الْوَطِيسُ». قَالَ ثُمَّ أَخَذَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم حَصَيَاتٍ فَرَمَى بِهِنَّ وُجُوهَ الْكُفَّارِ ثُمَّ قَالَ «انْهَزَمُوا وَرَبِّ مُحَمَّدٍ». قَالَ فَذَهَبْتُ أَنْظُرُ فَإِذَا الْقِتَالُ عَلَى هَيْئَتِهِ فِيمَا أَرَى - قَالَ - فَوَاللَّهِ مَا هُوَ إِلاَّ أَنْ رَمَاهُمْ بِحَصَيَاتِهِ فَمَا زِلْتُ أَرَى حَدَّهُمْ كَلِيلاً وَأَمْرَهُمْ مُدْبِرًا.

TRANSLATION:

Kathir ibn ‘Abbas said: Al-‘Abbas رضى الله عنه said: I was present with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on the day of Hunayn. Abu Sufyan ibn al-Harith ibn ‘Abd al-Muttalib and I ***stayed close to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and did not leave him***. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was on a white mule given to him by Farwah ibn Nufathah al-Judhami. When the Muslims and the disbelievers met, the Muslims turned back in retreat. Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ began spurring his mule ***towards the disbelievers***. Al-‘Abbas said: I was holding the bridle of the mule of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, holding it back so that it would not go too fast, and Abu Sufyan was holding the stirrup of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **“O ‘Abbas, call the people of the Samurah tree (those who pledged under it).”** Al-‘Abbas — a man with a loud voice — said: So I called out at the top of my voice: “Where are the people of the Samurah?” By Allah, ***their turning back when they heard my voice was like the turning of cows to their calves***. They said: “At your service, at your service!” Then they fought the disbelievers. The call to the Ansar was: “O Ansar! O Ansar!” Then the call was narrowed to Banu al-Harith ibn al-Khazraj: “O Banu al-Harith ibn al-Khazraj!” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, on his mule, looked at their fighting as one stretching his neck, and said: ***“Now the oven is blazing (the battle is at its height).”*** Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ took some pebbles and threw them at the faces of the disbelievers, then said: **“They are defeated, by the Lord of Muhammad!”** Al-‘Abbas said: I went to look, and the fighting seemed as it had been. By Allah, no sooner had he thrown his pebbles at them than I kept seeing their edge blunted and their affair turning back.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Abu at-Tahir Ahmad ibn ‘Amr ibn Sarh, from ‘Abdullah ibn Wahb, from Yunus ibn Yazid al-Ayli, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from Kathir ibn ‘Abbas ibn ‘Abd al-Muttalib, from al-‘Abbas ibn ‘Abd al-Muttalib رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Jihad and Expeditions, Chapter: The Battle of Hunayn, Hadith No. 1775.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:1775a

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Who were ***the people of the Samurah***? They were the Companions who pledged to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ beneath the samurah tree at Hudaybiyah — ***the Pledge of Ridwan*** (Book 15) — promising not to flee. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ chose that call because it reminded them of ***their promise to Allah***. And they came back as cows return to their calves — full of love and in haste.

The call was then directed to ***the Ansar***, and finally to ***Banu al-Harith ibn al-Khazraj***. The increasingly specific call touched each group’s sense of responsibility. In chaos, a general call is easily ignored; a call by one’s own clan’s name touches the heart.

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A HANDFUL OF DUST

When the Companions returned and the fighting reached its height, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did something that recalled the Battle of Badr. Salamah ibn al-Akwa' رضى الله عنه relates:

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1777

وَحَدَّثَنَا زُهَيْرُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ، حَدَّثَنَا عُمَرُ بْنُ يُونُسَ الْحَنَفِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا عِكْرِمَةُ بْنُ عَمَّارٍ، حَدَّثَنِي إِيَاسُ بْنُ سَلَمَةَ، حَدَّثَنِي أَبِي قَالَ، غَزَوْنَا مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم حُنَيْنًا فَلَمَّا وَاجَهْنَا الْعَدُوَّ تَقَدَّمْتُ فَأَعْلُو ثَنِيَّةً فَاسْتَقْبَلَنِي رَجُلٌ مِنَ الْعَدُوِّ فَأَرْمِيهِ بِسَهْمٍ فَتَوَارَى عَنِّي فَمَا دَرَيْتُ مَا صَنَعَ وَنَظَرْتُ إِلَى الْقَوْمِ فَإِذَا هُمْ قَدْ طَلَعُوا مِنْ ثَنِيَّةٍ أُخْرَى فَالْتَقَوْا هُمْ وَصَحَابَةُ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَوَلَّى صَحَابَةُ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَأَرْجِعُ مُنْهَزِمًا وَعَلَىَّ بُرْدَتَانِ مُتَّزِرًا بِإِحْدَاهُمَا مُرْتَدِيًا بِالأُخْرَى فَاسْتَطْلَقَ إِزَارِي فَجَمَعْتُهُمَا جَمِيعًا وَمَرَرْتُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم مُنْهَزِمًا وَهُوَ عَلَى بَغْلَتِهِ الشَّهْبَاءِ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم «لَقَدْ رَأَى ابْنُ الأَكْوَعِ فَزَعًا». فَلَمَّا غَشُوا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم نَزَلَ عَنِ الْبَغْلَةِ ثُمَّ قَبَضَ قَبْضَةً مِنْ تُرَابٍ مِنَ الأَرْضِ ثُمَّ اسْتَقْبَلَ بِهِ وُجُوهَهُمْ فَقَالَ «شَاهَتِ الْوُجُوهُ». فَمَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ مِنْهُمْ إِنْسَانًا إِلاَّ مَلأَ عَيْنَيْهِ تُرَابًا بِتِلْكَ الْقَبْضَةِ فَوَلَّوْا مُدْبِرِينَ فَهَزَمَهُمُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَقَسَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم غَنَائِمَهُمْ بَيْنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ.

TRANSLATION:

Iyas ibn Salamah narrated from his father (Salamah ibn al-Akwa' رضى الله عنه), who said: We fought alongside the Messenger of Allah ﷺ at Hunayn. When we faced the enemy, I advanced and climbed a small hill. A man from the enemy came at me; I shot an arrow at him and he disappeared from me, and I did not know what became of him. I looked at the people, and suddenly they appeared from another hill and clashed with the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ, and the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ turned back. I too came back retreating, wearing two garments, one as a lower wrap and the other over my shoulders. My lower wrap came loose, so I gathered both together. I passed the Messenger of Allah ﷺ while retreating, and he was on his grey mule. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **"Ibn al-Akwa' has seen something frightening."** When they closed in on the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he got down from the mule, then ***took a handful of dust from the ground***, faced them with it and said: ***"May the faces be disfigured!"*** And there was not a single one of them

whom Allah created but his eyes were filled with dust from that handful. They turned and fled, and Allah, Mighty and Majestic, defeated them, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ divided their spoils among the Muslims.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Zuhayr ibn Harb, from 'Umar ibn Yunus al-Hanafi, from 'Ikrimah ibn 'Ammar, from Iyas ibn Salamah, from his father Salamah ibn al-Akwa' رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Jihad and Expeditions, Chapter: The Battle of Hunayn, Hadith No. 1777.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:1777

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The same had happened at Badr, and Allah says about it: ***"And you threw not, [O Muhammad], when you threw, but it was Allah who threw"*** (Al-Anfal 8:17) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 8:17.

A handful of dust could not reach the eyes of thousands by ordinary human strength. It was ***a miracle***: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ performed a small act, and Allah brought about the result. This is a lesson for us: ***do what you are able to***, however small it seems, and leave the outcome to Allah.

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TRANQUILLITY AND UNSEEN SOLDIERS

The Qur'an explains what truly lay behind the victory of Hunayn. After the verse mentioning admiration of numbers and the initial rout, Allah says:

"Then Allah sent down His tranquillity upon His Messenger and upon the believers and sent down soldiers angels whom you did not see" (At-Taubah 9:26) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:26.

Notice the order of the verse: ***tranquillity (sakinah) came down first upon the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ,

then upon the believers. He was calm when everyone panicked, and that calm spread to the Companions who returned. Only then came ***the unseen soldiers*** — the angels. Victory began within the heart.

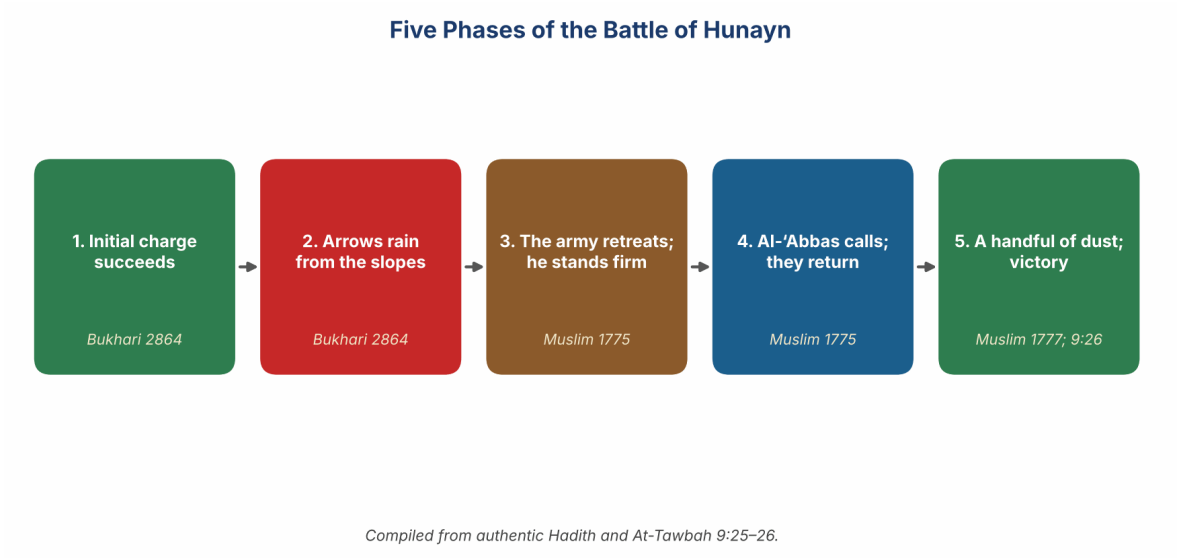

Figure 3: Five phases of the Battle of Hunayn.

The following verse opens a door of hope: ***"Then Allah will accept repentance after that for whom He wills"*** (At-Tawbah 9:27). Many of those who fought the Muslims at Hunayn later embraced Islam — including Malik ibn 'Awf himself. Allah did not close His door even to yesterday's enemy.

For us today, ***sakinah*** is the gift most needed in times of trial: in loss, illness or failure. That tranquillity does not come from outward circumstances, but from our bond with Allah — through prayer, remembrance and trust.

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THREE VERSES ON HUNAYN

Surat at-Tawbah is among the last surahs revealed, and it names Hunayn. Three consecutive verses (9:25–27) sum up the whole story briefly yet profoundly. Let us reflect on each part.

"Allah has already given you victory in many regions." The verse begins by recalling blessings: Badr, al-Khandaq, Khaybar, Makkah — all victories from Allah. Ibn Kathir explains that this verse reminds the Muslims that ***those victories came from Allah***, not from their numbers or equipment.

"…and the earth was confining for you with its vastness." This image is exact: Wadi Hunayn was a broad valley, but in their fear it felt narrow, as if there were nowhere to flee. So it is when a person's heart relies on other than Allah — the wide world feels narrow.

"Then Allah sent down His tranquillity upon His Messenger." The same word — sakinah — is used for the event in the Cave of Thawr during the Hijrah: ***"And Allah sent down his tranquillity upon him and supported him with angels you did not see"*** (At-Tawbah 9:40) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:40.

In the cave, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was alone with Abu Bakr; at Hunayn, he was surrounded by a handful of Companions amid a retreating army. In both cases, ***tranquillity and unseen soldiers*** came down from Allah. It shows that Allah's help does not depend on numbers — whether two men in a cave or twelve thousand in a valley.

And the third verse closes the story with mercy: ***"Then Allah will accept repentance after that for whom He wills"*** (At-Tawbah 9:27) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:27.

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THE HONESTY OF SALAMAH IBN AL-AKWA'

The Hadith of Salamah ibn al-Akwa' contains something remarkable: ***an honest confession*** by a Companion of his own weakness. Salamah was among the bravest Companions — at Dhu Qarad he chased raiders alone on foot and shot them with arrows. Yet of Hunayn he says plainly: ***"I came back retreating"***, and even recounts how his lower garment came loose.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw him and said: ***"Ibn al-Akwa' has seen something frightening."*** He did not scold or shame him, but ***understood*** that the fear had a cause. This is a leader's compassion towards a follower who faltered in a critical moment.

Honesty like this is ***the foundation of trust in the Companions' narrations***. They did not hide their own weaknesses to appear great. If they were honest about their own faults, we can be all the more confident of their honesty in narrating the words of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Hadith scholars cite this among the signs of the Companions' ***'adalah*** (uprightness and integrity).

The lesson for us: ***admitting a mistake is not weakness***. The one brave enough to admit his faults is the one most able to improve himself.

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ABU SUFYAN IBN AL-HARITH: A LOYAL COUSIN

In both the Hadith of al-Bara' and of al-'Abbas, one name appears at the side of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: ***Abu Sufyan ibn al-Harith ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib*** رضى الله عنه — holding the bridle and stirrup of his mule when many retreated.

Who was he? He was ***the Prophet's ﷺ cousin*** and foster-brother, who for twenty years had opposed him and mocked him in verse. Only a few weeks earlier, at Niq al-'Uqab, he had come seeking forgiveness with the words of Yusuf's brothers (Book 20). Now, at the most critical moment, he ***did not move a single step*** from his side.

> **SIRAH NOTE: THE PROPHET'S ﷺ PRAISE**
>
> The sirah authors relate that Abu Sufyan ibn al-Harith was so ashamed of his past that ***he never raised his gaze*** to the face of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ out of shyness. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ loved him dearly, and it is reported that he said he would be among the people of Paradise. As death approached, he told his family: "Do not weep for me; by Allah, I have not committed a sin since I embraced Islam."
>
> These details are ***from the sirah books and biographies of the Companions***; his steadfastness at Hunayn is authentic in Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim.
>
> **REFERENCES:**
> Ibn Hajar, al-Isabah — biography of Abu Sufyan ibn al-Harith.

The lesson: ***the past does not determine the future***. The man who opposed the longest became among the most loyal. True repentance transforms a person from within, and loyalty is proven at the hardest moment.

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UMM SULAYM AND HER DAGGER

Hunayn also witnessed a woman's courage. Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه tells of his own mother, ***Umm Sulaym*** رضى الله عنها:

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1809

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ، حَدَّثَنَا يَزِيدُ بْنُ هَارُونَ، أَخْبَرَنَا حَمَّادُ بْنُ سَلَمَةَ، عَنْ ثَابِتٍ، عَنْ أَنَسٍ، أَنَّ أُمَّ سُلَيْمٍ، اتَّخَذَتْ يَوْمَ حُنَيْنٍ خِنْجَرًا فَكَانَ مَعَهَا فَرَآهَا أَبُو طَلْحَةَ فَقَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ هَذِهِ أُمُّ سُلَيْمٍ مَعَهَا خِنْجَرٌ فَقَالَ لَهَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم «مَا هَذَا الْخِنْجَرُ». قَالَتِ اتَّخَذْتُهُ إِنْ دَنَا مِنِّي أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ بَقَرْتُ بِهِ بَطْنَهُ. فَجَعَلَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَضْحَكُ قَالَتْ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ اقْتُلْ مَنْ بَعْدَنَا مِنَ الطُّلَقَاءِ انْهَزَمُوا بِكَ. فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم «يَا أُمَّ سُلَيْمٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ كَفَى وَأَحْسَنَ». وَحَدَّثَنِيهِ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ حَاتِمٍ، حَدَّثَنَا بَهْزٌ، حَدَّثَنَا حَمَّادُ بْنُ سَلَمَةَ، أَخْبَرَنَا إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ، عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي طَلْحَةَ عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، فِي قِصَّةِ أُمِّ سُلَيْمٍ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم مِثْلَ حَدِيثِ ثَابِتٍ.

TRANSLATION:

Anas رضى الله عنه narrated that ***Umm Sulaym took a dagger on the day of Hunayn***, and kept it with her. Abu Talhah saw her and said: "O Messenger of Allah, here is Umm Sulaym with a dagger." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked her: **"What is this dagger for?"** She said: "I took it so that if any idolater comes near me, I will rip open his belly with it." ***And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ began to laugh.*** She said: "O Messenger of Allah, kill those after us among the tulaqa' (the newly freed Makkans) who fled from you." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"O Umm Sulaym, Allah has sufficed and done well."*** (Imam Muslim also narrated it through another chain from Anas with the same meaning.)

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Abu Bakr ibn Abi Shaybah, from Yazid ibn Harun, from Hammad ibn Salamah, from Thabit al-Bunani, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Jihad and Expeditions, Chapter: Women Taking Part in Campaigns with Men, Hadith No. 1809.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:1809a

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The women Companions took part in campaigns ***to give water, treat the wounded and support the army***. Umm Sulaym went further: she was ready ***to defend herself*** if attacked. In the chaos of Hunayn, when many men retreated, such a woman's courage became an example.

Umm Sulaym was a remarkable woman in Islamic history. It was she who gave her son ***Anas*** to serve the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as a child, and her ***dowry*** when she married Abu Talhah was Abu Talhah's own Islam. The Prophet's ﷺ laughter at her answer shows his ***appreciation and warmth*** towards her spirit.

Note too the Prophet's ﷺ answer when Umm Sulaym asked that those who fled be punished: ***"Allah has sufficed and done well."*** He did not punish those who retreated in panic, since Allah had granted victory. Forgiveness and patience towards new Muslims came before punishment.

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ABU QATADAH AND THE SLAIN ENEMY'S SPOILS

Also on the day of Hunayn, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ established a new ruling in war. ***Abu Qatadah al-Ansari*** رضى الله عنه, the Prophet's ﷺ famous horseman, recounts his experience:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 3142

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ مَسْلَمَةَ، عَنْ مَالِكٍ، عَنْ يَحْيَى بْنِ سَعِيدٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ أَفْلَحَ، عَنْ أَبِي مُحَمَّدٍ، مَوْلَى أَبِي قَتَادَةَ عَنْ أَبِي قَتَادَةَ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ قَالَ خَرَجْنَا مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم عَامَ حُنَيْنٍ، فَلَمَّا الْتَقَيْنَا كَانَتْ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ جَوْلَةٌ، فَرَأَيْتُ رَجُلاً مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ عَلاَ رَجُلاً مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، فَاسْتَدَرْتُ حَتَّى أَتَيْتُهُ مِنْ وَرَائِهِ حَتَّى ضَرَبْتُهُ بِالسَّيْفِ عَلَى حَبْلِ عَاتِقِهِ، فَأَقْبَلَ عَلَىَّ فَضَمَّنِي ضَمَّةً وَجَدْتُ مِنْهَا رِيحَ الْمَوْتِ، ثُمَّ أَدْرَكَهُ الْمَوْتُ فَأَرْسَلَنِي، فَلَحِقْتُ عُمَرَ بْنَ الْخَطَّابِ فَقُلْتُ مَا بَالُ النَّاسِ قَالَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ، ثُمَّ إِنَّ النَّاسَ رَجَعُوا، وَجَلَسَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَقَالَ «مَنْ قَتَلَ قَتِيلاً لَهُ عَلَيْهِ بَيِّنَةٌ فَلَهُ سَلَبُهُ». فَقُمْتُ فَقُلْتُ مَنْ يَشْهَدُ لِي ثُمَّ جَلَسْتُ ثُمَّ قَالَ «مَنْ قَتَلَ قَتِيلاً لَهُ عَلَيْهِ بَيِّنَةٌ فَلَهُ سَلَبُهُ» فَقُمْتُ فَقُلْتُ مَنْ يَشْهَدُ لِي ثُمَّ جَلَسْتُ، ثُمَّ قَالَ الثَّالِثَةَ مِثْلَهُ فَقَالَ رَجُلٌ صَدَقَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، وَسَلَبُهُ عِنْدِي فَأَرْضِهِ عَنِّي. فَقَالَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ الصِّدِّيقُ ـ رضى الله عنه لاَهَا اللَّهِ إِذًا يَعْمِدُ إِلَى أَسَدٍ مِنْ أُسْدِ اللَّهِ يُقَاتِلُ عَنِ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يُعْطِيكَ سَلَبَهُ. فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم «صَدَقَ». فَأَعْطَاهُ فَبِعْتُ الدِّرْعَ، فَابْتَعْتُ بِهِ مَخْرَفًا فِي بَنِي سَلِمَةَ، فَإِنَّهُ لأَوَّلُ مَالٍ تَأَثَّلْتُهُ فِي الإِسْلاَمِ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Qatadah رضى الله عنه said: We went out with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in the year of Hunayn. When we met (the enemy), the Muslims ***wheeled about (in retreat)***. I saw a man of the idolaters on top of a Muslim. I circled round until I came at him from behind and struck him with the sword on the sinew of his shoulder. He turned on me and squeezed me so hard that I felt the smell of death, then death overtook him and he let me go. I caught up with 'Umar ibn al-Khattab and asked: "What is wrong with the people?" He said: ***"It is Allah's decree."*** Then the people came back, and the Prophet ﷺ sat and said: **"Whoever has killed an enemy and has proof of it, his belongings (salab) are his."** I stood and said: "Who will bear witness for me?" then sat down. He said the same again, and I stood and said: "Who will bear witness for me?" then sat down. Then he said it a third time. A man said: "He has spoken the truth, O Messenger of Allah, and the belongings are

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with me, so satisfy him on my behalf." Abu Bakr as-Siddiq رضى الله عنه said: ***"No, by Allah! He would never deliberately take from one of Allah's lions who fights for Allah and His Messenger ﷺ and give you his spoils."*** The Prophet ﷺ said: **"He has spoken the truth."** So he gave them to me. I sold the armour and with it bought an orchard among Banu Salimah. ***It was the first property I acquired in Islam.***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Abdullah ibn Maslamah al-Qa'nabi, from Malik ibn Anas, from Yahya ibn Sa'id al-Ansari, from 'Umar ibn Kathir ibn Aflah, from Abu Muhammad Nafi', freedman of Abu Qatadah, from Abu Qatadah al-Ansari رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the One-Fifth, Chapter: Not Taking the Fifth from Slain Enemies' Belongings, Hadith No. 3142; also No. 4321 and Muslim No. 1751.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3142

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This story teaches ***justice in distributing rights***: each is given his due based on evidence. It also shows Abu Bakr's courage in ***defending another's right***, and the openness of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in accepting his Companion's view. Abu Qatadah later sold those belongings and bought an orchard — ***the first property*** he owned in Islam.

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WOMEN AND HIRED MEN ARE NOT KILLED

Even in the heat of war, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not allow his army to transgress. ***Rabah ibn ar-Rabi'*** رضى الله عنه narrated that in one campaign, people gathered around something. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent someone to look; he returned and said: "A woman has been killed." He said: ***"This woman was not one who fought."*** Then he sent someone to ***Khalid ibn al-Walid***, who led the vanguard: ***"Tell Khalid: Do not kill women and do not kill hired men ('asif)."*** (Sunan Abi Dawud 2669, graded sahih by al-Albani)

The sirah authors mention that this took place at Hunayn, and Khalid ibn al-Walid did lead the vanguard in that battle. This Hadith reaffirms the principle discussed in Book 20: ***non-combatant civilians may not be killed***, including women, children and hired labourers who merely tend livestock or goods.

Note the Prophet's ﷺ reasoning: ***"This woman was not one who fought."*** The criterion in Islam is not a person's religion or tribe, but ***whether they fight us or not***. This principle preceded modern international humanitarian law by more than a thousand years.

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AWTAS AND THE PRAYER FOR ABU 'AMIR

After the defeat at Hunayn, the Hawazin army split into three: some fled to ***Ta'if***, some to ***Nakhlah***, and some to ***Awtas***. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent detachments after them. Abu Musa al-Ash'ari رضى الله عنه recounts what happened to the detachment sent to Awtas:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4323

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْعَلاَءِ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أُسَامَةَ، عَنْ بُرَيْدِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، عَنْ أَبِي بُرْدَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي مُوسَى - رضى الله عنه - قَالَ لَمَّا فَرَغَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم مِنْ حُنَيْنٍ بَعَثَ أَبَا عَامِرٍ عَلَى جَيْشٍ إِلَى أَوْطَاسٍ فَلَقِيَ دُرَيْدَ بْنَ الصِّمَّةِ، فَقُتِلَ دُرَيْدٌ وَهَزَمَ اللَّهُ أَصْحَابَهُ. قَالَ أَبُو مُوسَى وَبَعَثَنِي مَعَ أَبِي عَامِرٍ فَرُمِيَ أَبُو عَامِرٍ فِي رُكْبَتِهِ، رَمَاهُ جُشَمِيٌّ بِسَهْمٍ فَأَثْبَتَهُ فِي رُكْبَتِهِ، فَانْتَهَيْتُ إِلَيْهِ فَقُلْتُ يَا عَمِّ مَنْ رَمَاكَ فَأَشَارَ إِلَى أَبِي مُوسَى فَقَالَ ذَاكَ قَاتِلِي الَّذِي رَمَانِي. فَقَصَدْتُ لَهُ فَلَحِقْتُهُ فَلَمَّا رَآنِي وَلَّى فَاتَّبَعْتُهُ وَجَعَلْتُ أَقُولُ لَهُ أَلاَ تَسْتَحِي، أَلاَ تَثْبُتُ. فَكَفَّ فَاخْتَلَفْنَا ضَرْبَتَيْنِ بِالسَّيْفِ فَقَتَلْتُهُ ثُمَّ قُلْتُ لأَبِي عَامِرٍ قَتَلَ اللَّهُ صَاحِبَكَ. قَالَ فَانْزِعْ هَذَا السَّهْمَ فَنَزَعْتُهُ فَنَزَا مِنْهُ الْمَاءُ. قَالَ يَا ابْنَ أَخِي أَقْرِئِ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم السَّلاَمَ، وَقُلْ لَهُ اسْتَغْفِرْ لِي. وَاسْتَخْلَفَنِي أَبُو عَامِرٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ، فَمَكَثَ يَسِيرًا ثُمَّ مَاتَ، فَرَجَعْتُ فَدَخَلْتُ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم فِي بَيْتِهِ عَلَى سَرِيرٍ مُرْمَلٍ وَعَلَيْهِ فِرَاشٌ قَدْ أَثَّرَ رِمَالُ السَّرِيرِ بِظَهْرِهِ وَجَنْبَيْهِ، فَأَخْبَرْتُهُ بِخَبَرِنَا وَخَبَرِ أَبِي عَامِرٍ، وَقَالَ قُلْ لَهُ اسْتَغْفِرْ لِي، فَدَعَا بِمَاءٍ فَتَوَضَّأَ ثُمَّ رَفَعَ يَدَيْهِ فَقَالَ «اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِعُبَيْدٍ أَبِي عَامِرٍ». وَرَأَيْتُ بَيَاضَ إِبْطَيْهِ ثُمَّ قَالَ «اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَوْقَ كَثِيرٍ مِنْ خَلْقِكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ». فَقُلْتُ وَلِي فَاسْتَغْفِرْ. فَقَالَ «اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِعَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ قَيْسٍ ذَنْبَهُ وَأَدْخِلْهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مُدْخَلاً كَرِيمًا». قَالَ أَبُو بُرْدَةَ إِحْدَاهُمَا لأَبِي عَامِرٍ وَالأُخْرَى لأَبِي مُوسَى.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Musa al-Ash'ari رضى الله عنه said: When the Prophet ﷺ had finished with Hunayn, he sent ***Abu 'Amir*** at the head of an army to ***Awtas***. He met Durayd ibn as-Simmah; Durayd was killed and Allah defeated his companions. Abu Musa said: He sent me with Abu 'Amir. Abu 'Amir was shot in his knee — a man of Banu Jusham shot him with an arrow which lodged in his knee. I went to him and said: "O uncle, who shot you?" He pointed and said: "That is my killer, the one who shot me." I went after him; when he saw me he turned and fled. I followed him saying: "Are you not ashamed? Will you not stand firm?" He stopped, and we

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exchanged two sword blows, and I killed him. I said to Abu 'Amir: "Allah has killed the one who shot you." He said: "Pull out this arrow." I pulled it out, and fluid flowed from it. He said: ***"O my nephew, convey my greetings to the Prophet ﷺ and tell him: Ask forgiveness for me."*** Abu 'Amir appointed me in his place over the men. He lingered a little while, then died. I returned and went in to the Prophet ﷺ in his house. He was lying on a bed woven of ropes with a mattress on it, and ***the weave of the bed had left marks on his back and sides***. I told him our news and the news of Abu 'Amir, and his message: "Tell him: Ask forgiveness for me." He called for water, performed ablution, then raised his hands and said: **"O Allah, forgive 'Ubayd Abu 'Amir."** I saw the whiteness of his armpits. Then he said: **"O Allah, place him on the Day of Resurrection above many of Your creation among people."** I said: "And for me, ask forgiveness." He said: **"O Allah, forgive 'Abdullah ibn Qays his sin, and admit him on the Day of Resurrection to an honourable place."** Abu Burdah said: One of the two prayers was for Abu 'Amir and the other for Abu Musa.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Muhammad ibn al-'Ala', from Abu Usamah Hammad ibn Usamah, from Burayd ibn 'Abdullah, from Abu Burdah, from Abu Musa al-Ash'ari رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions (al-Maghazi), Chapter: The Expedition of Awtas, Hadith No. 4323; also Muslim No. 2498.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4323

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This Hadith contains several moving images. First, ***Abu 'Amir's last request***: he asked not for wealth or praise, but only for ***a prayer of forgiveness*** from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Second, ***the simplicity of the Prophet's ﷺ life***: the leader of all Arabia slept on a bed of woven rope that left marks on his back.

Third, ***the way the Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed***: he first performed ablution, then ***raised both hands*** so high that the whiteness of his armpits showed — a sign of earnestness in prayer. And fourth, ***Abu Musa's quick thinking***: he did not miss the chance to ask a prayer for himself too. We too should earnestly seek the prayers of righteous people, and pray for our brothers who have passed on.

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DURAYD IBN AS-SIMMAH: THE OLD WARRIOR

Abu Musa's Hadith mentions briefly that at Awtas, ***"Durayd ibn as-Simmah was killed"***. Who was he, and why is his name remembered?

SIRAH NOTE: AN OLD WARRIOR OF BANU JUSHAM

Durayd ibn as-Simmah was ***a famous Arab poet and warrior*** of the pre-Islamic era, from the tribe of Banu Jusham (Hawazin). At the time of Hunayn he was very old — some reports put his age at over a hundred — and blind. He was carried to the battlefield in a litter solely for ***his experience and counsel***.

After Hawazin's defeat, a young Muslim named ***Rabi'ah ibn Rufay'*** came upon him and killed him. It is related that Durayd said to him: "Go back to your mother and tell her you killed Durayd ibn as-Simmah." When Rabi'ah told his mother, she said: "By Allah, he once freed three of your mothers (grandmothers) from captivity."

This story is ***a sirah report***; Durayd's death at Awtas is authentic in Sahih al-Bukhari 4323.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Expeditions of Hunayn and Ta'if; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.
Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah — the story of Durayd ibn as-Simmah.

Durayd's story holds two contrasting lessons. First, ***wisdom without faith does not save***: Durayd saw Malik's error clearly, yet he himself died in disbelief after living over a hundred years. A long life and wide experience are of no use if they do not lead to Allah.

Second, ***good deeds are remembered even from an enemy***: Rabi'ah's mother acknowledged Durayd's kindness in freeing the women of her people. Islam teaches us to be fair in judging people, including acknowledging an enemy's good. Allah says: "Do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just" (Al-Ma'idah 5:8).

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TA'IF TEN YEARS EARLIER

The remnants of Hawazin with Malik ibn 'Awf took refuge in the fortified city of ***Ta'if***. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ marched there. For him, Ta'if was no strange city — it held one of the bitterest memories of his life.

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها once asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about the hardest day of his life. His answer takes us back to Ta'if:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 3231

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ يُوسُفَ، أَخْبَرَنَا ابْنُ وَهْبٍ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي يُونُسُ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي عُرْوَةُ، أَنَّ عَائِشَةَ ـ رضى الله عنها ـ زَوْجَ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم حَدَّثَتْهُ أَنَّهَا قَالَتْ لِلنَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم هَلْ أَتَى عَلَيْكَ يَوْمٌ كَانَ أَشَدَّ مِنْ يَوْمِ أُحُدٍ قَالَ «لَقَدْ لَقِيتُ مِنْ قَوْمِكِ مَا لَقِيتُ، وَكَانَ أَشَدُّ مَا لَقِيتُ مِنْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْعَقَبَةِ، إِذْ عَرَضْتُ نَفْسِي عَلَى ابْنِ عَبْدِ يَالِيلَ بْنِ عَبْدِ كُلاَلٍ، فَلَمْ يُجِبْنِي إِلَى مَا أَرَدْتُ، فَانْطَلَقْتُ وَأَنَا مَهْمُومٌ عَلَى وَجْهِي، فَلَمْ أَسْتَفِقْ إِلاَّ وَأَنَا بِقَرْنِ الثَّعَالِبِ، فَرَفَعْتُ رَأْسِي، فَإِذَا أَنَا بِسَحَابَةٍ قَدْ أَظَلَّتْنِي، فَنَظَرْتُ فَإِذَا فِيهَا جِبْرِيلُ فَنَادَانِي فَقَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ سَمِعَ قَوْلَ قَوْمِكَ لَكَ وَمَا رَدُّوا عَلَيْكَ، وَقَدْ بَعَثَ إِلَيْكَ مَلَكَ الْجِبَالِ لِتَأْمُرَهُ بِمَا شِئْتَ فِيهِمْ، فَنَادَانِي مَلَكُ الْجِبَالِ، فَسَلَّمَ عَلَيَّ ثُمَّ قَالَ يَا مُحَمَّدُ، فَقَالَ ذَلِكَ فِيمَا شِئْتَ، إِنْ شِئْتَ أَنْ أُطْبِقَ عَلَيْهِمِ الأَخْشَبَيْنِ، فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم بَلْ أَرْجُو أَنْ يُخْرِجَ اللَّهُ مِنْ أَصْلاَبِهِمْ مَنْ يَعْبُدُ اللَّهَ وَحْدَهُ لاَ يُشْرِكُ بِهِ شَيْئًا».

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها, wife of the Prophet ﷺ, asked the Prophet ﷺ: "Have you ever had a day harder than the day of Uhud?" He said: **"I suffered from your people what I suffered, and the hardest I suffered from them was the day of al-'Aqabah, when I presented myself to Ibn 'Abd Yalil ibn 'Abd Kulal, and he did not respond to what I wanted. I went away deeply distressed, walking without direction, and did not come to myself until I was at Qarn ath-Tha'alib. I raised my head, and there was a cloud shading me. I looked, and in it was Jibril. He called me and said: Allah has heard what your people said to you and how they answered you, and He has sent you the angel of the mountains for you to command him as you wish concerning them. The angel of the mountains called me, greeted me, then said: O Muhammad, it is as you wish; if you wish, I will bring the two mountains (al-Akhshabayn) down upon**

them." The Prophet ﷺ said: "Rather, I hope that Allah will bring forth from their descendants those who worship Allah alone, associating nothing with Him."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Abdullah ibn Yusuf at-Tinnisi, from 'Abdullah ibn Wahb, from Yunus ibn Yazid al-Ayli, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr, from 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Beginning of Creation, Chapter: When One of You Says Amin, Hadith No. 3231; also No. 7389 and Muslim No. 1795.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3231

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

That event took place some ***ten years earlier***, in the Year of Sorrow (Book 5). Now he returned to Ta'if not as a rejected preacher, but as the leader of a great army. Would he take revenge? The following chapters answer — and the answer was the same as ten years before: ***hope, not revenge***.

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THE SIEGE OF TA'IF

Ta'if was a city surrounded by ***strong walls and forts***, with food supplies for a long time. Its people, Thaqif, were renowned archers. The Muslims besieged the city, and according to the sirah books, they used ***the manjaniq (catapult)*** and ***the dabbabah (wooden siege shelter)*** for the first time in Islamic history. But the forts of Ta'if could not be breached, and many Companions were wounded by arrows from the walls.

The length of the siege is reported differently: the sirah books mention about twenty days, while in one narration of Sahih Muslim, Anas رضى الله عنه mentions forty nights (Sahih Muslim 1059). Finally the Messenger of Allah ﷺ made a decision. 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما relates:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4325

حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنْ عَمْرٍو، عَنْ أَبِي الْعَبَّاسِ الشَّاعِرِ الأَعْمَى، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ، قَالَ لَمَّا حَاصَرَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم الطَّائِفَ فَلَمْ يَنَلْ مِنْهُمْ شَيْئًا قَالَ «إِنَّا قَافِلُونَ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ». فَثَقُلَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَقَالُوا نَذْهَبُ وَلاَ نَفْتَحُهُ ـ وَقَالَ مَرَّةً نَقْفُلُ ـ فَقَالَ «اغْدُوا عَلَى الْقِتَالِ». فَغَدَوْا فَأَصَابَهُمْ جِرَاحٌ فَقَالَ «إِنَّا قَافِلُونَ غَدًا إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ». فَأَعْجَبَهُمْ فَضَحِكَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، وَقَالَ سُفْيَانُ مَرَّةً فَتَبَسَّمَ. قَالَ قَالَ الْحُمَيْدِيُّ حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ الْخَبَرَ كُلَّهُ.

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما said: When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ besieged Ta'if and gained nothing from them, he said: **"We are returning, if Allah wills."** It weighed heavily on them, and they said: "Shall we go without conquering it?" He said: **"Go out to fight in the morning."** They went out in the morning and many were wounded. He said: **"We are returning tomorrow, if Allah wills."** This pleased them, ***and the Prophet ﷺ laughed*** (in another narration from Sufyan: smiled).

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Ali ibn 'Abdullah al-Madini, from Sufyan ibn 'Uyaynah, from 'Amr ibn Dinar, from Abu al-'Abbas ash-Sha'ir al-A'ma, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions (al-Maghazi), Chapter: The Expedition of Ta'if, Hadith No. 4325; also Nos. 6086, 7480 and Muslim No. 1778.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4325

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LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The decision to ***withdraw*** from Ta'if was not a defeat, but ***wisdom***. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw that continuing the siege would only add casualties without result, while Ta'if would come to Islam on its own in time. And that is exactly what happened: a year later, Thaqif sent a delegation to Madinah and embraced Islam (Book 26).

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A LEADER'S SMILE

Ibn 'Umar's Hadith about the siege of Ta'if holds a subtle lesson in leadership. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ first proposed returning, the Companions ***found it hard*** — they wanted to keep fighting and open Ta'if. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not force them. He said: "Go out to fight in the morning."

They fought, and ***many were wounded***. Having tasted the hardship themselves, when he said again, "We are returning tomorrow, in sha Allah," they accepted it gladly. ***Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ laughed.*** He laughed at the change in their hearts — from reluctance to gladness at the very same decision.

The lesson for every leader, parent and teacher: sometimes ***people need to experience things themselves*** before they can accept a decision. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave the Companions room to try, without scolding or belittling them. And he met the situation with ***a smile***, not frustration.

Note too his words: ***"in sha Allah"***. Even as the leader making the decision, he always tied his plans to Allah's will. This is the etiquette Allah taught in Surat al-Kahf 18:23–24.

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THOSE WHO CAME DOWN FROM THE FORT

During the siege, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ proclaimed: any ***slave*** inside Ta'if who came down to the Muslims would be ***free***. Several slaves answered the call and came down from the fort.

One of them was ***Nufay' ibn al-Harith***, who came down from the fort of Ta'if using ***a pulley (bakrah)***, and was thereafter known as ***Abu Bakrah***. Sahih al-Bukhari mentions him as "the one who climbed (down) the fort of Ta'if" and came to the Prophet ﷺ (Sahih al-Bukhari 4326). He later became a Companion who narrated many Hadith.

SIRAH NOTE: FREEDOM FOR THE SLAVES

The sirah authors relate that some ***twenty-three slaves*** came down from Ta'if. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ freed them all, and entrusted each to a Companion to support and teach the religion. When Thaqif later embraced Islam, they asked for the slaves back, but the Messenger of Allah ﷺ refused: ***"They are those whom Allah has freed."***

These numbers and details are ***sirah reports***.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Expeditions of Hunayn and Ta'if; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.

Ibn Hajar, al-Isabah — biography of Abu Bakrah Nufay' ibn al-Harith.

This event shows that Islam ***opened the door to freedom*** even in the midst of war. A slave who came down from a fort by a pulley became a Companion of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, a narrator of Hadith, and his name endures in history. Islam judges people by their faith, not their social status.

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"O ALLAH, GUIDE THAQIF"

Many Companions were wounded by Thaqif's arrows from the walls of Ta'if. Some asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to pray against Thaqif. What was his answer?

SIRAH NOTE: "O ALLAH, GUIDE THAQIF"

Jabir رضى الله عنه narrated that the Companions said: "O Messenger of Allah, the arrows of Thaqif have burned (wounded) us, so pray against them." He prayed: ***"O Allah, guide Thaqif."*** (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3942)

Imam at-Tirmidhi graded it ***hasan sahih gharib***, but some scholars, including Shaykh al-Albani, graded its chain ***weak*** because Abu az-Zubayr narrated it with 'an'anah. So it is placed in this Note. Yet its meaning agrees with the authentic Hadith about Ta'if (Sahih al-Bukhari 3231) and his prayer for the tribe of Daws: "O Allah, guide Daws" (Sahih al-Bukhari 2937).

REFERENCES:
al-Albani, Da'if Sunan at-Tirmidhi.

Whether with this wording or not, the Prophet's ﷺ ***attitude*** towards Ta'if is clear in the authentic Hadith: he never prayed for their destruction, but ***hoped for their guidance*** and that of their descendants. And that hope was fulfilled: Thaqif embraced Islam soon after, and when many Arab tribes apostatised after the Prophet's ﷺ passing, ***Thaqif remained firm in Islam***.

The lesson: when hurt, ***pray for guidance, not destruction***. Those who hurt us today may become our brothers in faith tomorrow.

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CAPTIVES AND SPOILS

Malik ibn 'Awf's decision to bring families and wealth to the battlefield ended in disaster for Hawazin. All their ***women, children and livestock*** fell into the Muslims' hands. Anas رضى الله عنه narrated that Hawazin came with their children, women, camels and sheep, arranged in ranks to display their great numbers (Sahih Muslim 1059).

> **SIRAH NOTE: THE NUMBERS OF CAPTIVES AND SPOILS**
>
> The sirah books state that the captives numbered about ***six thousand***, with ***twenty-four thousand camels***, more than ***forty thousand sheep***, and ***four thousand uqiyah of silver***. All were gathered and kept at ***al-Ji'ranah***, a place between Makkah and Ta'if.
>
> These figures are ***sirah reports*** (among others from al-Waqidi and Ibn Sa'd), and may be estimates.
>
> **REFERENCES:**
>
> Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Expeditions of Hunayn and Ta'if; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.
>
> al-Waqidi, al-Maghazi; Ibn Sa'd, at-Tabaqat al-Kubra.

What did the Messenger of Allah ﷺ do with such vast wealth? He ***delayed its distribution*** for some days, hoping Hawazin would come in repentance so that their families could be returned. The story of the distribution at al-Ji'ranah — including the gifts to the Qurashi nobles, the disappointment of some Ansar, and the Prophet's ﷺ sermon that made them weep — will be told in ***Book 23***.

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A MOTHER SEARCHING FOR HER CHILD

Amid the thousands of Hawazin captives, a small scene took place that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ turned into a great lesson about ***Allah's mercy***. 'Umar ibn al-Khattab رضى الله عنه relates that captives were brought to the Prophet ﷺ. Suddenly a woman among them was ***searching***, her breasts full of milk. Whenever she found an infant among the captives, she took it, pressed it to her and nursed it.

The Prophet ﷺ asked the Companions: ***"Do you think this woman would throw her child into the fire?"*** They said: "No, by Allah, not while she is able not to." He said: ***"Allah is more merciful to His servants than this woman is to her child."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 5999)

Ibn Hajar in Fath al-Bari mentions that the captives in this Hadith were ***the captives of Hawazin*** after Hunayn. Picture the scene: after a fierce battle, amid grief and loss, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***noticed a mother searching for her child*** — and made it a way to introduce his Companions to Allah's boundless love.

The lesson: ***Allah's mercy is wider than a mother's love***. A mother who lost her child would nurse any infant she found; how then is Allah towards His servant who returns to Him? Never despair of Allah's mercy, however far we have strayed.

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TRUST IN THE SPOILS OF WAR

The spoils of Hunayn were vast — perhaps the greatest the Muslims had yet gained. Great wealth brings a great test: ***the temptation to take something before it is divided***, which Islam calls ***ghulul*** (embezzling from the spoils).

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave a very severe warning about ghulul. Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrated that he stood and addressed them, mentioned ghulul and stressed its gravity, then said he did not wish to see anyone come on the Day of Resurrection ***carrying on his neck*** a camel, horse or sheep he had taken by fraud, saying: "O Messenger of Allah, help me!" He would answer: ***"I have no power to help you at all; I conveyed (the message) to you."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 3073)

SIRAH NOTE: A SINGLE CAMEL HAIR

'Amr ibn Shu'ayb narrated from his father, from his grandfather, that after Hunayn the Messenger of Allah ﷺ took ***a single hair*** from a camel's hump and said: ***"O people, I have no share in these spoils of yours — not even as much as this hair — except the fifth, and the fifth is returned to you. So return even thread and needle."*** (Sunan Abi Dawud 2694)

This Hadith is graded ***hasan*** by al-Albani; so it is placed in this Note.

REFERENCES:
al-Albani, Sahih Sunan Abi Dawud.

See ***the trustworthiness of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ. A leader with authority over thousands of camels and sheep declared that he himself had no right to even a single hair, except the share Allah had set — and even that was spent on the community. Whoever holds public wealth in trust — in a company, mosque, association or government — should remember the single camel hair of Hunayn.

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ASH-SHAYMA': A FOSTER SISTER

Among the captives of Hawazin was an old woman who claimed something astonishing: she was ***a foster sister*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

SIRAH NOTE: THE SPREAD CLOAK

The sirah authors relate that ***ash-Shayma' bint al-Harith***, daughter of Halimah as-Sa'diyyah, was brought as a captive and treated roughly. She said: "I am your companion's foster sister." When brought to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, she showed ***a bite mark*** on her back — the mark of his bite as a child when she carried him.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ recognised her, then ***spread out his cloak*** and seated her on it. He gave her a choice: to stay with him in honour, or return to her people with gifts. She chose to return, and he gave her many gifts.

This story is ***a sirah report*** (among others from Ibn Ishaq and al-Bayhaqi) and its chain ***is debated***.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Expeditions of Hunayn and Ta'if; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.
al-Bayhaqi, Dala'il an-Nubuwwah.

Though the chain of this story is debated, it agrees with the Prophet's ﷺ established character: he ***greatly honoured his foster family***. Authentic Hadith state that fosterage makes unlawful what blood kinship makes unlawful (Sahih al-Bukhari 2645) — a very close bond in Islam.

The lesson: ***never forget those who once did us good***, even in childhood, even long ago. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, as supreme leader of Arabia, still spread his cloak for a foster sister from a poor Bedouin village.

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BADR AND HUNAYN

The Qur'an names Hunayn, just as it names Badr. Comparing these two battles gives a very clear lesson about ***the source of victory***:

BADR (2 AH)	HUNAYN (8 AH)
313 men, ill-equipped	12,000 men, fully armed
Felt weak, relied on Allah	Impressed by their own numbers
Victorious from the start	Defeated at first, victorious later
He prayed earnestly	He stood firm on his mule
A handful of sand thrown (Al-Anfal 8:17)	A handful of dust thrown (Muslim 1777)
Angels sent down (Al-Anfal 8:9)	Unseen soldiers (At-Tawbah 9:26)
Ramadan, the 17th	Shawwal, after the Conquest of Makkah

Both battles teach the same truth from two directions: ***few numbers do not prevent victory when relying on Allah***, and ***great numbers do not guarantee victory when relying on oneself***. At Badr, the Muslims learned trust in weakness; at Hunayn, they learned humility in strength.

In our lives there are "Badr" moments — when we are weak and rely only on Allah — and "Hunayn" moments — when we are strong and easily forget Him. The second kind of test is often the more dangerous.

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SOURCES OF THE STORY

The story of Hunayn and Ta'if is narrated through the Qur'an, authentic Hadith and the books of sirah. The following table distinguishes the certain from the reported:

EVENT	SOURCE AND GRADE
Admiring numbers; sakinah	At-Tawbah 9:25–26
Dhat Anwat	Jami' at-Tirmidhi 2180 (sahih)
"I am the Prophet, no lie"	Sahih al-Bukhari 2864
Al-'Abbas's call; the throw	Sahih Muslim 1775, 1777
Awtas and the prayer for Abu 'Amir	Sahih al-Bukhari 4323
The siege of Ta'if	Sahih al-Bukhari 4325; Muslim 1059
Durayd ibn as-Simmah's advice	Sirah books
"O Allah, guide Thaqif"	At-Tirmidhi 3942; chain debated
Numbers of captives and spoils	Sirah books
The story of ash-Shayma'	Sirah books; chain debated

The main framework of the story — admiration of numbers, the ambush, the Prophet's ﷺ steadfastness, al-'Abbas's call, victory by Allah's help, and the siege of Ta'if — ***is established by the Qur'an and authentic Hadith***. Other details we convey honestly as sirah reports.

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THE TRIBES ON THE FIELD OF HUNAYN AND TA'IF

Chapters 1 and 2 introduced Hawazin and Thaqif briefly. Who exactly were the tribes that gathered under the banner of Malik ibn 'Awf? This chapter sets out their branches in one table. Almost all of these details come from the sirah books (Ibn Ishaq through Ibn Hisham, and al-Waqidi); what is established in authentic Hadith has its source stated.

TRIBE / BRANCH	POSITION	LEADER OR FIGURE	SOURCE
Hawazin (in general)	A large confederation of Bedouin tribes of the Qays 'Aylan stock, in the region east of Makkah as far as Najd	Malik ibn 'Awf an-Nasri, commander of the whole confederation	Sirah books; Sahih al-Bukhari 4323 mentions Hawazin
Banu Nasr ibn Mu'awiyah (Hawazin)	Took part	The tribe of Malik ibn 'Awf himself	Sirah books
Banu Jusham ibn Mu'awiyah (Hawazin)	Took part	Durayd ibn as-Simmah, the aged war adviser (chapter 19)	Sirah books; Durayd's death: Sahih al-Bukhari 4323
Banu Sa'd ibn Bakr (Hawazin)	Took part	The tribe of Halimah as-Sa'diyyah and ash-Shayma' (chapter 28)	Sirah books
Banu Hilal ibn 'Amir (Hawazin)	Only a small number took part	The tribe of the Mother of the Believers Maymunah bint al-Harith	Sirah books (Ibn Ishaq)
Banu Ka'b and Banu Kilab (Hawazin)	Did not take part	—	Sirah books; Durayd saw their absence as a bad sign
Thaqif — al-Ahlaf	Took part, then took refuge in Ta'if	Qarib ibn al-Aswad ibn Mas'ud	Sirah books (Ibn Ishaq)
Thaqif — Banu Malik	Took part, then took refuge in Ta'if	Dhu al-Khimar Subay' ibn al-Harith and his brother al-Ahmar	Sirah books (Ibn Ishaq)

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SIRAH NOTE: TRIBES TIED TO THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ

Two family ties linked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ with Hawazin. The first is the tie of nursing: he was nursed by Halimah bint Abi Dhu'ayb of Banu Sa'd ibn Bakr, and ash-Shayma' was his foster sister. The second is the tie of marriage: the Mother of the Believers Maymunah bint al-Harith رضى الله عنها was of Banu Hilal ibn 'Amir, also a branch of Hawazin (Book 18).

It was this tie of nursing that the delegation of Hawazin later used as their plea when they came in repentance, asking for their captives to be returned (Book 23).

This table shows that Hunayn was not a battle against a single tribe, but against a large confederation. It also shows that not every branch of Hawazin agreed with Malik ibn 'Awf's decision — Ka'b and Kilab chose not to take part. Thaqif fought at Hunayn and then withdrew to their fortified city of Ta'if.

LESSONS

Today's enemy may be tomorrow's brother. Banu Sa'd, who fought him at Hunayn, were his foster family, and before long all of Hawazin and Thaqif embraced Islam. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not regard people with lasting hatred; he saw them as future brothers in faith.

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THE PEOPLE OF THE BATTLE OF HUNAYN AND TA'IF

The following table gathers the main figures mentioned in this book, with their family relationship to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ or to other figures, their role, and the source of the information.

NAME	TRIBE / RELATIONSHIP	ROLE	SOURCE
Al-'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib	Quraysh (Banu Hashim); paternal uncle of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ	Called out to the People of the Samurah with his powerful voice	Sahih Muslim 1775
Abu Sufyan ibn al-Harith	Quraysh (Banu Hashim); cousin and foster brother of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ	Held the reins of his mule	Sahih Muslim 1775
Ayman ibn 'Ubayd	Son of Umm Ayman; half-brother of Usamah ibn Zayd through their mother	Fell as a martyr defending the Messenger of Allah ﷺ	Sirah books (Ibn Ishaq)
Abu 'Amir al-Ash'ari	Al-Ash'ariyyun (Yemen); paternal uncle of Abu Musa	Led the force to Awtas; fell as a martyr	Sahih al-Bukhari 4323
Abu Musa al-Ash'ari	Al-Ash'ariyyun; nephew of Abu 'Amir	Took over the banner at Awtas; delivered Abu 'Amir's message	Sahih al-Bukhari 4323
Abu Qatadah al-Ansari	Ansar — Khazraj (Banu Salimah)	Killed a polytheist and was given his possessions (salab)	Sahih al-Bukhari 3142
Umm Sulaym bint Milhan	Ansar — Khazraj (Banu an-Najjar); wife of Abu Talhah, mother of Anas	Carried a dagger on the battlefield	Sahih Muslim 1809
Salamah ibn al-Akwa'	Aslam	Admitted that he too had retreated	Sahih Muslim 1777
Khalid ibn al-Walid	Quraysh (Banu Makhzum)	Led the vanguard; rebuked because a woman was killed	Sunan Abi Dawud 2669
Abu Bakrah (Nufay' ibn al-Harith)	Thaqif; a freed slave	Came down from the fort of Ta'if by a pulley and embraced Islam	Sahih al-Bukhari 4326
Malik ibn 'Awf an-Nasri	Hawazin (Banu Nasr)	Commander of Hawazin; took refuge in Ta'if; later embraced Islam (Book 23)	Sirah books
Durayd ibn as-Simmah	Hawazin (Banu Jusham)	Aged adviser; killed at Awtas	Sahih al-Bukhari 4323; sirah books
Ash-Shayma' bint al-Harith	Hawazin (Banu Sa'd); foster sister of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ	A captive whom he honoured	Sirah books

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SIRAH NOTE: THE MARTYRS OF HUNAYN AND TA'IF

Ibn Ishaq names four martyrs at Hunayn and Awtas: Ayman ibn 'Ubayd, Yazid ibn Zam'ah ibn al-Aswad, Suraqah ibn al-Harith of the Ansar, and Abu 'Amir al-Ash'ari. At Ta'if he names twelve martyrs, most of them from Quraysh and the Ansar.

These figures are reports of the sirah books. What is established in Sahih al-Bukhari is the martyrdom of Abu 'Amir at Awtas (4323) and the many Companions wounded at Ta'if (4325).

Notice the make-up of this table: an uncle, a cousin, the son of his nurse, Companions from Yemen, the Ansar, former enemies from Makkah, and a slave from Ta'if. They differed in tribe, colour and origin, yet they stood under one banner.

LESSONS

At the critical moment, those who stood firm beside the Messenger of Allah ﷺ were his closest family and the Companions who had been with him longest. Faith built over years is firmer than enthusiasm that has only just arrived. Yet the door is always open: Abu Bakrah, who came down from the enemy's fort, became a Companion who narrated Hadith.

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PLACES OF THE EVENTS: THEN AND NOW

The events of this book took place east and south-east of Makkah, on the road towards the mountains of Ta'if. The following table lists the places mentioned. The location of some ancient places is uncertain, and we say so honestly.

PLACE	EVENT	TODAY	NOTE
Wadi Hunayn	The Hawazin ambush and the Muslim victory (chapters 6–11)	A valley on the road between Makkah and Ta'if, east of Makkah	The exact spot of the battlefield is uncertain
Awtas	Abu 'Amir's force; Durayd killed (chapters 18–19)	A valley in the territory of Hawazin	Its exact location is disputed
Nakhlah	Part of the Hawazin army fled here	A valley between Makkah and Ta'if	Also the place where a group of jinn listened to the Qur'an (Book 5)
Ta'if	The siege (chapters 20–24)	A city in the Hijaz mountains, about 1,879 metres above sea level; the 87 km Makkah–Ta'if mountain road was built in 1965	Wikipedia, "Taif"
Mosque of 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas, Ta'if	Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما died and was buried in Ta'if (68 AH / 687 CE)	A large mosque in the centre of Ta'if; the present building dates from 1958	Wikipedia; its link with where the Prophet ﷺ prayed during the siege is a historical report
Al-Ji'ranah	Captives and spoils gathered; the Prophet's ﷺ umrah	A miqat for umrah for the people of Makkah today	Told in Book 23

Ta'if today is known for its cool air, its rose gardens and its fruit. The city that once rejected and stoned the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and later held out against his siege, is now an Islamic city that keeps the grave of one of the greatest scholars of this Ummah — his cousin, 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas.

LESSONS

Places hold memories, but what endures is faith. Ta'if, harsh in the Year of Sorrow and unyielding in the year of the siege, in the end became a land that produced and preserved knowledge. The prayer of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ for the guidance of Thaqif was not in vain.

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RULINGS FROM HUNAYN AND TA'IF

The events of Hunayn and Ta'if are a source of many rulings in the fiqh of war. Some have been explained in earlier chapters. The following table summarises them, followed by one ruling not yet mentioned.

RULING	EVIDENCE	CHAPTER
It is permissible to borrow weapons from non-Muslims, with a guarantee to return them	Sunan Abi Dawud 3562	3
It is forbidden to imitate practices of shirk, even with good intentions	Jami' at-Tirmidhi 2180	4
The possessions of a slain enemy (salab) are given to the one who killed him	Sahih al-Bukhari 3142	16
Women, children and hired men may not be killed	Sunan Abi Dawud 2669	17
Slaves of the enemy who come out and surrender become free	Sahih al-Bukhari 4326	23
The leader may lift a siege if the public interest requires it	Sahih al-Bukhari 4325	21–22
It is forbidden to take from the spoils before they are divided (ghulul)	Sahih al-Bukhari 3073; Sunan Abi Dawud 2694	27
Female captives may not be approached before istibra' (ascertaining that they are not pregnant)	Sunan Abi Dawud 2157; Sahih Muslim 1456	34

HADITH: THE CAPTIVES OF AWTAS

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri رضى الله عنه narrated that at the Battle of Hunayn the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent a force to Awtas. They took captive some women who still had husbands among the polytheists, and some of the Companions felt uneasy. So Allah revealed the verse An-Nisa' 4:24 concerning their ruling.

In another narration from Abu Sa'id, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said about the captives of Awtas: "A pregnant woman is not to be approached until she gives birth, nor one who is not pregnant until she has had one menstrual period."

Grade: SAHIH — Sahih Muslim 1456; Sunan Abi Dawud 2157 (sahih according to al-Albani).

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FIQH NOTE

These rulings relate to the system of prisoners of war that existed throughout the world at that time. Islam came to regulate that system, closed many doors to injustice, and encouraged the freeing of slaves as an expiation and a righteous deed. That system of slavery ended long ago, and these rulings are studied today as part of the history of fiqh.

The Hadith of istibra' also shows the protection of lineage: Islam does not allow descent to become uncertain, even in time of war. As for salab, the scholars differ: the Shafi'i and Hanbali schools hold that the killer is entitled to it directly; the Hanafi and Maliki schools hold that it depends on the leader's announcement.

LESSONS

War in Islam is not free from law. Borrowed weapons must be returned, women and children are protected, the spoils may not be touched before they are divided, and honour and lineage are guarded. The Shari'ah remains present even in the middle of the battlefield.

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TIMELINE OF THE BATTLE OF HUNAYN AND TA'IF

The following dates are mostly based on the sirah books, and some are approximate.

TIME	EVENT	SOURCE
Ramadan 8 AH	The Conquest of Makkah; Hawazin and Thaqif gather an army	Books 20–21; sirah books
Early Shawwal 8 AH	Safwan lends armour; the Muslim army leaves Makkah	Sunan Abi Dawud 3562; sirah books (Ibn Ishaq: 6 Shawwal)
On the way	The episode of the tree of Dhat Anwat	Jami' at-Tirmidhi 2180
Around 10 Shawwal 8 AH, at dawn	The ambush in Wadi Hunayn; the army falls back	Sahih al-Bukhari 2864
The same morning	The call of al-'Abbas; the handful of dust; victory	Sahih Muslim 1775, 1777
After the battle	Hawazin scatter to Ta'if, Nakhlah and Awtas	Sirah books
A few days later	Abu 'Amir's force to Awtas; Durayd killed; Abu 'Amir martyred	Sahih al-Bukhari 4323
Shawwal 8 AH	Captives and spoils sent to al-Ji'ranah	Sirah books
Shawwal 8 AH	The siege of Ta'if begins	Sahih al-Bukhari 4325
During the siege	Abu Bakrah and some slaves come down from the fort	Sahih al-Bukhari 4326
After about 20 days (another report: 40 nights)	The siege is lifted; the prayer for Thaqif's guidance	Sirah books; Sahih Muslim 1059
End of Shawwal – Dhu al-Qa'dah 8 AH	Distribution of the spoils at al-Ji'ranah; umrah; return to Madinah	Book 23
9 AH	The delegation of Thaqif comes to embrace Islam	Book 26

LESSONS

In about two months the Muslims passed through a great victory at Makkah, an early setback and then victory at Hunayn, a failure to take Ta'if, and a distribution of wealth that tested hearts. The life of a believer is the same — alternating between blessing and trial, and both are a test.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BATTLE OF HUNAYN AND TA'IF

1. HOW LARGE WERE THE TWO ARMIES?

The Muslim army numbered about twelve thousand: the ten thousand who came from Madinah and about two thousand people of Makkah (chapter 3; Sahih al-Bukhari 4337). The size of Hawazin and its allies is not established in authentic Hadith; the sirah books and historical sources give differing estimates, some saying about twenty thousand.

2. WHY IS HUNAYN MENTIONED BY NAME IN THE QUR'AN?

Because it carries a very important lesson: great numbers do not guarantee victory. Allah says (meaning): "and on the day of Hunayn, when your great number pleased you" (At-Tawbah 9:25; chapters 5 and 12).

3. WHO ARE THE "SOLDIERS YOU DID NOT SEE" IN AT-TAWBAH 9:26?

Commentators such as Ibn Kathir explain them as angels whom Allah sent down to strengthen the Muslims, as at Badr. The Qur'an makes clear that the Muslims did not see them (chapter 11).

4. HOW MANY COMPANIONS WERE MARTYRED?

Ibn Ishaq names four at Hunayn and Awtas, and twelve at Ta'if (chapter 32). These figures are reports of the sirah books.

5. WAS A CATAPULT USED AT TA'IF?

The sirah books mention that the Muslims used a catapult (manjaniq) and a testudo (dabbabah) at Ta'if, and some reports say that at-Tufayl ibn 'Amr ad-Dawsi brought the catapult (chapter 21). These details are reports of the sirah books, not authentic Hadith.

6. WHY DID THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ NOT CONTINUE THE SIEGE UNTIL TA'IF WAS TAKEN?

Because its fortifications were too strong, many Companions were wounded, and there was no benefit in holding on. He chose to return (Sahih al-Bukhari 4325) and prayed for the guidance of Thaqif. A year later Thaqif came of their own accord to embrace Islam — a greater victory without bloodshed.

7. WHO WAS ABU BAKRAH?

His name was Nufay' ibn al-Harith, a slave in Ta'if. He came down from the fort by means of a pulley (bakrah) and embraced Islam, and so he was called Abu Bakrah. He and the other slaves who came down were set free (Sahih al-Bukhari 4326), and he later narrated many Hadith.

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8. WHAT WAS THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ WITH THE TRIBE OF HAWAZIN?

He was nursed by Halimah of Banu Sa'd, a branch of Hawazin, and ash-Shayma' was his foster sister. The Mother of the Believers Maymunah came from Banu Hilal, also a branch of Hawazin (chapter 31).

9. IS THE ONE WHO KILLS AN ENEMY DIRECTLY ENTITLED TO THAT ENEMY'S POSSESSIONS?

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave the salab to Abu Qatadah (Sahih al-Bukhari 3142). The scholars differ over whether that right is automatic or depends on the leader's announcement (chapter 34).

10. WHY IS THE VERSE AN-NISA' 4:24 LINKED WITH AWTAS?

Because Abu Sa'id al-Khudri narrated that the verse was revealed concerning the female captives of Awtas who still had husbands (Sahih Muslim 1456). Its ruling comes with the condition of istibra' (Sunan Abi Dawud 2157; chapter 34).

11. WHY DID THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ PRAY FOR THAQIF'S GUIDANCE, NOT THEIR DESTRUCTION?

Because his aim was the guidance of people, not revenge. He showed the same attitude at Ta'if ten years earlier, when he declined the offer of the angel of the mountains to destroy them (Sahih al-Bukhari 3231; chapters 20 and 24).

12. WHAT HAPPENED TO THE CAPTIVES AND SPOILS OF HUNAYN?

They were gathered at al-Ji'ranah and divided after the siege of Ta'if. Their distribution, the address to the Ansar, and the coming of the repentant delegation of Hawazin are told in Book 23.

LESSONS

These questions remind us to distinguish between the Qur'an, authentic Hadith, the reports of the sirah books and the opinions of scholars. The framework of the story of Hunayn and Ta'if is established by the Qur'an and authentic Hadith; the details of numbers and names we convey according to their grade.

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

Hunayn and Ta'if are a story of ***testing after victory***. After the Conquest of Makkah, the Muslims were tested not with weakness, but with strength — and that lesson was preserved in the Qur'an for the whole community until the Day of Resurrection.

LESSON	FROM HUNAYN AND TA'IF
Victory is from Allah	Great numbers "availed nothing"
Guarding pure tawhid	Dhat Anwat: closing the door to shirk
A leader's courage	"I am the Prophet, no lie"
Keeping one's pledge to Allah	The people of the Samurah return
Tranquillity from heaven	Sakinah upon the Messenger and believers
Honesty about weakness	Salamah ibn al-Akwa'
Ethics of war	Women and hired men not killed
Wisdom in withdrawing	Leaving Ta'if with a smile
Praying for guidance	Hope for Ta'if, not revenge

HUNAYN IN OUR LIVES

Each of us will pass through our own "Hunayn" — a moment when everything seems to collapse even though we felt strong. At that time, remember that Allah says: ***"For indeed, with hardship [will be] ease"*** (Ash-Sharh 94:5) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 94:5.

Return to our pledge with Allah, as the people of the Samurah returned when called. Stand firm like the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on his mule. And ask Allah for ***sakinah*** — for victory begins with a tranquil heart.

In sha Allah, the series **The Prophet's Sirah** will continue with ***Book 23 — The Spoils of Hunayn and the Ansar***: the distribution at al-Ji'ranah, gifts to soften hearts, Hawazin's repentance and the return of their families, and the Prophet's ﷺ sermon to the Ansar that made them weep until their beards were wet. And Allah knows best.

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PART TWO

The Spoils of Hunayn and the Ansar

The Prophet's Sirah — Series 23

Wealth That Softens Hearts, the Sermon in the Leather Tent and the Tears of the Ansar, According to the Qur'an and Authentic Hadith

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THE SPOILS OF HUNAYN AND THE ANSAR

Book 22 ended with the Muslim army returning from the siege of Ta'if to ***al-Ji'ranah***, where thousands of captives and tens of thousands of Hawazin's livestock had been gathered. Now came a moment that tested hearts in a different way: not with swords and arrows, but with ***wealth***.

This Book 23 tells how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ distributed the spoils of Hunayn: great gifts to newly

Muslim nobles to ***soften their hearts***, a man's accusation that the distribution was unjust, the whisper of some aggrieved Ansar, and ***the sermon in the leather tent*** that made them weep. It is also the story of Hawazin coming in repentance, and the generosity that returned their families.

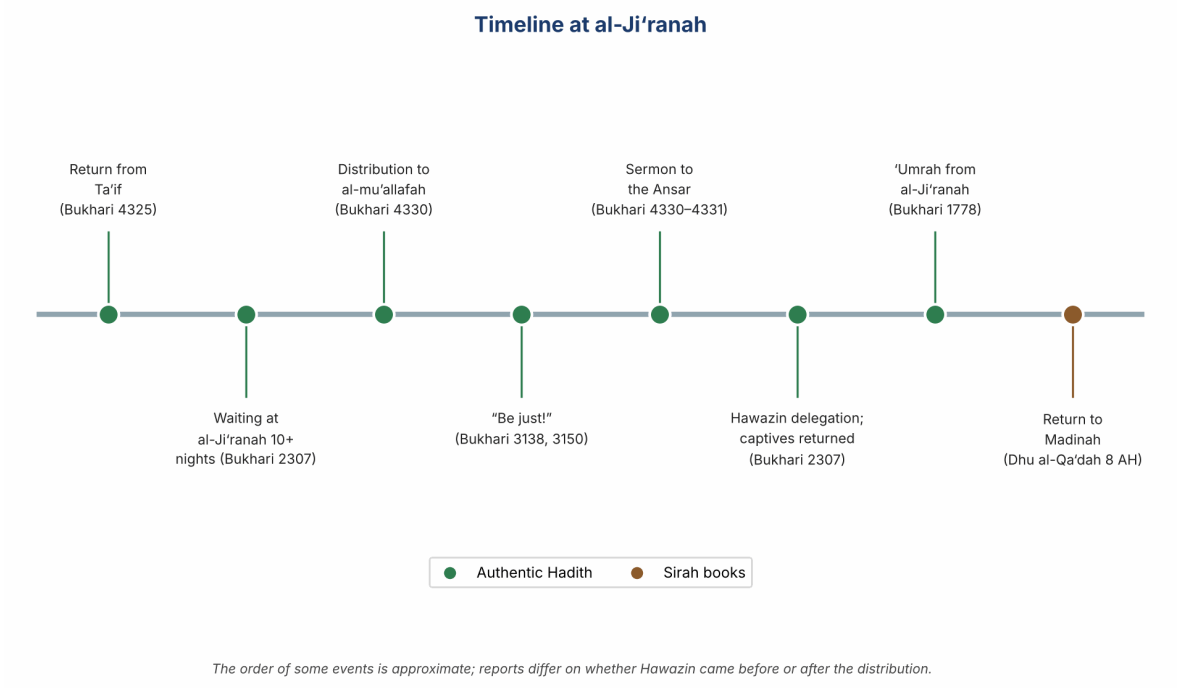

Figure 1: Timeline at al-Ji'ranah.

Note: The Qur'anic translation in this eBook is Sahih International. The grade of every Hadith is stated in its box. Information from the books of sirah — such as Sa'd ibn 'Ubadah's words, the story of Malik ibn 'Awf and details of the gifts to some nobles — is placed in brown "Sirah Note" boxes, since most of it is narrated without a connected chain or with a debated one.

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BACK TO AL-JI'RANAH

Al-Ji'ranah is a watered place between Makkah and Ta'if, about twenty-five kilometres north-east of Makkah. There the spoils of Hunayn were gathered and kept while the Muslim army besieged Ta'if. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned from Ta'if, he halted at al-Ji'ranah — and the events there became among the most moving in the sirah.

Picture the scene: thousands of captive Hawazin women and children, tens of thousands of camels and sheep, and heaps of silver. For an army mostly made up of poor men, it was a tempting sight. For the newly Muslim nobles of Makkah, it was a test of whether their faith was for Allah or for the world. And for the Ansar, who had sacrificed for eight years, it was a test of ***sincerity***.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ faced all these tests with one aim: ***winning hearts***, not merely dividing wealth.

Every decision he made at al-Ji'ranah — to whom to give, to whom not, and how to explain it — is a lesson in ***leadership, justice and wisdom***.

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WAITING FOR HAWAZIN

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not distribute the spoils at once. Sahih al-Bukhari 2307 states that he ***waited for Hawazin more than ten nights*** after returning from Ta'if. Why?

He hoped Hawazin would ***come in repentance and embrace Islam***, so that their families and wealth could be returned. This is the mercy of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: though Hawazin had just fought him and nearly defeated his army, he still thought of the fate of their women and children, and opened a door for them to return.

But an army cannot wait forever. Many pressed for the spoils to be divided, and some Bedouins crowded round the Messenger of Allah ﷺ demanding their share until he was pushed back against a tree and his cloak was caught. He said: ***"Give me back my cloak. If I had as many camels as these trees, I would divide them among you, and you would not find me miserly, a liar or a coward."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 2821)

The lesson: a leader must ***balance*** mercy to an enemy who may repent against the rights of his followers. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ waited as long as was reasonable, then acted — without closing the door of repentance.

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THE BEDOUIN WHO PULLED THE CLOAK

The crowd's pressure for the spoils reveals a very beautiful side of the Prophet's ﷺ character: ***patience with the rough***. Many in the army were Bedouins unaccustomed to town manners, and they asked in coarse ways. Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه recounts an incident that captures his character:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 3149

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ بُكَيْرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا مَالِكٌ، عَنْ إِسْحَاقَ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ ـ رضى الله عنه قَالَ كُنْتُ أَمْشِي مَعَ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَعَلَيْهِ بُرْدٌ نَجْرَانِيٌّ غَلِيظُ الْحَاشِيَةِ، فَأَدْرَكَهُ أَعْرَابِيٌّ فَجَذَبَهُ جَذْبَةً شَدِيدَةً، حَتَّى نَظَرْتُ إِلَى صَفْحَةِ عَاتِقِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَدْ أَثَّرَتْ بِهِ حَاشِيَةُ الرِّدَاءِ مِنْ شِدَّةِ جَذْبَتِهِ، ثُمَّ قَالَ مُرْ لِي مِنْ مَالِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي عِنْدَكَ. فَالْتَفَتَ إِلَيْهِ، فَضَحِكَ ثُمَّ أَمَرَ لَهُ بِعَطَاءٍ.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه said: I was walking with the Prophet ﷺ, and he was wearing a Najrani cloak with a coarse border. A Bedouin caught up with him and ***pulled it with a very violent tug***, so that I saw the side of the Prophet's ﷺ shoulder marked by the border of the cloak from the force of his pull. Then he said: "Order that I be given some of Allah's wealth that you have." He turned to him, ***laughed***, and then ordered that he be given something.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Yahya ibn Bukayr, from Malik ibn Anas, from Ishaq ibn 'Abdullah ibn Abi Talhah, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the One-Fifth, Hadith No. 3149; also Nos. 5809, 6088 and Muslim No. 1057.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3149

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Imagine: the leader of all Arabia has his cloak pulled until his shoulder is marked, and is asked in uncouth words. Yet he ***turned and laughed***, then gave. No anger, no punishment, no harsh rebuke. He understood that the Bedouin meant no insult; he simply did not know manners.

The lesson for us: not everyone who is rough means harm. Some come from different backgrounds. ***Patience and a smile*** are often more effective than anger in opening their hearts. Allah says of His Messenger: "If you had been rude and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you" (Al 'Imran 3:159).

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Anas, who served the Prophet ﷺ for ten years, also said that in all that time he never once said to him "Uff!", nor asked him about something he had done, "Why did you do it?" (Sahih al-Bukhari 6038). The patience shown to the Bedouin was not a single act, but the constant character of a man whose gentleness was part of his prophethood.

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THE LAW OF THE SPOILS

To understand the distribution at al-Ji'ranah, we must first understand ***the law of the spoils (ghanimah)*** in Islam. At Badr, the Companions disputed about the spoils, and Allah revealed:

"The [decision concerning] bounties is for Allah and the Messenger" (Al-Anfal 8:1) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 8:1.

Then Allah set out its division: ***"anything you obtain of war booty - then indeed, for Allah is one fifth of it and for the Messenger and for [his] near relatives and the orphans, the needy, and the [stranded] traveler"*** (Al-Anfal 8:41) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 8:41.

So ***four-fifths*** of the spoils were divided among the fighting army, and ***one-fifth (khumus)*** was given to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to spend on public interests: his kin, orphans, the poor and travellers. Scholars differ on whether the great gifts to al-mu'allafah at Hunayn came from the khumus or from the whole; Imam al-Bukhari placed those Hadith under the chapter ***"what the Prophet ﷺ gave al-mu'allafah from the khumus"***.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ took no wealth for himself. As mentioned in Book 22, he lifted a single camel hair and said he had no right to even that much, except the fifth — and even the fifth was returned to the community.

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THOSE WHOSE HEARTS ARE RECONCILED

When the distribution began, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave ***very large gifts*** to several Qurashi nobles and Arab tribal chiefs — most of them only newly Muslim, and some not yet Muslim. They were known as ***al-mu'allafah qulubuhum***: those whose hearts were to be softened and drawn to Islam.

The Qur'an names this group among the eight categories of zakah recipients: ***"Zakah expenditures are only for the poor and for the needy and for those employed to collect [zakah] and for bringing hearts together [for Islam]"*** (At-Tawbah 9:60) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:60.

Why does Islam give wealth to those weak in faith? Because the Messenger of Allah ﷺ understood ***human nature***. Some come to Islam through argument, some through character, and some — especially nobles who have just lost their status — must first be ***honoured*** before their hearts open. He said in another Hadith: ***"I give a man while another is dearer to me than him, for fear that Allah will throw him on his face into the Fire"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 27).

The results proved that wisdom. Many of the mu'allafah of Hunayn later became good Muslims who strove for Islam — including in the wars against Rome and Persia. That wealth was not a bribe, but ***a bridge*** to guidance.

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SAFWAN: FROM HATRED TO LOVE

The story of ***Safwan ibn Umayyah*** is the clearest example of how giving softens hearts. In Book 21 we saw Safwan flee when Makkah was opened, then return under safe conduct and ask for time to think. He joined Hunayn before embracing Islam, and lent his armour (Book 22). Now, at al-Ji'ranah:

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2313

وَحَدَّثَنِي أَبُو الطَّاهِرِ، أَحْمَدُ بْنُ عَمْرِو بْنِ سَرْحٍ أَخْبَرَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ وَهْبٍ، أَخْبَرَنِي يُونُسُ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، قَالَ غَزَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم غَزْوَةَ الْفَتْحِ فَتْحِ مَكَّةَ ثُمَّ خَرَجَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم بِمَنْ مَعَهُ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ فَاقْتَتَلُوا بِحُنَيْنٍ فَنَصَرَ اللَّهُ دِينَهُ وَالْمُسْلِمِينَ وَأَعْطَى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَوْمَئِذٍ صَفْوَانَ بْنَ أُمَيَّةَ مِائَةً مِنَ النَّعَمِ ثُمَّ مِائَةً ثُمَّ مِائَةً. قَالَ ابْنُ شِهَابٍ حَدَّثَنِي سَعِيدُ بْنُ الْمُسَيَّبِ أَنَّ صَفْوَانَ قَالَ وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ أَعْطَانِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم مَا أَعْطَانِي وَإِنَّهُ لأَبْغَضُ النَّاسِ إِلَىَّ فَمَا بَرِحَ يُعْطِينِي حَتَّى إِنَّهُ لأَحَبُّ النَّاسِ إِلَىَّ.

TRANSLATION:

Ibn Shihab said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ undertook the campaign of the Conquest, the opening of Makkah.

Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went out with the Muslims who were with him, and they fought at Hunayn.

Allah gave victory to His religion and to the Muslims. On that day the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave ***Safwan ibn Umayyah a hundred camels, then a hundred more, then a hundred more***. Ibn Shihab said: Sa'id ibn al-Musayyab told me that Safwan said: ***"By Allah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave me what he gave me while he was the most hateful of people to me. He kept on giving to me until he became the most beloved of people to me."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Abu at-Tahir Ahmad ibn 'Amr ibn Sarh, from 'Abdullah ibn Wahb, from Yunus ibn Yazid al-Ayli, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from Sa'id ibn al-Musayyab, from Safwan ibn Umayyah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Virtues, Chapter: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ Never Said No When Asked, Hadith No. 2313.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:2313

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Three hundred camels! For Safwan, a Qurashi noble whose father was killed at Badr, the gift was not mere wealth — it was ***honour*** from the man he had long opposed. And more than that, Safwan saw for

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himself that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave like ***one who does not fear poverty***. No worldly king has that trait; it is the trait of a prophet.

Anas رضى الله عنه narrated that a man asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and he gave him a flock of sheep filling the valley between two mountains. The man returned to his people and said: ***"O my people, embrace Islam, for Muhammad gives like one who has no fear of poverty."*** Anas said: A man would embrace Islam wanting only the world, but before long ***Islam became dearer to him than the world and all it contains*** (Sahih Muslim 2312).

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"HE NEVER SAID NO"

The gifts to Safwan and the nobles were nothing unusual for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. They were part of ***his character throughout his life***. Jabir ibn 'Abdillah رضى الله عنهما summed it up in one short sentence:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 6034

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ كَثِيرٍ، أَخْبَرَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنِ ابْنِ الْمُنْكَدِرِ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ جَابِرًا ـ رضى الله عنه ـ يَقُولُ مَا سُئِلَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم عَنْ شَىْءٍ قَطُّ فَقَالَ لاَ.

TRANSLATION:

Muhammad ibn al-Munkadir said: I heard Jabir رضى الله عنه say: ***"The Prophet ﷺ was never asked for anything and said: No."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Muhammad ibn Kathir, from Sufyan ath-Thawri, from Muhammad ibn al-Munkadir, from Jabir ibn 'Abdillah رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Manners, Chapter: Good Character and Generosity, Hadith No. 6034; also Muslim No. 2311.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:6034

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was the most generous of people, and most generous of all in Ramadan… more generous than the blowing wind"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 6). His generosity was not because he was rich — he often slept hungry, and no fire was lit in his house for months — but because he ***trusted in Allah's provision***.

Scholars explain that "never said no" means he never refused a request harshly. If he had nothing, he promised to give later, or prayed for the person, or kept a gentle silence. This is the manner of dealing with those who ask: ***do not disappoint them with hurtful words***.

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ABU SUFYAN, HAKIM AND THE NOBLES

Who else received great gifts at al-Ji'ranah? Rafi' ibn Khadij رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave ***Abu Sufyan ibn Harb, Safwan ibn Umayyah, 'Uyaynah ibn Hisn and al-Aqra' ibn Habis*** a hundred camels each (Sahih Muslim 1060).

SIRAH NOTE: ABU SUFYAN AND HIS SONS

The sirah authors relate that Abu Sufyan asked on behalf of his son ***Yazid***, and he gave him a hundred camels; then for his son ***Mu'awiyah***, and he gave him a hundred more. Abu Sufyan said: "May my father and mother be your ransom, you are noble in war and in peace." ***Hakim ibn Hizam*** also asked repeatedly and was given, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ advised him that the upper hand is better than the lower hand (Book 20).

The details about Yazid and Mu'awiyah are ***sirah reports***; the gift of a hundred camels to Abu Sufyan is authentic in Sahih Muslim 1060.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on Hunayn and the distribution at al-Ji'ranah; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.

Think for a moment: ***Abu Sufyan*** led Quraysh against Islam at Uhud and al-Khandaq. ***'Uyaynah ibn Hisn*** led Ghatafan in the siege of al-Khandaq. Now each received a hundred camels from the man they had fought. This is the Prophet's ﷺ ***strategy of pardon***: turning enemies into friends, not by the sword, but by generosity.

And Allah reminds us that the true joining of hearts comes from Him: ***"If you had spent all that is in the earth, you could not have brought their hearts together; but Allah brought them together"*** (Al-Anfal 8:63). Wealth is only a means; it is Allah who turns hearts.

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HAKIM IBN HIZAM: THE UPPER HAND

Among the Qurashi nobles who received gifts at Hunayn was ***Hakim ibn Hizam***, nephew of Khadijah رضى الله عنها, whose conversion was told in Book 20. Ibn Hajar in Fath al-Bari mentions that his repeated asking took place ***during the distribution of the spoils of Hunayn***. Hakim himself relates:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 1472

وَحَدَّثَنَا عَبْدَانُ، أَخْبَرَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ، أَخْبَرَنَا يُونُسُ، عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ، عَنْ عُرْوَةَ بْنِ الزُّبَيْرِ، وَسَعِيدِ بْنِ الْمُسَيَّبِ، أَنَّ حَكِيمَ بْنَ حِزَامٍ - رضى الله عنه - قَالَ سَأَلْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَأَعْطَانِي، ثُمَّ سَأَلْتُهُ فَأَعْطَانِي، ثُمَّ سَأَلْتُهُ فَأَعْطَانِي ثُمَّ قَالَ «يَا حَكِيمُ إِنَّ هَذَا الْمَالَ خَضِرَةٌ حُلْوَةٌ، فَمَنْ أَخَذَهُ بِسَخَاوَةِ نَفْسٍ بُورِكَ لَهُ فِيهِ، وَمَنْ أَخَذَهُ بِإِشْرَافِ نَفْسٍ لَمْ يُبَارَكْ لَهُ فِيهِ كَالَّذِي يَأْكُلُ وَلاَ يَشْبَعُ، الْيَدُ الْعُلْيَا خَيْرٌ مِنَ الْيَدِ السُّفْلَى». قَالَ حَكِيمٌ فَقُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِي بَعَثَكَ بِالْحَقِّ لاَ أَرْزَأُ أَحَدًا بَعْدَكَ شَيْئًا حَتَّى أُفَارِقَ الدُّنْيَا، فَكَانَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ - رضى الله عنه - يَدْعُو حَكِيمًا إِلَى الْعَطَاءِ فَيَأْبَى أَنْ يَقْبَلَهُ مِنْهُ، ثُمَّ إِنَّ عُمَرَ - رضى الله عنه - دَعَاهُ لِيُعْطِيَهُ فَأَبَى أَنْ يَقْبَلَ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا. فَقَالَ عُمَرُ إِنِّي أُشْهِدُكُمْ يَا مَعْشَرَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ عَلَى حَكِيمٍ، أَنِّي أَعْرِضُ عَلَيْهِ حَقَّهُ مِنْ هَذَا الْفَىْءِ فَيَأْبَى أَنْ يَأْخُذَهُ. فَلَمْ يَرْزَأْ حَكِيمٌ أَحَدًا مِنَ النَّاسِ بَعْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم حَتَّى تُوُفِّيَ.

TRANSLATION:

Hakim ibn Hizam رضى الله عنه said: I asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and he gave me, then I asked him again and he gave me, then I asked him again and he gave me. Then he said: **"O Hakim, this wealth is green and sweet. Whoever takes it with a generous soul (without greed) is blessed in it; and whoever takes it with a greedy soul is not blessed in it, like one who eats and is never full. The upper hand is better than the lower hand."** Hakim said: I said: "O Messenger of Allah, by the One who sent you with the truth, ***I will not take anything from anyone after you until I leave this world***." Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه used to call Hakim to give him his share, but he refused to accept it. Then 'Umar رضى الله عنه called him to give it to him, but he refused to accept anything from him. 'Umar said: "I call you to witness, O Muslims, concerning Hakim, that I offer him his right from this fay' and he refuses to take it." So Hakim took nothing from anyone after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ until he died.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Abdan ('Abdullah ibn 'Uthman), from 'Abdullah ibn al-Mubarak, from Yunus ibn Yazid al-Ayli, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr and Sa'id ibn al-Musayyab, from Hakim ibn Hizam رضى الله عنه.

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REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Zakah, Chapter: Refraining from Begging, Hadith No. 1472; also Nos. 2750, 3143, 6441 and Muslim No. 1035.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:1472

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***did not refuse Hakim*** — he gave him three times. But after giving, he ***educated*** him with advice that changed his life. The gift of wealth softened his heart; the advice ***ennobled his soul***. A noble who asked repeatedly became one who refused to take anything from anyone — even from the Caliph himself.

This is ***the Prophet's ﷺ method of nurturing***: meet the need first, then build the soul. He did not begin with rebuke when Hakim asked, but after Hakim had tasted his generosity, the advice entered his heart. The same lesson applies to parents and educators: ***a heart that is won is easier to teach***.

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THE VERSES OF AL-'ABBAS IBN MIRDAS

Not every noble received the same amount. Rafi' ibn Khadij narrated that ***al-'Abbas ibn Mirdas***, chief of the tribe of Sulaym, was given fewer than a hundred camels. He was not satisfied, and recited verses before the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, meaning:

"Do you make my share and the share of my horse al-'Ubayd between 'Uyaynah and al-Aqra'? Yet Hisn and Habis (their fathers) did not surpass Mirdas (my father) in any gathering. And I am not lower than either of them; and whoever you lower today will not be raised." So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***completed his gift to a hundred camels*** (Sahih Muslim 1060).

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not rebuke al-'Abbas ibn Mirdas for his verses. He understood that for an Arab chief, ***honour before his people*** mattered greatly, and a smaller gift could be taken as an insult. So he completed his gift — to preserve his heart and the hearts of his tribe, Banu Sulaym, many of whom were in the Muslim army.

The lesson: a wise leader ***understands each person's background and feelings***. What seems small to one may be very great to another. Wisdom lies not only in giving, but in knowing ***how and how much*** to give.

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"WHO IS JUST?"

The great gifts to the nobles stirred resentment among some. 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه heard a man say something very grave:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 3150

حَدَّثَنَا عُثْمَانُ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ، حَدَّثَنَا جَرِيرٌ، عَنْ مَنْصُورٍ، عَنْ أَبِي وَائِلٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ قَالَ لَمَّا كَانَ يَوْمُ حُنَيْنٍ آثَرَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم أُنَاسًا فِي الْقِسْمَةِ، فَأَعْطَى الأَقْرَعَ بْنَ حَابِسٍ مِائَةً مِنَ الإِبِلِ، وَأَعْطَى عُيَيْنَةَ مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ، وَأَعْطَى أُنَاسًا مِنْ أَشْرَافِ الْعَرَبِ، فَآثَرَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ فِي الْقِسْمَةِ. قَالَ رَجُلٌ وَاللَّهِ إِنَّ هَذِهِ الْقِسْمَةَ مَا عُدِلَ فِيهَا، وَمَا أُرِيدَ بِهَا وَجْهُ اللَّهِ. فَقُلْتُ وَاللَّهِ لأُخْبِرَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم. فَأَتَيْتُهُ فَأَخْبَرْتُهُ فَقَالَ «فَمَنْ يَعْدِلُ إِذَا لَمْ يَعْدِلِ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ رَحِمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى قَدْ أُوذِيَ بِأَكْثَرَ مِنْ هَذَا فَصَبَرَ».

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah (ibn Mas'ud) رضى الله عنه said: On the day of Hunayn, the Prophet ﷺ ***gave preference to some people in the distribution***. He gave al-Aqra' ibn Habis a hundred camels, gave 'Uyaynah the same, and gave some of the Arab nobles, preferring them that day in the distribution. A man said: "By Allah, this distribution has not been just, nor was the Face of Allah sought by it." I said: "By Allah, I shall tell the Prophet ﷺ." So I came and told him. He said: ***"Who will be just if Allah and His Messenger are not just? May Allah have mercy on Musa; he was hurt with more than this and he was patient."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Uthman ibn Abi Shaybah, from Jarir ibn 'Abd al-Hamid, from Mansur ibn al-Mu'tamir, from Abu Wa'il Shaqiq ibn Salamah, from 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the One-Fifth, Chapter: What the Prophet ﷺ Gave to Those Whose Hearts Were to Be Reconciled, Hadith No. 3150; also Nos. 3405, 6059 and Muslim No. 1062.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3150

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LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The man's accusation was very serious: ***"nor was the Face of Allah sought by it"*** — he was accusing the Messenger of Allah ﷺ of insincerity. Yet the Prophet's ﷺ answer was full of patience: he did not punish the man, but ***remembered the Prophet Musa*** عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, who was hurt more and was patient.

In another narration, Ibn Mas'ud said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***was angered until the anger could be seen on his face*** on hearing those words (Sahih al-Bukhari 3405). He was a human being with feelings; he was hurt by the accusation. But he controlled his anger and chose ***patience***.

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"WRETCHED WOULD YOU BE IF I WERE NOT JUST"

A similar event happened again at al-Ji'ranah, this time face to face. Jabir ibn 'Abdillah رضى الله عنهما narrates:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 3138

حَدَّثَنَا مُسْلِمُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، حَدَّثَنَا قُرَّةُ، حَدَّثَنَا عَمْرُو بْنُ دِينَارٍ، عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ ـ رضى الله عنهما ـ قَالَ بَيْنَمَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَقْسِمُ غَنِيمَةً بِالْجِعْرَانَةِ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ رَجُلٌ اعْدِلْ. فَقَالَ لَهُ «شَقِيتَ إِنْ لَمْ أَعْدِلْ».

TRANSLATION:

Jabir ibn 'Abdillah رضى الله عنهما said: While the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was distributing spoils at ***al-Ji'ranah***, a man said to him: ***"Be just!"*** He said to him: ***"You would be wretched if I were not just."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Muslim ibn Ibrahim, from Qurrah ibn Khalid, from 'Amr ibn Dinar, from Jabir ibn 'Abdillah رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the One-Fifth, Hadith No. 3138; also Muslim No. 1063 (with a longer account).

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3138

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

In the narration of Sahih Muslim, Jabir adds that the silver was in Bilal's garment, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was taking from it to give to the people. The man said: "O Muhammad, be just!" He said: ***"Woe to you! Who will be just if I am not just?"*** 'Umar رضى الله عنه said: "Let me kill this hypocrite." He said: ***"I seek refuge in Allah from people saying that I kill my Companions"*** (Sahih Muslim 1063).

Note the ***political wisdom*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: he did not punish the man though he deserved it, fearing the act would be misread by people and drive them away from Islam. Sometimes ***restraint*** from a deserved punishment benefits the call to Islam more.

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THE SEED OF THE KHAWARIJ

Hadith scholars record another similar incident, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was distributing wealth:

a man of Banu Tamim named ***Dhul Khuwaysirah*** said, "O Messenger of Allah, be just!" He replied: "Woe to you, who will be just if I am not just?" When 'Umar asked permission to kill him, he said: ***"Leave him, for he will have followers; one of you will think little of his prayer compared with theirs, and his fasting compared with theirs. They recite the Qur'an but it does not go beyond their throats. They pass out of the religion as an arrow passes through its target."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 3610)

Ibn Hajar in Fath al-Bari discusses whether the man at al-Ji'ranah and Dhul Khuwaysirah were the same person or two separate incidents — since Abu Sa'id al-Khudri's narration links Dhul Khuwaysirah's story to the distribution of gold sent by 'Ali from Yemen. Either way, ***the attitude is the same***: accusing the Messenger of Allah ﷺ of injustice, and thinking oneself to understand justice better than the Messenger.

Scholars see this attitude as ***the seed of the Khawarij*** — the group that later emerged in the time of 'Ali رضى الله عنه, declared the Companions disbelievers and shed Muslim blood, though they were intensely devoted to worship. Abu Sa'id himself testified that he was with 'Ali when he fought them, and saw the sign the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had described.

The lesson for our time: ***much worship is not necessarily a sign of being right*** if it comes with arrogance, quick accusation and contempt for others. True knowledge produces humility; knowledge that stays in the throat produces violence.

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THE PATIENCE OF MUSA

When accused of injustice, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"May Allah have mercy on Musa; he was hurt with more than this and he was patient."*** Why did he recall the Prophet Musa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ in particular?

The Qur'an tells how the people of Musa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ hurt him: ***"O you who have believed, be not like those who abused Moses; then Allah cleared him of what they said"*** (Al-Ahzab 33:69) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 33:69.

The Prophet Musa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ led a people who constantly argued: they asked for an idol god, worshipped the calf, refused to enter the holy land, and accused him of all manner of things. Yet he was patient. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ took his brother Musa as an example, and taught us that ***even prophets are hurt*** — so we should not be surprised to be misunderstood while doing good.

The lesson: when unfairly criticised, ***remember the prophets***. Recalling the patience of righteous people before us eases the pain and strengthens the soul to keep doing good.

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THE WHISPER OF THE ANSAR

The subtlest test at al-Ji'ranah came from the most loyal group: ***the Ansar***. They saw great wealth given to Qurashi nobles — men who only yesterday had fought Islam — while they, who had sacrificed for eight years, were given nothing. Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه relates:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4331

حَدَّثَنِي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا هِشَامٌ، أَخْبَرَنَا مَعْمَرٌ، عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي أَنَسُ بْنُ مَالِكٍ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ قَالَ قَالَ نَاسٌ مِنَ الأَنْصَارِ حِينَ أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم مَا أَفَاءَ مِنْ أَمْوَالِ هَوَازِنَ، فَطَفِقَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يُعْطِي رِجَالاً الْمِائَةَ مِنَ الإِبِلِ فَقَالُوا يَغْفِرُ اللَّهُ لِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يُعْطِي قُرَيْشًا وَيَتْرُكُنَا، وَسُيُوفُنَا تَقْطُرُ مِنْ دِمَائِهِمْ. قَالَ أَنَسٌ فَحُدِّثَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم بِمَقَالَتِهِمْ، فَأَرْسَلَ إِلَى الأَنْصَارِ فَجَمَعَهُمْ فِي قُبَّةٍ مِنْ أَدَمٍ وَلَمْ يَدْعُ مَعَهُمْ غَيْرَهُمْ، فَلَمَّا اجْتَمَعُوا قَامَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَقَالَ «مَا حَدِيثٌ بَلَغَنِي عَنْكُمْ». فَقَالَ فُقَهَاءُ الأَنْصَارِ أَمَّا رُؤَسَاؤُنَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ فَلَمْ يَقُولُوا شَيْئًا، وَأَمَّا نَاسٌ مِنَّا حَدِيثَةٌ أَسْنَانُهُمْ فَقَالُوا يَغْفِرُ اللَّهُ لِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يُعْطِي قُرَيْشًا وَيَتْرُكُنَا، وَسُيُوفُنَا تَقْطُرُ مِنْ دِمَائِهِمْ. فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم «فَإِنِّي أُعْطِي رِجَالاً حَدِيثِي عَهْدٍ بِكُفْرٍ، أَتَأَلَّفُهُمْ، أَمَا تَرْضَوْنَ أَنْ يَذْهَبَ النَّاسُ بِالأَمْوَالِ وَتَذْهَبُونَ بِالنَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم إِلَى رِحَالِكُمْ، فَوَاللَّهِ لَمَا تَنْقَلِبُونَ بِهِ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا يَنْقَلِبُونَ بِهِ». قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَدْ رَضِينَا. فَقَالَ لَهُمُ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم «سَتَجِدُونَ أُثْرَةً شَدِيدَةً، فَاصْبِرُوا حَتَّى تَلْقَوُا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَإِنِّي عَلَى الْحَوْضِ». قَالَ أَنَسٌ فَلَمْ يَصْبِرُوا.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه said: Some of the Ansar said, when Allah granted His Messenger ﷺ the wealth of Hawazin, and the Prophet ﷺ began giving some men a hundred camels each: ***"May Allah forgive the Messenger of Allah ﷺ; he gives to Quraysh and leaves us, while our swords still drip with their blood."*** Anas said: Their words were reported to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He sent for the Ansar and gathered them in ***a leather tent***, and called no one else with them. When they had gathered, the Prophet ﷺ stood and said: **"What is this talk that has reached me about you?"** The men of understanding among the

Ansar said: "As for our leaders, O Messenger of Allah, they said nothing. But some young men among us said: May Allah forgive the Messenger of Allah ﷺ; he gives to Quraysh and leaves us, while our swords still drip with their blood." The Prophet ﷺ said: **"I give to men who have only recently left disbelief, to win their hearts. Are you not pleased that people go away with wealth, while you go back to your homes with the Prophet ﷺ? By Allah, what you return with is better than what they return with."** They said: "O Messenger of Allah, we are pleased." The Prophet ﷺ said to them: **"You will find (after me) severe selfishness (athrah), so be patient until you meet Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, for I will be at the Pool (al-Hawd)."** Anas said: But they were not patient.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad al-Musnadi, from Hisham ibn Yusuf, from Ma'mar ibn Rashid, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions (al-Maghazi), Chapter: The Expedition of Ta'if, Hadith No. 4331; also No. 3147 and Muslim No. 1059.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4331

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Note ***the honesty of the men of understanding*** among the Ansar: they did not hide what had been said, but explained fairly that their leaders had said nothing, and those who spoke were only a few young men. This is an example of ***reporting accurately*** without adding or omitting.

Note too how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ handled the matter: he ***gathered them privately***, in a tent, with no one else. The correction and explanation were given in private, not in public — so their dignity was preserved and their hearts could open.

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SA'D IBN 'UBADAH: "I AM ONLY ONE OF MY PEOPLE"

SIRAH NOTE: "I AM ONLY ONE OF MY PEOPLE"

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri رضى الله عنه narrated that when the Ansar felt aggrieved, ***Sa'd ibn 'Ubadah*** came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said: "O Messenger of Allah, these Ansar are aggrieved with you over these spoils." He asked: "And where do you stand in this, O Sa'd?" Sa'd replied: ***"O Messenger of Allah, I am only one of my people."*** He said: "Gather your people for me in this tent."

This report is in ***Musnad Ahmad*** and the sirah books (Ibn Ishaq), and its chain is graded hasan by some scholars. The gathering of the Ansar in a tent is authentic in Sahih al-Bukhari.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on Hunayn and the distribution at al-Ji'ranah; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.
Ahmad, al-Musnad — the Musnad of Abu Sa'id al-Khudri.

Sa'd's answer shows ***rare honesty***. As a leader, he could have pretended to disagree with his people to look good before the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. But he was frank: he too felt what his people felt. And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***did not rebuke him***, but valued his honesty and asked him to gather the Ansar.

The lesson for every leader: ***a good leader conveys his people's feelings*** honestly to those above him, rather than hiding them. And a good supreme leader ***listens*** and acts, rather than punishing the bearer of unwelcome news.

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THE SERMON IN THE LEATHER TENT

Inside that leather tent, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ delivered one of the most moving sermons in Islamic history. 'Abdullah ibn Zayd ibn 'Asim رضى الله عنه, an Ansari Companion who was present, narrates it:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4330

حَدَّثَنَا مُوسَى بْنُ إِسْمَاعِيلَ، حَدَّثَنَا وُهَيْبٌ، حَدَّثَنَا عَمْرُو بْنُ يَحْيَى، عَنْ عَبَّادِ بْنِ تَمِيمٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ زَيْدِ بْنِ عَاصِمٍ، قَالَ لَمَّا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَوْمَ حُنَيْنٍ قَسَمَ فِي النَّاسِ فِي الْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ، وَلَمْ يُعْطِ الأَنْصَارَ شَيْئًا، فَكَأَنَّهُمْ وَجَدُوا إِذْ لَمْ يُصِبْهُمْ مَا أَصَابَ النَّاسَ فَخَطَبَهُمْ فَقَالَ «يَا مَعْشَرَ الأَنْصَارِ أَلَمْ أَجِدْكُمْ ضُلاَّلاً فَهَدَاكُمُ اللَّهُ بِي، وَكُنْتُمْ مُتَفَرِّقِينَ فَأَلَّفَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِي وَعَالَةً، فَأَغْنَاكُمُ اللَّهُ بِي». كُلَّمَا قَالَ شَيْئًا قَالُوا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمَنُّ. قَالَ «مَا يَمْنَعُكُمْ أَنْ تُجِيبُوا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم». قَالَ كُلَّمَا قَالَ شَيْئًا قَالُوا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمَنُّ. قَالَ «لَوْ شِئْتُمْ قُلْتُمْ جِئْتَنَا كَذَا وَكَذَا. أَتَرْضَوْنَ أَنْ يَذْهَبَ النَّاسُ بِالشَّاةِ وَالْبَعِيرِ، وَتَذْهَبُونَ بِالنَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم إِلَى رِحَالِكُمْ، لَوْلاَ الْهِجْرَةُ لَكُنْتُ امْرَأً مِنَ الأَنْصَارِ، وَلَوْ سَلَكَ النَّاسُ وَادِيًا وَشِعْبًا لَسَلَكْتُ وَادِيَ الأَنْصَارِ وَشِعْبَهَا، الأَنْصَارُ شِعَارٌ وَالنَّاسُ دِثَارٌ، إِنَّكُمْ سَتَلْقَوْنَ بَعْدِي أَثَرَةً فَاصْبِرُوا حَتَّى تَلْقَوْنِي عَلَى الْحَوْضِ».

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn Zayd ibn 'Asim رضى الله عنه said: When Allah granted wealth to His Messenger ﷺ on the day of Hunayn, he distributed it among the people, among ***al-mu'allafah qulubuhum*** (those whose hearts were to be reconciled), and gave the Ansar nothing. It was as if they felt hurt at not receiving what others had received. So he addressed them and said: ***"O Ansar, did I not find you astray, and Allah guided you through me? You were divided, and Allah united you through me? You were poor, and Allah enriched you through me?"*** Whenever he said something, they said: "Allah and His Messenger have done the greater favour." He said: **"What prevents you from answering the Messenger of Allah ﷺ?"** Whenever he said something, they said: "Allah and His Messenger have done the greater favour." He said: **"If you wished, you could say: You came to us in such-and-such a state. Are you not pleased that people go away with sheep and camels, while you go away with the Prophet ﷺ to your homes? Were it not for the Hijrah, I would have been one of the Ansar. If people took one valley and one pass, I would take the valley and pass of the Ansar. The Ansar are the inner garment (closest to the body), and other people are**

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the outer garment. You will meet selfishness (athrah) after me, so be patient until you meet me at the Pool (al-Hawd)."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Musa ibn Isma'il at-Tabudhaki, from Wuhayb ibn Khalid, from 'Amr ibn Yahya al-Mazini, from 'Abbad ibn Tamim, from 'Abdullah ibn Zayd ibn 'Asim رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions (al-Maghazi), Chapter: The Expedition of Ta'if, Hadith No. 4330; also Muslim No. 1061.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4330

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

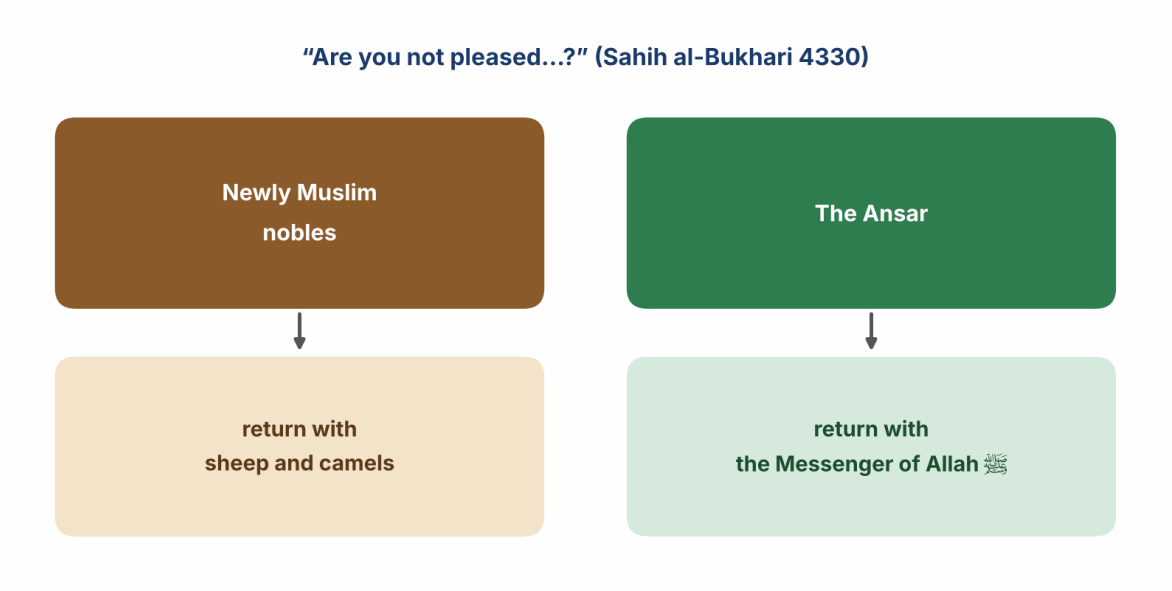

Figure 2: Two kinds of "return" from al-Ji'ranah.

Notice how the sermon is structured. He ***did not begin by blaming***, but by recalling blessings: guidance, unity and wealth. Then he ***acknowledged their service*** in words they themselves were too modest to speak: "If you wished, you could say: You came to us in such-and-such a state." Other narrations explain the meaning: you came to us belied and we believed you, driven out and we sheltered you.

Then came the question that changed everything: ***"Are you not pleased that people go away with sheep and camels, while you go away with the Prophet ﷺ to your homes?"*** In an instant, the measure of value changed. The wealth they felt they had missed became small beside what they had gained: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself.

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GUIDANCE, UNITY AND WEALTH

The three blessings the Messenger of Allah ﷺ named to the Ansar — ***guidance, unity and wealth*** — were not mere words. Each had a long history.

Guidance: before Islam, al-Aws and al-Khazraj worshipped idols, including Manat, destroyed after the Conquest of Makkah (Book 21). ***Unity***: the two tribes had fought each other for more than a hundred years, culminating in the Battle of Bu'ath a few years before the Hijrah. ***Wealth***: their life had once been modest, and Allah broadened their provision through Islam.

Allah recalls this blessing of unity in the Qur'an: ***"remember the favor of Allah upon you - when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together"*** (Al 'Imran 3:103) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 3:103.

Each time the Messenger of Allah ﷺ named a blessing, the Ansar replied: ***"Allah and His Messenger have done the greater favour."*** They did not recount their sacrifices, but acknowledged that the blessings they had received were far greater. This is ***the manner of the believer***: to see Allah's gifts, not one's own deeds.

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THE INNER AND THE OUTER GARMENT

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ described the Ansar's standing with a beautiful simile: ***"The Ansar are the shi'ar (inner garment), and other people are the dithar (outer garment)."*** The shi'ar is the garment touching the skin, closest to the body; the dithar is the outer layer over it. Meaning: the Ansar are ***those closest*** to him.

He also said: ***"Were it not for the Hijrah, I would have been one of the Ansar"***, and that if people took one valley, he would choose the valley of the Ansar. This is the highest recognition: he would wish to be known as one of them, were it not for the higher honour of the Hijrah.

That is why the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"The sign of faith is love of the Ansar, and the sign of hypocrisy is hatred of the Ansar"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 17). Loving those who loved and helped the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is part of faith.

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ATHRAH: A PROPHECY AND PATIENCE

At the end of the sermon, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave a ***prophecy*** and a ***counsel***: ***"You will meet selfishness (athrah) after me, so be patient until you meet me at the Pool (al-Hawd)."***

Athrah means others being preferred in wealth and office while you are left behind. The prophecy came true: after the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, many offices and positions were given to others, and the Ansar were often passed over. Anas رضى الله عنه himself said at the end of his narration: ***"But they were not patient"*** — meaning some of them found that hard to accept.

The Prophet's ﷺ counsel teaches a profound principle: ***the true reward is not in this world, but at the Pool of al-Hawd***, on meeting him on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever is wronged or unappreciated in this world should be patient and await the reward there — without rebellion or dividing the community.

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THE TEARS OF THE ANSAR

How did the Ansar receive that sermon? Sahih al-Bukhari records them saying: "O Messenger of Allah, we are pleased." Other narrations describe the scene in more detail:

SIRAH NOTE: "WE ARE PLEASED WITH THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH AS OUR SHARE"

In the narration of Abu Sa'id al-Khudri رضى الله عنه in Musnad Ahmad and the sirah books, after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ finished his sermon and prayed: ***"O Allah, have mercy on the Ansar, the children of the Ansar, and the grandchildren of the Ansar"***, the Ansar ***wept until their beards were wet***, and said: ***"We are pleased with the Messenger of Allah as our portion and our share."*** Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ left and they dispersed.

This narration ***is graded hasan*** by some scholars; the prayer for the Ansar and their descendants also has a basis in Sahih Muslim (No. 2506).

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on Hunayn and the distribution at al-Ji'ranah; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.

Ahmad, al-Musnad — the Musnad of Abu Sa'id al-Khudri.

Those tears were not tears of sorrow over lost wealth, but ***tears of joy and realisation***. In a few minutes, aggrieved hearts became wholly content. Such is the power of true words from a sincere heart.

For us, the Prophet's ﷺ question still echoes: while others chase wealth and position, ***are we content to return home with faith and his Sunnah***? That is the share that lasts, while sheep and camels will run out.

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THE ANSAR IN THE QUR'AN

The Ansar's contentment at al-Ji'ranah was nothing new. Allah had praised their character in the Qur'an:

"They love those who emigrated to them and find not any want in their breasts of what the emigrants were given but give [them] preference over themselves, even though they are in privation" (Al-Hashr 59:9) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 59:9.

This verse describes ***ithar*** — preferring others even when one is in need. At al-Ji'ranah that trait was tested once more: they saw others given while they were not. After hearing the Prophet's ﷺ explanation, they returned to their true nature: ***contentment and preference for others***.

And Allah declared His pleasure with them: ***"And the first forerunners [in the faith] among the Muhajireen and the Ansar and those who followed them with good conduct - Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him"*** (At-Tawbah 9:100) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:100.

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THE HAWAZIN DELEGATION REPENTS

The Prophet's ﷺ waiting finally bore fruit. After the spoils were distributed, ***the Hawazin delegation*** arrived at al-Ji'ranah — not as enemies this time, but as ***repentant Muslims***. They asked for their families and wealth to be returned. Marwan ibn al-Hakam and al-Miswar ibn Makhramah narrate:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 2307

حَدَّثَنَا سَعِيدُ بْنُ عُفَيْرٍ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي اللَّيْثُ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي عُقَيْلٌ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، قَالَ وَزَعَمَ عُرْوَةُ أَنَّ مَرْوَانَ بْنَ الْحَكَمِ، وَالْمِسْوَرَ بْنَ مَخْرَمَةَ، أَخْبَرَاهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَامَ حِينَ جَاءَهُ وَفْدُ هَوَازِنَ مُسْلِمِينَ، فَسَأَلُوهُ أَنْ يَرُدَّ إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ وَسَبْيَهُمْ فَقَالَ لَهُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم «أَحَبُّ الْحَدِيثِ إِلَىَّ أَصْدَقُهُ. فَاخْتَارُوا إِحْدَى الطَّائِفَتَيْنِ إِمَّا السَّبْيَ، وَإِمَّا الْمَالَ، وَقَدْ كُنْتُ اسْتَأْنَيْتُ بِهِمْ». وَقَدْ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم انْتَظَرَهُمْ بِضْعَ عَشْرَةَ لَيْلَةً، حِينَ قَفَلَ مِنَ الطَّائِفِ، فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم غَيْرُ رَادٍّ إِلَيْهِمْ إِلاَّ إِحْدَى الطَّائِفَتَيْنِ قَالُوا فَإِنَّا نَخْتَارُ سَبْيَنَا. فَقَامَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فِي الْمُسْلِمِينَ، فَأَثْنَى عَلَى اللَّهِ بِمَا هُوَ أَهْلُهُ ثُمَّ قَالَ «أَمَّا بَعْدُ فَإِنَّ إِخْوَانَكُمْ هَؤُلاَءِ قَدْ جَاءُونَا تَائِبِينَ، وَإِنِّي قَدْ رَأَيْتُ أَنْ أَرُدَّ إِلَيْهِمْ سَبْيَهُمْ، فَمَنْ أَحَبَّ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ يُطَيِّبَ بِذَلِكَ فَلْيَفْعَلْ، وَمَنْ أَحَبَّ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ يَكُونَ عَلَى حَظِّهِ حَتَّى نُعْطِيَهُ إِيَّاهُ مِنْ أَوَّلِ مَا يُفِيءُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا فَلْيَفْعَلْ». فَقَالَ النَّاسُ قَدْ طَيَّبْنَا ذَلِكَ لِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم. فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم «إِنَّا لاَ نَدْرِي مَنْ أَذِنَ مِنْكُمْ فِي ذَلِكَ مِمَّنْ لَمْ يَأْذَنْ، فَارْجِعُوا حَتَّى يَرْفَعُوا إِلَيْنَا عُرَفَاؤُكُمْ أَمْرَكُمْ». فَرَجَعَ النَّاسُ فَكَلَّمَهُمْ عُرَفَاؤُهُمْ، ثُمَّ رَجَعُوا إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَأَخْبَرُوهُ أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ طَيَّبُوا وَأَذِنُوا.

TRANSLATION:

'Urwah narrated that Marwan ibn al-Hakam and al-Miswar ibn Makhramah told him that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood when ***the delegation of Hawazin came to him as Muslims***, and they asked him to return their wealth and their captives. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to them: **"The speech most beloved to me is the most truthful. So choose one of two: either the captives or the wealth. I delayed (the distribution) waiting for you."** The Messenger of Allah ﷺ had ***waited for them more than ten nights*** after returning from Ta'if. When it became clear to them that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would return only one of the two,

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they said: ***"We choose our captives."*** Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood among the Muslims, praised Allah as He deserves, then said: **"Amma ba'd. These brothers of yours have come to us in repentance, and I have decided to return their captives to them. Whoever of you wishes to do so willingly, let him do so. And whoever wishes to keep his share until we compensate him from the first wealth Allah grants us, let him do so."** The people said: "We give it up willingly for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **"We do not know who among you has given permission and who has not. Go back until your leaders ('urafa') convey your decision to us."** The people went back, their leaders spoke with them, then they returned to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and told him that they had all agreed willingly and given permission.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Sa'id ibn 'Ufayr, from al-Layth ibn Sa'd, from 'Uqayl ibn Khalid, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr, from Marwan ibn al-Hakam and al-Miswar ibn Makhramah رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Agency, Chapter: Giving a Gift to an Agent, Hadith No. 2307; also Nos. 2539, 2583, 3131 and 4318.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:2307

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

SIRAH NOTE: HALIMAH AND THE FOSTER KIN

The sirah authors relate that Hawazin's spokesman, ***Zuhayr ibn Surad***, said to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: "O Messenger of Allah, among these captives are your foster aunts and the nurses who once cared for you." This was because Halimah as-Sa'diyyah, his foster mother, came from Banu Sa'd — a branch of Hawazin. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Whatever belongs to me and to Banu 'Abd al-Muttalib is yours."*** The Muhajirun and Ansar followed, saying: "Whatever belongs to us is for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ."

These details are ***sirah reports*** (Ibn Ishaq); the return of Hawazin's captives is authentic in Sahih al-Bukhari 2307.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on Hunayn and the distribution at al-Ji'ranah; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.

Note the Prophet's ﷺ words: ***"The speech most beloved to me is the most truthful."*** He was frank that both captives and wealth could not be returned, since the army's rights had to be protected. He gave no false promise to please them. Hawazin chose ***their families*** — and that choice shows what truly matters in the human heart.

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The delegation's return also fulfilled the hope the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had voiced at Ta'if: that Allah would bring forth from these peoples those who worship Him alone. Hawazin, who had marched against him with their families behind them, now came as believers to ask for those families back — and received them through the generosity of the very army they had fought.

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THE FOSTER BOND WITH HAWAZIN

The Prophet's ﷺ relationship with Hawazin was not merely that of victor and vanquished. Through ***Halimah as-Sa'diyyah***, his foster mother from Banu Sa'd, he had ***a bond of fosterage*** with this tribe. He spent his early childhood years in the encampment of Banu Sa'd, in the clean air of the desert.

SIRAH NOTE: A CLOAK SPREAD FOR AN OLD WOMAN

Abu at-Tufayl رضى الله عنه narrated that he saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ distributing meat at al-Ji'ranah. A woman came, and he ***spread out his cloak*** and she sat on it. Abu at-Tufayl asked: "Who is she?" The people said: ***"This is his mother who nursed him."*** (Sunan Abi Dawud 5144)

This Hadith is graded ***weak*** by Shaykh al-Albani; so it is placed in this Note. Scholars differ on whether the woman was Halimah herself, or his foster sister ash-Shayma' (Book 22).

REFERENCES:
al-Albani, Da'if Sunan Abi Dawud.

Though its chain is weak, it agrees with what is established of the Prophet's ﷺ character: he ***honoured those who had once done him good***, even after decades. This bond of fosterage was one reason he so hoped Hawazin would come in repentance, and was so generous when they came.

The lesson: ***do not forget those who raised us*** — parents, carers, teachers and anyone who did us good when we were small. A high position should never make us forget where we came from.

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JUSTICE IN RETURNING THE CAPTIVES

The way the Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned Hawazin's captives is a remarkable lesson in ***administration and justice***. The captives had become the army's right. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not take them back by force, though he had the power to do so.

STEP	EXPLANATION
1. An honest choice	Captives or wealth, not both
2. Presenting the proposal	He addressed the people and explained
3. Voluntary consent	Whoever agrees willingly may do so
4. Compensation	Those unwilling are compensated from future wealth
5. Confirmation through representatives	Leaders ('urafa') convey the decision

The fifth step is especially important. Though the crowd cried "we agree", the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was not satisfied with a general shout. He said: ***"We do not know who among you has given permission and who has not."*** He asked each group to consult its own leaders ('urafa'), who then conveyed the decision. This ensured that ***each individual's right*** was respected.

Scholars take this Hadith as evidence for ***a system of representation*** and the importance of ***genuine consent*** in matters involving public rights. Imam al-Bukhari placed it in the Book of Agency and the chapter on 'urafa'. Nearly fourteen hundred years ago, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught that individual rights cannot be taken merely by a majority's cheer.

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MALIK IBN 'AWF EMBRACES ISLAM

And what of ***Malik ibn 'Awf***, the young commander who led Hawazin at Hunayn and then took refuge in Ta'if?

SIRAH NOTE: THE COMMANDER WHO BECAME A COMPANION

The sirah authors relate that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked the Hawazin delegation about Malik ibn 'Awf, and they told him he was in Ta'if with Thaqif. He said: ***"Tell him that if he comes to me as a Muslim, I will return his family and his wealth, and give him a hundred camels."***

Malik slipped out of Ta'if secretly, met the Messenger of Allah ﷺ at al-Ji'ranah or in Makkah, and embraced Islam. He returned his family and wealth, gave him a hundred camels, and ***reappointed him chief of his people*** who had embraced Islam. Malik then led his people in pressing Thaqif hard, and recited verses praising the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: "I have never seen or heard of anyone like Muhammad among all people."

This story is ***a sirah report*** (Ibn Ishaq).

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on Hunayn and the distribution at al-Ji'ranah; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.
Ibn Hajar, al-Isabah — biography of Malik ibn 'Awf an-Nasri.

See the breadth of the Prophet's ﷺ mercy. Malik ibn 'Awf was ***the enemy commander*** who had nearly defeated the Muslim army. Yet he not only pardoned him, but restored his position. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw ***potential*** in a person, not only his mistakes. A leader able to rally his tribe against Islam could also rally them for Islam.

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THE 'UMRAH FROM AL-JI'RANAH

After the matter of the spoils was settled, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not return straight to Madinah. He ***entered ihram from al-Ji'ranah*** to perform 'umrah. Anas رضى الله عنه mentions it as one of the Prophet's ﷺ 'umrahs:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 1778

حَدَّثَنَا حَسَّانُ بْنُ حَسَّانٍ، حَدَّثَنَا هَمَّامٌ، عَنْ قَتَادَةَ، سَأَلْتُ أَنَسًا ـ رضى الله عنه ـ كَمِ اعْتَمَرَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ أَرْبَعٌ عُمْرَةُ الْحُدَيْبِيَةِ فِي ذِي الْقَعْدَةِ، حَيْثُ صَدَّهُ الْمُشْرِكُونَ، وَعُمْرَةٌ مِنَ الْعَامِ الْمُقْبِلِ فِي ذِي الْقَعْدَةِ، حَيْثُ صَالَحَهُمْ، وَعُمْرَةُ الْجِعْرَانَةِ إِذْ قَسَمَ غَنِيمَةَ أُرَاهُ حُنَيْنٍ. قُلْتُ كَمْ حَجَّ قَالَ وَاحِدَةً.

TRANSLATION:

Qatadah said: I asked Anas رضى الله عنه: "How many times did the Prophet ﷺ perform 'umrah?" He said: "***Four***: the 'umrah of Hudaybiyah in Dhu al-Qa'dah when the idolaters turned him back; the 'umrah of the following year in Dhu al-Qa'dah when he made peace with them; and ***the 'umrah of al-Ji'ranah when he distributed the spoils*** — I think (the spoils) of Hunayn." I asked: "How many times did he perform Hajj?" He said: "Once."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Hassan ibn Hassan, from Hammam ibn Yahya, from Qatadah ibn Di'amah, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of 'Umrah, Chapter: How Many Times the Prophet ﷺ Performed 'Umrah, Hadith No. 1778; also Nos. 1779, 1780 and Muslim No. 1253.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:1778

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Anas says "four" but this narration lists only three; the fourth was the 'umrah performed with ***the Farewell Hajj***, as stated in other narrations of Sahih al-Bukhari (Nos. 1779–1780). All the Prophet's ﷺ 'umrahs were performed in ***Dhu al-Qa'dah***.

SIRAH NOTE: AN 'UMRAH BY NIGHT

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Muharrish al-Ka'bi رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ left al-Ji'ranah ***by night*** in ihram, entered Makkah and performed his 'umrah, then returned to al-Ji'ranah that same night, so that in the morning he was there ***as though he had spent the night there*** (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 935, graded sahih by al-Albani).

At-Tirmidhi graded this Hadith hasan gharib; so it is placed in this Note.

REFERENCES:
al-Albani, Sahih Sunan at-Tirmidhi.

After the battles, the distribution, the accusations, the whisper and the sermon — the Messenger of Allah ﷺ closed it all with ***worship***. Victory and wealth did not distract him from returning to Allah. Today, ***the Mosque of al-Ji'ranah*** still stands and is one of the places from which residents of Makkah enter ihram for 'umrah, following the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

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THE RETURN TO MADINAH

After the ‘umrah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned to Madinah with the Muhajirun and Ansar — exactly as he had promised in the leather tent: the Ansar ***returned home with the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ.

According to the sirah books, he reached Madinah at the end of Dhu al-Qa‘dah 8 AH, having left in Ramadan — almost three months earlier.

In Makkah, he left ***‘Attab ibn Usayd*** as governor and ***Mu‘adh ibn Jabal*** to teach its people the Qur’an and its rulings (according to the sirah books). The city that had been the centre of opposition was now led by a young Muslim, and taught by one of the Companions most learned in the lawful and the unlawful.

The year 8 AH was extraordinary: Mu’tah, the Conquest of Makkah, Hunayn, Ta’if and al-Ji‘ranah. Arabia was changing rapidly. The following year, 9 AH, would bring a new test — ***the Expedition of Tabuk*** against the Roman empire, in scorching summer heat — and also ***the Year of Delegations***, when tribes from all over Arabia came to embrace Islam.

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WEALTH AND HEARTS

The story of al-Ji'ranah is a story about ***the relationship between wealth and hearts***. The following table sums up how each group was tested and how they answered:

GROUP	THE TEST AND ITS OUTCOME
Newly Muslim nobles	Given wealth → hearts softened (Safwan)
The accuser	Not given → accused of injustice
The Ansar	Not given → aggrieved → content and weeping
Hawazin	Lost everything → repented → families returned
Malik ibn 'Awf	Enemy commander → Muslim → chief again
The Messenger ﷺ	Gave without fear of poverty; took nothing for himself

From this table we see that ***wealth is a two-way test***: for those who receive it, whether it leads to gratitude or greed; for those who do not, whether it leads to contentment or envy. And for the giver, whether it is sincerely for Allah or for self-interest.

Allah shows the best way: ***"If only they had been satisfied with what Allah and His Messenger gave them and said, "Sufficient for us is Allah"*** (At-Tawbah 9:59) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:59.

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SOURCES OF THE STORY

The story of al-Ji'ranah is narrated in many authentic Hadith, complemented by sirah reports. The following table distinguishes between them:

EVENT	SOURCE AND GRADE
Waiting for Hawazin 10+ nights	Sahih al-Bukhari 2307
Gifts to al-mu'allafah	Sahih al-Bukhari 3150, 4330; Muslim 1060
Safwan: from hatred to love	Sahih Muslim 2313
"Be just!"	Sahih al-Bukhari 3138; Muslim 1063
The sermon to the Ansar	Sahih al-Bukhari 4330, 4331
Hawazin's captives returned	Sahih al-Bukhari 2307
'Umrah from al-Ji'ranah	Sahih al-Bukhari 1778
Sa'd's words; the Ansar's tears	Musnad Ahmad; graded hasan
Gifts to Yazid and Mu'awiyah	Sirah books
Malik ibn 'Awf embraces Islam	Sirah books

The main framework — the gifts to al-mu'allafah, the accusation of injustice, the sermon to the Ansar, the return of Hawazin's captives and the 'umrah from al-Ji'ranah — ***is established by authentic Hadith***. Other details we convey honestly as sirah reports.

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QUR'ANIC VERSES ON WEALTH, GIVING AND JUSTICE

This book mentions several verses of the Qur'an in different places. This chapter gathers them in one table, together with one verse not yet discussed: At-Tawbah 9:58. The last column explains how each verse relates to the events at al-Ji'ranah — whether that link is stated in an authentic Hadith, or is only a link of theme.

VERSE	BRIEF CONTENT	LINK WITH AL-JI'RANAH
Al-Anfal 8:1	The spoils of war belong to Allah and the Messenger	The legal basis of the distribution (chapter 4)
Al-Anfal 8:41	One fifth (khums) for Allah, the Messenger and certain groups	The legal basis of the distribution (chapter 4)
At-Tawbah 9:58	Some criticise the distribution of charity; if they are given they are pleased, if not they are angry	Mentioned in Sahih al-Bukhari 6933 after the story of the man who said "Be just" (chapters 12–13)
At-Tawbah 9:59	If only they had been content and said: "Allah is sufficient for us"	Link of theme (chapter 29)
At-Tawbah 9:60	The eight categories of zakat recipients, including those whose hearts are to be reconciled	Link of theme; the basis of the mu'allafah category (chapters 5 and 33)
Al-Ahzab 33:69	Do not be like those who harmed Prophet Musa	The Messenger of Allah ﷺ recalled the patience of Prophet Musa (Sahih al-Bukhari 3150; chapter 14)
Al 'Imran 3:103 and Al-Anfal 8:63	It is Allah who unites hearts	The sermon to the Ansar (chapter 18)
Al-Hashr 59:9 and At-Tawbah 9:100	Allah's praise of the Ansar	Link of theme (chapter 22)
Saba' 34:39	Whatever you spend, Allah will replace it	Link of theme: the generosity of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ (chapter 7)

AT-TAWBAH 9:58: THOSE WHO CRITICISED THE DISTRIBUTION

Allah says: "And among them are some who criticise you concerning the (distribution of) charities; if they are given from them, they are pleased, but if they are not given from them, at once they are angry" (At-Tawbah 9:58).

In a narration of Abu Sa'id al-Khudri رضى الله عنه about the man who said to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, "Be just!", it is mentioned at the end that this verse was revealed concerning them (Sahih al-Bukhari 6933).

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As explained in chapter 13, Ibn Hajar discusses whether that man is the same as the man at al-Ji'ranah or whether it was a different incident. Either way, the verse describes exactly the same attitude.

The next verse (9:59) gives the way out: to be content with what Allah and His Messenger give, and to say, "Allah is sufficient for us." Read together, these two verses are a mirror for everyone who is given, or not given, something.

LESSONS

A person's sincerity shows when he is not given. If his contentment depends on his share, his heart is still tied to this world. The one who says "Allah is sufficient for me" is the richest of people, even with empty hands.

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THE RECIPIENTS OF THE GREAT GIFTS AND WHAT BECAME OF THEM

Who were the people who received great gifts at al-Ji'ranah, and what happened to them afterwards? This table answers that question. The first four names are mentioned in authentic Hadith; the rest are mentioned by sirah writers such as Ibn Ishaq. What became of them is taken from the books of tarajim (biographies of the Companions) such as al-Isabah by Ibn Hajar.

NAME	TRIBE / RELATION	GIFT	OUTCOME (BOOKS OF TARAJIM)
Abu Sufyan ibn Harb	Quraysh (Banu Umayyah); father of Mu'awiyah and Yazid	One hundred camels (Sahih Muslim 1060)	Remained in Islam; lost an eye in battle
Safwan ibn Umayyah	Quraysh (Banu Jumah); son of Umayyah ibn Khalaf	One hundred camels (Sahih Muslim 1060, 2313)	Became a good Muslim; died in Makkah
'Uyaynah ibn Hisn	Ghatafan (Banu Fazarah)	One hundred camels (Sahih Muslim 1060)	Followed the apostates for a time after the death of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, then returned to Islam
Al-Aqra' ibn Habis	Banu Tamim (Banu Darim)	One hundred camels (Sahih Muslim 1060)	Remained in Islam; took part in the conquests
Al-'Abbas ibn Mirdas	Banu Sulaym; a poet	Less than one hundred, then completed after his poem (Sahih Muslim 1060; chapter 10)	Remained in Islam
Hakim ibn Hizam	Quraysh (Banu Asad); nephew of Khadijah رضى الله عنها	Asked and was given repeatedly (Sahih al-Bukhari 1472; chapter 9)	Swore never again to ask anyone for anything until he died
Mu'awiyah and Yazid ibn Abi Sufyan	Quraysh (Banu Umayyah); sons of Abu Sufyan	One hundred camels each (sirah books; chapter 8)	Yazid led armies in Syria and died there; Mu'awiyah later became caliph
Suhayl ibn 'Amr	Quraysh (Banu 'Amir ibn Lu'ayy); father of Abu Jandal	Mentioned in the sirah writers' lists	Fought in Syria and died there
Al-Harith ibn Hisham	Quraysh (Banu Makhzum); brother of Abu Jahl	Mentioned in the sirah writers' lists	Fought in Syria and died there
Malik ibn 'Awf an-Nasri	Hawazin (Banu Nasr)	His family and wealth returned, and one hundred camels (sirah books; chapter 26)	Led the Muslims of his people; took part in the conquest of Iraq

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SIRAH NOTE: LISTS THAT DIFFER

The sirah writers do not agree on the full list of those who received great gifts. Ibn Ishaq mentions about fifteen names, and some other reports add or remove names. What is firmly established in authentic Hadith are the names in Sahih Muslim 1060 and the stories of Safwan and Hakim.

The outcome of each person above is summarised from the books of tarajim such as al-Isabah fi Tamyiz as-Sahabah by Ibn Hajar and al-Isti'ab by Ibn 'Abd al-Barr. The details of the dates and places of their deaths are disputed, so we do not mention them here.

GENEROSITY THAT BROUGHT A WHOLE PEOPLE TO ISLAM

The effect of such gifts did not stop with the person who received them. Anas رضى الله عنه narrated that a man asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and he gave him sheep filling the valley between two mountains.

The man went back to his people and said: "O my people, embrace Islam, for Muhammad gives like one who has no fear of poverty" (Sahih Muslim 2312).

Anas added that a man would embrace Islam wanting only this world, but before long Islam became dearer to him than the world and everything in it (the same narration). This is what happened to most of the recipients at al-Ji'ranah.

LESSONS

Human hearts can change. A man who came for camels can go home with faith, and a former enemy commander can become a leader of the Muslims. A wise caller does not judge a person only by his starting point, but gives guidance room to grow.

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THOSE WHOSE HEARTS ARE RECONCILED AFTER THE TIME OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ

Chapter 5 explained that al-mu'allafah qulubuhum (those whose hearts are to be reconciled) are one of the eight categories of zakat recipients in At-Tawbah 9:60. A question arose after the death of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: does this share remain for ever? The scholars discussed it carefully, and the discussion is often linked to something 'Umar ibn al-Khattab رضى الله عنه did.

> **SIRAH NOTE: 'UMAR AND THE TWO TRIBAL CHIEFS**
>
> It is reported that 'Uyaynah ibn Hisn and al-Aqra' ibn Habis came to Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه during his rule and asked for a piece of land, and Abu Bakr wrote them a deed of grant. When 'Umar saw it, he disagreed and told them that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had reconciled their hearts when Islam had few followers, whereas now Allah had made Islam strong.
>
> This story is narrated by Ibn Abi Shaybah and al-Bayhaqi. Its chain is discussed by the Hadith scholars, and some of them judge it to be broken. So we convey it as a historical report, not as a definitive text.

DID 'UMAR ABROGATE A VERSE?

The answer is no. No one after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ can abrogate a verse of the Qur'an. The scholars explain that 'Umar saw that the reason ('illah) for the gift — the need to win hearts for the strength of Islam — no longer existed in those two men at that time. When the reason exists again, the ruling returns. This is the view held by many scholars, past and present.

SCHOOL	BRIEF VIEW ON THE SHARE OF THOSE WHOSE HEARTS ARE RECONCILED
Hanafi	This share is no longer given because Islam has become strong; they argue from the action of 'Umar and the Companions
Maliki	There are two views; the more widely held: it is given when there is a need
Shafi'i	Non-Muslims are not given from zakat; new Muslims are given to strengthen their faith or to win over their people
Hanbali	This share remains and may be given when there is a need, including to win hearts or to ward off harm

This summary is taken from al-Mughni by Ibn Qudamah and Bidayat al-Mujtahid by Ibn Rushd. The details of each school are wider than one table can hold.

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NEW MUSLIMS IN MALAYSIA TODAY

In Malaysia, new Muslims (muallaf) are one of the categories (asnaf) that receive zakat through the state zakat institutions. The help is used for religious education, living needs and guidance for new Muslims. A case study on zakat management for new Muslims in Selangor can be read at Emerald Insight. This shows that the spirit of al-Ji'ranah is still alive: honouring and strengthening those who have newly entered Islam.

LESSONS

The rulings of Islam have purposes, and the Companions understood those purposes deeply. Understanding the 'illah of a ruling does not mean changing the religion, but carrying it out with wisdom. Our new Muslim brothers and sisters today are "al-mu'allafah" who deserve to be honoured, guided and helped.

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AL-JI'RANAH: THEN AND NOW

Al-Ji'ranah is a valley north-east of Makkah, about 25 km from al-Masjid al-Haram (Discover Makkah). It lies outside the Haram, on the old road between Makkah and Ta'if. Here the captives and spoils of Hunayn were gathered, here the sermon to the Ansar was delivered, and from here the Messenger of Allah ﷺ entered ihram for 'umrah (Sahih al-Bukhari 1778).

PLACE	EVENT IN THE SIRAH	TODAY
Al-Ji'ranah	The spoils of Hunayn divided; the sermon to the Ansar; the 'umrah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ	Masjid al-Ji'ranah; a place of ihram for people in Makkah who wish to perform 'umrah
At-Tan'im	'A'ishah رضى الله عنها entered ihram for 'umrah from here during the Farewell Pilgrimage (Book 28)	Masjid 'A'ishah; the place of ihram nearest to al-Masjid al-Haram
Al-Hudaybiyah	The Treaty of Hudaybiyah (Book 15)	The ash-Shumaysi area; also a place of ihram for people in Makkah
Wadi Hunayn	The Battle of Hunayn (Book 22)	A valley east of Makkah; its exact location cannot be determined
Ta'if	The siege of Ta'if (Book 22)	A city in the as-Sarawat mountains

ENTERING IHRAM FROM AL-JI'RANAH

Someone who is in Makkah and wishes to perform 'umrah must go out to the land outside the Haram to enter ihram. Al-Ji'ranah is one of the places chosen because the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself entered ihram there. Scholars of the Shafi'i school say that the best place for the people of Makkah to enter ihram for 'umrah is al-Ji'ranah, then at-Tan'im, then al-Hudaybiyah. A discussion of this can be read in an IslamWeb fatwa.

Many pilgrims from Malaysia who perform a second or third 'umrah while in Makkah are taken to al-Ji'ranah or at-Tan'im. When you stand in Masjid al-Ji'ranah, remember that in this valley the Ansar wept until their beards were wet, and here the Messenger of Allah ﷺ crowned his victory with worship.

LESSONS

The places of the sirah are not merely tourist destinations. They are a living history class. A pilgrim who knows the story of a place will find his worship more meaningful than one who simply follows the group.

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TIMELINE: FROM HUNAYN TO MADINAH

The following table arranges the events from the Battle of Hunayn until the Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned to Madinah. Most of the exact dates come from the sirah books, especially Ibn Sa'd and al-Waqidi, so they should be read as approximations.

TIME (8 AH)	EVENT	SOURCE
Early Shawwal	The Muslim army sets out from Makkah towards Hunayn	Sirah books (Ibn Ishaq)
Shawwal	The Battle of Hunayn and the expedition to Awtas (Book 22)	Sahih al-Bukhari 4323; Sahih Muslim 1775
Shawwal – early Dhu al-Qa'dah	The siege of Ta'if (Book 22)	Sahih al-Bukhari 4325; its length is disputed
Early Dhu al-Qa'dah	Arrival at al-Ji'ranah; the spoils and captives of Hunayn already gathered	Sirah books (Ibn Sa'd)
More than ten nights	The Messenger of Allah ﷺ waits for Hawazin to come in repentance	Sahih al-Bukhari 2307
Dhu al-Qa'dah	The spoils divided; great gifts to those whose hearts are reconciled	Sahih Muslim 1060; Sahih al-Bukhari 3150
Dhu al-Qa'dah	A man accuses the distribution of being unjust	Sahih al-Bukhari 3138
Dhu al-Qa'dah	The sermon to the Ansar in the leather tent	Sahih al-Bukhari 4330, 4331
Dhu al-Qa'dah	The Hawazin delegation repents; the captives are returned	Sahih al-Bukhari 2307
Dhu al-Qa'dah	Malik ibn 'Awf comes and embraces Islam	Sirah books
Mid-Dhu al-Qa'dah, at night	The 'umrah from al-Ji'ranah at night	Sahih al-Bukhari 1778; Jami' at-Tirmidhi 935
Dhu al-Qa'dah	'Attab ibn Usayd appointed governor of Makkah; Mu'adh ibn Jabal to teach	Sirah books
Late Dhu al-Qa'dah	The Messenger of Allah ﷺ arrives in Madinah	Sirah books
Dhu al-Hijjah	'Attab ibn Usayd leads the Hajj season in Makkah	Sirah books
Rajab 9 AH	The Expedition of Tabuk (Book 24)	Sahih al-Bukhari; sirah books

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LESSONS

In less than three months, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went through a battle, a siege, the distribution of wealth, an accusation, a sermon, negotiations, worship and the appointment of leaders. Every matter was settled with patience and order. A good leader is not hasty, but neither does he leave matters hanging.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SPOILS OF HUNAYN

Here are twelve questions often asked about the events at al-Ji'ranah, with brief answers and references to the related chapters.

1. WAS THE GIFT TO THOSE WHOSE HEARTS ARE RECONCILED A KIND OF BRIBE?

No. A bribe is a gift to defeat the truth or to obtain something one has no right to. The gifts of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ were to strengthen faith and to save people from the Fire, as he said in Sahih al-Bukhari 27 (chapter 5).

2. WHY WERE THE ANSAR NOT GIVEN A LARGE SHARE?

Because their faith was already firm. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ explained that he gave those who had only just left disbelief to win their hearts, while the Ansar went home taking the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to their homes (Sahih al-Bukhari 4330, 4331; chapter 17).

3. WAS AT-TAWBAH 9:58 REVEALED ABOUT THE MAN WHO ACCUSED HIM OF INJUSTICE?

In the narration of Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, it is mentioned that this verse was revealed concerning that man and his followers (Sahih al-Bukhari 6933; chapter 31).

4. WHO RECEIVED ONE HUNDRED CAMELS?

Sahih Muslim 1060 names Abu Sufyan, Safwan ibn Umayyah, 'Uyaynah ibn Hisn and al-Aqra' ibn Habis. Al-'Abbas ibn Mirdas was given less, and it was then completed. Other names are mentioned by the sirah writers (chapter 32).

5. DOES THE ZAKAT SHARE FOR NEW MUSLIMS STILL EXIST TODAY?

The majority of scholars hold that it still exists when there is a need, while the Hanafi school holds that it is no longer given. In Malaysia, new Muslims (muallaf) are one of the zakat categories (chapter 33).

6. IS IT TRUE THAT 'UMAR STOPPED THE SHARE OF THOSE WHOSE HEARTS ARE RECONCILED?

The story of 'Umar with 'Uyaynah and al-Aqra' is narrated by Ibn Abi Shaybah and al-Bayhaqi, but its chain is discussed. The scholars explain that 'Umar did not abrogate the verse, but saw that the reason for the gift no longer existed in them (chapter 33).

7. WHY DID THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ WAIT MORE THAN TEN NIGHTS FOR HAWAZIN?

He hoped they would come in repentance so that their families and wealth could be returned. That waiting shows his mercy (Sahih al-Bukhari 2307; chapter 2).

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8. HOW WERE THE HAWAZIN CAPTIVES RETURNED FAIRLY?

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked the Companions to return the captives in their share willingly, and anyone who wanted compensation would be given it from the first wealth Allah granted afterwards (Sahih al-Bukhari 2307; chapter 25).

9. WHY WAS THE 'UMRAH FROM AL-JI'RANAH PERFORMED AT NIGHT?

Muharrish al-Ka'bi narrated that he went out at night and returned before dawn. Many people did not know of it, which is why some people did not count this 'umrah (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 935; chapter 27).

10. WHERE IS AL-JI'RANAH TODAY?

It lies north-east of Makkah, about 25 km from al-Masjid al-Haram. Masjid al-Ji'ranah is a place of ihram for the people of Makkah who wish to perform 'umrah (chapter 34).

11. WHAT WAS THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ WITH HAWAZIN?

His foster mother, Halimah, came from Banu Sa'd, one of the branches of Hawazin. It was this foster bond that the Hawazin delegation used as their plea (Sunan Abi Dawud 5144; chapter 24).

12. WHAT IS THE MAIN LESSON OF THIS STORY FOR LEADERS TODAY?

A leader must be just, but justice does not always mean equal shares. Gifts must be arranged according to need and purpose, and a leader must be willing to explain his decision to those who feel hurt, as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ explained it to the Ansar.

LESSONS

These questions remind us to distinguish between the Qur'an, authentic Hadith, the reports of the sirah books and the opinions of scholars. The framework of the story of al-Ji'ranah is established by authentic Hadith; the details of names, dates and numbers we convey according to their grade.

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

Al-Ji'ranah was a "school" of ***leadership, justice and sincerity***. There the Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught how to use wealth to join hearts, how to face accusations with patience, and how to soothe the hearts of the loyal but aggrieved.

LESSON	FROM AL-JI'RANAH
Wealth as a bridge	Al-mu'allafah: giving to join hearts
Giving without fear of poverty	Three hundred camels for Safwan
Patience under accusation	"May Allah have mercy on Musa"
Beware of extremism	The seed of the Khawarij
Correcting in private	The sermon in the leather tent
The true measure of value	Sheep and camels, or the Messenger ﷺ?
Patience until al-Hawd	The counsel about athrah
Honesty and consent	Hawazin's captives returned
Closing with worship	The 'umrah from al-Ji'ranah

AL-JI'RANAH IN OUR LIVES

We may never receive a hundred camels, but every day we are tested by ***comparison***: others get more, are promoted, or praised, while we are not. At that moment, remember the Prophet's ﷺ question to the Ansar: ***"Are you not pleased…?"*** If we return home with faith, the Sunnah and love for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, we have returned with something far more precious.

In sha Allah, the series **The Prophet's Sirah** will continue with ***Book 24 — The Expedition of Tabuk***: the campaign against the Roman empire in scorching summer heat, "the army of hardship", the spending of Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthman, the hypocrites with their excuses, and the long march north. And Allah knows best.

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PART THREE

The Expedition of Tabuk

The Prophet's Sirah — Series 24

The Army of Hardship, the Companions' Spending and the Long March North, According to the Qur'an and Authentic Hadith

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THE EXPEDITION OF TABUK

The year 8 AH ended with victory after victory: Makkah was opened, Hunayn was won, and Arab tribes began coming to embrace Islam. But the year 9 AH brought a different test — one that sifted out who truly believed and who merely followed the tide. That test was ***the Expedition of Tabuk***.

This Book 24 tells of the march of more than ***seven hundred kilometres*** north to face the Roman empire, in ***scorching summer heat***, just as the dates of Madinah were ripening. It is a story of extraordinary ***spending***, the ***tears*** of those who could not go, the ***excuses*** of the hypocrites, and ***miracles*** along the way. The story of the three Companions who stayed behind — including Ka'b ibn Malik — will be told in Book 25.

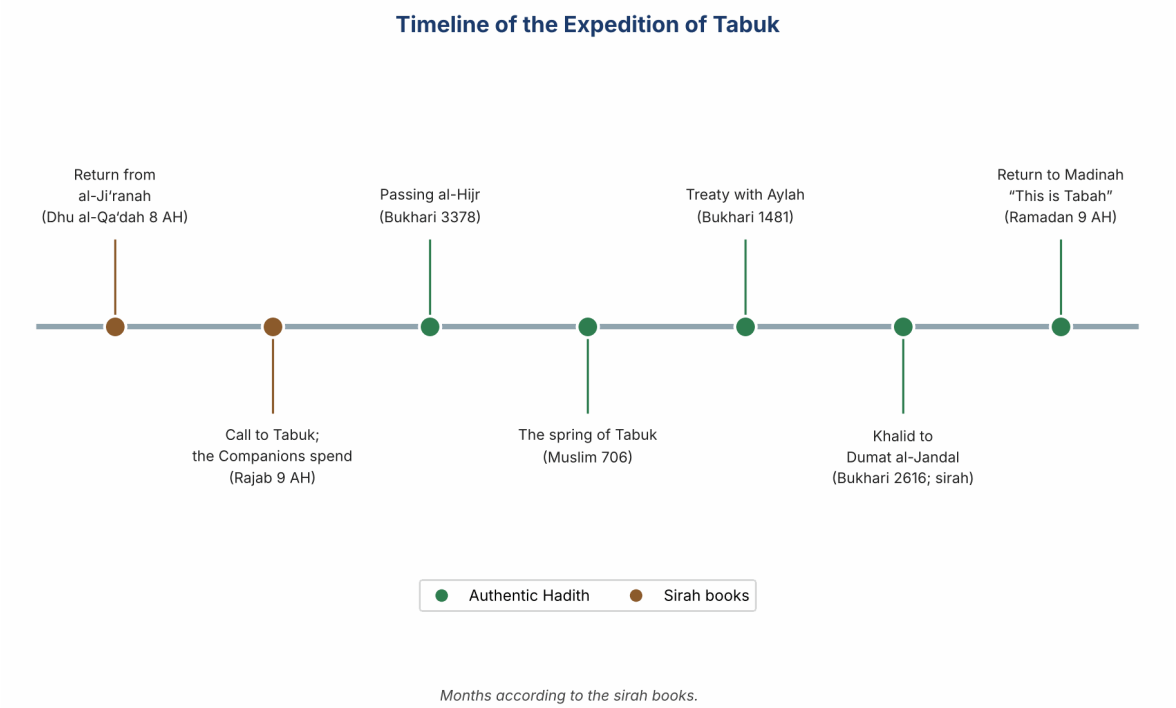

Figure 1: Timeline of the Expedition of Tabuk.

Note: The Qur'anic translation in this eBook is Sahih International. The grade of every Hadith is stated in its box. Information from the books of sirah — such as news of the Roman army gathering, al-Jadd ibn Qays's excuse, and the story of Abu Dharr walking alone — is placed in brown "Sirah Note" boxes, since most of it is narrated without a connected chain or with a debated one.

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AFTER THE YEAR OF VICTORY

After returning from al-Ji'ranah at the end of 8 AH, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stayed in Madinah for some months. Islam spread rapidly across Arabia. From the south to the centre, tribes that had once waited now came to Islam.

But in the north, on the borders of Syria, stood a world power: ***the Byzantine Roman empire***. Two years earlier, three thousand Muslims had faced the Romans and their Arab allies at ***Mu'tah*** (Book 19), and three commanders fell as martyrs. Rome would not sit still while a new power rose south of its frontier.

The Expedition of Tabuk took place in ***Rajab 9 AH*** according to the sirah books. It was ***the last campaign*** the Messenger of Allah ﷺ led in person, and the largest army he ever commanded.

The months between Hunayn and Tabuk were not empty. The Prophet ﷺ sent collectors to gather zakat from the tribes that had embraced Islam, dispatched small expeditions to remove the last idols, and received the first delegations. Islam was moving from a community defending itself to a state organising the life of a whole people.

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NEWS FROM SYRIA

SIRAH NOTE: THE ROMAN ARMY GATHERING

The sirah authors relate that news reached Madinah through Nabataean traders bringing oil from Syria that ***Rome was gathering a great army***, along with Christian Arab tribes such as Lakhm, Judham, 'Amilah and Ghassan, and that their vanguard had reached al-Balqa'.

Some scholars note that the news was not fully accurate, since when the Muslims reached Tabuk they did not find the Roman army. These details are ***sirah reports*** (al-Waqidi and Ibn Sa'd).

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The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not wait for the enemy to come to Madinah. He chose ***to go out and meet it*** at the frontier. This decision was not only military strategy, but also ***a message*** to all of Arabia and to Rome: the Muslims did not fear even the greatest power of the day.

The lesson: ***news must be verified***, yet vigilance is still needed. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ took precautions based on the information available, and Allah filled the journey with wisdom even though no battle took place.

Tabuk itself lies about halfway between Madinah and Damascus, in the far north-west of the Arabian Peninsula. In the Prophet's ﷺ time it was a watering place on the caravan route to Syria, on the edge of lands under Byzantine influence. For an army on foot and camelback, the journey of some 700 kilometres would take around two weeks each way through some of the harshest terrain in Arabia.

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AN OPEN CALL

The Prophet's ﷺ usual practice when setting out on a campaign was ***to conceal his destination*** — as we saw in the Conquest of Makkah (Book 20). But Tabuk was different. Ka'b ibn Malik رضى الله عنه relates that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ rarely intended a campaign without concealing it by mentioning another place, ***until this campaign***: he fought it in intense heat, facing a long journey and desert, and a numerous enemy, so he ***made the matter clear to the Muslims*** so they could prepare (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418).

Why the difference? Because ***the preparation required was immense***. A long journey in summer needed water, food, camels and abundant supplies. Everyone had to know what lay ahead to prepare properly. Honesty about the hardship also ***sifted*** people — only the truly faithful would answer.

The lesson for every leader: sometimes ***secrecy*** is needed, and sometimes ***transparency*** comes first. Wisdom is knowing which to use when. When a task demands great sacrifice, people have a right to know what is being asked of them.

The phrase "a numerous enemy" is significant. The Byzantine empire had only recently defeated Persia after a long war, and was at the height of its confidence. To march against such a power was, in human terms, an enormous risk. The Companions' readiness to go shows how completely their trust had shifted from numbers and wealth to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ.

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SUMMER HEAT AND RIPENING DATES

The call to Tabuk came at the hardest possible time. Summer was at its peak, and ***the dates of Madinah were nearly ripe*** — the moment Madinah's people waited for all year, since dates were their main livelihood. Ka'b ibn Malik mentions that he set out ***"when the fruits and the shade were at their best"***.

Some felt reluctant to go out, and Allah rebuked them: ***"what is [the matter] with you that, when you are told to go forth in the cause of Allah, you adhere heavily to the earth? Are you satisfied with the life of this world rather than the Hereafter?"*** (At-Tawbah 9:38) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:38.

And Allah commanded: ***"Go forth, whether light or heavy"*** (At-Tawbah 9:41) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:41.

The test of Tabuk was a test between ***this world and the Hereafter*** in its starkest form: the shade of trees and ripening dates on one side, the scorching desert and a mighty enemy on the other. Each of us will face our own "Tabuk" — a moment when obedience to Allah requires us to leave a comfort right before our eyes.

It is worth noting that the Arabic word nafara used in these verses means to rush forth together in response to a call. The image is of a whole community rising at once, like a flock taking flight. The believer's response to Allah's call is not slow and grudging, but swift and wholehearted.

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JAYSH AL-'USRAH: THE ARMY OF HARDSHIP

The army of Tabuk is known by a name the Qur'an preserved: ***Jaysh al-'Usrah*** — the Army of Hardship. Allah says:

"Allah has already forgiven the Prophet and the Muhajireen and the Ansar who followed him in the hour of difficulty" (At-Tawbah 9:117) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:117.

The hardship covered every aspect: ***a shortage of mounts*** so that several men took turns riding one camel, ***a shortage of food*** so that a single date was shared between two, and ***a shortage of water*** in the burning heat. Ibn Kathir cites a report in which 'Umar رضى الله عنه related that they were so thirsty that some slaughtered their camels and squeezed out their stomach contents to drink.

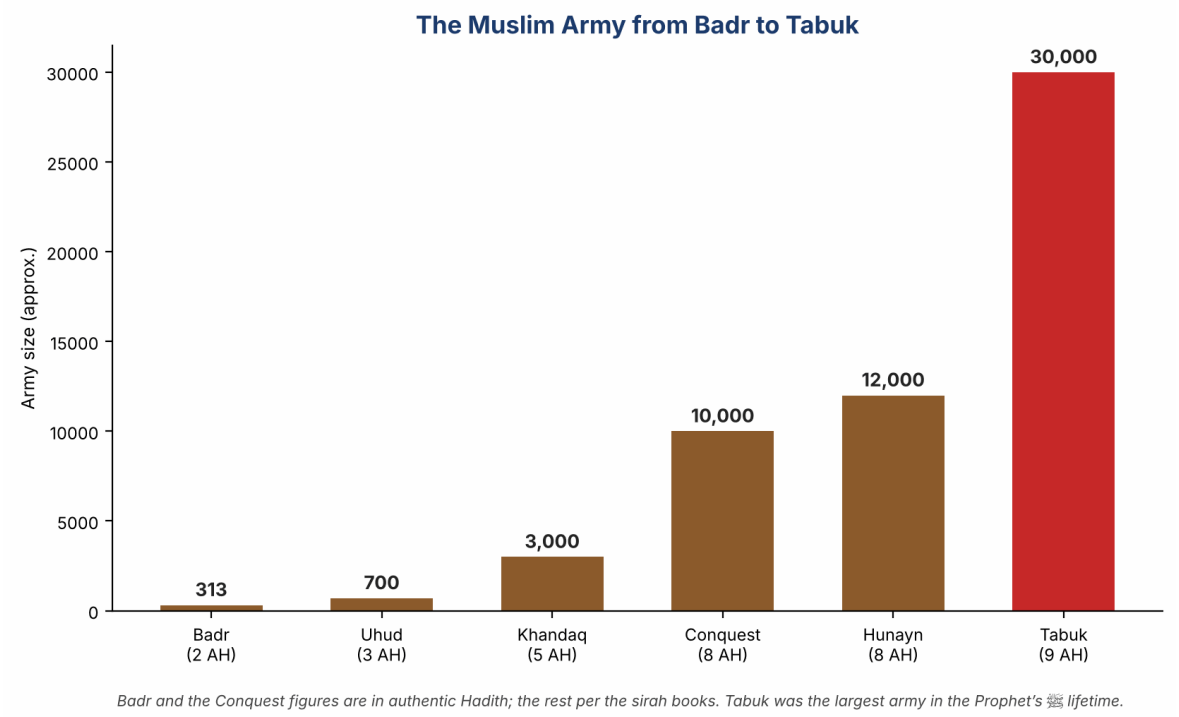

Figure 2: The Muslim army from Badr to Tabuk.

Yet despite such great hardship, the sirah books state that the army numbered about ***thirty thousand men*** — the largest in the Prophet's ﷺ lifetime. See the difference from Badr: in seven years, a community once 313 strong had become a power able to face a world empire.

A single camel carrying a rider, water and supplies could make the difference between life and death on such a march. This is why the Prophet ﷺ placed such weight on equipping the army: every mount provided meant another believer who could join, and every waterskin meant a chance of surviving the desert. Spending was not a side matter; it was the backbone of the campaign.

The growth of the army also reflected the growth of trust: at Badr, few expected a battle; at Uhud, some turned back; at the Trench, the hypocrites slipped away. By Tabuk, tens of thousands answered a call

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they knew would be hard. Yet the chapters that follow show that even within so large an army, hearts still varied — and the Qur'an would expose each of them.

A large army, however, also brings its own dangers. At Hunayn, only months earlier, some Muslims had been pleased with their own great numbers, and Allah reminded them: "when your great number pleased you, but it did not avail you at all" (At-Tawbah 9:25). The Companions who marched to Tabuk carried that lesson with them: numbers are a blessing to be grateful for, not a source of pride. What would decide the outcome was not the size of the army, but the sincerity of those within it.

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THE SPENDING OF 'UTHMAN IBN 'AFFAN

An army that size needed great funding. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ called the Companions to spend, and said: ***"Whoever equips the Army of Hardship will have Paradise."*** And ***'Uthman ibn 'Affan*** رضى الله عنه equipped it (Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Wills, before Hadith No. 2778, as a ta'liq). 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Samurah رضى الله عنه witnessed an unforgettable moment:

HADITH — JAMI' AL-TIRMIDHI, NO. 3701

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ إِسْمَاعِيلَ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا الْحَسَنُ بْنُ وَاقِعٍ الرَّمْلِيُّ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا ضَمْرَةُ بْنُ رَبِيعَةَ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ شَوْذَبٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ الْقَاسِمِ، عَنْ كَثِيرٍ، مَوْلَى عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ سَمُرَةَ عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ ابْنِ سَمُرَةَ، قَالَ جَاءَ عُثْمَانُ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم بِأَلْفِ دِينَارٍ - قَالَ الْحَسَنُ بْنُ وَاقِعٍ وَكَانَ فِي مَوْضِعٍ آخَرَ مِنْ كِتَابِي فِي كُمِّهِ حِينَ جَهَّزَ جَيْشَ الْعُسْرَةِ فَنَثَرَهَا فِي حِجْرِهِ. قَالَ عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ فَرَأَيْتُ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يُقَلِّبُهَا فِي حِجْرِهِ وَيَقُولُ «مَا ضَرَّ عُثْمَانَ مَا عَمِلَ بَعْدَ الْيَوْمِ». مَرَّتَيْنِ.

TRANSLATION:

'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Samurah رضى الله عنه said: 'Uthman came to the Prophet ﷺ with ***a thousand dinars*** — al-Hasan ibn Waqi' said: in another place in my notes, (the dinars were) in his sleeve — ***when he equipped the Army of Hardship (Jaysh al-'Usrah)***, and scattered them in his lap. 'Abd ar-Rahman said: I saw the Prophet ﷺ turning them over in his lap and saying: ***"Nothing 'Uthman does after today will harm him."***

He said it twice.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Muhammad ibn Isma'il (al-Bukhari), from al-Hasan ibn Waqi' ar-Ramli, from Damrah ibn Rabi'ah, from 'Abdullah ibn Shawdhab, from 'Abdullah ibn al-Qasim, from Kathir, freedman of 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Samurah, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Samurah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in Jami' at-Tirmidhi, Chapters on Virtues, Chapter: The Virtues of 'Uthman ibn 'Affan, Hadith No. 3701; also Ahmad No. 20630.

GRADE: HASAN — Imam at-Tirmidhi graded it hasan gharib; graded hasan by Shaykh al-Albani and Darussalam.

Source: https://sunnah.com/tirmidhi:3701

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

"Nothing 'Uthman does after today will harm him." Scholars explain that this is ***glad tidings*** that 'Uthman's deed that day was so great that it secured his forgiveness and rank — not permission to sin, like the similar words about the people of Badr (Book 20).

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The sirah books mention that ‘Uthman contributed ***hundreds of camels with their saddles and gear***, besides those thousand dinars. ‘Uthman’s wealth was not for himself, but for ***the religion of Allah***. He was also the one who bought the well of Rumah and endowed it for the Muslims. This is the example of a believing businessman: ***wealth in the hand, not in the heart***.

‘Uthman’s generosity was not a single moment. He was known throughout his life for freeing slaves, feeding the poor and supporting every good cause. When he later became the third caliph, he oversaw the compilation of the Qur’an into a single standard copy — the mushaf we still read today. The hand that equipped the Army of Hardship also preserved the Book of Allah for all generations.

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ABU BAKR AND 'UMAR COMPETE

SIRAH NOTE: "I LEFT THEM ALLAH AND HIS MESSENGER"

'Umar ibn al-Khattab رضى الله عنه related that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ordered them to give charity, and at the time 'Umar had wealth. He said to himself: "Today I will outdo Abu Bakr, if ever I can." He brought ***half his wealth***. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked: "What have you left for your family?" He said: "The same amount." Then Abu Bakr came with ***all his wealth***. He asked: "What have you left for your family?" Abu Bakr said: ***"I have left them Allah and His Messenger."*** 'Umar said: "I will never outdo him in anything." (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3675, graded hasan by al-Albani)

This Hadith does not mention Tabuk explicitly; ***the sirah authors*** link it to the preparation of the Army of Hardship. So it is placed in this Note.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Expedition of Tabuk; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.

This story portrays healthy ***competition in good***. 'Umar did not envy Abu Bakr out of spite, but wanted to be first in obedience. And when outdone, he acknowledged his friend's superiority graciously. Allah says: ***"So for this let the competitors compete"*** (Al-Mutaffifin 83:26).

Note too that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***accepted*** all of Abu Bakr's wealth, knowing the strength of his faith and trust, yet in other cases he advised Companions not to give away all their wealth (as with Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, Sahih al-Bukhari 2742). The ruling differs according to ***a person's circumstances and strength of faith***.

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A SA' OF DATES

Not every Companion was rich like 'Uthman and Abu Bakr. Many were poor, yet they too wanted to contribute. Abu Mas'ud al-Ansari رضى الله عنه related that when the verse on charity was revealed, they worked carrying loads on their backs to earn wages, and then gave charity. A man came with a large donation, and the hypocrites said: ***"He is showing off."*** Another man came with ***a sa' of dates***, and they said: ***"Allah has no need of this man's sa'."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4668)

Then Allah revealed a verse defending them: ***"Those who criticize the contributors among the believers concerning [their] charities and [criticize] the ones who find nothing [to spend] except their effort, so they ridicule them - Allah will ridicule them"*** (At-Tawbah 9:79) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:79.

The hypocrites were never satisfied: those who gave much were accused of showing off, those who gave little were mocked. But Allah weighs ***sincerity and effort***, not amount. A sa' of dates from one who toiled to earn it may weigh more with Allah than a thousand dinars from one who is insincere.

The lesson: ***never belittle a small charity***, and do not busy yourself judging others' intentions. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Protect yourselves from the Fire even with half a date"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 1417).

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THOSE WHO WEPT

Among the most moving scenes in the preparation for Tabuk was a group of poor Companions who came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ asking for mounts, since they could not afford them. When he had nothing to give, they went back ***weeping***. Allah immortalised their tears in the Qur'an:

"Nor [is there blame] upon those who, when they came to you that you might give them mounts, you said, "I can find nothing for you to ride upon." They turned back while their eyes overflowed with tears out of grief that they could not find something to spend" (At-Tawbah 9:92) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:92.

The sirah books call them ***al-Bakka'un*** — the Weepers — and name seven of them from the Ansar and others. They wept not for being denied wealth, but for ***missing the chance to strive in the cause of Allah***. Compare them with the hypocrites who searched for excuses not to go.

The preceding verse sets out the principle of excuse in Islam: ***"There is not upon the weak or upon the ill or upon those who do not find anything to spend any discomfort when they are sincere to Allah and His Messenger"*** (At-Tawbah 9:91) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:91.

The tears of al-Bakka'un are a reminder that sincerity sometimes shows itself in what we cannot do. Some had wealth but no will; these had the will but no wealth. Allah knew the difference, and He honoured the latter in His Book until the end of time. Their names were preserved not for great deeds, but for great longing.

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MOUNTS FOR THE ASH'ARIS

One of the groups that came asking for mounts was ***the Ash'aris*** from Yemen, represented by Abu Musa al-Ash'ari رضى الله عنه. Abu Musa recounts the incident honestly, including his sorrow:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4415

حَدَّثَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْعَلاَءِ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أُسَامَةَ، عَنْ بُرَيْدِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي بُرْدَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي بُرْدَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي مُوسَى ـ رضى الله عنه ـ قَالَ أَرْسَلَنِي أَصْحَابِي إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم أَسْأَلُهُ الْحُمْلاَنَ لَهُمْ، إِذْ هُمْ مَعَهُ فِي جَيْشِ الْعُسْرَةِ وَهْىَ غَزْوَةُ تَبُوكَ فَقُلْتُ يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ أَصْحَابِي أَرْسَلُونِي إِلَيْكَ لِتَحْمِلَهُمْ. فَقَالَ «وَاللَّهِ لاَ أَحْمِلُكُمْ عَلَى شَىْءٍ». وَوَافَقْتُهُ، وَهْوَ غَضْبَانُ وَلاَ أَشْعُرُ، وَرَجَعْتُ حَزِينًا مِنْ مَنْعِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، وَمِنْ مَخَافَةِ أَنْ يَكُونَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَجَدَ فِي نَفْسِهِ عَلَىَّ، فَرَجَعْتُ إِلَى أَصْحَابِي فَأَخْبَرْتُهُمُ الَّذِي قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، فَلَمْ أَلْبَثْ إِلاَّ سُوَيْعَةً إِذْ سَمِعْتُ بِلاَلاً يُنَادِي أَىْ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنَ قَيْسٍ. فَأَجَبْتُهُ، فَقَالَ أَجِبْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَدْعُوكَ، فَلَمَّا أَتَيْتُهُ، قَالَ «خُذْ هَذَيْنِ الْقَرِينَيْنِ ـ وَهَذَيْنِ الْقَرِينَيْنِ لِسِتَّةِ أَبْعِرَةٍ ابْتَاعَهُنَّ حِينَئِذٍ مِنْ سَعْدٍ ـ فَانْطَلِقْ بِهِنَّ إِلَى أَصْحَابِكَ فَقُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ ـ أَوْ قَالَ إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم ـ يَحْمِلُكُمْ عَلَى هَؤُلاَءِ فَارْكَبُوهُنَّ». فَانْطَلَقْتُ إِلَيْهِمْ بِهِنَّ، فَقُلْتُ إِنَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَحْمِلُكُمْ عَلَى هَؤُلاَءِ وَلَكِنِّي وَاللَّهِ لاَ أَدَعُكُمْ حَتَّى يَنْطَلِقَ مَعِي بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَى مَنْ سَمِعَ مَقَالَةَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم لاَ تَظُنُّوا أَنِّي حَدَّثْتُكُمْ شَيْئًا لَمْ يَقُلْهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَقَالُوا لِي إِنَّكَ عِنْدَنَا لَمُصَدَّقٌ، وَلَنَفْعَلَنَّ مَا أَحْبَبْتَ. فَانْطَلَقَ أَبُو مُوسَى بِنَفَرٍ مِنْهُمْ حَتَّى أَتَوُا الَّذِينَ سَمِعُوا قَوْلَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم مَنْعَهُ إِيَّاهُمْ، ثُمَّ إِعْطَاءَهُمْ بَعْدُ، فَحَدَّثُوهُمْ بِمِثْلِ مَا حَدَّثَهُمْ بِهِ أَبُو مُوسَى.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Musa رضى الله عنه said: My companions sent me to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to ask him for ***mounts*** for them, since they wished to go with him in ***the Army of Hardship, which was the Expedition of Tabuk***. I said: "O Prophet of Allah, my companions have sent me to you to give them mounts." He said: **"By Allah, I will not give you any mounts."** I had met him while he was angry without realising it. I returned sad at the Prophet's ﷺ refusal, and fearing he might be displeased with me. I went back to my companions and told

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them what the Prophet ﷺ had said. Shortly after, I heard Bilal calling: "O 'Abdullah ibn Qays!" I answered, and he said: "Answer the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he is calling you." When I came, he said: **"Take these two pairs and these two pairs"** — six camels he had just bought from Sa'd — **"and take them to your companions and say: Allah — or the Messenger of Allah ﷺ — gives you these to ride, so ride them."** I took them to them and said: "The Prophet ﷺ gives you these to ride. But by Allah, I will not leave you until some of you go with me to those who heard the words of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, so that you do not think I told you something the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not say." They said: "You are trusted among us, but we will do as you wish." So Abu Musa went with some of them to those who had heard the Messenger of Allah's ﷺ refusal and then his giving, and they told them the same as Abu Musa had told them.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Muhammad ibn al-'Ala', from Abu Usamah Hammad ibn Usamah, from Burayd ibn 'Abdullah, from Abu Burdah, from Abu Musa al-Ash'ari رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions (al-Maghazi), Chapter: The Expedition of Tabuk, Hadith No. 4415; also Nos. 3133, 6623 and Muslim No. 1649.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4415

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ at first swore he would not give mounts, since there truly were none at the time, and he was angry over another matter. But when camels came, he gave. In another narration he explained: ***"I do not swear an oath about something and then see something better than it, except that I do what is better and expiate my oath"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 6623).

Note too ***Abu Musa's care*** in conveying the news: he did not want his people to think he had invented the Prophet's ﷺ words, so he took them to other witnesses. This is the Companions' spirit of ***safeguarding the truth of what is narrated*** — the spirit that became the foundation of the science of Hadith.

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THE EXCUSES OF THE HYPOCRITES

If Tabuk revealed the sincerity of the Companions, it also ***exposed the true face of the hypocrites***. A large part of Surah At-Tawbah was revealed about this event, so that the surah is also called ***al-Fadihah*** — "the Exposer" — because it uncovered the secrets of their hearts one by one. Allah says:

"Had it been an easy gain and a moderate trip, the hypocrites would have followed you, but distant to them was the journey" (At-Tawbah 9:42) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:42.

This verse portrays the hypocrite's soul precisely: they were willing to follow if ***the gain was easy and the journey short***. At Hunayn there were spoils; at Tabuk there was only heat, distance and danger. So they began inventing excuses.

"And among them is he who says, "Permit me [to remain at home] and do not put me to trial." Unquestionably, into trial they have fallen" (At-Tawbah 9:49) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:49.

SIRAH NOTE: AL-JADD IBN QAYS

The scholars of tafsir and sirah relate that this verse was revealed about ***al-Jadd ibn Qays*** of Banu Salimah. When called to Tabuk, he said: "Permit me to stay and do not tempt me. My people know no man is more drawn to women than I; I fear that if I see the women of Rome, I will not be able to restrain myself." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ turned away from him and said: "I permit you."

This report is mentioned by Ibn Ishaq and in the tafsir of at-Tabari and Ibn Kathir with several chains; ***the strength of some is debated***, but its meaning is well known among the commentators.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Expedition of Tabuk; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.
Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim, At-Tawbah 9:49. https://tafsir.app/ibn-katheer/9/49

See the irony: he asked not to be "tempted" by the women of Rome, yet by staying behind he ***had fallen into a greater trial*** — the trial of abandoning the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. An excuse that looks pious can be a blanket over laziness and fear.

The sirah books mention that the hypocrites who sought leave to stay numbered ***some eighty men***, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ accepted their outward excuses and left the secrets of their hearts to Allah.

This is the Islamic principle of dealing with people: ***we judge by the outward***, and Allah handles what is hidden.

Allah later addressed His Messenger ﷺ regarding them: "May Allah pardon you, [O Muhammad]; why did you give them permission [to remain behind]? [You should not have] until it was evident to you who were truthful and you knew [who were] the liars" (At-Tawbah 9:43).

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"DO NOT GO FORTH IN THE HEAT"

The hypocrites were not content with staying behind; they also ***incited others*** not to go. Allah recorded their words and answered them with one shattering sentence:

"Those who remained behind rejoiced in their staying [at home] after [the departure of] the Messenger of Allah and disliked to strive with their wealth and their lives in the cause of Allah and said, "Do not go forth in the heat." Say, "The fire of Hell is more intensive in heat" - if they would but understand" (At-Tawbah 9:81) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:81.

"The fire of Hell is more intensive in heat." This comparison puts everything on its true scale. The heat of the Tabuk desert would pass within weeks; the heat avoided by abandoning obedience may lead to a heat that never ends.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also said that the fire of this world is only ***one part of seventy parts*** of the fire of Hell (Sahih al-Bukhari 3265). The Companions who grasped this reality did not fear the desert sun; they feared something far more terrible.

The lesson for us: whenever we look for an excuse to abandon a duty because it is ***hard, tiring or uncomfortable***, ask ourselves this Qur'anic question. Rising for Fajr in the cold, fasting in the heat, or giving charity when tight — all are small compared to what they protect us from.

History repeats this pattern in every age. Whenever the call to a good cause becomes costly — whether in time, money or comfort — some will always say "not now", "it is too hot", or "it is too far". The Qur'an does not merely record what the hypocrites said in Madinah; it holds up a mirror to every generation, so that each of us can ask which of the two groups we would have joined.

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RECOGNISING THE DISEASE OF HYPOCRISY

The events of Tabuk taught the Muslims ***to recognise the traits of hypocrisy***, not to accuse others, but ***to examine themselves***. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ explained its signs in several sahih Hadith. He said:

"The signs of a hypocrite are three: when he speaks he lies, when he promises he breaks it, and when he is entrusted he betrays" (Sahih al-Bukhari 33).

In another narration he added one more trait: ***"when he disputes he transgresses"***, and said that whoever has one of these traits has ***a branch of hypocrisy*** until he leaves it (Sahih al-Bukhari 34). Scholars distinguish between ***nifaq i'tiqadi*** (hypocrisy of belief — concealing disbelief, like the hypocrites of Tabuk) and ***nifaq 'amali*** (hypocrisy of deeds — bad traits that may be found in a Muslim).

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also said: ***"No prayer is heavier on the hypocrites than Fajr and 'Isha'; if they knew what is in them, they would come even if crawling"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 657). Just as the heat of Tabuk exposed them, ***the darkness of Fajr and 'Isha'*** also exposes who truly believes.

He described the hypocrite as ***"like a sheep wavering between two flocks, going to this one once and to that one once"*** (Sahih Muslim 2784). That was their state in Madinah: sometimes with the Muslims, sometimes with the enemy, without conviction.

The Companions themselves greatly feared hypocrisy. Ibn Abi Mulaykah said: ***"I met thirty of the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ, all of them fearing hypocrisy for themselves"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Faith, as a ta'liq). If those who marched to Tabuk were afraid, how much more should we be.

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‘ALI: AS HARUN WAS TO MUSA

Before setting out, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ needed to appoint someone to look after Madinah and his family. The sirah books mention that Muhammad ibn Maslamah was appointed over Madinah, and ***‘Ali ibn Abi Talib*** رضى الله عنه was left to look after the Prophet's family. For a warrior like ‘Ali, staying behind was very hard:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4416

حَدَّثَنَا مُسَدَّدٌ، حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى، عَنْ شُعْبَةَ، عَنِ الْحَكَمِ، عَنْ مُصْعَبِ بْنِ سَعْدٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم خَرَجَ إِلَى تَبُوكَ، وَاسْتَخْلَفَ عَلِيًّا فَقَالَ أَتُخَلِّفُنِي فِي الصِّبْيَانِ وَالنِّسَاءِ قَالَ «أَلاَ تَرْضَى أَنْ تَكُونَ مِنِّي بِمَنْزِلَةِ هَارُونَ مِنْ مُوسَى إِلاَّ أَنَّهُ لَيْسَ نَبِيٌّ بَعْدِي».
وَقَالَ أَبُو دَاوُدَ حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ عَنِ الْحَكَمِ سَمِعْتُ مُصْعَبًا.

TRANSLATION:

Mus‘ab ibn Sa‘d narrated from his father (Sa‘d ibn Abi Waqqas رضى الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ set out for Tabuk and ***appointed ‘Ali as his deputy*** (in Madinah). ‘Ali said: “Do you leave me behind with the children and the women?” He said: ***“Are you not pleased to be to me as Harun was to Musa, except that there is no prophet after me?”*** (Abu Dawud at-Tayalisi narrated it with the wording: “al-Hakam said: I heard Mus‘ab.”)

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Musaddad ibn Musarhad, from Yahya ibn Sa‘id al-Qattan, from Shu‘bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from al-Hakam ibn ‘Utaybah, from Mus‘ab ibn Sa‘d, from his father Sa‘d ibn Abi Waqqas رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions (al-Maghazi), Chapter: The Expedition of Tabuk, Hadith No. 4416; also No. 3706 and Muslim No. 2404.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4416

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The sirah books mention that the hypocrites spread a rumour: ***“He left him behind because he dislikes him.”*** So ‘Ali took up his weapons and caught up with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ at al-Jurf. There the Prophet ﷺ spoke the words that became one of ‘Ali's greatest virtues.

The Prophet Musa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ left his brother Harun عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to look after his people when he went to commune with his Lord for forty nights (Al-A‘raf 7:142). So was ‘Ali to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: ***a trusted***

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deputy. But he added firmly: ***"except that there is no prophet after me"*** — closing off any misunderstanding about prophethood.

The lesson: ***every role in the faith has its value***. The one who fights on the field and the one who guards at home both serve. Sometimes the least glamorous task is the greatest trust.

'Ali's response is also instructive. He did not argue or sulk; once the Prophet ﷺ explained, he accepted wholeheartedly and returned to Madinah to carry out his duty. Obedience is not only marching when we are sent, but also staying when we are asked to stay. Many of us find it easier to do a visible, celebrated task than to quietly fulfil the one we have been given.

This Hadith is among the most famous virtues of 'Ali, and scholars across the Muslim community have cited it with love. At the same time, they read it in its context: the Prophet ﷺ was speaking of a deputyship during his absence, just as Harun deputised for Musa. It shows 'Ali's rank and closeness to the Prophet ﷺ, and Ahl as-Sunnah honour him as the fourth of the rightly guided caliphs.

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ABU KHAYTHAMAH AND ABU DHARR

The army began to move, and some sincere Companions fell behind because they were slow to prepare. One of them was ***Abu Khaythamah al-Ansari*** رضى الله عنه. In the long Hadith of Ka'b ibn Malik, it is related that while the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was sitting at Tabuk, a man in white was seen approaching from afar through the mirage. He said: ***"Be Abu Khaythamah!"*** And it was indeed Abu Khaythamah al-Ansari — ***the man who had given a sa' of dates in charity and been mocked by the hypocrites*** (Sahih Muslim 2769).

See how Allah connects the stories: the poor man mocked for a sa' of dates (Chapter 8) is the same man who crossed the desert alone to join the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. The hypocrites mocked, but ***Allah raised him***.

SIRAH NOTE: ABU KHAYTHAMAH'S SHADE AND WIVES; ABU DHARR WALKING ALONE

Ibn Ishaq relates that Abu Khaythamah returned to his garden on a hot day and found his two wives had sprinkled water in the shaded hut and prepared cool water and food. He said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ is in the blazing sun and hot wind, while Abu Khaythamah is in cool shade, with food ready and beautiful women? This is not fair!"*** So he readied his camel and followed him.

Ibn Ishaq also relates that ***Abu Dharr*** رضى الله عنه fell behind because his camel was weak, so he carried his belongings and ***walked alone on foot***. When he appeared in the distance, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Be Abu Dharr!" Then he said: ***"May Allah have mercy on Abu Dharr; he walks alone, will die alone, and will be resurrected alone."*** Both stories are ***sirah reports***; the Abu Dharr story in particular is narrated with a weak chain.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Expedition of Tabuk; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.

Abu Khaythamah's story shows that falling behind is not the end. He had stayed, but he caught himself before it was too late, and the moment of awakening came when he compared his comfort with the hardship of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Every believer needs such moments of honest comparison: "Is it fair that I rest while the work of Islam needs me?"

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AL-HIJR: THE LAND OF THAMUD

On the way north, the Muslim army passed through an extraordinary region: ***al-Hijr***, the land of Thamud, the people of the Prophet Salih عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. There stood houses carved into rock mountains — remains of a once-mighty civilisation, destroyed for denying their messenger. Allah says:

"And certainly did the companions of Thamud deny the messengers" (Al-Hijr 15:80) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 15:80.

"And they used to carve from the mountains, houses, feeling secure" (Al-Hijr 15:82) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 15:82.

"But the shriek seized them at early morning" (Al-Hijr 15:83) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 15:83.

The exhausted, thirsty Companions found wells there, drew water and made dough. But the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave a surprising command:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 3378

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ مِسْكِينٍ أَبُو الْحَسَنِ، حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ حَسَّانَ بْنِ حَيَّانَ أَبُو زَكَرِيَّاءَ، حَدَّثَنَا سُلَيْمَانُ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ دِينَارٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ ـ رضى الله عنهما أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم لَمَّا نَزَلَ الْحِجْرَ فِي غَزْوَةِ تَبُوكَ أَمَرَهُمْ أَنْ لاَ يَشْرَبُوا مِنْ بِئْرِهَا، وَلاَ يَسْتَقُوا مِنْهَا فَقَالُوا قَدْ عَجَنَّا مِنْهَا، وَاسْتَقَيْنَا. فَأَمَرَهُمْ أَنْ يَطْرَحُوا ذَلِكَ الْعَجِينَ وَيُهَرِيقُوا ذَلِكَ الْمَاءَ. وَيُرْوَى عَنْ سَبْرَةَ بْنِ مَعْبَدٍ وَأَبِي الشُّمُوسِ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم أَمَرَ بِإِلْقَاءِ الطَّعَامِ. وَقَالَ أَبُو ذَرٍّ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم «مَنِ اعْتَجَنَ بِمَائِهِ».

TRANSLATION:

Ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما narrated that when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ halted at ***al-Hijr*** during the Expedition of Tabuk, he ordered them ***not to drink from its well nor draw water from it***. They said: "We have already kneaded dough with it and drawn its water." So he ordered them ***to throw away that dough and pour out that water***. (Al-Bukhari said:) It is also narrated from Sabrah ibn Ma'bad and Abu ash-Shumus that the Prophet ﷺ ordered the food to be thrown away; and Abu Dharr narrated from the Prophet ﷺ: "Whoever kneaded dough with its water."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Muhammad ibn Miskin, from Yahya ibn Hassan, from Sulayman ibn Bilal, from 'Abdullah ibn Dinar, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Prophets, Chapter: "And to Thamud their brother Salih", Hadith No. 3378; also Nos. 3379–3381, 4419–4420 and Muslim No. 2981.

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GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3378

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

In thirst and hunger, ***throwing away water and bread*** was a great sacrifice. Yet the Companions obeyed without question. Another narration in Sahih al-Bukhari (3379) mentions that he ordered them to draw water from ***the well from which the she-camel of the Prophet Salih had drunk*** — showing that the prohibition was not about water itself, but about ***a place under Allah's wrath***.

Today the site of al-Hijr (Mada'in Salih) in northern Saudi Arabia is ***a tourist attraction***. Scholars remind us that the Prophet's ﷺ etiquette at this place was to pass through ***taking a lesson***, not to enjoy and make merry at a place once struck by punishment.

The episode also teaches that obedience sometimes means giving up something we have already invested in. The Companions had drawn the water and kneaded the dough; their effort was real. Yet when the command came, they let it go. How often do we cling to something only because we have already spent time or money on it, even after learning that it displeases Allah?

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"DO NOT ENTER EXCEPT WEEPING"

Passing the dwellings of Thamud, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave a soul-stirring warning. 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما narrates that he said: ***"Do not enter the dwellings of those who wronged themselves except weeping, lest what befell them befall you."*** Then he ***covered his head and hastened his pace*** until he had crossed the valley (Sahih al-Bukhari 4419; 4420).

Weeping here is not merely tears, but ***a fearful and mindful heart***: fear of the same punishment, and awareness that the strength of Thamud — who carved mountains into homes — could not save them at all. ***"So nothing availed them [from] what they used to earn"*** (Al-Hijr 15:84).

This was ***a history lesson*** taught by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on site. History is not a story to memorise, but ***a mirror*** in which to see ourselves. Every proud civilisation that forgets Allah will end like al-Hijr — ruins that people visit.

Scholars derive from this Hadith that it is ***disliked to stop or stay overnight*** without need at places once struck by punishment, and that one should ***pass through them quickly*** while taking a lesson.

The Prophet ﷺ covering his head and hastening his pace also teaches that emotions such as fear and humility have a place in worship. The believer does not pass the signs of Allah's punishment like a careless tourist, but with a heart that trembles and a step that hurries away from what displeases his Lord.

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THE SPRING OF TABUK

After the long march, the Muslim army approached its destination. Mu'adh ibn Jabal رضى الله عنه narrates what happened at ***the spring of Tabuk***:

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 706

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ الدَّارِمِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عَلِيٍّ الْحَنَفِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا مَالِكٌ، - وَهُوَ ابْنُ أَنَسٍ - عَنْ أَبِي الزُّبَيْرِ الْمَكِّيِّ، أَنَّ أَبَا الطُّفَيْلِ، عَامِرَ بْنَ وَاثِلَةَ أَخْبَرَهُ أَنَّ مُعَاذَ بْنَ جَبَلٍ أَخْبَرَهُ قَالَ خَرَجْنَا مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم عَامَ غَزْوَةِ تَبُوكَ فَكَانَ يَجْمَعُ الصَّلاَةَ فَصَلَّى الظُّهْرَ وَالْعَصْرَ جَمِيعًا وَالْمَغْرِبَ وَالْعِشَاءَ جَمِيعًا حَتَّى إِذَا كَانَ يَوْمًا أَخَّرَ الصَّلاَةَ ثُمَّ خَرَجَ فَصَلَّى الظُّهْرَ وَالْعَصْرَ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ دَخَلَ ثُمَّ خَرَجَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَصَلَّى الْمَغْرِبَ وَالْعِشَاءَ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ قَالَ «إِنَّكُمْ سَتَأْتُونَ غَدًا إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ عَيْنَ تَبُوكَ وَإِنَّكُمْ لَنْ تَأْتُوهَا حَتَّى يُضْحِيَ النَّهَارُ فَمَنْ جَاءَهَا مِنْكُمْ فَلاَ يَمَسَّ مِنْ مَائِهَا شَيْئًا حَتَّى آتِيَ». فَجِئْنَاهَا وَقَدْ سَبَقَنَا إِلَيْهَا رَجُلاَنِ وَالْعَيْنُ مِثْلُ الشِّرَاكِ تَبِضُّ بِشَىْءٍ مِنْ مَاءٍ - قَالَ - فَسَأَلَهُمَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم «هَلْ مَسَسْتُمَا مِنْ مَائِهَا شَيْئًا». قَالاَ نَعَمْ. فَسَبَّهُمَا النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَقَالَ لَهُمَا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَقُولَ - قَالَ - ثُمَّ غَرَفُوا بِأَيْدِيهِمْ مِنَ الْعَيْنِ قَلِيلاً قَلِيلاً حَتَّى اجْتَمَعَ فِي شَىْءٍ - قَالَ - وَغَسَلَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فِيهِ يَدَيْهِ وَوَجْهَهُ ثُمَّ أَعَادَهُ فِيهَا فَجَرَتِ الْعَيْنُ بِمَاءٍ مُنْهَمِرٍ أَوْ قَالَ غَزِيرٍ - شَكَّ أَبُو عَلِيٍّ أَيُّهُمَا قَالَ - حَتَّى اسْتَقَى النَّاسُ ثُمَّ قَالَ «يُوشِكُ يَا مُعَاذُ إِنْ طَالَتْ بِكَ حَيَاةٌ أَنْ تَرَى مَا هَا هُنَا قَدْ مُلِئَ جِنَانًا».

TRANSLATION:

Mu'adh ibn Jabal رضى الله عنه said: We went out with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in the year of the Expedition of Tabuk. He ***combined the prayers***: he prayed Zuhr and 'Asr together, and Maghrib and 'Isha' together. One day he delayed the prayer, then came out and prayed Zuhr and 'Asr together, then went in, then came out after that and prayed Maghrib and 'Isha' together. Then he said: **"Tomorrow, if Allah wills, you will reach the spring of Tabuk, and you will not reach it until the forenoon. Whoever of you gets there, let him not touch any of its water until I come."** We reached it, and two men had got there before us. ***The spring was as thin as a sandal strap, trickling a little water.*** The Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked them: **"Did you touch any of its water?"** They said: "Yes." The Prophet ﷺ rebuked them and said to them what Allah willed him to say. Then they scooped from the spring with their hands little by little until some was gathered

in a vessel. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ washed his hands and face in it, then poured it back into the spring.

And the spring gushed with abundant water, until the people drew their fill. Then he said: ***"Soon, O Mu'adh, if your life is long, you will see this place filled with gardens."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from 'Abdullah ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman ad-Darimi, from Abu 'Ali al-Hanafi, from Malik ibn Anas, from Abu az-Zubayr al-Makki, from Abu at-Tufayl 'Amir ibn Wathilah, from Mu'adh ibn Jabal رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Virtues, Chapter: The Prophet's ﷺ Miracles, Hadith No. 706; also Malik in al-Muwatta'.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:706c

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The spring was flowing only ***drop by drop***, like a fine thread. They scooped up a little at a time until some was gathered, then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ washed his face and hands with it and returned it to the spring. Then ***the spring gushed with abundant water***, and everyone drank.

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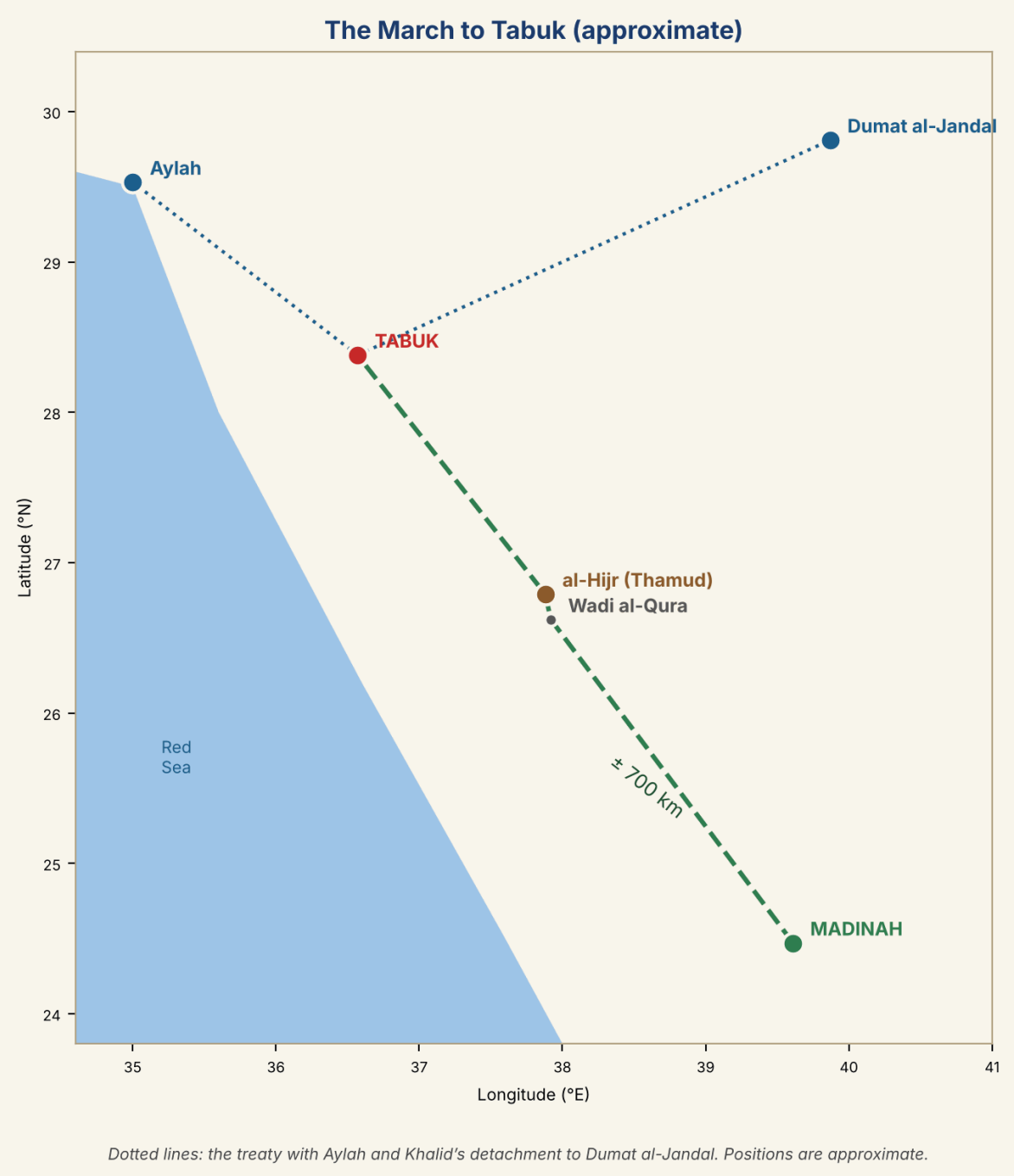

Figure 3: The route from Madinah to Tabuk.

Then he said to Mu'adh: ***"It may be, O Mu'adh, if you live long, that you will see this place filled with gardens."*** Today, the Tabuk region in northern Saudi Arabia is known for ***vast farmland*** — wheat, fruit and flowers — making it one of the country's important agricultural areas.

Note too his instruction: ***"Let no one touch its water at all until I come."*** Two men went ahead and touched it, and he rebuked them. Discipline in managing ***scarce water*** for thirty thousand people was a matter of life and death.

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COMBINING PRAYERS ON A JOURNEY

The same Hadith of Mu'adh contains ***an important point of fiqh***: throughout the journey to Tabuk, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***combined prayers*** — Zuhr with 'Asr, and Maghrib with 'Isha'. This is among the main proofs that combining is permitted for the traveller.

In another narration in Sahih Muslim from Mu'adh, when asked why he did so, the answer was: ***"He wanted that his community not be put in hardship."*** This is the spirit of Islamic law: ***ease in hardship***. Allah says: ***"Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship"*** (Al-Baqarah 2:185).

SITUATION	PRAYERS THAT MAY BE COMBINED
Traveller (on a journey)	Zuhr + 'Asr; Maghrib + 'Isha'
Jam' taqdim (advanced)	Performed in the time of the first prayer
Jam' ta'khir (delayed)	Performed in the time of the second prayer
Cannot be combined	Fajr; 'Asr with Maghrib

Travellers today — truck drivers, pilots, students returning home — may take this concession. It is not a sign of weak faith, but ***following the Sunnah*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, practised by him on the hardest journey of his life.

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A FIERCE WIND AND A WOMAN'S GARDEN

Abu Humayd as-Sa'idi رضى الله عنه narrates a Hadith that contains ***several miracles*** on the way to and from Tabuk:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 1481

حَدَّثَنَا سَهْلُ بْنُ بَكَّارٍ، حَدَّثَنَا وُهَيْبٌ، عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ يَحْيَى، عَنْ عَبَّاسٍ السَّاعِدِيِّ، عَنْ أَبِي حُمَيْدٍ السَّاعِدِيِّ، قَالَ غَزَوْنَا مَعَ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم غَزْوَةَ تَبُوكَ فَلَمَّا جَاءَ وَادِي الْقُرَى إِذَا امْرَأَةٌ فِي حَدِيقَةٍ لَهَا فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم لأَصْحَابِهِ «اخْرُصُوا». وَخَرَصَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم عَشَرَةَ أَوْسُقٍ فَقَالَ لَهَا «أَحْصِي مَا يَخْرُجُ مِنْهَا». فَلَمَّا أَتَيْنَا تَبُوكَ قَالَ «أَمَا إِنَّهَا سَتَهُبُّ اللَّيْلَةَ رِيحٌ شَدِيدَةٌ فَلاَ يَقُومَنَّ أَحَدٌ، وَمَنْ كَانَ مَعَهُ بَعِيرٌ فَلْيَعْقِلْهُ». فَعَقَلْنَاهَا وَهَبَّتْ رِيحٌ شَدِيدَةٌ فَقَامَ رَجُلٌ فَأَلْقَتْهُ بِجَبَلِ طَيِّئٍ ـ وَأَهْدَى مَلِكُ أَيْلَةَ لِلنَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم بَغْلَةً بَيْضَاءَ، وَكَسَاهُ بُرْدًا وَكَتَبَ لَهُ بِبَحْرِهِمْ ـ فَلَمَّا أَتَى وَادِي الْقُرَى قَالَ لِلْمَرْأَةِ « كَمْ جَاءَ حَدِيقَتُكِ». قَالَتْ عَشَرَةَ أَوْسُقٍ خَرْصَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم «إِنِّي مُتَعَجِّلٌ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ، فَمَنْ أَرَادَ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ يَتَعَجَّلَ مَعِي فَلْيَتَعَجَّلْ». فَلَمَّا ـ قَالَ ابْنُ بَكَّارٍ كَلِمَةً مَعْنَاهَا ـ أَشْرَفَ عَلَى الْمَدِينَةِ قَالَ «هَذِهِ طَابَةُ». فَلَمَّا رَأَى أُحُدًا قَالَ «هَذَا جَبَيْلٌ يُحِبُّنَا وَنُحِبُّهُ، أَلاَ أُخْبِرُكُمْ بِخَيْرِ دُورِ الأَنْصَارِ». قَالُوا بَلَى. قَالَ «دُورُ بَنِي النَّجَّارِ، ثُمَّ دُورُ بَنِي عَبْدِ الأَشْهَلِ، ثُمَّ دُورُ بَنِي سَاعِدَةَ، أَوْ دُورُ بَنِي الْحَارِثِ بْنِ الْخَزْرَجِ، وَفِي كُلِّ دُورِ الأَنْصَارِ ـ يَعْنِي ـ خَيْرًا». وَقَالَ سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ بِلاَلٍ حَدَّثَنِي عَمْرٌو، «ثُمَّ دَارُ بَنِي الْحَارِثِ، ثُمَّ بَنِي سَاعِدَةَ». وَقَالَ سُلَيْمَانُ عَنْ سَعْدِ بْنِ سَعِيدٍ، عَنْ عُمَارَةَ بْنِ غَزِيَّةَ، عَنْ عَبَّاسٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ «أُحُدٌ جَبَلٌ يُحِبُّنَا وَنُحِبُّهُ». قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ كُلُّ بُسْتَانٍ عَلَيْهِ حَائِطٌ فَهُوَ حَدِيقَةٌ، وَمَا لَمْ يَكُنْ عَلَيْهِ حَائِطٌ لَمْ يَقُلْ حَدِيقَةٌ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Humayd as-Sa'idi رضى الله عنه said: We went on the Expedition of Tabuk with the Prophet ﷺ. When he reached ***Wadi al-Qura***, there was a woman in her garden. The Prophet ﷺ said to his Companions: **"Estimate (its yield)."** The Messenger of Allah ﷺ estimated it at ***ten wasqs***, and said to her: **"Count what it**

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produces." When we reached Tabuk, he said: **"A strong wind will blow tonight, so let no one stand up, and whoever has a camel, let him tie it."** So we tied them. A strong wind blew, and a man stood up, ***and the wind threw him onto the mountain of Tayyi'***. The king of ***Aylah*** presented the Prophet ﷺ with a white mule, and he clothed him with a cloak and wrote him a document concerning his land. When he came back to Wadi al-Qura, he asked the woman: **"How much did your garden yield?"** She said: "Ten wasqs, as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ estimated." The Prophet ﷺ said: **"I am hastening to Madinah; whoever of you wishes to hasten with me, let him do so."** When he came within sight of Madinah, he said: ***"This is Tabah (the good)."*** When he saw Uhud, he said: ***"This is a mountain that loves us and we love it."*** Then he said: **"Shall I tell you the best of the Ansar's homes?"** They said: "Yes." He said: **"The homes of Banu an-Najjar, then the homes of Banu 'Abd al-Ashhal, then the homes of Banu Sa'idah or the homes of Banu al-Harith ibn al-Khazraj, and in all the homes of the Ansar there is good."** (Al-Bukhari also cites other narrations with the same meaning, and explains that "hadiqah" is a walled garden.)

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Sahl ibn Bakkar, from Wuhayb ibn Khalid, from 'Amr ibn Yahya al-Mazini, from 'Abbas ibn Sahl as-Sa'idi, from Abu Humayd as-Sa'idi رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Zakah, Chapter: Estimating Dates, Hadith No. 1481; also Nos. 3161, 4422 and Muslim No. 1392.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:1481

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The first miracle: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ estimated the yield of the woman's garden in Wadi al-Qura at ten wasq. On the way back, the woman reported that the yield was exactly ***ten wasq***. It also shows the practice of ***khars*** (estimating date yields), the basis for calculating zakat on fruit.

The second miracle: He foretold that ***a fierce wind would blow*** that night and ordered everyone not to stand and to tie their camels. The wind indeed came, and ***a man who stood up was carried away*** to the mountains of Tayyi'. Obedience saved; disobedience brought danger.

The lesson: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***gave early warning*** and clear safety instructions. In modern terms, this is ***risk management***. Following safety instructions — whether storm, flood or epidemic warnings — is part of following the Sunnah.

The Hadith also shows the Prophet's ﷺ care for the woman of Wadi al-Qura: he asked her to measure her harvest, and on the way back he asked about it again. He did not forget a single woman and her small garden while leading thirty thousand men. Great leadership is not only about grand strategy, but also about remembering the small people along the way.

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THE TREATY WITH AYLAH

The Hadith of Abu Humayd also mentions an important political event: ***the king of Aylah*** (today Aqaba in Jordan, at the head of the Gulf of Aqaba) came and gave the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***a white mule***, and the Prophet ﷺ clothed him with a cloak and ***wrote him a treaty for their land*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 1481).

The sirah books give the king's name as ***Yuhannah ibn Ru'bah***, and say that the people of Jarba' and Adhruh also came to make treaties. They agreed to pay ***jizyah***, and in return their lives, property, ships and caravans ***were guaranteed safety***.

These treaties accord with the verse revealed in the same period: ***"[fight] until they give the jizyah willingly while they are humbled"*** (At-Tawbah 9:29) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:29.

Jizyah is not plunder, but ***a protection payment*** that allowed the People of the Book to keep their religion under the shelter of the Islamic state, exempt from military service, with their safety guaranteed. This was among the foundations of ***coexistence*** between Muslims and non-Muslims in Islamic history.

Without battle, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***extended the influence of Islam*** to the borders of Syria. The northern tribes now knew there was a new power, just and strong. Sometimes ***the greatest victory is won without drawing a sword***.

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KHALID TO DUMAT AL-JANDAL

From Tabuk, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent ***Khalid ibn al-Walid*** رضى الله عنه with about four hundred and twenty horsemen to ***Dumat al-Jandal***, an important northern fortress (today al-Jawf in Saudi Arabia) ruled by ***Ukaydir ibn 'Abd al-Malik***, a Christian Arab king.

SIRAH NOTE: THE WILD CATTLE ON A MOONLIT NIGHT

The sirah authors relate that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to Khalid: ***"You will find him hunting wild cattle."*** On a moonlit night, while Ukaydir was on the roof of his palace with his wife, a herd of wild cattle came rubbing their horns against the palace gate. Ukaydir came down and rode out to hunt, and was captured by Khalid's troop. His brother Hassan was killed in the brief skirmish.

Ukaydir was brought to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who ***spared his life*** and made a peace treaty with him in return for jizyah. These details are ***sirah reports*** (Ibn Ishaq and al-Waqidi).

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Expedition of Tabuk; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.

al-Waqidi, al-Maghazi — Khalid's expedition to Dumat al-Jandal.

This event is confirmed by sahih Hadith. Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه narrates that ***Ukaydir of Dumah gave the Prophet ﷺ a silk robe***. People marvelled at its beauty, and he said: ***"By the One in whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, the handkerchiefs of Sa'd ibn Mu'adh in Paradise are better than this"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 2616).

See how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***redirected*** the Companions' gaze. While they were dazzled by a king's silk, he reminded them of Sa'd ibn Mu'adh — the Ansari leader martyred from a wound received at the Battle of the Trench (Books 12–13). Merely ***his handkerchiefs*** in Paradise are nobler than the costliest garments of this world.

The silk robe also carries a legal lesson: silk is forbidden for Muslim men to wear, yet the Prophet ﷺ accepted it as a gift, and in other narrations distributed such garments to be used by women or sold. Accepting gifts from non-Muslim rulers was part of his diplomacy, and the ruling on its use was applied with wisdom.

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TWENTY DAYS AT TABUK

Jabir ibn 'Abdillah رضى الله عنهما narrates: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stayed at Tabuk for twenty days, shortening the prayer"*** (Sunan Abi Dawud 1235, graded sahih by an-Nawawi and al-Albani).

During those twenty days, ***the Roman army did not appear***. Whether the news of their gathering was inaccurate, or they chose not to face so large and determined an army, the result was the same: the Muslims ***held the field without battle***. The Arab border tribes saw that the Roman empire did not dare come out.

> **SIRAH NOTE: CONSULTATION: ADVANCE OR RETURN?**
>
> The sirah authors relate that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ consulted the Companions about advancing further into Syria. 'Umar ibn al-Khattab رضى الله عنه said: "O Messenger of Allah, if you have been commanded to advance, then advance." He said: "Had I been commanded, I would not have asked your opinion." 'Umar then advised returning, since Rome had a large army and there was not a single Muslim there, and their coming to Tabuk had ***sufficiently intimidated the enemy***. This report is mentioned by al-Waqidi.
>
> **REFERENCES:**
> Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Expedition of Tabuk; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.

The lesson: ***victory does not always mean fighting***. Achieving a strategic aim without bloodshed is wisdom. And great decisions are made through ***shura***, even by a Prophet.

Twenty days was a long time for an army of thirty thousand to remain in the desert. Yet it was not idle: delegations came, treaties were signed, and the northern frontier was secured. The Prophet ﷺ used this time to build relationships rather than merely to wait for an enemy, turning a military expedition into a diplomatic one.

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THE PLOT AT THE PASS OF 'AQABAH

On the way back from Tabuk, an event took place that revealed how deep the hatred of some hypocrites ran. In Sahih Muslim, Abu at-Tufayl relates a dispute between a man from ***"the people of al-'Aqabah"*** and Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman رضى الله عنه. Hudhayfah said they numbered ***fourteen or fifteen***, and testified that twelve of them were ***enemies of Allah and His Messenger in this world and the Hereafter***. In the same narration it is mentioned that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ once said on a journey: "The water is little, so let no one reach it before me," then found that some people had gone ahead, and he cursed them (Sahih Muslim 2779).

SIRAH NOTE: MASKED MEN ON THE MOUNTAIN PATH

The sirah authors relate that as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ crossed the pass of 'Aqabah at night, he ordered the army to take the valley route while he himself took the narrow mountain path. ***'Ammar ibn Yasir*** led his camel by the rein in front, and ***Hudhayfah*** drove it from behind. A group of ***masked*** men tried to approach to push him into the ravine. Hudhayfah struck the faces of their camels, and they fled.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ told Hudhayfah their names in secret, which is why Hudhayfah was called ***"the keeper of the Messenger's ﷺ secret"***. The details of this story are ***sirah reports*** and in the Musnad of Ahmad with debated chains; its basis is confirmed by Sahih Muslim 2779.

REFERENCES:
Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Expedition of Tabuk; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.

Though he knew their names, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***did not kill them***. In another incident he explained: ***"So that people will not say that Muhammad kills his companions"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4905). He protected ***the good name of the call*** even against an enemy within.

The incident at 'Aqabah also shows Hudhayfah's unique place among the Companions. In later years, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab would watch whether Hudhayfah attended a funeral prayer; if Hudhayfah did not pray over someone, 'Umar would not either. Even 'Umar, in his humility, once asked him: "By Allah, am I among them?" Hudhayfah answered that he was not, and that he would tell no one else after him.

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"WE WERE ONLY CHATTING AND JOKING"

Along the way, some hypocrites ***mocked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the Companions***. When confronted, they gave a now-famous excuse. Allah says:

"And if you ask them, they will surely say, "We were only conversing and playing." Say, "Is it Allah and His verses and His Messenger that you were mocking" (At-Tawbah 9:65) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:65.

"Make no excuse; you have disbelieved after your belief" (At-Tawbah 9:66) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:66.

SIRAH NOTE: "WE HAVE NEVER SEEN THE LIKE OF OUR RECITERS"

Ibn Jarir at-Tabari and Ibn Abi Hatim narrate from Ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما that during the Expedition of Tabuk a man said in a gathering: ***"We have never seen the like of these reciters of ours — the greediest of stomach, the most lying of tongue, and the most cowardly when meeting the enemy"*** — referring to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the Companions. When the news reached him, the man came clinging to the saddle strap of the Prophet's camel, his feet stumbling on the stones, saying: "We were only chatting and joking." He simply recited this verse, and did not turn to him.

Some scholars graded this report hasan; it is placed in this Note because it is not in the Sahih collections.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim, At-Tawbah 9:65–66. https://tafsir.app/ibn-katheer/9/65

Scholars take this verse as proof that ***mocking Allah, His verses and His Messenger*** is no small matter, even in jest. Religion is not material for comedy. In the age of social media, where jokes about religion spread easily, this verse is ***a very relevant warning***.

Yet the next part of the verse also opens a door: ***"If We pardon one faction of you…"*** The commentators mention a man named Makhshi ibn Humayyir who repented and was forgiven. The door of repentance is always open to the one who sincerely returns.

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THOSE HELD BACK BY EXCUSE

As he approached Madinah on the way back, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ spoke words honouring those who could not go out because of ***genuine excuse***:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4423

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، أَخْبَرَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ، أَخْبَرَنَا حُمَيْدٌ الطَّوِيلُ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم رَجَعَ مِنْ غَزْوَةِ تَبُوكَ فَدَنَا مِنَ الْمَدِينَةِ فَقَالَ «إِنَّ بِالْمَدِينَةِ أَقْوَامًا مَا سِرْتُمْ مَسِيرًا وَلاَ قَطَعْتُمْ وَادِيًا إِلاَّ كَانُوا مَعَكُمْ». قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَهُمْ بِالْمَدِينَةِ قَالَ «وَهُمْ بِالْمَدِينَةِ، حَبَسَهُمُ الْعُذْرُ».

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned from the Expedition of Tabuk, and when he drew near Madinah he said: ***"In Madinah there are people who, whenever you travelled any distance or crossed any valley, were with you."*** They said: "O Messenger of Allah, while they were in Madinah?" He said: ***"While they were in Madinah; they were held back by a valid excuse."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Marwazi, from 'Abdullah ibn al-Mubarak, from Humayd at-Tawil, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions (al-Maghazi), Hadith No. 4423; also No. 2839 and Muslim No. 1911 (from Jabir).

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4423

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This is ***the nobility of intention***. The Companions who wept because they could not go (Chapter 9) did not take a single step towards Tabuk, yet they ***shared the reward of every step***. Allah weighs the heart, not merely the limbs.

This Hadith also consoles every Muslim ***held back from good*** by illness, old age, family responsibility or lack of means. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said in another Hadith: ***"When a servant falls ill or travels, there is written for him the like of what he used to do when resident and healthy"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 2996).

But the difference is clear: those with excuse ***grieved*** at not being able to go, while the hypocrites ***rejoiced*** at staying behind (At-Tawbah 9:81). The measure of our sincerity is: how do we feel when we miss a chance to worship?

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The scholars derived from this Hadith a well-known principle: a person is rewarded according to his sincere intention when he is genuinely unable to act. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Actions are only by intentions, and every person will have only what he intended" (Sahih al-Bukhari 1). The one who truly intends good but is prevented by a real obstacle is not deprived of its reward.

This Hadith also teaches that those who remain at home with a genuine excuse share in the reward only because of their sincere grief. It is not the mere staying that earns reward, but the longing that accompanies it. The same outward act — staying in Madinah — was worship for some and hypocrisy for others, depending entirely on the heart.

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"THIS IS TABAH": RETURN TO MADINAH

When Madinah came into view in the distance, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said lovingly: ***"This is Tabah (the good Madinah)."*** And when he saw Mount Uhud, he said: ***"This is a mountain that loves us and we love it"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 1481).

In the same Hadith, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said as he drew near: ***"I am hastening to Madinah; whoever wishes to hasten with me, let him hasten."*** Longing for one's homeland and place of worship is a natural feeling that does not conflict with faith.

SIRAH NOTE: THE CHILDREN'S SONG AT THANIYYAT AL-WADA'

As-Sa'ib ibn Yazid رضى الله عنه narrates: ***"I remember going out with the children to Thaniyyat al-Wada' to meet the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when he returned from the Expedition of Tabuk"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4427).

The famous song "Tala'a al-badru 'alayna" is often linked to the Hijrah, but some scholars such as Ibn al-Qayyim held it more likely that it was sung ***on the return from Tabuk***, since Thaniyyat al-Wada' lies on the Syrian side. The report of the song itself ***has no sahih chain***.

REFERENCES:
Ibn al-Qayyim, Zad al-Ma'ad — section on the Expedition of Tabuk.

On arriving in Madinah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went straight to ***the mosque*** and prayed two rak'ahs, then sat to receive people. There more than eighty who had stayed behind came with excuses — and there began the story of ***three truthful Companions***, to be told in Book 25.

The return from Tabuk also completed a turning point in Arabia. After this, delegations from across the peninsula began coming to Madinah in such numbers that the following year became known as 'Am al-Wufud — the Year of Delegations. The march that seemed fruitless to the hypocrites, with no battle and no spoils, in fact opened the hearts and doors of the whole of Arabia.

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SURAH AT-TAWBAH: REVELATION ALONG THE WAY

Tabuk is the only campaign about which ***most of a whole surah*** was revealed. Ibn Kathir and other commentators mention that verses from the middle of Surah At-Tawbah were revealed before, during and after the march to Tabuk, accompanying each stage — as though revelation ***marched with the army***.

VERSES	THEME
9:29	Command to face the People of the Book; jizyah
9:38–41	Rebuke to those reluctant to go forth
9:42–57	The excuses and traits of the hypocrites
9:64–66	The hypocrites' mockery on the journey
9:79–83	Mocking charity; "do not go forth in the heat"
9:91–92	Those with excuse and those who wept
9:94–96	The hypocrites' excuses after the return
9:107–110	Masjid ad-Dirar
9:117–118	Repentance of the Prophet, Muhajirun, Ansar and the three

This table shows how the Qur'an ***followed events as they happened***: calling before departure, exposing secrets during the journey, and weighing each group after the return. It also shows that Surah At-Tawbah is not merely a surah about war, but a surah about ***honesty of the heart***.

Note too that this sequence ends with ***the verses of repentance*** (9:117–118). Though the surah is severe towards the hypocrites, the door of repentance stays open — and the repentance of the three Companions who stayed behind will be the main subject of Book 25. Verses 9:107–110 on Masjid ad-Dirar will also be explained in the same book.

Scholars also mention that Surah At-Tawbah is among ***the last surahs revealed***, and it is the only surah that does not begin with the basmalah. The wisdom behind this will be discussed in Book 27, when we tell of the declaration of Bara'ah during the Hajj season of 9 AH.

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MU'TAH AND TABUK

Tabuk was the second time the Muslims marched against Rome. A comparison with Mu'tah shows how far the community had grown in ***less than two years***:

ASPECT	MU'TAH (8 AH) → TABUK (9 AH)
Leader	Zayd, Ja'far, Ibn Rawahah → the Prophet ﷺ himself
Army size	About 3,000 → about 30,000
Fighting	Fierce battle → no battle
Losses	Three commanders martyred → none
Outcome	Army saved by Khalid → border tribes submit
Revelation	No specific verses → much of At-Tawbah

If Mu'tah was ***a test of courage***, Tabuk was ***a test of sincerity***. At Mu'tah the enemy was in front; at Tabuk the greatest enemy was ***the self*** — the heat, the distance, the date gardens, and the whispers of the hypocrites.

Tabuk also paved the way for ***the opening of Syria*** in the time of Abu Bakr and 'Umar. The route the Messenger of Allah ﷺ took to Tabuk was later followed by the Muslim armies that liberated Jerusalem.

Tabuk also shows how the Prophet ﷺ combined preparation with reliance on Allah. He gathered the largest army of his life, organised supplies, appointed deputies and gave careful instructions about water and wind. Yet the outcome — the retreat of the Romans and the submission of the border towns — came without a single battle. The believer prepares fully, then leaves the result to Allah.

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SOURCES OF THE STORY

The story of Tabuk is narrated in many sources of differing grades. The table below summarises them:

EVENT	SOURCE AND GRADE
The open call and the heat	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418 — sahih
'Uthman's spending	Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3701 — hasan
Abu Bakr and 'Umar	Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3675 — hasan; Tabuk link: sirah
The Ash'aris	Sahih al-Bukhari 4415 — sahih
'Ali like Harun	Sahih al-Bukhari 4416 — sahih
Abu Khaythamah	Sahih Muslim 2769 — sahih
Abu Dharr walking alone	Ibn Ishaq — weak chain
Al-Hijr	Sahih al-Bukhari 3378, 4419 — sahih
Spring of Tabuk and combining	Sahih Muslim 706 — sahih
The wind and Aylah	Sahih al-Bukhari 1481 — sahih
Ukaydir and the silk robe	Sahih al-Bukhari 2616 — sahih; details: sirah
Twenty days at Tabuk	Sunan Abi Dawud 1235 — sahih
The people of al-'Aqabah	Sahih Muslim 2779 — sahih; details: sirah
Those with excuse	Sahih al-Bukhari 4423 — sahih
News of the Roman army	al-Waqidi, Ibn Sa'd — sirah

Most of the main events of Tabuk are supported by ***sahih Hadith***, while the additional details come from the books of sirah. We accept the sahih with confidence, and convey the sirah reports while stating their grade.

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THE PEOPLE OF THE EXPEDITION OF TABUK

The Expedition of Tabuk involved the largest army in the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, yet the story is remembered through a number of particular people. This table gathers them in one place: their tribe, their role in these events, and the source. Information found only in the sirah books is marked as such.

NAME	TRIBE / RELATION	ROLE AT TABUK	SOURCE
‘Ali ibn Abi Talib رضى الله عنه	Quraysh (Banu Hashim); cousin and son-in-law of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ	Left behind to look after his family: “like Harun to Musa”	Sahih al-Bukhari 4416 (chapter 14)
Muhammad ibn Maslamah رضى الله عنه	Aws (Ansar)	Administered Madinah in his absence	Sirah books; another report names Siba‘ ibn ‘Urfutah al-Ghifari
‘Uthman ibn ‘Affan رضى الله عنه	Quraysh (Banu Umayyah)	The largest spending for Jaysh al-‘Usrah	Jami‘ at-Tirmidhi 3701 (chapter 6)
‘Abd ar-Rahman ibn ‘Awf رضى الله عنه	Quraysh (Banu Zuhrah)	Led the Fajr prayer; the Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed behind him	Sahih Muslim 274 (chapter 32)
Al-Mughirah ibn Shu‘bah رضى الله عنه	Thaqif	Accompanied him and poured the water for his wudu’	Sahih Muslim 274 (chapter 32)
Abu Musa al-Ash‘ari رضى الله عنه	Al-Ash‘ariyyun (Yemen)	Asked for mounts for his people	Sahih al-Bukhari 4415 (chapter 10)
Abu Khaythamah رضى الله عنه	Ansar (Khazraj, according to the sirah books)	Stayed behind at first, then caught up at Tabuk	Sahih Muslim 2769; sirah books (chapter 15)
Abu Dharr al-Ghifari رضى الله عنه	Ghifar	Walked alone when his camel grew weak	Sirah books (chapter 15)
Khalid ibn al-Walid رضى الله عنه	Quraysh (Banu Makhzum)	Sent to Dumat al-Jandal	Sirah books; Sahih al-Bukhari 2616 (chapter 22)
Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman رضى الله عنه	Banu ‘Abs; his father was an ally of Banu ‘Abd al-Ashhal (Aws)	Knew the names of the plotters at ‘Aqabah	Sahih Muslim 2779 (chapter 24)
‘Ammar ibn Yasir رضى الله عنه	Banu ‘Ans (Madhhij); his family were allies of Banu Makhzum	Held the rein of his camel on the slope of ‘Aqabah	Sirah books (chapter 24)

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NAME	TRIBE / RELATION	ROLE AT TABUK	SOURCE
'Abdullah Dhu al-Bijadayn رضى الله عنه	Muzaynah	Died at Tabuk and was buried by the Prophet ﷺ himself	Sirah books; weak chain (chapter 33)
Al-Jadd ibn Qays	Banu Salimah (Khazraj)	Asked permission not to go out (At-Tawbah 9:49)	Books of tafsir and sirah (chapter 11)
Ukaydir ibn 'Abd al-Malik	Kindah (as-Sakun); king of Dumat al-Jandal	Captured, then made peace and paid jizyah	Sirah books; Sahih al-Bukhari 2616 (chapter 22)
Yuhannah ibn Ru'bah	Ruler of Aylah	Came to make a peace treaty	Sahih al-Bukhari 1481 ("the king of Aylah"); the name is from the sirah books (chapter 21)
Ka'b ibn Malik, Murarah ibn ar-Rabi' and Hilal ibn Umayyah رضى الله عنهم	Ka'b: Khazraj (Banu Salimah); Murarah and Hilal: Aws	The three who stayed behind without excuse	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418 (Series 25)

Notice the variety in this table: Quraysh and Ansar, Arabs and non-Arabs, the wealthy and those who walked on foot, loyal Companions and hypocrites. All were on one journey, yet Allah judged each person by his heart.

LESSONS

Tabuk was a test that sifted people: on one journey it became clear who spent his wealth, who wept because he could not go out, and who looked for excuses. Each of us is writing his own role in the "table" of life, and Allah knows best what is in the hearts.

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RULINGS FROM THE JOURNEY TO TABUK

A journey of more than seven hundred kilometres in the summer gave rise to many rulings that are still practised today. This chapter adds one important Hadith not yet discussed, then gathers the rulings from earlier chapters into one table.

THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ PRAYS BEHIND 'ABD AR-RAHMAN IBN 'AWF

Al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah رضى الله عنه related that he accompanied the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on the Expedition of Tabuk. Before Fajr, the Prophet went out to relieve himself, and al-Mughirah carried a container of water. When he returned, al-Mughirah poured the water, and he made wudu' and wiped over his khuffs (leather socks).

When they arrived, the people had already begun the prayer with 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn 'Awf رضى الله عنه as imam. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ caught one of the two rak'ahs, and prayed the last rak'ah with them.

After 'Abd ar-Rahman gave the salam, the Prophet stood up to complete the rak'ah he had missed. The people were alarmed and said "Subhan Allah" many times. When he finished, he said: "You have done well" — or he said: "You have done right" — because they had prayed on time (Sahih Muslim 274).

This Hadith contains several lessons: it is permissible to wipe over khuffs when travelling; a great leader may pray behind someone of lower rank; and praying at the start of the time is better than waiting for an imam who is late, if the delay is long.

RULING	EVIDENCE	CHAPTER
Wiping over khuffs when travelling	Sahih Muslim 274	32
Praying behind an imam of lower rank; completing the missed rak'ahs (masbuq)	Sahih Muslim 274	32
Combining Zuhr–'Asr and Maghrib–'Isha' on a journey	Sahih Muslim 706	19
Shortening the prayer for twenty days at Tabuk	Sunan Abi Dawud 1235	23
Not using water from the wells of the punished people of Thamud, except the well of the she-camel of Prophet Salih عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ	Sahih al-Bukhari 3378, 3379	16–17
Passing places of punishment weeping and hastening one's pace	Sahih al-Bukhari 4419–4420	17
Taking jizyah from the People of the Book as a peace treaty	At-Tawbah 9:29; Sahih al-Bukhari 1481	21
Those held back by a valid excuse receive the reward of those who went out	Sahih al-Bukhari 4423	26

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RULING	EVIDENCE	CHAPTER
A leader seeking counsel and pooling provisions in times of hardship	Sahih Muslim 27	33

FIQH NOTE: SHORTENING THE PRAYER FOR TWENTY DAYS

Scholars differ on how long a traveller may shorten the prayer if he stays in one place. In the Shafi'i school, if a person intends to stay four days or more, he is no longer counted as a traveller; but if he stays without knowing when his business will end, he may shorten the prayer for up to eighteen days. The Hanafi school sets the limit at an intention to stay fifteen days.

Most scholars understand that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ shortened the prayer for twenty days at Tabuk because he did not intend to settle; he was waiting for developments, not staying for a fixed period. These details are discussed in the books of fiqh such as al-Majmu' by an-Nawawi; for particular cases, consult the local religious authorities.

LESSONS

The Shari'ah makes things easy for those in hardship: wiping over khuffs, combining and shortening the prayer. Yet ease does not remove discipline: the prayer is still performed on time, even when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself had not yet arrived.

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SMALL STORIES ALONG THE WAY

Among the great events of Tabuk are small stories that touch the heart. Some are authentic in Sahih Muslim; others are reports of the sirah books. This chapter gathers three of them, stating the grade of each.

THE BLESSED PROVISIONS

On the journey to Tabuk, the Companions' provisions almost ran out, until they were hungry. They asked permission to slaughter their riding camels. 'Umar رضى الله عنه said to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: if the camels were slaughtered, the mounts would become fewer; it would be better for him to gather the remains of their provisions and pray for blessing upon them.

He agreed. A leather mat was spread out, and each person came with whatever he had left — a handful of corn, a handful of dates, a piece of bread. He prayed for blessing, then said: "Take it into your containers." They took until there was not a single container in the army that had not been filled. Then he said: "I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that I am the Messenger of Allah. No servant meets Allah with these two testimonies, without doubt, and is kept away from Paradise" (Sahih Muslim 27).

Notice that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ accepted 'Umar's suggestion: consultation took place even at the moment of a miracle. The miracle was then followed by a reminder about tawhid — so that hearts would be attached not to wonders, but to Allah.

THE LOST CAMEL

The sirah books (Ibn Ishaq) report that the camel of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went missing on the journey. A hypocrite, Zayd ibn al-Lusayt, mocked: "Muhammad claims he is a prophet and brings news from heaven, yet he does not know where his camel is." He said: "I only know what Allah teaches me, and Allah has shown me: the camel is in such-and-such a valley, its rein caught on a tree." The Companions went and found it as he had said. This story is a report of the sirah books.

His answer carries a lesson of creed: a prophet does not know the unseen by himself, except what Allah reveals to him.

DHU AL-BIJADAYN: A GRAVE OTHERS LONGED FOR

'Abdullah Dhu al-Bijadayn رضى الله عنه was a young man from the tribe of Muzaynah. His nickname means "the one with two coarse cloths", because when he embraced Islam his people stripped him of his clothes and he left with a single cloth torn in two. He died at Tabuk at night.

It is reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself went down into his grave, while Abu Bakr and 'Umar handed down his body. After laying him to rest, he prayed: "O Allah, I am pleased with him, so be pleased

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with him." Ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه said: "How I wish I were the occupant of that grave." This story is narrated by Ibn Ishaq and at-Tabarani; al-Haythami graded the chain of at-Tabarani's narration weak (Majma' az-Zawa'id 4237). It is presented here as a sirah report.

LESSONS

These small stories teach that Allah forgets no one: a handful of dates, a lost camel, and a poor young man who died far from home. Honour with Allah is not measured by wealth or clothing, but by faith and sacrifice.

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TABUK AND AL-HIJR: THEN AND NOW

The places in the story of Tabuk still exist today, and some of them draw visitors from all over the world. This table links the names in the sirah books with their locations today. Uncertain locations are stated as such.

NAME IN THE SIRAH	TODAY	NOTE
Thaniyyat al-Wada‘	North of Madinah	Where the army gathered and set out; historians place it differently
Wadi al-Qura	The al-‘Ula area, north-west of Madinah	The woman's garden whose yield he asked them to estimate (chapter 20)
Al-Hijr	The archaeological site of Hegra (Mada'in Salih), north of al-‘Ula	The land of Thamud; passed through weeping (chapters 16–17)
Tabuk	The city of Tabuk, north-western Saudi Arabia	More than seven hundred kilometres from Madinah by modern road (approximate)
Aylah	The Gulf of ‘Aqabah area (Aqaba in Jordan and Eilat)	The king of Aylah came to make peace (chapter 21)
Dumat al-Jandal	Al-Jawf Province, northern Saudi Arabia	The fortress of Ukaydir (chapter 22)

HEGRA: SAUDI ARABIA'S FIRST WORLD HERITAGE SITE

In 2008, the site of al-Hijr (Hegra) was listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site — the first in Saudi Arabia. The site has 111 large tombs carved into sandstone outcrops, 94 of them decorated, dating from around the first century BCE to the first century CE (Saudipedia).

It should be noted that the tombs visible today were built by the Nabataeans, long after the time of Thamud. Islamic tradition identifies the area as the land of Thamud mentioned in the Qur'an (Al-Hijr 15:80–84), but not every structure standing today necessarily belonged to Thamud. What is certain from authentic Hadith is the instruction of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that places of punishment be passed through weeping and taking heed (Sahih al-Bukhari 4419–4420).

TABUK TODAY

Tabuk is now the capital of Tabuk Province in north-western Saudi Arabia. In the city stands Masjid al-Tawbah, known to local people as "the Prophet's Mosque" (Visit Saudi). Local people link it with the place where the Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed while at Tabuk; this link is a local tradition and is not confirmed by Hadith.

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LESSONS

Historic sites can be a powerful reminder, but the Islamic etiquette of visiting them is clear: to take heed, not merely to be entertained. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed through al-Hijr with his head lowered, weeping, and that is the best example for every visitor.

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TIMELINE OF THE EXPEDITION OF TABUK

This table arranges the events of the Expedition of Tabuk in order. Most dates are approximate, from sirah books such as Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Sa'd and al-Waqidi.

TIME	EVENT	SOURCE / CHAPTER
After Hunayn and Ta'if (8 AH)	News of a Roman army gathering in Syria reaches Madinah	Sirah books (chapter 2)
Early Rajab 9 AH	An open call to go out; preparation of Jaysh al-'Usrah	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418 (chapters 3, 5)
Before setting out	The spending of 'Uthman, Abu Bakr, 'Umar and the Companions; those who wept	Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3701, 3675; At-Tawbah 9:92 (chapters 6–9)
Before setting out	The hypocrites make excuses; al-Jadd ibn Qays asks permission	At-Tawbah 9:42, 9:49 (chapters 11–12)
Rajab 9 AH	An army of about thirty thousand sets out; 'Ali is left to look after the family	Sirah books; Sahih al-Bukhari 4416 (chapters 5, 14)
On the way	Abu Khaythamah and Abu Dharr catch up	Sahih Muslim 2769; sirah books (chapter 15)
On the way	Passing through al-Hijr weeping	Sahih al-Bukhari 3378, 4419 (chapters 16–17)
On the way	The blessed provisions; 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn 'Awf leads the prayer	Sahih Muslim 27, 274 (chapters 32–33)
Arrival at Tabuk	The spring of Tabuk gushes forth	Sahih Muslim 706 (chapter 18)
At Tabuk (about 20 days)	Shortening the prayer; the Roman army does not appear	Sunan Abi Dawud 1235 (chapter 23)
At Tabuk	Treaties with Aylah, Jarba' and Adhruh	Sahih al-Bukhari 1481; sirah books (chapter 21)
At Tabuk	Khalid is sent to Dumat al-Jandal; Ukaydir makes peace	Sirah books; Sahih al-Bukhari 2616 (chapter 22)
The return journey	The plot at the slope of 'Aqabah	Sahih Muslim 2779; sirah books (chapter 24)
Ramadan 9 AH	Arrival in Madinah: "This is Tabah"	Sahih al-Bukhari 1481 (chapter 27)
After the return	The story of the three who stayed behind, and Masjid ad-Dirar	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418; At-Tawbah 9:107 (Series 25)

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LESSONS

The Expedition of Tabuk lasted about two months without a battle, yet it changed the map of the Arabian Peninsula: the northern tribes accepted peace treaties, and Rome became aware of a new power in the south. Sometimes victory is achieved without a single sword being drawn.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE EXPEDITION OF TABUK

Here are twelve questions often asked about the Expedition of Tabuk, with short answers and references to the chapters of this eBook.

1. WHY WAS THIS ARMY CALLED JAYSH AL-'USRAH?

Because it went out at a very hard time: scorching summer heat, a long journey, a shortage of mounts and provisions, just when the dates were ripening. The name is taken from At-Tawbah 9:117 (chapters 4–5).

2. WAS THERE ANY FIGHTING AT TABUK?

No. The Roman army did not appear, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stayed at Tabuk for about twenty days, then returned after making peace treaties with several northern tribes (chapters 21–23).

3. HOW LARGE WAS THE MUSLIM ARMY?

The sirah books mention about thirty thousand men, the largest army in the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. The Hadith of Ka'b ibn Malik says they were so many that they could not be recorded in a single register (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418; chapter 5).

4. WHO LOOKED AFTER MADINAH?

The sirah books mention that Muhammad ibn Maslamah administered Madinah, and another report names Siba' ibn 'Urfutah. 'Ali ibn Abi Talib رضى الله عنه was left to look after the Prophet's family (Sahih al-Bukhari 4416; chapter 14).

5. WAS TABUK THE LAST EXPEDITION THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ TOOK PART IN?

Yes. Tabuk was the last ghazwah he led in person. After it he sent out forces, such as the army of Usamah ibn Zayd that was being prepared near the time of his death (chapter 1).

6. IS THE STORY OF THA'LABAH IBN HATIB, WHO REFUSED TO PAY ZAKAT, TRUE?

This story is well known in explanations of At-Tawbah 9:75–77, but the scholars of Hadith grade it inauthentic. Al-'Iraqi said its chain is weak, Ibn Hajar said he did not think the story was true, and Ibn Hazm rejected it. Tha'labah ibn Hatib was a Companion who took part in Badr (Mufti of the Federal Territories). So this story should not be spread without explanation.

7. MAY ONE VISIT HEGRA (AL-HIJR) TODAY?

Authentic Hadith commands that places of punishment be passed through weeping and taking heed (Sahih al-Bukhari 4419–4420). Scholars differ on tourist visits to such sites; what is agreed is that visiting

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them heedlessly and in merriment is forbidden. Whoever visits should keep the etiquette taught by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ (chapters 17 and 34).

8. WHY DID THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ SHORTEN THE PRAYER FOR TWENTY DAYS?

Because he did not intend to settle, but was waiting for developments. Scholars differ on how long a person staying in one place may shorten the prayer (chapter 23 and the fiqh note in chapter 32).

9. WHAT IS JIZYAH?

Jizyah is an annual payment from the People of the Book living under a treaty with the Islamic state. In return, their lives, property and freedom of religion are guaranteed. It is mentioned in At-Tawbah 9:29 and was practised in the treaties with Aylah and Dumat al-Jandal (chapters 21–22).

10. WHO WERE THE PLOTTERS AT 'AQABAH?

Sahih Muslim mentions their number, but the Messenger of Allah ﷺ kept their names secret and told them only to Hudhayfah رضى الله عنه. The details of the story are reports of the sirah books (Sahih Muslim 2779; chapter 24).

11. WHAT HAPPENED TO THOSE WHO STAYED BEHIND?

The hypocrites came with excuses and were outwardly accepted. Three truthful Companions — Ka'b ibn Malik, Murarah ibn ar-Rabi' and Hilal ibn Umayyah — were boycotted for fifty days until their repentance was accepted. Their story is told in full in Series 25.

12. WHAT IS THE MAIN LESSON OF TABUK FOR US TODAY?

Faith is tested when circumstances are least comfortable. Tabuk sifted those who spent their wealth and energy in hardship from those who looked for excuses. Every age has its own "Tabuk" — a moment when we must choose between comfort and obedience.

LESSONS

These questions remind us to distinguish between the Qur'an, authentic Hadith, the reports of the sirah books and weak stories. The framework of the story of Tabuk is established by the Qur'an and authentic Hadith; the details of names, dates and numbers we convey according to their grade.

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

Tabuk was a campaign without a battle, yet it was among ***the greatest tests*** in the sirah. It divided the ranks of the Muslims into clear groups: those who spent all they had, those who wept because they could not go, those who fell behind through negligence, and those who invented excuses out of hypocrisy.

LESSON	FROM TABUK
Transparent leadership	An open call about the hardship
Spending without limit	'Uthman, Abu Bakr and 'Umar
Small charity, great worth	Abu Khaythamah's sa' of dates
Sincere intention	The tears of al-Bakka'un
Beware of excuses	"Do not go forth in the heat"
Learning from history	Weeping at al-Hijr
Ease in the law	Combining and shortening prayers
Victory without bloodshed	The treaties of Aylah and Dumah
Religion is no joke	At-Tawbah 9:65–66

TABUK IN OUR LIVES

Each of us will face our own "Tabuk": a moment when obedience asks us to leave comfort behind — shade, a garden about to be harvested, or a longed-for rest. At that moment, we can be 'Uthman who spent, Abu Khaythamah who rose and followed, al-Bakka'un who wept because they could not, or — Allah forbid — those who said ***"do not go forth in the heat"***. The choice is always ours.

In sha Allah, the series **The Prophet's Sirah** will continue with ***Book 25 — Ka'b ibn Malik and Masjid ad-Dirar***: the story of three Companions who stayed behind and chose to tell the truth, fifty nights of boycott, repentance accepted from the heavens, and a mosque built to divide the Muslims. And Allah knows best.

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PART FOUR

Ka‘b ibn Malik and Masjid ad-Dirar

The Prophet's Sirah — Series 25

The Truthfulness of Three Companions, Fifty Nights of Boycott and the Mosque Built to Divide, According to the Qur'an and Authentic Hadith

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KA'B IBN MALIK AND MASJID AD-DIRAR

Book 24 ended with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ returning from Tabuk to Madinah. More than eighty men who had not marched came with excuses, and he accepted their outward word. But three Companions chose a different path: they ***told the truth***, even though their honesty led them into ***fifty nights*** — the hardest of their lives.

This Book 25 tells their story — above all that of ***Ka'b ibn Malik*** رضى الله عنه, who told it himself in one of the longest and most moving Hadith in Sahih al-Bukhari (No. 4418) and Sahih Muslim (No. 2769). Then we will look at another event after Tabuk: ***Masjid ad-Dirar***, a mosque built not for Allah, but to divide the Muslims.

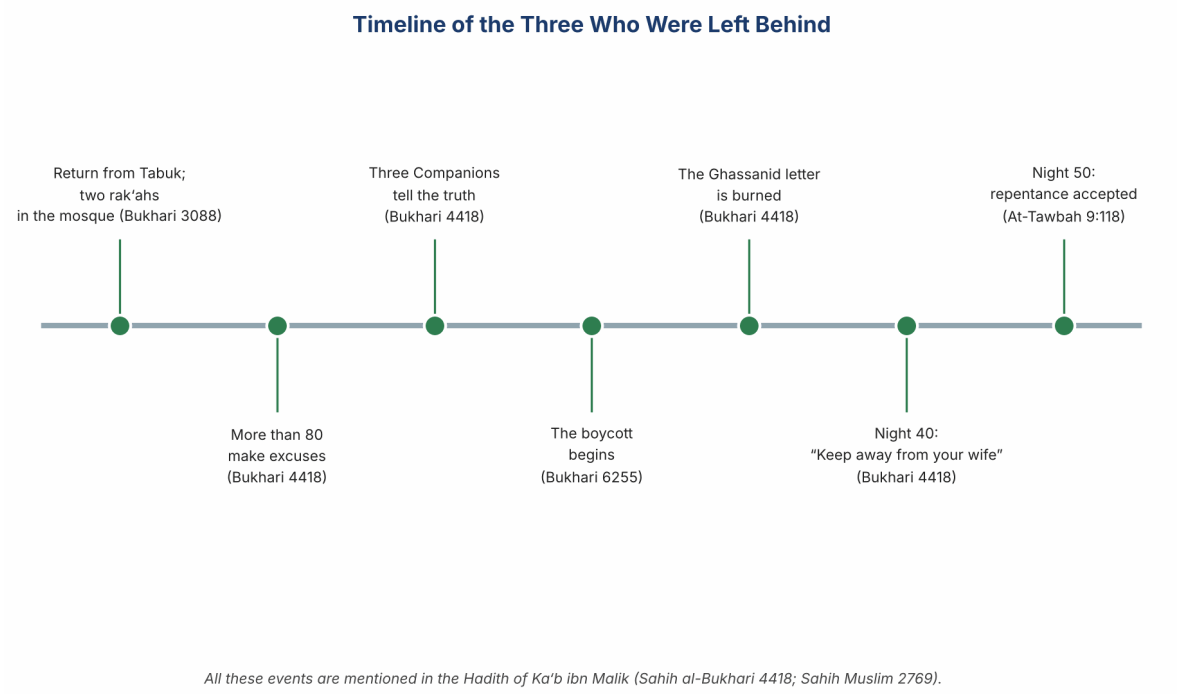

Figure 1: Timeline of the three who were left behind.

Note: The Qur'anic translation in this eBook is Sahih International. The grade of every Hadith is stated in its box. The story of Ka'b ibn Malik is told from the long Hadith of Sahih al-Bukhari 4418 and Sahih Muslim 2769. Information from the books of sirah — such as the stories of Abu Lubabah, Abu 'Amir the Monk and the demolition of Masjid ad-Dirar — is placed in brown "Sirah Note" boxes.

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THE THREE WHO WERE LEFT BEHIND

At the close of the Tabuk story in Surah At-Tawbah, Allah mentions a small and special group. They were not hypocrites, nor were they among those whose excuses were accepted. They were ***the three who were left behind***:

"And [He also forgave] the three who were left behind [and regretted their error] to the point that the earth closed in on them in spite of its vastness and their souls confined them and they were certain that there is no refuge from Allah except in Him" (At-Tawbah 9:118) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:118.

They were ***Ka'b ibn Malik***, ***Murarah ibn ar-Rabi'*** and ***Hilal ibn Umayyah*** رضي الله عنهم — all three from the Ansar. Ka'b himself explained the meaning of "left behind" (khullifu) in this verse: ***it does not mean that they stayed behind from the campaign***, but that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***deferred their case*** from that of those who swore oaths and had their excuses accepted, until Allah decided it (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418).

Theirs is a story of ***truthfulness at a high price***, ***sincere repentance***, and ***the mercy of Allah*** that comes after a long trial. It also shows how the society of Madinah nurtured its members: not with hatred, but with discipline that led to healing.

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WHO WAS KA'B IBN MALIK?

Ka'b ibn Malik al-Ansari al-Khazraji رضى الله عنه of Banu Salimah was among the early Companions to embrace Islam in Madinah. He was present on ***the night of the Pledge of 'Aqabah***, when the Ansar pledged allegiance to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ before the Hijrah. He said of that night: "I would not like to exchange it for (being at) Badr, even though Badr is better known among people" (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418).

Ka'b was also known as one of ***the three poets of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ, along with Hassan ibn Thabit and 'Abdullah ibn Rawahah. They defended Islam with poetry when Quraysh attacked with words. He took part in every campaign with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***except Badr and Tabuk***. Of Badr he said: no one was blamed for missing it, since the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went out only for the caravan of Quraysh, until Allah brought them face to face with the enemy without an appointment.

So Ka'b was no ordinary man. He was ***a believing, brave and accomplished Companion***. This is what makes his story so precious: it teaches us that ***even good people can slip***, and what distinguishes them is what they do after they slip.

SIRAH NOTE: KA'B TELLS HIS STORY IN OLD AGE

This Hadith was narrated from Ka'b by his son ***'Abdullah ibn Ka'b***, who led him about after Ka'b became blind in old age (Sahih al-Bukhari 4678). This means Ka'b told the story ***years after it happened***, in remarkable detail — a sign of how deeply the event marked his soul.

Historians mention that Ka'b died during the reign of Mu'awiyah رضى الله عنه, around 50 AH.

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"TOMORROW I WILL GET READY"

When the call to Tabuk rang out, Ka'b was in the best state of his life. He said: ***"I was never stronger or better off than when I stayed behind from that campaign. By Allah, I had never before owned two riding camels, but I owned them at the time of that campaign"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418).

He had no excuse at all. His problem was a very common illness: ***procrastination***. He related: ***"I would go out in the morning to get ready with them, and return having done nothing. I would say to myself: 'I can do it whenever I want.'"*** Day after day passed like this, until the people had made their earnest preparations and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ set out with the Muslims, while Ka'b had prepared nothing.

Even after the army had left, he still thought: "I will get ready in a day or two, then catch up with them." Ka'b admitted with deep regret: ***"Would that I had done so! But it was not decreed for me."***

The lesson is very close to our lives. How much good do we postpone by saying "tomorrow" — voluntary prayer, reading the Qur'an, giving charity, asking forgiveness — until the chance is gone? The scholars said: ***"Saying 'later' is one of the soldiers of Iblis."*** Ka'b did not intend to stay behind; he simply ***did not act*** when he could.

Ka'b's honesty about his own procrastination is itself instructive. He does not blame the heat, the distance or the ripening dates. He simply says he kept postponing. Many of our failures are not dramatic acts of rebellion but a quiet accumulation of small delays — each one seeming harmless, until the opportunity has passed.

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AN EMPTY MADINAH

After the army left, Ka'b began to feel a strange loneliness in Madinah. He said: ***"When I went out among the people after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had left, it grieved me that I saw no one like me except a man suspected of hypocrisy, or a weak man whom Allah had excused"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418).

Imagine the feelings of a Companion who had been present on the night of 'Aqabah and fought campaign after campaign, now walking the lanes of Madinah among ***the hypocrites and the excused***. He realised that he was ***in the wrong place***, in a group that was not his own.

Ka'b also mentioned that the Muslims were numerous then, and ***there was no register (diwan)*** recording their names. Anyone who wanted to be absent would think he would go unnoticed, ***as long as no revelation came down*** about him. But that is the reality: people may not notice, but ***Allah sees all***, and revelation would uncover everything.

The lesson: ***our surroundings reflect our state***. If we find ourselves only among the heedless, it is a sign we need to return. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"A man follows the religion of his close friend, so let each of you look at whom he befriends"*** (Sunan Abi Dawud 4833, graded hasan).

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"WHAT HELD KA'B BACK?"

Throughout the march, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not mention Ka'b until he reached Tabuk. While sitting with the Companions, he asked: ***"What has Ka'b done?"*** A man from Banu Salimah answered: "O Messenger of Allah, his two cloaks held him back, and his admiring glances at his own sides" — meaning he was distracted by comfort and self-regard (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418).

Then ***Mu'adh ibn Jabal*** رضى الله عنه at once defended his brother: ***"What an evil thing you have said! By Allah, O Messenger of Allah, we know nothing of him but good."*** The Messenger of Allah ﷺ remained silent.

Note two things. First, ***the Messenger of Allah ﷺ remembered Ka'b*** among thirty thousand men. Every individual mattered to him. Second, ***Mu'adh defended the honour of his absent brother***. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Whoever defends his brother's honour, Allah will turn the Fire away from his face on the Day of Resurrection"*** (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 1931, graded hasan).

The lesson for our gatherings: when someone absent is backbitten or thought badly of, be like Mu'adh — ***think well and defend***, not add to it. We do not know a person's true state, and only Allah knows what is in the heart.

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BACK TO THE MOSQUE

When news came that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was on his way back, Ka'b was overcome with grief.

He began thinking of ***a false excuse***: "How can I escape his anger tomorrow?" He sought the opinion of every wise person in his family. But when it was said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was about to arrive,

all falsehood left his mind, and he realised he would never be saved by a lie. So he ***resolved to tell the truth*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418).

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ arrived in the morning. As was his habit, the first thing he did was go to the mosque:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 3088

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عَاصِمٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ جُرَيْجٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ كَعْبٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، وَعَمِّهِ، عُبَيْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ كَعْبٍ عَنْ كَعْبٍ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم كَانَ إِذَا قَدِمَ مِنْ سَفَرٍ ضُحًى دَخَلَ الْمَسْجِدَ، فَصَلَّى رَكْعَتَيْنِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَجْلِسَ.

TRANSLATION:

Ka'b ibn Malik رضى الله عنه related that the Prophet ﷺ, ***whenever he returned from a journey in the forenoon, would enter the mosque and pray two rak'ahs before sitting down.***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Abu 'Asim an-Nabil, from Ibn Jurayj, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn 'Abdullah ibn Ka'b, from his father 'Abdullah ibn Ka'b and his uncle 'Ubaydullah ibn Ka'b, from Ka'b ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Jihad and Expeditions, Chapter: Prayer on returning from a journey, Hadith No. 3088; also Muslim No. 716.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3088

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This Sunnah is beautiful: after a long, tiring journey, ***the first place he headed for was the house of Allah***, not his own house. Those two rak'ahs were ***a sign of gratitude*** for returning safely, and they also made the mosque the first place he met the community. After praying, he sat to receive the people.

Scholars encourage this Sunnah for every returning traveller: ***stop at the mosque and pray two rak'ahs*** before going home, if possible. It reminds us that every journey begins and ends with Allah.

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MORE THAN EIGHTY EXCUSES

Then those who had stayed behind came. Ka'b related: ***"They began making excuses to him and swearing oaths; they were eighty-odd men. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ accepted their outward (word), took their pledge, asked forgiveness for them, and left their secrets to Allah"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418).

Allah had informed His Messenger of this before he reached Madinah:

"They will make excuses to you when you have returned to them. Say, "Make no excuse - never will we believe you. Allah has already informed us of your news" (At-Tawbah 9:94) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:94.

"They will swear by Allah to you when you return to them that you would leave them alone. So leave them alone; indeed they are evil" (At-Tawbah 9:95) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:95.

"They swear to you so that you might be satisfied with them. But if you should be satisfied with them - indeed, Allah is not satisfied with a defiantly disobedient people" (At-Tawbah 9:96) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:96.

These hypocrites ***"succeeded"*** in this world: their excuses were accepted, and they went home in peace. But Allah was not pleased with them. The three truthful men, on the other hand, seemed at first to have ***"lost"***, but in the end their repentance was immortalised in the Qur'an. This is the difference between ***temporary success*** and ***true success***.

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THE MOMENT OF TRUTH

Then came Ka'b's turn. He came and greeted him. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***smiled the smile of one who is angry***, and said: "Come." Ka'b walked up and sat before him. He asked: ***"What kept you back? Had you not bought your mount?"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418)

Ka'b's answer is among the most honest words a servant has ever spoken: ***"O Messenger of Allah, by Allah, if I were sitting before anyone else of the people of this world, I would see that I could escape his anger with some excuse; I have been given skill in argument. But by Allah, I know that if I tell you today a false story that pleases you with me, Allah will soon make you angry with me. And if I tell you a true story that makes you angry with me, I truly hope for Allah's forgiveness in it. By Allah, I had no excuse. By Allah, I was never stronger or better off than when I stayed behind from you."***

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"As for this man, he has told the truth. Get up until Allah decides about you."***

Ka'b understood something very deep: ***deceiving people may succeed, but deceiving Allah is impossible***. He preferred to face the Prophet's ﷺ anger today with hope of Allah's forgiveness, rather than win people's approval with a lie that revelation would one day expose.

Afterwards, some men of Banu Salimah followed him and said: "By Allah, we never knew you to commit a sin before this. Why did you not make an excuse like the others? The Prophet's ﷺ prayer for forgiveness would have been enough for your sin." They kept reproaching him until ***Ka'b nearly went back to belie himself***. The social pressure to lie was strong — but he held firm.

Ka'b's words also show how well he knew the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He knew that revelation could expose any lie told to him, and that the Prophet's ﷺ approval was worthless if Allah was displeased. His choice was not between pleasing or angering a man, but between pleasing or angering Allah.

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THE GREATEST BLESSING AFTER GUIDANCE

Years later, when Ka'b looked back on the event, he did not see it as a calamity, but as ***the greatest blessing*** of his life after Islam:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4673

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى، حَدَّثَنَا اللَّيْثُ، عَنْ عُقَيْلٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، أَنَّ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنَ كَعْبِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ كَعْبَ بْنَ مَالِكٍ، حِينَ تَخَلَّفَ عَنْ تَبُوكَ، وَاللَّهِ، مَا أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيَّ مِنْ نِعْمَةٍ بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَانِي أَعْظَمَ مِنْ صِدْقِي رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم أَنْ لاَ أَكُونَ كَذَبْتُهُ فَأَهْلِكَ كَمَا هَلَكَ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا حِينَ أُنْزِلَ الْوَحْىُ {سَيَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ لَكُمْ إِذَا انْقَلَبْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ} إِلَى {الْفَاسِقِينَ}.

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn Ka'b ibn Malik said: I heard Ka'b ibn Malik رضى الله عنه say, when relating how he stayed behind from Tabuk: ***"By Allah, Allah has never bestowed on me any blessing — after He guided me — greater than my truthfulness to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, that I did not lie to him and so perish as those who lied perished"***, when the revelation came down: {They will swear by Allah to you when you return to them} up to {the defiantly disobedient} (At-Tawbah 9:95–96).

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Yahya ibn Bukayr, from al-Layth ibn Sa'd, from 'Uqayl ibn Khalid, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn 'Abdullah ibn Ka'b, from 'Abdullah ibn Ka'b ibn Malik, from Ka'b ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Tafsir, Chapter: "They will swear by Allah to you…", Hadith No. 4673; the full story is in No. 4418 and Muslim No. 2769.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4673

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Ka'b compared himself with those who lied. They escaped for a moment, but Allah described them with ***the worst words*** ever said of anyone — "indeed they are evil" — and shut the door of His pleasure on them. Ka'b suffered fifty nights, but ***he is mentioned in the Qur'an with accepted repentance***.

This is the true measure of blessing. Sometimes Allah saves us by ***giving hardship***, and sometimes He leaves a person with ***a comfort that destroys***. Ka'b understood that painful truthfulness was ***the door of salvation***, while a comfortable lie was the door of ruin.

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MURARAH AND HILAL

In that pressured state, Ka'b asked: "Has anyone else met with what I have?" They said: "Yes, two men said what you said, and were told what you were told." He asked: "Who are they?" They said: ***"Murarah ibn ar-Rabi' al-'Amri and Hilal ibn Umayyah al-Waqifi."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418)

Ka'b said: ***"They mentioned to me two righteous men who had taken part in Badr; in them was an example for me."*** So he went on his way and did not go back to lie. Knowing that two righteous men had also chosen honesty ***strengthened his heart***.

See how important ***a good example*** is. When we are being tested, knowing that other righteous people walk the same path gives us strength. This is why Allah commands, in the verse revealed with this story: ***"and be with those who are true"*** (At-Tawbah 9:119).

Hilal ibn Umayyah was an elderly man of Banu Waqif, while Murarah ibn ar-Rabi' was of Banu 'Amr ibn 'Awf. Both were ***people of Badr***, whose virtue the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had praised. This shows once again that ***even honoured people can err***, and past honour does not exempt anyone from being corrected.

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THE BOYCOTT BEGINS

Then came a heavy decision. Ka'b related: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ forbade the Muslims to speak to the three of us, from among those who had stayed behind."*** People avoided them and changed towards them, until ***the land itself seemed to change***, no longer the land he knew (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418).

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 6255

حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ بُكَيْرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا اللَّيْثُ، عَنْ عُقَيْلٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، أَنَّ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنَ كَعْبٍ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ كَعْبَ بْنَ مَالِكٍ، يُحَدِّثُ حِينَ تَخَلَّفَ عَنْ تَبُوكَ، وَنَهَى، رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم عَنْ كَلاَمِنَا، وَآتِي رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَأُسَلِّمُ عَلَيْهِ، فَأَقُولُ فِي نَفْسِي هَلْ حَرَّكَ شَفَتَيْهِ بِرَدِّ السَّلاَمِ أَمْ لاَ حَتَّى كَمَلَتْ خَمْسُونَ لَيْلَةً، وَآذَنَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم بِتَوْبَةِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْنَا حِينَ صَلَّى الْفَجْرَ.

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn Ka'b said: I heard Ka'b ibn Malik رضى الله عنه narrating when he stayed behind from Tabuk: ***The Messenger of Allah ﷺ forbade (the people) from speaking to us.*** I would come to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and greet him, and say to myself: ***"Did he move his lips to return the greeting or not?"*** — until ***fifty nights*** were complete. Then the Prophet ﷺ announced ***that Allah had accepted our repentance*** when he had prayed Fajr.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Yahya ibn Bukayr, from al-Layth ibn Sa'd, from 'Uqayl ibn Khalid, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn 'Abdullah ibn Ka'b, from 'Abdullah ibn Ka'b ibn Malik, from Ka'b ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Asking Permission, Chapter: Not greeting one who has committed a sin, Hadith No. 6255.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:6255

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Murarah and Hilal ***stayed at home weeping***. Ka'b, being the youngest and most resilient, still went out to pray in congregation and walk in the markets, but ***no one spoke to him***. After the prayer he would greet the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and wonder whether his lips moved to return the greeting. He would pray

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near him and steal glances: ***when he turned to his prayer, the Prophet looked at him; when he looked towards the Prophet, he turned away*** from him.

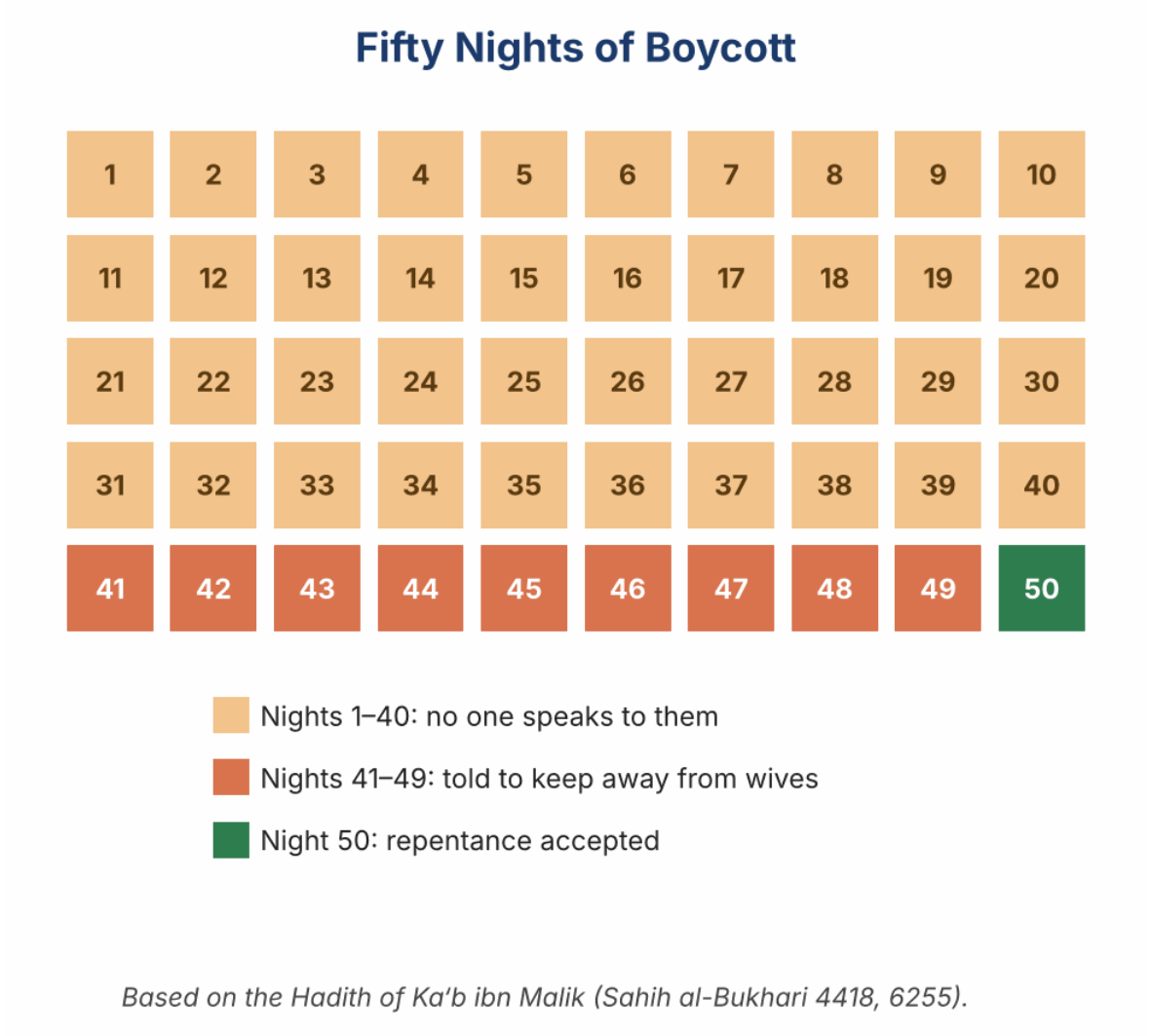

Figure 2: Fifty nights of boycott.

This small detail is very moving. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***still looked at Ka'b*** — he did not hate him.

But he carried out ***the discipline that was commanded***, awaiting Allah's decision. Those stolen glances show ***the love that remained*** behind the firmness.

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WHEN THE VAST EARTH CLOSED IN

The days of the boycott passed slowly. Ka'b described his state in words close to the Qur'an: ***"My own self felt confined, and the earth closed in on me in spite of its vastness."*** The peak of his grief was when he climbed the wall of the garden of ***Abu Qatadah*** — his cousin and the person dearest to him (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418).

He greeted him, but ***by Allah, Abu Qatadah did not return his greeting***. Ka'b said: "O Abu Qatadah, I ask you by Allah, do you know that I love Allah and His Messenger?" Abu Qatadah was silent. Ka'b repeated it, and he was still silent. The third time, Abu Qatadah said: ***"Allah and His Messenger know best."*** Ka'b's eyes overflowed with tears, and he turned back and climbed over the wall again.

See Abu Qatadah's obedience. He loved Ka'b, but ***his obedience to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ rose above his feelings***. Even his answer did not break the prohibition: he did not converse with Ka'b, but stated a true word. This shows the discipline of the Madinan community — no one "secretly" broke the instruction, even towards a close relative.

And see how precisely the Qur'an describes this feeling: ***"the earth closed in on them in spite of its vastness and their souls confined them"*** (At-Tawbah 9:118). The narrowness was not in the place, but in ***a soul cut off from others***. Humans are social beings; being shunned by those one loves is among the heaviest of trials.

The phrase "the earth closed in on them in spite of its vastness" has comforted believers in every age who feel trapped by grief or guilt. The Qur'an acknowledges that feeling honestly; it does not tell the believer that his pain is imaginary. But it also shows that this narrowness was not the end of the story — it was the doorway to relief.

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A LETTER FROM THE KING OF GHASSAN

In the midst of that loneliness came a subtler test. As Ka'b walked in the market of Madinah, a ***Nabataean farmer from Syria*** who had come to sell food asked: "Who will guide me to Ka'b ibn Malik?" People pointed him out. The man handed him a letter from ***the King of Ghassan*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418).

It read: ***"To proceed. It has reached us that your companion has treated you harshly. Allah has not made you to live in a land of humiliation and neglect. Come to us, and we will console you."***

Ka'b said: ***"This too is a trial."*** So he took the letter to ***the oven and burned it***.

The kingdom of Ghassan was an ally of Rome, the enemy just faced at Tabuk. Enemies always watch for cracks in the ranks of the Muslims and try ***to lure those who are hurting***. Ka'b could have said: "I am shunned, I have been treated harshly." But he did not let his grief become ***a door to betrayal***.

The lesson is very relevant: when we are disappointed by our fellow Muslims, community or leaders, there will be those offering "a more honourable place". ***Burning that letter*** is a sign of mature faith — loyalty to Allah and His Messenger does not depend on how people treat us.

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"KEEP AWAY FROM YOUR WIFE"

When ***forty nights*** of the fifty had passed, and still no revelation had come, a messenger of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ came to Ka'b: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ orders you to keep away from your wife."*** Ka'b asked: "Should I divorce her, or what should I do?" The messenger said: "No, but keep away from her and do not go near her." The same instruction was sent to his two companions (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418).

Ka'b said to his wife: ***"Go to your family and stay with them until Allah decides this matter."*** He obeyed at once, without protest.

The wife of Hilal ibn Umayyah came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said: "O Messenger of Allah, Hilal is a weak old man with no servant. Would you dislike it if I served him?" He said: ***"No, but he must not approach you."*** She said: "By Allah, he has no desire for anything. By Allah, ***he has not stopped weeping*** from the time this happened until today."

Some of Ka'b's family suggested he too ask permission like Hilal's wife. But Ka'b refused: "I will not ask permission, for I do not know what the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would say, and ***I am a young man***." He chose to avoid anything that might lead to temptation, even if it was allowed for someone else.

Note the Prophet's ﷺ wisdom: for Hilal, old and weak, his wife was allowed to serve him; for Ka'b, who was young, the situation differed. ***Rulings take account of individual circumstances***, and mercy is always present within firmness.

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THE FIFTIETH NIGHT

Ten more nights passed. Ka'b said: ***"So fifty nights were complete from the time the Messenger of Allah ﷺ forbade (people) to speak to us."*** On the morning after the fiftieth night, he prayed Fajr on the roof of one of his houses (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418).

He described his state at that moment: ***"As I sat in the state Allah has described of us — my own self confined, and the earth closed in on me despite its vastness…"*** This was the lowest point of his trial. Fifty days without a greeting, without a smile, without his wife beside him, without certainty that his repentance would be accepted.

Yet in that narrowness there was one certainty the Qur'an mentions: ***"and they were certain that there is no refuge from Allah except in Him"*** (At-Tawbah 9:118). When every human door is shut, ***Allah's door remains open***. They did not flee to the King of Ghassan, nor to lies — they fled to Allah.

Scholars note that the darkest hour is ***just before dawn***. So too relief often comes when distress reaches its peak. Allah says: ***"Indeed, with hardship comes ease"*** (Ash-Sharh 94:6).

Fifty days is a long time to wait without knowing the outcome. Ka'b and his companions did not know whether the boycott would last a week or a lifetime, nor whether their repentance would be accepted at all. Their patience was not the patience of someone counting down to a known date, but the patience of complete reliance on Allah.

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A VOICE FROM MOUNT SAL'

Suddenly, Ka'b heard a voice from ***the top of Mount Sal'***, someone calling at the top of his voice: ***"O Ka'b ibn Malik, rejoice!"*** Ka'b at once fell ***prostrate***, for he knew relief had come (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418).

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ had announced Allah's acceptance of their repentance after he finished the Fajr prayer. People hurried out to give the good news. One man ***galloped his horse*** towards Ka'b, while a man of ***Banu Aslam ran and climbed the mountain***. Ka'b said: ***"The voice was faster than the horse."***

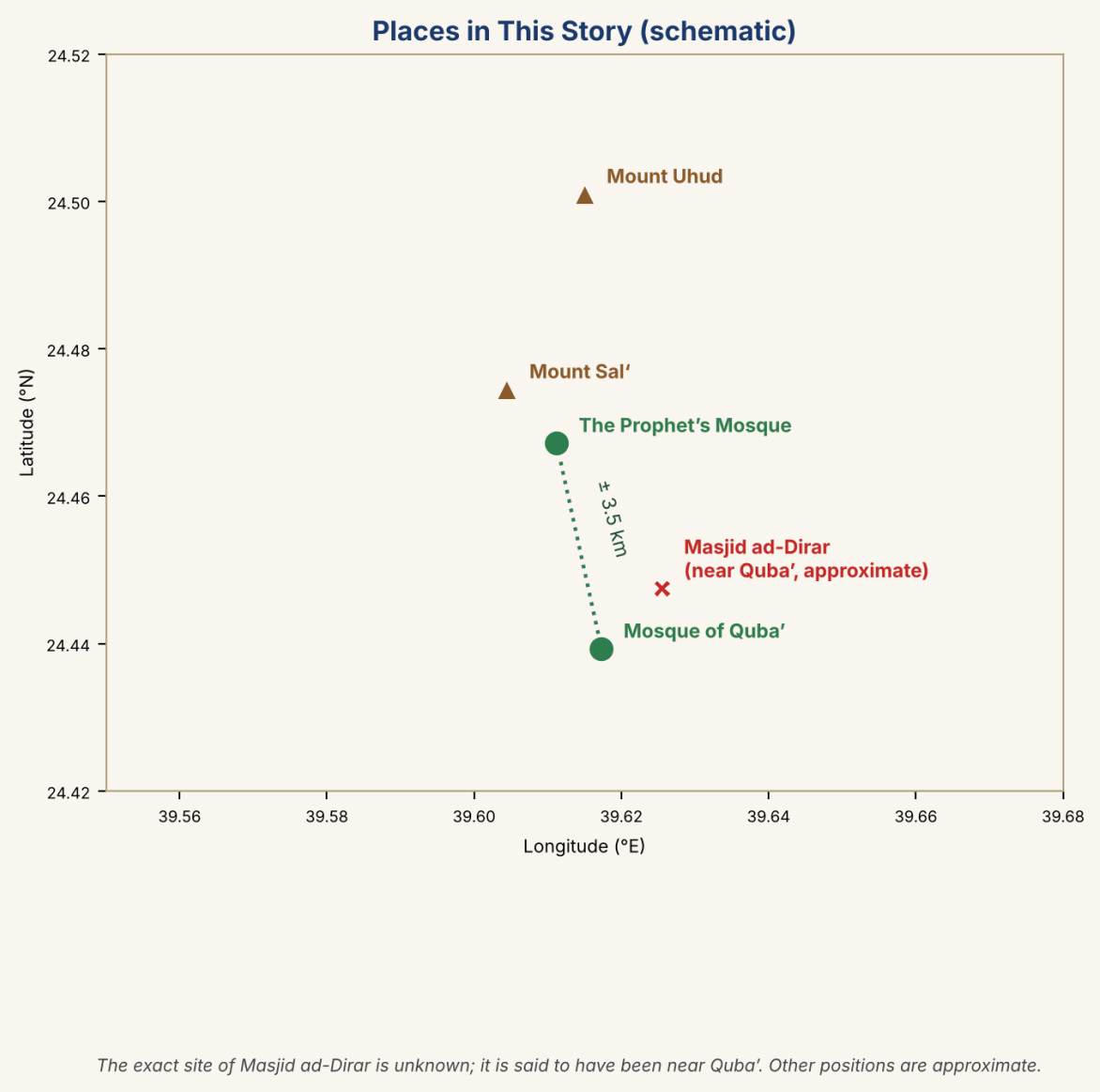

Figure 3: Places in this story (schematic).

When the man whose voice he had heard arrived, Ka'b ***took off his two garments and clothed him with them*** as a gift for his good news. Ka'b said: ***"By Allah, I owned no other garments than those two that day."*** So he borrowed two garments and put them on.

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Notice Ka'b's prostration. A believer's first reaction to a blessing is ***a prostration of gratitude*** to Allah. Scholars take this story as one of the proofs that ***the prostration of gratitude is recommended*** on receiving a great blessing or being spared a calamity.

Notice too the joy of the whole community. Those who had not spoken to Ka'b for fifty days now ***raced to give him the good news***. The boycott was not hatred; it was ***discipline born of love***, and when it ended, that love returned in full.

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"THE BEST DAY SINCE YOUR MOTHER BORE YOU"

Ka'b hurried to the mosque. People met him in throngs, congratulating him: ***"May Allah's acceptance of your repentance bring you joy."*** When he entered the mosque, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was sitting surrounded by people. ***Talhah ibn 'Ubaydillah*** رضى الله عنه stood up and hurried to him, shook his hand and congratulated him. Ka'b said: ***"By Allah, no one of the Muhajirun stood up apart from him."*** Ka'b never forgot that for Talhah (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418).

Ka'b greeted the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, whose face was ***shining with joy***. He said: ***"Rejoice at the best day you have seen since your mother bore you."*** Ka'b asked: "Is it from you, O Messenger of Allah, or from Allah?" He said: ***"No, rather from Allah."*** Ka'b said: when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was happy, ***his face shone as if it were a piece of the moon***, and we would know it.

The best day since he was born — not the day he embraced Islam? Scholars explain that the day his repentance was accepted ***completed*** the day of his Islam; it was a day combining Islam with accepted repentance, so it was more complete. It teaches us that ***accepted repentance is among the greatest blessings*** in a believer's life.

Talhah's gesture teaches us about ***welcoming a returning brother***. Do not be the one who keeps reminding a repentant person of his old mistakes. Be the first to stand, shake his hand and rejoice with him.

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THE VERSES OF REPENTANCE

The acceptance of repentance was not merely the Prophet's ﷺ decision — it was ***revelation from the heavens***, verses recited until the Day of Resurrection:

"Allah has already forgiven the Prophet and the Muhajireen and the Ansar who followed him in the hour of difficulty" (At-Tawbah 9:117) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:117.

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4678

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ بُكَيْرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا اللَّيْثُ، عَنْ عُقَيْلٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ كَعْبِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، أَنَّ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنَ كَعْبِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ ـ وَكَانَ قَائِدَ كَعْبِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ ـ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ كَعْبَ بْنَ مَالِكٍ، يُحَدِّثُ حِينَ تَخَلَّفَ عَنْ قِصَّةِ، تَبُوكَ. فَوَاللَّهِ مَا أَعْلَمُ أَحَدًا أَبْلاَهُ اللَّهُ فِي صِدْقِ الْحَدِيثِ أَحْسَنَ مِمَّا أَبْلاَنِي، مَا تَعَمَّدْتُ مُنْذُ ذَكَرْتُ ذَلِكَ لِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم إِلَى يَوْمِي هَذَا كَذِبًا، وَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم {لَقَدْ تَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ} إِلَى قَوْلِهِ {وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ}

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn Ka'b ibn Malik — who led Ka'b about (after his father became blind) — said: I heard Ka'b ibn Malik رضى الله عنه narrate the story of how he stayed behind from Tabuk: ***"By Allah, I know of no one whom Allah tested in truthful speech with a better trial than He tested me. Since I told that to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ until this day of mine, I have never deliberately told a lie."*** And Allah, Mighty and Majestic, revealed to His Messenger ﷺ: {Allah has already forgiven the Prophet and the Muhajirun…} up to {and be with those who are true} (At-Tawbah 9:117–119).

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Yahya ibn Bukayr, from al-Layth ibn Sa'd, from 'Uqayl ibn Khalid, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn 'Abdullah ibn Ka'b, from 'Abdullah ibn Ka'b ibn Malik, from Ka'b ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Tafsir, Chapter: "O you who believe, fear Allah and be with those who are true", Hadith No. 4678.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4678

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Note the order of these verses: Allah begins with the repentance of ***the Prophet*** ﷺ, then ***the Muhajirun and Ansar***, and only then ***the three who were left behind***. Scholars point out that this is ***an honour*** for

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the three: their repentance is mentioned together with that of the noblest people, so that they would not feel set apart.

The end of verse 118 is also beautiful: ***"Then He turned to them so they could repent."*** Repentance begins from Allah — He grants the ability to repent — and ends with Allah — He accepts it. ***We repent because Allah first turned to us with His mercy.***

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ALLAH'S JOY AT HIS SERVANT'S REPENTANCE

If Ka'b was so joyful at the acceptance of his repentance, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was so glad that his face shone, then know that ***Allah is more joyful still***. Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Allah is more delighted with the repentance of His servant than any of you would be on finding his camel after losing it in a vast desert"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 6309).

In Muslim's narration, the parable is more detailed: a man loses his camel carrying his food and drink in the desert, despairs and lies down under a tree waiting to die. Suddenly his camel is standing beside him. He seizes its rein and, from sheer joy, blurts out: ***"O Allah, You are my servant and I am Your lord!"*** (Sahih Muslim 2747). Allah's joy at a servant's repentance is ***greater than that***.

Abu Musa al-Ash'ari رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Allah stretches out His hand at night to accept the repentance of the one who sinned by day, and stretches out His hand by day to accept the repentance of the one who sinned by night, until the sun rises from the west"*** (Sahih Muslim 2759).

CONDITION OF REPENTANCE	IN KA'B'S STORY
Leaving the sin	No longer delaying obedience
Regret	Weeping, the earth closing in
Resolve not to return	Vowing to speak only truth for life
Restoring rights (if owed to people)	Admitting the fault openly

These conditions are gathered by Imam an-Nawawi in ***Riyad as-Salihin***, chapter on repentance — and he includes the long Hadith of Ka'b ibn Malik in that very chapter. Ka'b's story is ***a model of complete repentance***: honest admission, patient endurance of the consequences, and change afterwards.

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"KEEP SOME OF YOUR WEALTH"

Ka'b's joy moved him to express his gratitude in a big way. He wanted ***to give away all his wealth***:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 2757

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ بُكَيْرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا اللَّيْثُ، عَنْ عُقَيْلٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ كَعْبٍ، أَنَّ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنَ كَعْبٍ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ كَعْبَ بْنَ مَالِكٍ ـ رضى الله عنه. قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ مِنْ تَوْبَتِي أَنْ أَنْخَلِعَ مِنْ مَالِي صَدَقَةً إِلَى اللَّهِ وَإِلَى رَسُولِهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم. قَالَ أَمْسِكْ عَلَيْكَ بَعْضَ مَالِكَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكَ. قُلْتُ فَإِنِّي أُمْسِكُ سَهْمِي الَّذِي بِخَيْبَرَ.

TRANSLATION:

Ka'b ibn Malik رضى الله عنه said: I said: "O Messenger of Allah, part of (my gratitude for) my repentance is that ***I give up all my wealth as charity to Allah and His Messenger*** ﷺ." He said: ***"Keep some of your wealth, for that is better for you."*** I said: "Then I will keep my share that is in Khaybar."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Yahya ibn Bukayr, from al-Layth ibn Sa'd, from 'Uqayl ibn Khalid, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn 'Abdullah ibn Ka'b, from 'Abdullah ibn Ka'b ibn Malik, from Ka'b ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Wills, Chapter: Giving part of one's wealth in charity or as an endowment, Hadith No. 2757; also No. 4676, 6690.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:2757

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not let Ka'b go to an extreme in his joy. He advised him to ***keep some of his wealth***. This accords with the Islamic principle of ***moderation***: giving charity without ruining oneself and one's family. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said in another Hadith: ***"The best charity is that given while still having sufficiency"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 1426).

Ka'b also said: ***"O Messenger of Allah, Allah has saved me only through truthfulness, and part of my repentance is that I will speak nothing but the truth as long as I live."*** And he kept that promise: ***"By Allah, since I told that to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ until this day, I have never deliberately told a lie"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418; Sahih al-Bukhari 4678).

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This is ***true repentance***: not merely regret, but ***a change of life***. Ka'b made truthfulness a lifelong pledge, because he knew it was truthfulness that had saved him.

Ka'b's wish to give away everything echoes Abu Bakr's gift at Tabuk, when he brought all his wealth (Book 24). Yet the Prophet ﷺ accepted it from Abu Bakr and advised Ka'b otherwise. The difference shows that guidance is given to each person according to his state: Abu Bakr's certainty and reliance were unique, while Ka'b was a man with a family whose future also mattered.

Ka'b's choice to keep his share in Khaybar is also telling. It was land granted to him from the spoils of a campaign he had joined with the Prophet ﷺ. In keeping it, he kept a reminder of his years of striving, while giving away the rest as a sign that his heart now belonged wholly to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ.

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TRUTHFULNESS LEADS TO PARADISE

After the verses of repentance, Allah closes this story with a general command to all believers: ***"O you who have believed, fear Allah and be with those who are true"*** (At-Tawbah 9:119) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:119.

Imam al-Bukhari placed this verse as a chapter heading in the Book of Manners, and under it he narrated the Hadith that is the foundation of the ethic of truthfulness:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 6094

حَدَّثَنَا عُثْمَانُ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ، حَدَّثَنَا جَرِيرٌ، عَنْ مَنْصُورٍ، عَنْ أَبِي وَائِلٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ إِنَّ الصِّدْقَ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْبِرِّ، وَإِنَّ الْبِرَّ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ، وَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَصْدُقُ حَتَّى يَكُونَ صِدِّيقًا، وَإِنَّ الْكَذِبَ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْفُجُورِ، وَإِنَّ الْفُجُورَ يَهْدِي إِلَى النَّارِ، وَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَكْذِبُ، حَتَّى يُكْتَبَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَذَّابًا.

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه related that the Prophet ﷺ said: ***"Truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise. A man keeps telling the truth until he becomes a siddiq (a truthful one). Lying leads to wickedness, and wickedness leads to the Fire. A man keeps lying until he is written before Allah as a liar."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Uthman ibn Abi Shaybah, from Jarir ibn 'Abd al-Hamid, from Mansur ibn al-Mu'tamir, from Abu Wa'il Shaqiq ibn Salamah, from 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه, from the Prophet ﷺ.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Manners, Chapter: "O you who believe, fear Allah and be with those who are true", Hadith No. 6094; also Muslim No. 2607.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:6094

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This Hadith portrays truthfulness as ***a path that moves***: one step of honesty leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise. Conversely, one lie leads to another, until a person ***is written as a liar*** before Allah. Ka'b's story is a living example of this Hadith: ***his honesty led him to repentance, and repentance led him to Allah's pleasure***.

In today's world, lying is often treated as minor — a "white lie", an excuse for being late, a figure slightly altered in a report. Ka'b's story reminds us that ***honesty can be costly in this world, but it always profits in the Hereafter***.

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Truthfulness is not only about words. Scholars describe truthfulness in intention, in resolve and in deeds as well: that a person's inner state matches what he shows. Ka'b's story touches every level — he was truthful in speech before the Prophet ﷺ, truthful in his regret, and truthful in keeping his vow for the rest of his life.

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THE WISDOM BEHIND THE BOYCOTT

Why did the Messenger of Allah ﷺ boycott three truthful Companions, while more than eighty liars were left alone? Does this not seem backwards? Ibn al-Qayyim in ***Zad al-Ma'ad*** explains the wisdom at length. Among it:

WISDOM	EXPLANATION
Discipline for the beloved	Only those in whom good is hoped are disciplined and corrected
Hypocrites left alone	Nothing was hoped from the hypocrites, so their case was left to Allah
Cleansing of sin	Fifty nights of distress erased their error
Raising of rank	Their repentance preserved in the Qur'an until the Last Day
A lesson for the Ummah	No one escapes responsibility because of past merit
Testing loyalty	The Ghassanid letter revealed the firmness of Ka'b's faith

A doctor who cares for his patient gives bitter medicine; he does not give it to someone he is not treating. So it was with this boycott: it was ***medicine for those whose hearts were still alive***. As for the hypocrites, their hearts had died — no medicine could help.

Scholars also derived from this story the ruling on ***al-hajr*** (boycotting) as a tool of discipline: it is permissible to shun someone for a religious reason, with the leader's permission, for a set time, and aiming to reform — not out of personal grudge. In worldly matters, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ forbade a person to shun his brother ***for more than three days*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 6077).

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LESSONS OF FIQH FROM THE HADITH OF KA'B

The Hadith of Ka'b ibn Malik is not only a moving story; it is also ***a mine of fiqh rulings***. Ibn Hajar in ***Fath al-Bari*** and an-Nawawi in ***Sharh Sahih Muslim*** list dozens of lessons from it. Among them:

RULING	EVIDENCE IN THE STORY
Two rak'ahs on return from travel	The Prophet ﷺ went straight to the mosque
Shunning for religious reasons	The ban on speaking to the three
Prostration of gratitude	Ka'b prostrated on hearing the news
Rewarding the bearer of good news	Ka'b gave his two garments
Congratulating on religious blessings	The people and Talhah congratulated him
Separation is not divorce	"No, but keep away from her"
Charity within limits	"Keep some of your wealth"
Judging by the outward	The hypocrites' excuses accepted

See how rich a single Hadith narrated honestly can be. Every detail Ka'b related — from his prostration to the garments he gave away — became ***guidance for the Ummah*** to this day. His honesty in telling it, including his own weakness, made this story ***a source of knowledge*** that never runs dry.

Ibn al-Qayyim also notes a subtle lesson: Ka'b ***did not blame destiny***. He said, "it was not decreed for me," but he did not use it as an excuse. He admitted his negligence plainly: ***"I had no excuse."*** This is the manner of a believer: believing in destiny, yet ***taking responsibility for his choices***.

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WHY DID KA'B TELL OF HIS OWN WEAKNESS?

An interesting question: why did Ka'b relate the story of his own weakness in such detail, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"All of my Ummah will be pardoned except those who make (their sins) public"*** — those who sin at night, Allah conceals it, and then in the morning they themselves tell of it (Sahih al-Bukhari 6069)?

The answer lies in ***intention and circumstance***. Those condemned in that Hadith relate their sins ***with pride or without shame***, as though sin were trivial. Ka'b, on the other hand, told his story ***after his repentance had been accepted and announced by revelation***, with deep regret, in order ***to teach the Ummah*** about the danger of delay and the value of honesty. His story was already mentioned in the Qur'an; he simply explained its details.

Scholars also praise ***Ka'b's integrity as a narrator***. He hid nothing that embarrassed him — his negligence, his temptation to lie, his people's reproach, and his tears in Abu Qatadah's garden. Nor did he exaggerate what honoured him. These are the marks of ***a truthful narrator***, which is why his story was accepted in full by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

The lesson for us: when advising others, ***our own experience*** — including mistakes we have repented of — can be the most effective lesson. But it must be shared ***with shame before Allah***, not with pride, and without exposing sins Allah has concealed for no benefit.

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THOSE WHO CONFESSED THEIR SINS

Surah At-Tawbah mentions several groups who stayed behind from Tabuk. Besides the hypocrites and the three who were deferred, there was another group:

"And [there are] others who have acknowledged their sins. They had mixed a righteous deed with another that was bad. Perhaps Allah will turn to them in forgiveness" (At-Tawbah 9:102) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:102.

SIRAH NOTE: ABU LUBABAH TIES HIMSELF TO A PILLAR

The commentators narrate from Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما that this verse was revealed about ***Abu Lubabah*** and some of his companions who stayed behind from Tabuk. When they heard the verses revealed about those who stayed behind, they ***tied themselves to the pillars of the mosque*** and swore not to untie themselves until the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself released them. When this verse was revealed, he released them.

This report is mentioned by at-Tabari and Ibn Kathir with several chains; ***the strength of its details is debated*** by the scholars. Another report links Abu Lubabah tying himself to the event of Banu Qurayzah (Book 13).

REFERENCES:

Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim, At-Tawbah 9:102. https://tafsir.app/ibn-katheer/9/102

Then Allah mentions a group whose decision was deferred — according to Ibn Kathir and many commentators, they are the three in Ka'b's story: ***"And [there are] others deferred until the command of Allah - whether He will punish them or whether He will forgive them"*** (At-Tawbah 9:106) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:106.

See ***Allah's mercy*** in verse 102: ***"Perhaps Allah will turn to them in forgiveness."*** Scholars say that "perhaps" ('asa) from Allah means ***certainty***. Whoever honestly admits his sin, having mixed good deeds with bad, need not despair — the door of repentance is wide open to him.

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MASJID AD-DIRAR IS BUILT

We now turn to another event also connected with Tabuk. Before the Messenger of Allah ﷺ set out, a group of hypocrites had built a mosque near the Mosque of Quba'. Allah exposed their real intention:

"And [there are] those [hypocrites] who took for themselves a mosque for causing harm and disbelief and division among the believers and as a station for whoever had warred against Allah and His Messenger before" (At-Tawbah 9:107) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:107.

This verse names ***four evil aims*** behind building that mosque: (1) ***dirar*** — harming the Muslims; (2) ***kufr*** — strengthening disbelief; (3) ***tafriq*** — splitting the congregation of Quba'; and (4) ***irsad*** — serving as a base for an enemy who had fought Allah and His Messenger. The name "Masjid ad-Dirar" comes from the first of these words.

SIRAH NOTE: ABU 'AMIR THE MONK AND THE HYPOCRITES' REQUEST

The commentators and sirah authors relate that "whoever had warred against Allah and His Messenger before" was ***Abu 'Amir the Monk*** of the Aws, who had become a Christian before Islam. He opposed the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, joined Quraysh at Uhud, then ***went to the Roman emperor*** to seek help against the Muslims. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ called him ***Abu 'Amir the Corrupt***. His son, ***Hanzalah ibn Abi 'Amir***, was the Companion martyred at Uhud and washed by the angels (Book 10).

The hypocrites built the mosque as a place to await Abu 'Amir. They came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ while he was preparing for Tabuk and said: "We have built a mosque for the sick and needy on cold, rainy nights; we would like you to pray in it." He replied: "I am preparing for a journey; when we return, in sha Allah." These details are ***sirah and tafsir reports***.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapters on the three who were left behind and Masjid ad-Dirar; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.

Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim, At-Tawbah 9:107. https://tafsir.app/ibn-katheer/9/107

See how subtle the hypocrites' scheme was: they used ***the holiest religious symbol*** — a mosque — to divide. They also wanted ***the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to pray in it*** so that it would gain "legitimacy". But Allah exposed them before the plan could succeed.

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"DO NOT STAND IN IT"

As the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was returning from Tabuk, Allah revealed a firm prohibition: ***"Do not stand [for prayer] within it - ever"*** (At-Tawbah 9:108) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:108.

The hypocrites had also prepared their oath: ***"We intended only the best."*** But Allah answered: ***"And Allah testifies that indeed they are liars"*** (At-Tawbah 9:107). Oaths and claimed good intentions do not change reality.

SIRAH NOTE: MASJID AD-DIRAR IS DEMOLISHED

The sirah authors relate that when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ reached ***Dhu Awan***, a place near Madinah, he called ***Malik ibn ad-Dukhshum*** and ***Ma'n ibn 'Adi*** (or his brother 'Asim ibn 'Adi) and ordered them: "Go to this mosque whose people are wrongdoers, and demolish and burn it." They went and ***burned and demolished it***.

It is also mentioned that its site was later used as a rubbish dump. These details are ***reports of Ibn Ishaq*** and the books of sirah.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapters on the three who were left behind and Masjid ad-Dirar; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.

The lesson: ***a building is not sacred because of its form***, but because of its ***intention and purpose***. A mosque built to divide the Ummah is not a house of Allah in the true sense. Scholars derived from this event that ***anything built to harm and divide the Muslims*** must be stopped, even if it hides behind the name of religion.

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THE MOSQUE FOUNDED ON PIETY

The same verse continues with praise for the true mosque: ***"A mosque founded on righteousness from the first day is more worthy for you to stand in"*** (At-Tawbah 9:108). Which mosque is meant? The Companions themselves once asked:

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1398

حَدَّثَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ حَاتِمٍ، حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، عَنْ حُمَيْدٍ الْخَرَّاطِ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ أَبَا سَلَمَةَ بْنَ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، قَالَ مَرَّ بِي عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيِّ قَالَ قُلْتُ لَهُ كَيْفَ سَمِعْتَ أَبَاكَ يَذْكُرُ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ الَّذِي أُسِّسَ عَلَى التَّقْوَى قَالَ قَالَ أَبِي دَخَلْتُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فِي بَيْتِ بَعْضِ نِسَائِهِ فَقُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَىُّ الْمَسْجِدَيْنِ الَّذِي أُسِّسَ عَلَى التَّقْوَى قَالَ فَأَخَذَ كَفًّا مِنْ حَصْبَاءَ فَضَرَبَ بِهِ الأَرْضَ ثُمَّ قَالَ هُوَ مَسْجِدُكُمْ هَذَا. - لِمَسْجِدِ الْمَدِينَةِ - قَالَ فَقُلْتُ أَشْهَدُ أَنِّي سَمِعْتُ أَبَاكَ هَكَذَا يَذْكُرُهُ

TRANSLATION:

Abu Salamah ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman said: 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Abi Sa'id al-Khudri passed by me, so I asked him: "How did you hear your father mention ***the mosque founded on piety***?" He said: My father (Abu Sa'id al-Khudri رضى الله عنه) said: I went in to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in the house of one of his wives and said:

"O Messenger of Allah, which of the two mosques is the one founded on piety?" He took a handful of pebbles, struck the ground with it, and said: ***"It is this mosque of yours"*** — meaning the Mosque of Madinah. Abu Salamah said: "I bear witness that I heard your father mention it this way."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Muhammad ibn Hatim, from Yahya ibn Sa'id al-Qattan, from Humayd al-Kharrat, from Abu Salamah ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Abi Sa'id al-Khudri, from his father Abu Sa'id al-Khudri رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Hajj, Chapter: The mosque founded on piety is the Mosque of the Prophet ﷺ in Madinah, Hadith No. 1398.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:1398a

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The context of the verse points to ***the Mosque of Quba'***, since Masjid ad-Dirar was built near it to rival it, and Quba' was the first mosque the Messenger of Allah ﷺ built during the Hijrah (Book 7). Yet this Hadith names ***the Prophet's Mosque***. Ibn Kathir, Ibn Hajar and others reconcile both: ***both mosques were founded on piety***. The verse was revealed about Quba', and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ made clear that his own mosque was even more deserving of that description.

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The greater lesson: ***the foundation of a building decides its fate***. The mosques founded on piety live on and are filled to this day — millions pray in the Prophet's Mosque and the Mosque of Quba' every year. Of Masjid ad-Dirar, ***not a single stone remains***.

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QUBA' AND THOSE WHO PURIFY THEMSELVES

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ cherished the Mosque of Quba' throughout his life:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 1193

حَدَّثَنَا مُوسَى بْنُ إِسْمَاعِيلَ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْعَزِيزِ بْنُ مُسْلِمٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ دِينَارٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ عُمَرَ ـ رضى الله عنهما ـ قَالَ كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَأْتِي مَسْجِدَ قُبَاءٍ كُلَّ سَبْتٍ مَاشِيًا وَرَاكِبًا. وَكَانَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ ـ رضى الله عنهما ـ يَفْعَلُهُ.

TRANSLATION:

Ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما said: ***The Prophet ﷺ used to come to the Mosque of Quba' every Saturday, walking and riding.*** And 'Abdullah (ibn 'Umar) رضى الله عنهما used to do the same.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Musa ibn Isma'il, from 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn Muslim, from 'Abdullah ibn Dinar, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Virtue of Prayer in the Mosques of Makkah and Madinah, Chapter: Visiting the Mosque of Quba' every Saturday, Hadith No. 1193; also Muslim No. 1399.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:1193

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

He also said: ***"Prayer in the Mosque of Quba' is like an 'umrah"*** (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 324, graded sahih by al-Albani). This Sunnah is still practised by pilgrims to this day: performing wudu' at home, then going to Quba' and praying in it.

Verse 108 also praises the people of Quba': ***"Within it are men who love to purify themselves; and Allah loves those who purify themselves"*** (At-Tawbah 9:108) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:108.

In the narration of Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه, it is mentioned that this verse was revealed about the people of Quba' because they ***cleaned themselves with water*** after relieving themselves (Sunan Abi Dawud 44, graded sahih by al-Albani). Their outward cleanliness reflected inner purity. Compare Masjid ad-Dirar: its building may have been fine, but ***the hearts of its builders were impure***.

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A BUILDING ON THE EDGE OF A CLIFF

Allah then gives a very powerful parable:

"Then is one who laid the foundation of his building on righteousness [with fear] from Allah and [seeking] His approval better or one who laid the foundation of his building on the edge of a bank about to collapse, so it collapsed with him into the fire of Hell?" (At-Tawbah 9:109) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:109.

Imagine a building raised on ***a riverbank already eroded*** beneath. From outside it looks solid, but the ground under it is hollow. At any moment it will collapse — and in this parable, it ***collapses straight into Hell*** with its builder.

"Their building which they built will not cease to be a [cause of] skepticism in their hearts until their hearts are stopped" (At-Tawbah 9:110) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:110.

This parable applies to ***every deed***, not only mosques. Every deed — a business, an organisation, a work, even worship — has a "foundation". If its foundation is ***piety and Allah's pleasure***, it will last. If its foundation is showing off, deceit or self-interest, it is like a building on the edge of a cliff: it looks grand, but is only waiting to fall.

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TWO MOSQUES, TWO INTENTIONS

A comparison between the Mosque of Quba' and Masjid ad-Dirar shows that the worth of anything lies in its ***intention and foundation***, not its appearance:

ASPECT	QUBA' → MASJID AD-DIRAR
Builders	The Prophet ﷺ and Companions → the hypocrites
Foundation	Piety and Allah's pleasure → the edge of a collapsing bank
Purpose	Uniting the Muslims → dividing them
Its people	Those who love purification → those who swear falsely
Command	More worthy to pray in → never pray in it
Outcome	Still filled with worshippers today → burned and demolished

The story of these two mosques also completes the story of the three Companions. Both teach about ***truthfulness***: the three Companions were truthful in their words, while the builders of Masjid ad-Dirar deceived with their building and their oaths. Allah exposed both — raising the truthful, and bringing down the deceivers.

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SOURCES OF THE STORY

This story is narrated in sources of differing grades. The table below summarises them:

EVENT	SOURCE AND GRADE
Full story of Ka'b ibn Malik	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418; Sahih Muslim 2769 — sahih
The blessing of truthfulness	Sahih al-Bukhari 4673 — sahih
Fifty nights	Sahih al-Bukhari 6255 — sahih
The verses of repentance	Sahih al-Bukhari 4678 — sahih
Two rak'ahs after travel	Sahih al-Bukhari 3088 — sahih
"Keep some of your wealth"	Sahih al-Bukhari 2757 — sahih
Truthfulness leads to Paradise	Sahih al-Bukhari 6094 — sahih
The mosque founded on piety	Sahih Muslim 1398 — sahih
Quba' every Saturday	Sahih al-Bukhari 1193 — sahih
Abu Lubabah ties himself	Tafsir at-Tabari, Ibn Kathir — debated
Abu 'Amir the Monk	Sirah and tafsir books
Demolition of Masjid ad-Dirar	Ibn Ishaq — sirah

The story of Ka'b ibn Malik is among the sirah stories with ***the strongest chains***, since it is narrated by Ka'b himself in both Sahih collections. The story of Masjid ad-Dirar is confirmed by the Qur'an, while its details come from the books of sirah and tafsir.

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THE QUR'ANIC VERSES BEHIND THIS STORY

The story of the three Companions and Masjid ad-Dirar is not only a historical report; it is preserved in a series of verses of Surah At-Tawbah that will be recited until the Day of Judgement. This table gathers those verses and shows the chapter of this eBook that explains each of them.

VERSE	SUMMARY	CHAPTER
At-Tawbah 9:81–83	Those who rejoiced at staying behind and said "do not go out in the heat"	7
At-Tawbah 9:94–96	They will make excuses when you return; do not believe them, Allah has informed us	7
At-Tawbah 9:102	Those who confessed their sins and mixed good deeds with bad	25
At-Tawbah 9:106	Those whose matter was deferred until the decision of Allah	25
At-Tawbah 9:107–110	Masjid ad-Dirar and the mosque founded on piety	26–30
At-Tawbah 9:117	Allah turned in mercy to the Prophet, the Muhajirun and the Ansar in the hour of hardship	18
At-Tawbah 9:118	Repentance accepted for the three who were left behind	1, 12, 18
At-Tawbah 9:119	"Be with those who are truthful"	21

READING VERSE 9:118 PHRASE BY PHRASE

Verse 9:118 describes the state of the three Companions in very delicate language. Commentators such as Ibn Kathir and al-Qurtubi explain its phrases as follows:

PHRASE	MEANING	BRIEF EXPLANATION
ٱلَّذِينَ خُلِّفُواْ	those who were left behind / deferred	Ka'b himself explained that it does not mean they stayed behind from the battle, but that their matter was deferred, unlike those who swore oaths and made excuses (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418)
ضَاقَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْأَرْضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتْ	the earth closed in on them despite its vastness	Ka'b said the land seemed to change; it was no longer the land he knew
وَضَاقَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ	their own souls closed in on them	The constriction was not only outside, but within the chest
وَظَنُّوٓاْ أَن لَّا مَلْجَأَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَّآ إِلَيْهِ	they were certain there was no refuge from Allah except in Him	The peak of repentance: fleeing from Allah to Allah
ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَتُوبُواْ	then He turned to them so that they might repent	The very ability to repent is itself a gift from Allah

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Notice the order of this verse: constriction outside, then constriction within, then the certainty that there is no refuge except in Allah — and only then does acceptance of repentance come. It is like a map of the journey of a repenting soul.

Reference: Surah At-Tawbah 9:118 (Quran.com); Sahih al-Bukhari 4418; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim.

LESSONS

Allah did not merely accept the repentance of the three Companions; He preserved their feelings in His Word. Anyone who has felt "the earth close in" because of his sins can read this verse and know that the way out is to return to Allah.

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THE PEOPLE OF THE STORY OF KA'B AND MASJID AD-DIRAR

The Hadith of Ka'b ibn Malik mentions many people besides the three Companions themselves. This table gathers them, together with the people of the story of Masjid ad-Dirar. Information found only in the sirah books is marked as such.

NAME	TRIBE / RELATION	ROLE IN THE STORY	SOURCE
Ka'b ibn Malik رضى الله عنه	Khazraj (Banu Salimah)	One of the three who were left behind; narrator of the story	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418
Murarah ibn ar-Rabi' رضى الله عنه	Aws (Banu 'Amr ibn 'Awf); a veteran of Badr	One of the three who were left behind	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418
Hilal ibn Umayyah رضى الله عنه	Aws (Banu Waqif); a veteran of Badr	One of the three who were left behind; his wife was allowed to serve him because of his age	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418
Abu Qatadah رضى الله عنه	Khazraj (Banu Salimah); Ka'b calls him "my cousin and the dearest of people to me"	Did not return Ka'b's greeting in his garden	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418
Mu'adh ibn Jabal رضى الله عنه	Khazraj	Defended Ka'b at Tabuk when a man criticised him	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418
A man of Banu Salimah	Khazraj (Banu Salimah)	Criticised Ka'b at Tabuk: "his two cloaks held him back"	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418
A Nabatean farmer from Syria	—	Brought the letter of the King of Ghassan to Ka'b	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418
Talhah ibn 'Ubaydullah رضى الله عنه	Quraysh (Banu Taym)	Rose and ran to welcome and congratulate Ka'b	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418
The man who called out from Mount Sal'	Not named in the Hadith	Announced the news of repentance in the loudest voice	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418; the names come from al-Waqidi's report cited by Ibn Hajar
Abu 'Amir ar-Rahib	Aws; father of Hanzalah "Ghasil al-Mala'ikah"	The man the builders of Masjid ad-Dirar were waiting for	Books of sirah and tafsir
Malik ibn ad-Dukhshum and Ma'n ibn 'Adi رضى الله عنهما	Malik: Khazraj; Ma'n: Bali, an ally of the Ansar	Sent to demolish and burn Masjid ad-Dirar	Ibn Ishaq — sirah report

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NAME	TRIBE / RELATION	ROLE IN THE STORY	SOURCE
Abu Lubabah رضى الله عنه	Aws (Banu 'Amr ibn 'Awf)	Tied himself to a pillar of the mosque (linked by some commentators to 9:102)	Tafsir at-Tabari, Ibn Kathir — discussed

SIRAH NOTE: WHO CALLED OUT AND WHO RODE?

The authentic Hadith does not name the man who called out from Mount Sal' or the horseman who hurried to Ka'b. Ibn Hajar in Fath al-Bari cites a report of al-Waqidi naming Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه as the one who climbed Sal', and other names for the horseman and the bearer of the news.

Al-Waqidi's reports are graded weak by the Hadith scholars, so we mention these names only as sirah reports. What is certain from the authentic Hadith is the joy of the Companions as they raced to deliver the news.

LESSONS

In one Hadith we see a Companion who defended (Mu'adh), a Companion who criticised (the man of Banu Salimah), a Companion who obeyed though saddened (Abu Qatadah), and a Companion who rejoiced without envy (Talhah). A healthy society is not one without mistakes, but one that knows how to educate, to wait, and to welcome back.

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HILAL IBN UMAYYAH AND THE VERSES OF LI'AN

Hilal ibn Umayyah رضى الله عنه was not only one of the three who were left behind. His name is also recorded in another event that brought a ruling in the Qur'an: the verses of li'an in Surah An-Nur.

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما narrated that Hilal ibn Umayyah accused his wife before the Messenger of Allah ﷺ with a man named Sharik ibn Sahma'. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to him: "Bring proof, or the prescribed punishment (hadd) will fall on your back." Hilal replied: "O Messenger of Allah, if one of us sees a man with his wife, must he go looking for witnesses?" Then the verses of li'an were revealed (An-Nur 24:6–9). (Sahih al-Bukhari 4747)

Reference: Sahih al-Bukhari 4747; Surah An-Nur 24:6–9 (Quran.com).

Li'an is the Qur'an's way of resolving the situation of a husband who accuses his wife but has no four witnesses. The husband testifies by Allah four times that he is truthful, and the fifth time invokes the curse of Allah on himself if he is lying. The wife may avert the punishment by testifying four times that her husband is lying, and the fifth time invoking the wrath of Allah on herself if he is truthful. After that, they are separated.

> **NOTE: TWO REPORTS ABOUT THE OCCASION OF THE VERSES OF LI'AN**
>
> Sahih al-Bukhari also contains a report that the verses of li'an were revealed concerning 'Uwaymir al-'Ajlani (Sahih al-Bukhari 4745). Scholars such as Ibn Hajar reconcile the two reports: perhaps Hilal's case came first and the verses were revealed, then 'Uwaymir came shortly afterwards, so the verses are linked to both.
>
> This chapter mentions the ruling only briefly. The detailed fiqh of li'an should be taken from the books of fiqh and the religious authorities.

The two stories of Hilal meet at one point: truthfulness. In the story of Tabuk, he honestly admitted he had no excuse. In the story of li'an, he said to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: "By the One who sent you with the truth, I am truthful, and Allah will surely reveal something that frees my back from the punishment." Allah confirmed his hope twice.

LESSONS

Rulings of the Qur'an were often revealed through the stories of ordinary people facing real trials. Hilal, an honest old man, became the occasion for two series of verses. Our small acts of honesty today may become a great good we never expected.

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AL-HAJR: WHEN IS BOYCOTTING PERMITTED?

Chapters 22 and 23 mentioned that scholars derived the ruling of al-hajr (boycotting) from the story of Ka'b. Yet the story is often misunderstood as a licence to boycott anyone. This chapter gathers the evidence so that we see the full picture.

THE PROHIBITION OF SHUNNING A BROTHER FOR MORE THAN THREE DAYS

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "It is not lawful for a man to shun his brother for more than three nights, so that they meet and this one turns away and that one turns away. The better of the two is the one who begins with the greeting of peace." (Sahih al-Bukhari 6077)

He ﷺ also said: "The gates of Paradise are opened on Mondays and Thursdays, and every servant who does not associate anything with Allah is forgiven, except a man between whom and his brother there is enmity. It is said: Delay these two until they reconcile." (Sahih Muslim 2565)

In another report: "It is not lawful for a Muslim to shun his brother for more than three days. Whoever shuns him for more than three days and dies, enters the Fire." (Sunan Abi Dawud 4914; graded sahih by al-Albani)

Reference: Sahih al-Bukhari 6077; Sahih Muslim 2565; Sunan Abi Dawud 4914.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TWO KINDS OF BOYCOTT

ASPECT	FORBIDDEN BOYCOTT	CORRECTIVE BOYCOTT (AS IN THE STORY OF KA'B)
Reason	Worldly matters, personal anger, grudges	A clear religious wrong
Who decides	An individual, driven by emotion	A leader or someone with authority, with wisdom
Purpose	Venting anger or punishing	Correcting and educating
Duration	Forbidden beyond three days	Only as long as needed, ending when the purpose is achieved
Outcome	The relationship is severed	Welcomed back with joy (Talhah, Mu'adh, Abu Qatadah)

Ibn Hajar and an-Nawawi stress that boycotting for religious reasons is permitted only if it brings benefit, that is, the person boycotted is expected to change. If the boycott only drives him further from good, then drawing near to him and advising him is better.

IN LIFE TODAY

Today, "boycotting" takes new forms: blocking a phone number, leaving a chat group, or not greeting someone at a family gathering. The story of Ka'b teaches that a legitimate boycott is very limited,

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purposeful, and ends with an embrace. Otherwise, the original command is to keep the ties of kinship and to begin with the greeting of peace.

LESSONS

Do not use the story of Ka'b as an excuse to cut relations. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ boycotted three Companions to correct them, then welcomed them with a face shining like the moon. The better of two people at odds is the one who greets first.

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TIMELINE OF THE THREE COMPANIONS AND MASJID AD-DIRAR

This table arranges the events of this eBook in order. The dates are approximate, based on the Hadith and the sirah books.

TIME	EVENT	SOURCE
Before Tabuk (9 AH)	The hypocrites build Masjid ad-Dirar and ask the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to pray in it; he defers because he is about to set out	Books of sirah and tafsir
Rajab 9 AH	The army sets out for Tabuk; Ka'b says "tomorrow I will get ready"	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418
At Tabuk	The Messenger of Allah ﷺ asks "What did Ka'b do?"; Mu'adh defends him	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418
On the way back	Ka'b begins thinking of excuses to save himself	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418
Near Madinah	The verses on Masjid ad-Dirar are revealed; men are sent to demolish it	At-Tawbah 9:107–110; Ibn Ishaq
Ramadan 9 AH (approx.)	The Messenger of Allah ﷺ arrives, prays two rak'ahs in the mosque, and accepts the excuses of more than eighty people	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418, 3088
The same day	Ka'b, Murarah and Hilal tell the truth	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418
Nights 1–40	The boycott: no one speaks to them; the King of Ghassan's letter is burned	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418
Night 40	The order to keep away from their wives	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418
Night 50	The verses of repentance are revealed in the last third of the night	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418, 4678
Fajr of day 51	The call from Mount Sal'; Ka'b prostrates in gratitude, then goes to the mosque	Sahih al-Bukhari 4418
Afterwards	Ka'b wants to give away all his wealth; he is told to keep some of it	Sahih al-Bukhari 2757
End of 9 AH	The first Hajj under Abu Bakr; the Year of Delegations begins (Series 26–27)	Sirah books
Around 50 AH	Ka'b dies in the time of Mu'awiyah, having become blind in old age	Biographical works

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LESSONS

Fifty nights felt long to those who endured them, yet on the timeline of history they are only one small row. So it is with our trials: while we live through them they seem endless, but they pass, and what remains is the outcome — whether or not we returned to Allah.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT KA'B IBN MALIK AND MASJID AD-DIRAR

1. WHO WERE THE THREE WHO WERE LEFT BEHIND?

Ka'b ibn Malik (Khazraj, Banu Salimah), Murarah ibn ar-Rabi' (Aws, Banu 'Amr ibn 'Awf) and Hilal ibn Umayyah (Aws, Banu Waqif). Murarah and Hilal were veterans of Badr (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418; chapters 10 and 34).

2. WHAT DOES "LEFT BEHIND" MEAN IN AT-TAWBAH 9:118?

According to Ka'b himself, it means their matter was deferred, not merely that they stayed behind from the battle (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418; chapter 33).

3. WHY WERE THE HYPOCRITES NOT BOYCOTTED?

Because no good was expected from them; their matter was left to Allah. The three Companions, by contrast, were disciplined because they were expected to return (chapter 22).

4. HOW LONG DID THE BOYCOTT LAST?

Fifty nights. On the fortieth night they were ordered to keep away from their wives (Sahih al-Bukhari 4418; chapters 14–15).

5. DID THE ORDER TO KEEP AWAY FROM THEIR WIVES MEAN DIVORCE?

No. Ka'b asked whether he should divorce his wife and was told: "No, but keep away from her." Ka'b told his wife to go to her family. Hilal's wife was allowed to serve him because he was old (chapter 14).

6. WHAT DID THE KING OF GHASSAN WRITE?

He invited Ka'b to come to him because "your companion has shunned you". Ka'b saw it as yet another trial and burned the letter (chapter 13).

7. WHO CALLED OUT FROM MOUNT SAL'?

The authentic Hadith does not name him. Al-Waqidi's report mentions particular names, but that report is weak (chapter 34).

8. MAY WE BOYCOTT OTHERS AS IN THE STORY OF KA'B?

Boycotting for personal reasons is forbidden beyond three days. A corrective boycott for religious reasons is very limited: it aims to correct, is done with wisdom, and ends when its purpose is achieved (Sahih al-Bukhari 6077; Sahih Muslim 2565; chapter 36).

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9. WHAT IS THE LINK BETWEEN HILAL IBN UMAYYAH AND THE VERSES OF LI'AN?

Hilal accused his wife without four witnesses, and the verses of li'an were revealed (An-Nur 24:6–9). There is also a report linking the verses to 'Uwaymir al-'Ajlani (Sahih al-Bukhari 4747, 4745; chapter 35).

10. WHO BUILT MASJID AD-DIRAR?

A group of hypocrites who were waiting for Abu 'Amir ar-Rahib. Allah exposed their intention in At-Tawbah 9:107, and the mosque was demolished after he returned from Tabuk (sirah books; chapters 26–27).

11. WHICH MOSQUE WAS "FOUNDED ON PIETY"?

There are two views: Masjid Quba' or the Prophet's Mosque. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ named his own mosque in Sahih Muslim 1398, and many scholars say the verse includes both (chapters 28–29).

12. WHAT IS THE MAIN LESSON OF THIS STORY FOR US?

Truthfulness, even when costly, is better than an excuse that saves for a while. Allah accepts the repentance of the truthful, and exposes those who deceive, even with a beautiful building.

LESSONS

These questions show how firmly grounded the story of Ka'b is: almost every detail comes from authentic Hadith narrated by Ka'b himself. The details of names and dates that come from the sirah books we convey according to their grade.

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

The story of the three who were left behind and the story of Masjid ad-Dirar are two sides of the same coin: ***truth and falsehood***. One seemed to lose but in the end won; the other seemed to succeed but in the end collapsed.

LESSON	FROM THIS STORY
The danger of delay	"Tomorrow I will get ready"
Defending an absent brother	Mu'adh defends Ka'b at Tabuk
Truth even when costly	Ka'b refuses a false excuse
Righteous examples	Murarah and Hilal, people of Badr
Loyal when hurt	The Ghassanid letter burned
Fleeing to Allah	"No refuge from Allah except in Him"
Prostration of gratitude	Ka'b prostrates at the voice from Sal'
Welcoming the returning	Talhah stands to shake his hand
Intention decides worth	Quba' and Masjid ad-Dirar

KA'B IN OUR LIVES

Each of us has erred like Ka'b — delaying good, falling behind in obedience. The question is not whether we will err, but ***what we do afterwards***. Do we look for excuses like those eighty men, or do we tell the truth, bear the consequences with patience, and flee to Allah? Ka'b chose the second path, and Allah made the day of his repentance ***the best day since he was born***.

In sha Allah, the series **The Prophet's Sirah** will continue with ***Book 26 — 'Am al-Wufud (The Year of Delegations)***: after Tabuk, delegation after delegation from across Arabia came to Madinah to embrace Islam — Thaqif from Ta'if, Banu Tamim, Najran, and many more. And Allah knows best.

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PART FIVE

The Year of Delegations

The Prophet's Sirah — Series 26

Delegations from Across Arabia, People Entering Islam in Multitudes and the Prophet's ﷺ Way with Guests, According to the Qur'an and Authentic Hadith

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THE YEAR OF DELEGATIONS

Book 25 ended with the truthfulness of three Companions and the demolition of Masjid ad-Dirar. Now we enter a very different period of the sirah — a time of ***harvest***. The seeds sown over twenty years in Makkah and Madinah now bore fruit: delegation after delegation came from across Arabia to ***embrace Islam***.

Historians call the year 9 AH ***'Am al-Wufud — the Year of Delegations***. This Book 26 tells of some of the most famous delegations: Thaqif, who had once driven the Messenger of Allah ﷺ out of Ta'if; Banu Tamim with their rough manners; 'Abd al-Qays who came from afar; Dimam ibn Tha'labah with his blunt questions; the Christians of Najran; the tender-hearted people of Yemen — and also ***Musaylimah***, who came not to believe but to ask for power.

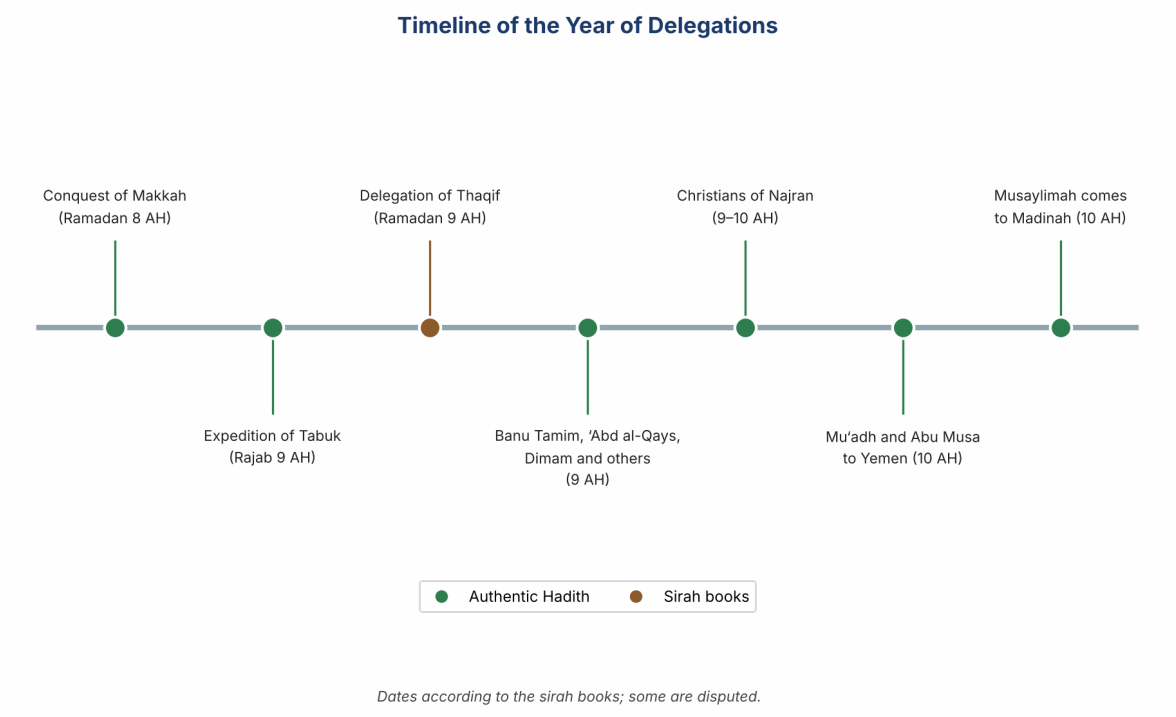

Figure 1: Timeline of the Year of Delegations.

Note: The Qur'anic translation in this eBook is Sahih International. The grade of every Hadith is stated in its box. Information from the books of sirah — such as the story of 'Urwah ibn Mas'ud, the conditions of Thaqif, the destruction of al-Lat and the oratory contest of Banu Tamim — is placed in brown "Sirah Note" boxes, since most of it is narrated without a connected chain or with a debated one.

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THE YEAR OF DELEGATIONS

Long before this happened, Allah had revealed a short surah describing it precisely:

"When the victory of Allah has come and the conquest" (An-Nasr 110:1) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 110:1.

"And you see the people entering into the religion of Allah in multitudes" (An-Nasr 110:2) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 110:2.

"Then exalt [Him] with praise of your Lord and ask forgiveness of Him. Indeed, He is ever Accepting of repentance" (An-Nasr 110:3) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 110:3.

"People entering into the religion of Allah in multitudes" — before this, people embraced Islam one by one, sometimes in secret, at the risk of persecution. Now whole tribes came at once, represented by their leaders. As we saw in Book 20, Ibn 'Abbas understood this surah as ***a sign that the Prophet's ﷺ end was near***: his mission was nearly complete.

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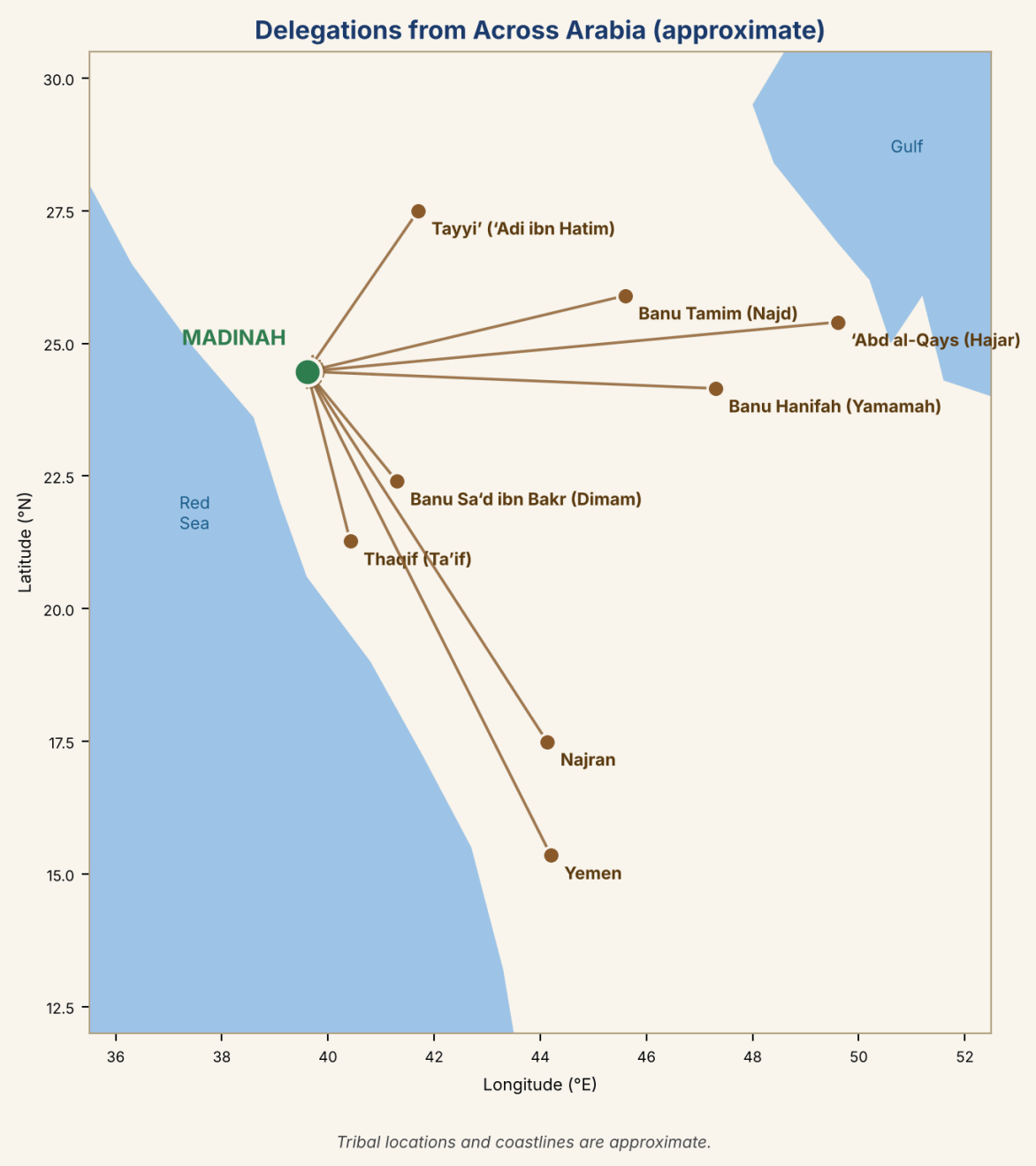

Figure 2: Delegations from across Arabia (approximate).

The sirah authors list ***more than sixty delegations*** that came to Madinah in this period, mostly in 9 and 10 AH. We cannot tell of them all, but several delegations mentioned in sahih Hadith give a clear picture of ***the variety of people*** who came, and ***the Prophet's ﷺ wisdom*** in dealing with each of them.

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WHY AFTER TABUK?

Why did the Arab tribes wait so long? 'Amr ibn Salamah رضى الله عنه explained: ***"The Arabs delayed their Islam until the Conquest (of Makkah). They said: 'Leave him and his people; if he prevails over them, then he is truly a prophet.' When the Conquest of Makkah took place, every people hastened to embrace Islam"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4302).

Quraysh were ***the guardians of the Ka'bah*** and the religious leaders of the Arabs. As long as Quraysh opposed him, the other tribes hesitated. When Makkah was opened, Hunayn won, and Rome dared not face him at Tabuk, no power in Arabia remained that could hold Islam back. So the tribes came — some out of faith, some because they saw ***which way the wind was blowing***.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ received them all well, because ***the door of Islam is open to anyone***. Faith that may be weak at first can grow strong through teaching. Yet some of those who entered without deep faith were the very ones who later ***apostatised*** after the Prophet's ﷺ death — a trial that Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه would have to face.

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THAQIF COMES FROM TA'IF

Among the most meaningful delegations was ***Thaqif from Ta'if*** — the people who had once driven out the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and stoned him (Book 5), and who held out behind their fortress when besieged after Hunayn (Book 22). Now they came to Madinah of their own accord.

SIRAH NOTE: 'URWAH IBN MAS'UD AND THE CONDITIONS OF THAQIF

The sirah authors relate that after the siege of Ta'if, the Thaqafi chief ***'Urwah ibn Mas'ud*** caught up with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and embraced Islam. He returned to call his people, but as he called the adhan from his rooftop, ***they shot him with arrows until he was martyred***. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ is said to have likened him to the man in Surah Ya-Sin killed by his people for calling to the messengers.

Some months later, Thaqif realised they could not hold out, surrounded by tribes that had embraced Islam. They sent a delegation and asked for certain conditions — among them that the idol al-Lat be left for some years and that they be exempted from prayer. ***All these requests were refused.*** Jabir رضى الله عنه narrates that Thaqif stipulated they would owe no zakat and no jihad, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "They will give charity and strive once they have embraced Islam" (Sunan Abi Dawud 3025; its chain is debated).

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Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapters on the delegations (al-wufud); Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ appointed the young man in that delegation most eager to learn the Qur'an, ***'Uthman ibn Abi al-'As*** رضى الله عنه, as their imam. He advised him: ***"Lead your people in prayer. Whoever leads people should make it light, for among them are the old, the sick, the weak and those with business to attend to"*** (Sahih Muslim 468).

See the wisdom here: he did not choose the oldest or the highest in rank, but ***the most devoted to knowledge***. And his advice was not about power, but about ***compassion for those praying behind***. The people who had once thrown stones were now led in prayer by a gentle-hearted young man.

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THE IDOL AL-LAT IS TORN DOWN

Al-Lat was the chief idol of Thaqif at Ta'if, one of the three greatest idols of the Arabs along with al-'Uzza and Manat (An-Najm 53:19–20). Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما explained its origin: ***"Al-Lat was a man who used to mix sawiq (barley meal) for the pilgrims"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4859). After he died, people devoted themselves at his grave, until it was eventually worshipped.

SIRAH NOTE: AL-MUGHIRAH TEARS DOWN AL-LAT

The sirah authors relate that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent ***Abu Sufyan ibn Harb*** and ***al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah*** رضى الله عنهما with the Thaqif delegation to tear down al-Lat. Al-Mughirah, himself of Thaqif, struck it with an axe. The women of Thaqif came out bareheaded, weeping over it. The wealth and ornaments in the idol's house were taken and used to pay the debts of 'Urwah ibn Mas'ud and his brother. These details are ***sirah reports***.

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Note the lesson in al-Lat's origin: it began with ***excessive veneration of a good man***, then his grave was glorified, and finally it became an object of worship. This is why Islam is so firm in guarding ***the purity of tawhid***, including forbidding structures over graves and turning them into places of worship.

The people who once defended al-Lat with swords and stones now ***watched it being torn down***, and nothing happened. The idol they had feared for centuries could not even defend itself.

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BANU TAMIM OUTSIDE THE CHAMBERS

Banu Tamim was one of the largest tribes of Najd, famous for its courage, poetry and eloquence — but also for its ***rough manners***. When their delegation reached Madinah, they did not wait for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to come out. They ***stood outside his wives' chambers*** and called out loudly. Allah revealed:

"Indeed, those who call you, [O Muhammad], from behind the chambers - most of them do not use reason" (Al-Hujurat 49:4) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 49:4.

"And if they had been patient until you [could] come out to them, it would have been better for them. But Allah is Forgiving and Merciful" (Al-Hujurat 49:5) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 49:5.

In at-Tirmidhi's narration, one of them, ***al-Aqra' ibn Habis***, called out: "O Muhammad, my praise is an adornment and my blame is a disgrace!" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ replied: ***"That is Allah."*** (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3267, graded hasan gharib by at-Tirmidhi.) Only Allah's praise truly honours and His blame truly disgraces.

See ***Allah's patience and mercy*** in these verses: Allah did not punish them, but corrected them gently and closed with ***"Allah is Forgiving and Merciful"***. They had just arrived and did not yet know the manners of Islam. A lesson for us: ***newcomers must be taught patiently***, not punished harshly.

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"ACCEPT THE GLAD TIDINGS"

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ greeted Banu Tamim with the most precious offer — ***the glad tidings of Islam and Paradise***. But see how they received it:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4365

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو نُعَيْمٍ، حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنْ أَبِي صَخْرَةَ، عَنْ صَفْوَانَ بْنِ مُحْرِزٍ الْمَازِنِيِّ، عَنْ عِمْرَانَ بْنِ حُصَيْنٍ ـ رضى الله عنهما ـ قَالَ أَتَى نَفَرٌ مِنْ بَنِي تَمِيمٍ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَقَالَ اقْبَلُوا الْبُشْرَى يَا بَنِي تَمِيمٍ. قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَدْ بَشَّرْتَنَا فَأَعْطِنَا. فَرِيءَ ذَلِكَ فِي وَجْهِهِ فَجَاءَ نَفَرٌ مِنَ الْيَمَنِ فَقَالَ اقْبَلُوا الْبُشْرَى إِذْ لَمْ يَقْبَلْهَا بَنُو تَمِيمٍ. قَالُوا قَدْ قَبِلْنَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ.

TRANSLATION:

'Imran ibn Husayn رضى الله عنهما said: A group from ***Banu Tamim*** came to the Prophet ﷺ, and he said: ***"Accept the glad tidings, O Banu Tamim!"*** They said: "O Messenger of Allah, you have given us glad tidings, so ***give us (something)***." Displeasure showed on his face. Then a group from ***Yemen*** came, and he said: ***"Accept the glad tidings, since Banu Tamim did not accept them."*** They said: ***"We accept them, O Messenger of Allah."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Abu Nu'aym al-Fadl ibn Dukayn, from Sufyan ath-Thawri, from Abu Sakhrah Jami' ibn Shaddad, from Safwan ibn Muhriz al-Mazini, from 'Imran ibn Husayn رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions, Chapter: The delegation of Banu Tamim, Hadith No. 4365; also No. 3190.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4365

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Banu Tamim came with ***a worldly mind***: glad tidings, to them, meant gifts and wealth. The people of Yemen came with ***hearts thirsty for knowledge***: they accepted the glad tidings for what they were. In a longer narration (Sahih al-Bukhari 3190), the Yemenis said: "We have come to gain understanding of the religion and to ask about the beginning of this matter" — that is, the beginning of creation.

Yet Banu Tamim did not stay that way. Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه said: "I have always loved Banu Tamim since I heard three things about them from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ" — among them, that they would be ***the fiercest of this Ummah against the Dajjal*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4366). A tribe rough at first eventually produced many fighters and scholars.

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The contrast between the two groups also teaches us how to receive good news from Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. Banu Tamim measured the offer by what they could hold in their hands; the Yemenis measured it by what it meant for their hearts and their Hereafter. Every believer is tested in the same way: do we value guidance itself, or only what it might bring us in this world?

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ABU BAKR AND 'UMAR RAISE THEIR VOICES

The coming of Banu Tamim was also the occasion for the verses of etiquette at the start of Surah Al-Hujurat — and those corrected were not only Bedouins, but also ***the two noblest Companions***:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4367

حَدَّثَنِي إِبْرَاهِيمُ بْنُ مُوسَى، حَدَّثَنَا هِشَامُ بْنُ يُوسُفَ، أَنَّ ابْنَ جُرَيْجٍ، أَخْبَرَهُمْ عَنِ ابْنِ أَبِي مُلَيْكَةَ، أَنَّ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنَ الزُّبَيْرِ، أَخْبَرَهُمْ أَنَّهُ، قَدِمَ رَكْبٌ مِنْ بَنِي تَمِيمٍ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَقَالَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ أَمِّرِ الْقَعْقَاعَ بْنَ مَعْبَدِ بْنِ زُرَارَةَ. قَالَ عُمَرُ بَلْ أَمِّرِ الأَقْرَعَ بْنَ حَابِسٍ. قَالَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ مَا أَرَدْتَ إِلاَّ خِلاَفِي. قَالَ عُمَرُ مَا أَرَدْتُ خِلاَفَكَ. فَتَمَارَيَا حَتَّى ارْتَفَعَتْ أَصْوَاتُهُمَا فَنَزَلَ فِي ذَلِكَ {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لاَ تُقَدِّمُوا} حَتَّى انْقَضَتْ.

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr رضى الله عنهما related that a party of riders from ***Banu Tamim*** came to the Prophet ﷺ. Abu Bakr said: "Appoint al-Qa'qa' ibn Ma'bad ibn Zurarah (as their leader)." 'Umar said: "Rather, appoint al-Aqra' ibn Habis." Abu Bakr said: "You only wanted to oppose me." 'Umar said: "I did not want to oppose you." ***They argued until their voices rose.*** Then about that was revealed: {O you who have believed, do not put [yourselves] before…} to the end of the passage.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Ibrahim ibn Musa, from Hisham ibn Yusuf, from Ibn Jurayj, from Ibn Abi Mulaykah, from 'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions, Chapter: The delegation of Banu Tamim, Hadith No. 4367; also No. 4845, 4847, 7302.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4367

The verse revealed was: ***"O you who have believed, do not put [yourselves] before Allah and His Messenger"*** (Al-Hujurat 49:1) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 49:1.

"O you who have believed, do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet" (Al-Hujurat 49:2) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 49:2.

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Abu Bakr and 'Umar رضى الله عنهما were not enemies; they simply differed over who should lead Banu Tamim, and the discussion grew heated in the Prophet's ﷺ presence. Allah corrected them for ***getting ahead of the Prophet's ﷺ decision*** and ***raising their voices*** before him.

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And see how they took that correction. Ibn az-Zubayr said: after this verse was revealed, ***'Umar spoke to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ so quietly that he had to ask him to repeat*** what he had said (Sahih al-Bukhari 4845, 7302). This is the mark of a believer: when corrected, ***he changes at once***, without defending himself.

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THABIT IBN QAYS: THE PROPHET'S ﷺ ORATOR

The verse about raised voices deeply affected one Ansari Companion: ***Thabit ibn Qays ibn Shammas*** رضى الله عنه, the orator of the Ansar, who naturally had a loud voice. Anas رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ noticed Thabit was missing, so someone went to look for him. He found Thabit sitting in his house with his head lowered. Thabit said: ***"Woe is me! I used to raise my voice above the Prophet's ﷺ; my deeds have come to nothing and I am among the people of the Fire."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 3613; 4846)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent the man back with an extraordinary glad tiding: ***"Go to him and tell him: You are not of the people of the Fire; rather, you are of the people of Paradise."***

> **SIRAH NOTE: THABIT ANSWERS THE ORATOR OF BANU TAMIM**
>
> The sirah authors relate that Banu Tamim came with their orator and poet to ***boast***. Their orator, 'Utarid ibn Hajib, spoke in praise of his people. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ ordered Thabit ibn Qays to answer him, and Thabit spoke in praise of Allah and His Messenger. Then their poet, az-Zibriqan ibn Badr, recited, and ***Hassan ibn Thabit*** answered him. Finally al-Aqra' ibn Habis admitted: "Their orator is more eloquent than ours, and their poet greater than ours." Then they embraced Islam. These details are ***sirah reports***.
>
> **REFERENCES:**
> Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapters on the delegations (al-wufud); Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.

Thabit ibn Qays was later ***martyred at the Battle of Yamamah*** against Musaylimah the Liar — fulfilling the Prophet's ﷺ glad tidings about him. His loud voice was used to defend Islam, and his fear of Allah made him noble.

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THE DELEGATION OF 'ABD AL-QAYS

From the east of Arabia — the region of ***Bahrain*** (today al-Ahsa' and its surroundings) — came the delegation of ***'Abd al-Qays***. To reach Madinah they had to cross the lands of the Mudar tribes who were still disbelievers, so they could only come safely in ***the sacred months***. Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما tells of their meeting:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 53

حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْجَعْدِ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ أَبِي جَمْرَةَ، قَالَ كُنْتُ أَقْعُدُ مَعَ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، يُجْلِسُنِي عَلَى سَرِيرِهِ فَقَالَ أَقِمْ عِنْدِي حَتَّى أَجْعَلَ لَكَ سَهْمًا مِنْ مَالِي، فَأَقَمْتُ مَعَهُ شَهْرَيْنِ، ثُمَّ قَالَ إِنَّ وَفْدَ عَبْدِ الْقَيْسِ لَمَّا أَتَوُا النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ مَنِ الْقَوْمُ أَوْ مَنِ الْوَفْدُ. قَالُوا رَبِيعَةُ. قَالَ مَرْحَبًا بِالْقَوْمِ ـ أَوْ بِالْوَفْدِ ـ غَيْرَ خَزَايَا وَلاَ نَدَامَى. فَقَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّا لاَ نَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ نَأْتِيَكَ إِلاَّ فِي شَهْرِ الْحَرَامِ، وَبَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكَ هَذَا الْحَىُّ مِنْ كُفَّارِ مُضَرَ، فَمُرْنَا بِأَمْرٍ فَصْلٍ، نُخْبِرْ بِهِ مَنْ وَرَاءَنَا، وَنَدْخُلْ بِهِ الْجَنَّةَ. وَسَأَلُوهُ عَنِ الأَشْرِبَةِ. فَأَمَرَهُمْ بِأَرْبَعٍ، وَنَهَاهُمْ عَنْ أَرْبَعٍ، أَمَرَهُمْ بِالإِيمَانِ بِاللَّهِ وَحْدَهُ. قَالَ أَتَدْرُونَ مَا الإِيمَانُ بِاللَّهِ وَحْدَهُ. قَالُوا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ. قَالَ شَهَادَةُ أَنْ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَإِقَامُ الصَّلاَةِ، وَإِيتَاءُ الزَّكَاةِ، وَصِيَامُ رَمَضَانَ، وَأَنْ تُعْطُوا مِنَ الْمَغْنَمِ الْخُمُسَ. وَنَهَاهُمْ عَنْ أَرْبَعٍ عَنِ الْحَنْتَمِ وَالدُّبَّاءِ وَالنَّقِيرِ وَالْمُزَفَّتِ. وَرُبَّمَا قَالَ الْمُقَيَّرِ. وَقَالَ احْفَظُوهُنَّ وَأَخْبِرُوا بِهِنَّ مَنْ وَرَاءَكُمْ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Jamrah said: I used to sit with Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما, and he would seat me on his couch. He said: "Stay with me and I will give you a share of my wealth." So I stayed with him for two months. Then he said: When ***the delegation of 'Abd al-Qays*** came to the Prophet ﷺ, he asked: **"Who are these people?"** — or **"Who is this delegation?"** They said: "Rabi'ah." He said: ***"Welcome to the people — or the delegation — neither disgraced nor regretful."*** They said: "O Messenger of Allah, we cannot come to you except in the sacred month, for between us and you is this tribe of the disbelievers of Mudar. So give us a decisive command which we can convey to those behind us, and by which we may enter Paradise." They also asked him about drinks. He ordered them to do ***four things*** and forbade them four. He ordered them to believe in Allah alone, and asked: **"Do you know what belief in Allah alone is?"** They said: "Allah and His Messenger know best." He said: ***"To testify that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, to establish prayer, to give zakat, to fast Ramadan, and to hand over one-fifth of the spoils."*** He

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forbade them four kinds of vessels: al-hantam, ad-dubba', an-naqir and al-muzaffat — or perhaps he said al-muqayyar. He said: ***"Memorise these and convey them to those behind you."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Ali ibn al-Ja'd, from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from Abu Jamrah Nasr ibn 'Imran, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Faith, Chapter: Paying the one-fifth is part of faith, Hadith No. 53; also No. 4369 and Muslim No. 17.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:53

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

"Welcome, neither disgraced nor regretful" — a beautiful greeting. They came willingly, not because they lost a war, so they were not disgraced; and they chose Islam freely, so they would have no regrets. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave them ***a summary of Islam*** that was easy to memorise and convey: the testimony, prayer, zakat, fasting and the one-fifth.

'Abd al-Qays's earnestness bore great fruit. Ibn 'Abbas said: ***"The first Friday prayer held after the Friday prayer in the mosque of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was in the mosque of 'Abd al-Qays at Juwatha, in Bahrain"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 892). A small delegation became ***a centre of Islam in eastern Arabia***.

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TWO TRAITS ALLAH LOVES

In the delegation of 'Abd al-Qays was a leader called ***al-Ashajj*** (Mundhir ibn 'A'idh). While the others rushed down from their mounts to meet the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, al-Ashajj did not hurry. He saw to their baggage and mounts, changed into good clothes, then came calmly. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to him: ***"You have two traits that Allah loves: forbearance (al-hilm) and deliberateness (al-anah)"*** (Sahih Muslim 17).

Al-hilm is self-control when angered or provoked. ***Al-anah*** is not rushing, thinking before acting, and doing things in an orderly way. Both traits are essential in a leader. Al-Ashajj showed that ***how we come*** to an important matter also reflects our character.

Compare Banu Tamim, calling out from outside the chambers. Two delegations, two manners: one hasty and rough, the other calm and courteous. The Qur'an corrected the first, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ praised the second. In our fast-paced lives today, ***al-anah*** — pausing, composing ourselves and acting calmly — is a very precious trait.

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DIMAM IBN THA'LABAH

Among the most unusual delegates was ***Dimam ibn Tha'labah*** of Banu Sa'd ibn Bakr. He came alone on a camel, rode straight into the mosque, and asked questions that were ***blunt and firm***:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 63

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ يُوسُفَ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا اللَّيْثُ، عَنْ سَعِيدٍ ـ هُوَ الْمَقْبُرِيُّ ـ عَنْ شَرِيكِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي نَمِرٍ، أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ أَنَسَ بْنَ مَالِكٍ، يَقُولُ بَيْنَمَا نَحْنُ جُلُوسٌ مَعَ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم فِي الْمَسْجِدِ، دَخَلَ رَجُلٌ عَلَى جَمَلٍ فَأَنَاخَهُ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ، ثُمَّ عَقَلَهُ، ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَيُّكُمْ مُحَمَّدٌ وَالنَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم مُتَّكِئٌ بَيْنَ ظَهْرَانَيْهِمْ. فَقُلْنَا هَذَا الرَّجُلُ الأَبْيَضُ الْمُتَّكِئُ. فَقَالَ لَهُ الرَّجُلُ ابْنَ عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ فَقَالَ لَهُ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَدْ أَجَبْتُكَ. فَقَالَ الرَّجُلُ لِلنَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم إِنِّي سَائِلُكَ فَمُشَدِّدٌ عَلَيْكَ فِي الْمَسْأَلَةِ فَلاَ تَجِدْ عَلَىَّ فِي نَفْسِكَ. فَقَالَ سَلْ عَمَّا بَدَا لَكَ. فَقَالَ أَسْأَلُكَ بِرَبِّكَ وَرَبِّ مَنْ قَبْلَكَ، آللَّهُ أَرْسَلَكَ إِلَى النَّاسِ كُلِّهِمْ فَقَالَ اللَّهُمَّ نَعَمْ. قَالَ أَنْشُدُكَ بِاللَّهِ، آللَّهُ أَمَرَكَ أَنْ نُصَلِّيَ الصَّلَوَاتِ الْخَمْسَ فِي الْيَوْمِ وَاللَّيْلَةِ قَالَ اللَّهُمَّ نَعَمْ. قَالَ أَنْشُدُكَ بِاللَّهِ، آللَّهُ أَمَرَكَ أَنْ نَصُومَ هَذَا الشَّهْرَ مِنَ السَّنَةِ قَالَ اللَّهُمَّ نَعَمْ. قَالَ أَنْشُدُكَ بِاللَّهِ، آللَّهُ أَمَرَكَ أَنْ تَأْخُذَ هَذِهِ الصَّدَقَةَ مِنْ أَغْنِيَائِنَا فَتَقْسِمَهَا عَلَى فُقَرَائِنَا فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم اللَّهُمَّ نَعَمْ. فَقَالَ الرَّجُلُ آمَنْتُ بِمَا جِئْتَ بِهِ، وَأَنَا رَسُولُ مَنْ وَرَائِي مِنْ قَوْمِي، وَأَنَا ضِمَامُ بْنُ ثَعْلَبَةَ أَخُو بَنِي سَعْدِ بْنِ بَكْرٍ. رَوَاهُ مُوسَى وَعَلِيُّ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْحَمِيدِ عَنْ سُلَيْمَانَ عَنْ ثَابِتٍ عَنْ أَنَسٍ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم بِهَذَا.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه said: While we were sitting with the Prophet ﷺ in the mosque, a man came in on a camel. He made it kneel in the mosque and tied it, then said to them: "Which of you is Muhammad?" — while the Prophet ﷺ was reclining among them. We said: "This fair-skinned man reclining." The man said to him: "O son of 'Abd al-Muttalib!" The Prophet ﷺ said: **"I am listening to you."** The man said to the Prophet ﷺ: ***"I am going to ask you, and be stern in my questioning, so do not hold it against me."*** He said: **"Ask whatever you wish."** He said: "I ask you by your Lord and the Lord of those before you: has Allah sent you to all of mankind?" He said: **"By Allah, yes."** He said: "I adjure you by Allah: has Allah commanded you that we pray the five prayers in a day and a night?" He said: **"By Allah, yes."** He said: "I adjure you by Allah:

has Allah commanded you that we fast this month of the year?" He said: **"By Allah, yes."** He said: "I adjure you by Allah: has Allah commanded you to take this charity from our rich and distribute it among our poor?" The Prophet ﷺ said: **"By Allah, yes."** The man said: ***"I believe in what you have brought, and I am the messenger of my people behind me. I am Dimam ibn Tha'labah, of the brethren of Banu Sa'd ibn Bakr."*** (Imam al-Bukhari also cites the narration of Sulayman from Thabit from Anas with the same meaning.)

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Abdullah ibn Yusuf, from al-Layth ibn Sa'd, from Sa'id al-Maqburi, from Sharik ibn 'Abdullah ibn Abi Namir, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Knowledge, Chapter: What is said about knowledge, Hadith No. 63; also Muslim No. 12.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:63

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Note Dimam's unusual courtesy: he ***asked permission first*** to question sternly — "do not hold it against me." He did not pretend to be gentle, but was honest about his manner. And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***was not offended***: he answered every question with the oath "By Allah, yes."

Imam al-Bukhari placed this Hadith in ***the Book of Knowledge*** as proof that it is valid ***to read knowledge back to a teacher*** (al-qira'ah 'ala al-muhaddith) — Dimam recited what had reached him, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ confirmed it. It also shows that ***asking for certainty*** is not a sign of weak faith, but a path to firm faith.

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DIMAM RETURNS TO HIS PEOPLE

SIRAH NOTE: DIMAM CALLS HIS PEOPLE

Ibn Ishaq and Imam Ahmad narrate from Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما that when Dimam returned to his people, the first thing he said was: ***"How evil are al-Lat and al-'Uzza!"*** His people said: "Quiet, Dimam! Beware of leprosy, beware of elephantiasis, beware of madness!" He replied: "Woe to you! By Allah, they can neither harm nor benefit. Allah has sent a Messenger and revealed to him a Book to save you from what you are in."

It is reported that ***before evening that day, there was not a man or woman among his people who had not embraced Islam***. Ibn 'Abbas said: "We never heard of a delegate of a people better than Dimam ibn Tha'labah." This report is ***graded hasan by some scholars***.

REFERENCES:
Ahmad, al-Musnad (Musnad of Ibn 'Abbas); Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah.

See the strength of ***certain faith***. Dimam came with questions, returned with certainty, and his certainty was strong enough to face his people's fear of the idols. One truly convinced person can change ***his whole people***.

The lesson for those who call to Islam: Dimam did not take home long arguments or thick books. He took home ***a few questions and their answers*** — about the message, prayer, fasting, zakat and pilgrimage — and unshakeable conviction. Sometimes ***simplicity and clarity*** are more effective than long debates.

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THE CHRISTIANS OF NAJRAN

From the south, on the border of Yemen, came the delegation of ***the Christians of Najran*** — a large and influential Christian community, with their bishop, priests and leaders. They came ***to dialogue*** with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about the Prophet 'Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. The commentators mention that the opening of Surah Al 'Imran — more than eighty verses — was revealed concerning the discussion with them.

The Qur'an made clear the true position of the Prophet 'Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: ***"Indeed, the example of Jesus to Allah is like that of Adam"*** (Al 'Imran 3:59) — both created without a father, by the word "Be". When they kept disputing, Allah commanded His Messenger to invite them to ***mubahalah***:

"Come, let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves, then supplicate earnestly [together] and invoke the curse of Allah upon the liars [among us]" (Al 'Imran 3:61) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 3:61.

Mubahalah is the final resort when arguments are no longer accepted: both parties, with their closest family, pray earnestly that Allah curse the side that is lying. It shows the Prophet's ﷺ ***absolute certainty*** in the truth he brought — he was willing to stake himself and his family on it.

This story also shows the Islamic manner of interfaith dialogue: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***received them in Madinah***, heard their arguments, and answered with revelation. Ibn Ishaq's report mentions that they were even allowed to pray facing east in the Prophet's Mosque — ***a report whose chain scholars have discussed***.

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THE MUBAHALAH THAT NEVER HAPPENED

What happened when the mubahalah was offered? Hudhayfah رضى الله عنه narrates:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4380

حَدَّثَنِي عَبَّاسُ بْنُ الْحُسَيْنِ، حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ آدَمَ، عَنْ إِسْرَائِيلَ، عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ، عَنْ صِلَةَ بْنِ زُفَرَ، عَنْ حُذَيْفَةَ، قَالَ جَاءَ الْعَاقِبُ وَالسَّيِّدُ صَاحِبَا نَجْرَانَ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يُرِيدَانِ أَنْ يُلاَعِنَاهُ، قَالَ فَقَالَ أَحَدُهُمَا لِصَاحِبِهِ لاَ تَفْعَلْ، فَوَاللَّهِ لَئِنْ كَانَ نَبِيًّا فَلاَعَنَّا، لاَ نُفْلِحُ نَحْنُ وَلاَ عَقِبُنَا مِنْ بَعْدِنَا. قَالاَ إِنَّا نُعْطِيكَ مَا سَأَلْتَنَا، وَابْعَثْ مَعَنَا رَجُلاً أَمِينًا، وَلاَ تَبْعَثْ مَعَنَا إِلاَّ أَمِينًا. فَقَالَ لأَبْعَثَنَّ مَعَكُمْ رَجُلاً أَمِينًا حَقَّ أَمِينٍ. فَاسْتَشْرَفَ لَهُ أَصْحَابُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَقَالَ قُمْ يَا أَبَا عُبَيْدَةَ بْنَ الْجَرَّاحِ. فَلَمَّا قَامَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم هَذَا أَمِينُ هَذِهِ الأُمَّةِ.

TRANSLATION:

Hudhayfah رضى الله عنه said: ***al-'Aqib and as-Sayyid***, the two leaders of Najran, came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ intending ***to invoke mutual curses (mubahalah)*** with him. One of them said to the other: ***"Do not do it! By Allah, if he is truly a prophet and we invoke curses against him, neither we nor our descendants after us will ever prosper."*** So they said: "We will give you what you ask of us. Send with us a trustworthy man, and send none with us but a trustworthy man." He said: **"I will send with you a trustworthy man, truly trustworthy."** The Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ each hoped to be chosen. He said: **"Stand up, O Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah."** When he stood, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"This is the trustworthy one of this Ummah."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Abbas ibn al-Husayn, from Yahya ibn Adam, from Isra'il ibn Yunus, from Abu Ishaq as-Sabi'i, from Silah ibn Zufar, from Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions, Chapter: The story of the people of Najran, Hadith No. 4380; also No. 4381 and Muslim No. 2420.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4380

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The leaders of Najran ***did not dare*** go through with the mubahalah. One said to the other: "If he is truly a prophet, neither we nor our descendants will prosper." This was ***an implicit admission***: in their hearts, they feared he really was a Prophet.

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Instead, they chose to make ***a peace treaty***: they kept their religion and paid jizyah, and in return received ***the protection*** of the Islamic state. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ accepted that choice. There is no compulsion in religion (Al-Baqarah 2:256); they were given the proof, and the decision was left to them.

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ABU 'UBAYDAH: THE TRUSTWORTHY ONE OF THIS UMMAH

Najran asked for a ***trustworthy*** man to manage their affairs. The Companions each hoped to be chosen — not for power, but to ***earn the title*** "trustworthy" from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He chose ***Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah*** رضى الله عنه.

Anas رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Every nation has a trustworthy one, and the trustworthy one of this Ummah is Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 3744).

Abu 'Ubaydah was one of ***the ten promised Paradise***. He later led the Muslim armies in the opening of Syria, and died in the plague of 'Amwas. 'Umar once said that had Abu 'Ubaydah been alive, he would have appointed him as his successor. The title "trustworthy" was not given for eloquence or military strength, but for ***the honesty and purity of his heart***.

The lesson for us: when choosing someone for a task — especially one involving wealth and others' rights — ***trustworthiness is the first condition***. It also teaches that the treatment of non-Muslims under the protection of Islam must be handled by ***the most trustworthy***.

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THE TENDER-HEARTED PEOPLE OF YEMEN

Several delegations came from Yemen, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ greeted them with very special praise:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4388

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ أَبِي عَدِيٍّ، عَنْ شُعْبَةَ، عَنْ سُلَيْمَانَ، عَنْ ذَكْوَانَ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ أَتَاكُمْ أَهْلُ الْيَمَنِ، هُمْ أَرَقُّ أَفْئِدَةً وَأَلْيَنُ قُلُوبًا، الإِيمَانُ يَمَانٍ وَالْحِكْمَةُ يَمَانِيَةٌ، وَالْفَخْرُ وَالْخُيَلاَءُ فِي أَصْحَابِ الإِبِلِ، وَالسَّكِينَةُ وَالْوَقَارُ فِي أَهْلِ الْغَنَمِ. وَقَالَ غُنْدَرٌ عَنْ شُعْبَةَ، عَنْ سُلَيْمَانَ، سَمِعْتُ ذَكْوَانَ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه related that the Prophet ﷺ said: ***"The people of Yemen have come to you; they are the most tender of heart and the gentlest of soul. Faith is Yemeni, and wisdom is Yemeni. Pride and arrogance are among the owners of camels, and tranquillity and dignity are among the owners of sheep."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Muhammad ibn Bashshar, from Ibn Abi 'Adi, from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from Sulayman al-A'mash, from Dhakwan Abu Salih, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions, Chapter: The arrival of the Ash'aris and the people of Yemen, Hadith No. 4388; also Muslim No. 52.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4388

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

"Faith is Yemeni, and wisdom is Yemeni" — very high praise. The people of Yemen were known for hearts that were ***gentle and quick to accept the truth***. They did not come to boast or ask for wealth, but ***to learn the religion***.

This Hadith also contrasts ***camel owners***, inclined to pride, with ***sheep owners***, inclined to tranquillity. Scholars explain that occupation and surroundings shape a person's character. The prophets too ***herded sheep*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 2262) — work that trains patience and gentleness.

From Yemen came many great figures of Islam: ***Abu Musa al-Ash'ari***, ***Abu Hurayrah*** of the tribe of Daws, and later many of the Successors such as ***Uways al-Qarani***, praised by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ (Sahih Muslim 2542). Truly he spoke: faith and wisdom are Yemeni.

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The Prophet ﷺ also prayed for Yemen by name: "O Allah, bless us in our Syria, and bless us in our Yemen" (Sahih al-Bukhari 1037). His love for its people was not only in words of praise but in his supplications, and the blessing of that prayer can be seen in the scholars, worshippers and callers that Yemen has produced throughout Islamic history.

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THE ASH'ARIS: "THEY ARE OF ME"

Among the most beloved of the Yemenis were ***the Ash'aris***, the people of Abu Musa رضى الله عنه. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ praised a beautiful trait of theirs: ***"When the Ash'aris run short of provisions on a campaign, or their families' food in Madinah runs low, they gather all they have in one cloth, then share it among themselves equally in one vessel. They are of me, and I am of them"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 2486).

"They are of me, and I am of them" — words showing ***a very special closeness***. Not because of lineage or wealth, but because of ***the ethic of sharing*** in hardship. They never let one of their number go hungry while others were full.

We met the Ash'aris in Book 24, when Abu Musa came asking for mounts for Tabuk and carefully verified the news he conveyed. In Book 16 they arrived from Abyssinia with Ja'far ibn Abi Talib when Khaybar was opened. This small people was always present with ***honesty, knowledge and generosity***.

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AT-TUFAYL AND THE PEOPLE OF DAWS

Not every tribe accepted Islam easily. ***At-Tufayl ibn 'Amr ad-Dawsi*** رضى الله عنه, a chief and poet of the tribe of ***Daws*** in the south, embraced Islam early and went home to call his people. But they refused. He came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ disheartened. Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrates: At-Tufayl and his companions said: ***"O Messenger of Allah, Daws have disobeyed and refused, so invoke (Allah) against them."*** Someone said: "Daws are ruined!" But he prayed: ***"O Allah, guide Daws and bring them."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 2937)

The prayer was answered. Daws came in numbers to Madinah, and among them was a man who would become ***the most prolific narrator of Hadith*** in Islamic history: ***Abu Hurayrah*** رضى الله عنه. Imagine if the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had prayed against Daws — we might have lost thousands of Hadith narrated by Abu Hurayrah.

The lesson is great for every caller, teacher and parent: when those we call refuse, ***pray for their guidance, not their ruin***. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ is ***a mercy to all the worlds*** (Al-Anbiya' 21:107).

Human hearts are in the hand of Allah, and a sincere prayer can open the hardest heart.

Daws actually arrived before the Year of Delegations, around the time Khaybar was opened (7 AH). But their story fits well here, for it shows that ***the delegations that came in 9 AH*** were the fruit of years of prayer, patience and da'wah.

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UWAYS AL-QARANI: THE YEMENI KNOWN IN HEAVEN

The Prophet's ﷺ words that ***"faith is Yemeni"*** were proven in a man who never met him, yet whose name he mentioned: ***Uways al-Qarani***. 'Umar ibn al-Khattab رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Uways ibn 'Amir will come to you with the reinforcements from Yemen, of (the tribe of) Murad, then of Qaran. He had leprosy and was cured of it except for a spot the size of a dirham. He has a mother, and he is most dutiful to her. If he were to swear by Allah, Allah would fulfil his oath. If you are able to have him ask forgiveness for you, do so."*** (Sahih Muslim 2542)

Years later, whenever reinforcements arrived from Yemen, 'Umar — by then caliph — would ask: "Is Uways ibn 'Amir among you?" Until at last he found him, confirmed every trait described, and ***asked Uways to seek forgiveness for him***. Imagine: ***the caliph of the Muslims***, one of the ten promised Paradise, asking a prayer from an unknown man of Yemen.

Why did Uways not emigrate to meet the Messenger of Allah ﷺ? Scholars note that he ***stayed to serve his mother***. And Allah honoured him for that devotion — his name is preserved in Sahih Muslim, and his prayer is answered. He was known in heaven though unknown on earth.

The lesson: ***honour with Allah does not depend on fame***. A child sincerely devoted to his mother may be nobler with Allah than many who are famous. The people of Yemen, "the most tender of heart", produced the most beautiful example of this.

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MU'ADH IS SENT TO YEMEN

After the people of Yemen embraced Islam, they needed teachers and leaders. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent two Companions: ***Mu'adh ibn Jabal*** and ***Abu Musa al-Ash'ari*** رضى الله عنهما, each to a region.

Before Mu'adh set out, he gave him advice that became ***a guide for da'wah*** for all time:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4347

حَدَّثَنِي حِبَّانُ، أَخْبَرَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ، عَنْ زَكَرِيَّاءَ بْنِ إِسْحَاقَ، عَنْ يَحْيَى بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ صَيْفِيٍّ، عَنْ أَبِي مَعْبَدٍ، مَوْلَى ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ ـ رضى الله عنهما ـ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم لِمُعَاذِ بْنِ جَبَلٍ حِينَ بَعَثَهُ إِلَى الْيَمَنِ إِنَّكَ سَتَأْتِي قَوْمًا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ، فَإِذَا جِئْتَهُمْ فَادْعُهُمْ إِلَى أَنْ يَشْهَدُوا أَنْ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللَّهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، فَإِنْ هُمْ طَاعُوا لَكَ بِذَلِكَ فَأَخْبِرْهُمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ فَرَضَ عَلَيْهِمْ خَمْسَ صَلَوَاتٍ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ وَلَيْلَةٍ، فَإِنْ هُمْ طَاعُوا لَكَ بِذَلِكَ، فَأَخْبِرْهُمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ فَرَضَ عَلَيْكُمْ صَدَقَةً، تُؤْخَذُ مِنْ أَغْنِيَائِهِمْ، فَتُرَدُّ عَلَى فُقَرَائِهِمْ، فَإِنْ هُمْ طَاعُوا لَكَ بِذَلِكَ، فَإِيَّاكَ وَكَرَائِمَ أَمْوَالِهِمْ، وَاتَّقِ دَعْوَةَ الْمَظْلُومِ فَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ اللَّهِ حِجَابٌ. قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ {طَوَّعَتْ} طَاعَتْ وَأَطَاعَتْ لُغَةٌ، طِعْتُ وَطُعْتُ وَأَطَعْتُ.

TRANSLATION:

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to ***Mu'adh ibn Jabal*** when he sent him to Yemen: ***"You are going to a people of the Book. When you come to them, call them to testify that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. If they obey you in that, tell them that Allah has made obligatory on them five prayers every day and night. If they obey you in that, tell them that Allah has made obligatory on them a charity (zakat) taken from their rich and returned to their poor. If they obey you in that, then beware of taking the best of their property, and fear the supplication of the oppressed, for there is no barrier between it and Allah."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Hibban ibn Musa, from 'Abdullah ibn al-Mubarak, from Zakariyya ibn Ishaq, from Yahya ibn 'Abdullah ibn Sayfi, from Abu Ma'bad, freedman of Ibn 'Abbas, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions, Chapter: Sending Abu Musa and Mu'adh to Yemen, Hadith No. 4347; also No. 1395, 1496 and Muslim No. 19.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4347

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LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This advice contains ***a gradual method of da'wah***: begin with the most fundamental — tawhid — then prayer, then zakat. Do not burden people with everything at once. Each stage is built on the one before.

The last two pieces of advice are vital for anyone in authority: ***"beware of taking the best of their property"*** — do not take the finest when collecting zakat — and ***"fear the supplication of the oppressed, for there is no barrier between it and Allah"***. Power is no licence to oppress. Mu'adh went as teacher, judge and zakat collector, and this advice safeguarded his justice.

The sirah authors mention that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ walked beside Mu'adh while Mu'adh rode, and said: "O Mu'adh, perhaps you will not meet me after this year." Mu'adh wept. And so it was — ***the Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed away before Mu'adh returned*** from Yemen. (Narrated by Ahmad, graded sahih by some scholars.)

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"MAKE THINGS EASY, NOT HARD"

To Mu'adh and Abu Musa together, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave brief but rich advice: ***"Make things easy and do not make them hard, give glad tidings and do not drive people away, and cooperate with each other and do not differ"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 3038).

ADVICE	MEANING IN DA'WAH
Make things easy	Choose the easiest option as long as it is not sinful
Do not make things hard	Do not burden newcomers with heavy matters
Give glad tidings	Begin with hope and Allah's mercy
Do not drive away	Do not make people flee from religion
Cooperate	Two callers support each other
Do not differ	Disputes between leaders harm the community

This advice is very relevant for every teacher, parent, imam and caller today. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself, when given a choice between two things, ***always chose the easier as long as it was not sinful*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 3560). An easy religion does not mean a lax religion, but one that is ***understood, loved and practised consistently***.

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JARIR AND DHUL-KHALASAH

In Yemen there was a famous idol-house called ***Dhul-Khalasah***, nicknamed ***"the Yemeni Ka'bah"*** — an imitation of the Ka'bah in Makkah. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked ***Jarir ibn 'Abdillah al-Bajali*** رضى الله عنه: ***"Will you not relieve me of Dhul-Khalasah?"*** Jarir set out with a hundred and fifty horsemen of the tribe of Ahmas (Sahih al-Bukhari 4355–4357).

But Jarir had one weakness: ***he could not sit firmly on a horse***. He told the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who struck his chest until Jarir could see the marks of his fingers, and prayed: ***"O Allah, make him firm, and make him one who guides and is guided."*** Jarir said: ***"After that, I never fell from my horse."***

Jarir went, ***demolished and burned*** Dhul-Khalasah, then sent a messenger with the good news. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed for blessing on the horses and men of Ahmas ***five times***. Thus the "imitation Ka'bah" in Yemen vanished, and only ***one Ka'bah*** remained — the House of Allah in Makkah.

The lesson: personal weakness is no barrier to serving the religion. Jarir was weak on horseback, but ***the Prophet's ﷺ prayer*** made him firm. When given a task that feels heavy, admit our weakness to Allah and ask Him for strength.

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'ALI SENT TO YEMEN

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also sent ***Khalid ibn al-Walid*** رضى الله عنه to Yemen, then sent ***'Ali ibn Abi Talib*** رضى الله عنه to replace him. Al-Bara' ibn 'Azib رضى الله عنه, who was in that force, tells of it (Sahih al-Bukhari 4349). 'Ali served in Yemen as caller, judge and collector of the one-fifth, and later met the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in Makkah at the Farewell Pilgrimage.

In Yemen a misunderstanding arose. Buraydah رضى الله عنه was unhappy with how 'Ali took his share of the one-fifth, and complained to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He asked: ***"O Buraydah, do you hate 'Ali?"*** He said: "Yes." He said: ***"Do not hate him, for he is entitled to more than that from the one-fifth."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4350)

SIRAH NOTE: THE TRIBE OF HAMDAN EMBRACES ISLAM

Al-Bayhaqi narrates from al-Bara' that when 'Ali read the letter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to the tribe of ***Hamdan*** in Yemen, ***the whole tribe embraced Islam on the same day***. 'Ali wrote to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to inform him, and he prostrated and said: "Peace be upon Hamdan, peace be upon Hamdan." Some scholars grade its chain sahih, while others discuss it.

REFERENCES:
al-Bayhaqi, Dala'il an-Nubuwwah; Ibn Hajar, Fath al-Bari, Book of al-Maghazi.

The lesson: ***do not be quick to dislike a fellow believer*** because of a misunderstanding. What seems unfair may have an explanation we do not know. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ corrected Buraydah's feelings gently, and Buraydah later became one of those who loved 'Ali most.

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MUSAYLIMAH THE LIAR

Not every delegation came with good intentions. From ***Yamamah*** in central Arabia came the delegation of ***Banu Hanifah***, and with them a man who later became known as ***Musaylimah al-Kadhdhab*** — Musaylimah the Liar:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4373

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو الْيَمَانِ، أَخْبَرَنَا شُعَيْبٌ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي حُسَيْنٍ، حَدَّثَنَا نَافِعُ بْنُ جُبَيْرٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ ـ رضى الله عنهما ـ قَالَ قَدِمَ مُسَيْلِمَةُ الْكَذَّابُ عَلَى عَهْدِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَجَعَلَ يَقُولُ إِنْ جَعَلَ لِي مُحَمَّدٌ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ تَبِعْتُهُ. وَقَدِمَهَا فِي بَشَرٍ كَثِيرٍ مِنْ قَوْمِهِ، فَأَقْبَلَ إِلَيْهِ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَمَعَهُ ثَابِتُ بْنُ قَيْسِ بْنِ شَمَّاسٍ، وَفِي يَدِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قِطْعَةُ جَرِيدٍ حَتَّى وَقَفَ عَلَى مُسَيْلِمَةَ فِي أَصْحَابِهِ، فَقَالَ لَوْ سَأَلْتَنِي هَذِهِ الْقِطْعَةَ مَا أَعْطَيْتُكَهَا وَلَنْ تَعْدُوَ أَمْرَ اللَّهِ فِيكَ، وَلَئِنْ أَدْبَرْتَ لَيَعْقِرَنَّكَ اللَّهُ، وَإِنِّي لأَرَاكَ الَّذِي أُرِيتُ فِيهِ مَا رَأَيْتُ، وَهَذَا ثَابِتٌ يُجِيبُكَ عَنِّي. ثُمَّ انْصَرَفَ عَنْهُ. قَالَ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ فَسَأَلْتُ عَنْ قَوْلِ، رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم إِنَّكَ أُرَى الَّذِي أُرِيتُ فِيهِ مَا أُرِيتُ. فَأَخْبَرَنِي أَبُو هُرَيْرَةَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ بَيْنَا أَنَا نَائِمٌ رَأَيْتُ فِي يَدَىَّ سِوَارَيْنِ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ، فَأَهَمَّنِي شَأْنُهُمَا، فَأُوحِيَ إِلَىَّ فِي الْمَنَامِ أَنِ انْفُخْهُمَا، فَنَفَخْتُهُمَا فَطَارَا فَأَوَّلْتُهُمَا كَذَّابَيْنِ يَخْرُجَانِ بَعْدِي، أَحَدُهُمَا الْعَنْسِيُّ، وَالآخَرُ مُسَيْلِمَةُ.

TRANSLATION:

Ibn ‘Abbas رضى الله عنهما said: ***Musaylimah the Liar*** came in the time of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and began saying: ***“If Muhammad hands (the matter) to me after him, I will follow him.”*** He came to Madinah with many of his people. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ went to him with Thabit ibn Qays ibn Shammas, holding ***a piece of a palm stalk***, until he stood before Musaylimah among his companions. He said: ***“If you asked me for this piece, I would not give it to you. You will not go beyond Allah’s decree concerning you. If you turn away, Allah will surely destroy you. I see that you are the one about whom I was shown what I was shown. And this is Thabit, who will answer you on my behalf.”*** Then he left him. Ibn ‘Abbas said: I asked about the Prophet’s ﷺ words “you are the one about whom I was shown what I was shown”. Abu Hurayrah told me that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **“While I was asleep, I saw two gold bracelets on my hands, and they troubled me. It was revealed to me in the dream: ‘Blow on them.’ So I blew on them and they flew away. I interpreted them as ‘two liars’ who would appear after me: one of them al-‘Ansi, and the other Musaylimah.”**

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CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Abu al-Yaman al-Hakam ibn Nafi', from Shu'ayb ibn Abi Hamzah, from 'Abdullah ibn Abi Husayn, from Nafi' ibn Jubayr, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions, Chapter: The delegation of Banu Hanifah, Hadith No. 4373; also No. 3620, 4374 and Muslim No. 2273.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4373

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Musaylimah came with ***a condition***: he would follow the Messenger of Allah ﷺ if given power after him.

This is the mark of ***false faith*** — faith dependent on self-interest. The Prophet's ﷺ reply was firm and symbolic: ***"If you asked me for even this piece of palm stalk, I would not give it to you."*** Prophethood and religious leadership are not merchandise.

Note also that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***went in person*** to meet Musaylimah, with Thabit ibn Qays. He did not ignore the delegation, but neither did he compromise on matters of creed. Then he left the rest of the answer to Thabit — the same man who would later be ***martyred at Yamamah*** fighting Musaylimah.

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TWO GOLD BRACELETS

In the same Hadith, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ described his dream of ***two gold bracelets*** on his hands.

Bracelets are adornments, but gold for a man is disliked; so it was interpreted as ***something burdensome***. When he blew on them, both flew away — a sign that the affair of the two liars was ***light and would vanish***.

Another narration names the two liars as ***"al-'Ansi, whom Fayruz killed in Yemen, and Musaylimah"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4379). ***Al-Aswad al-'Ansi*** claimed prophethood in Yemen and was killed by Fayruz ad-Daylami before the Prophet ﷺ passed away. ***Musaylimah*** was killed at the Battle of Yamamah in the time of Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه; Wahshi ibn Harb — who had killed Hamzah at Uhud — said that he took part in killing Musaylimah (Sahih al-Bukhari 4072).

See how ***the prophecy of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ came true. He saw in a dream two liars who would appear, and both appeared and vanished like bracelets blown away. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also said that ***thirty liars*** would appear, each claiming to be a prophet, while he is ***the seal of the prophets*** (Sunan Abi Dawud 4252, graded sahih). History has shown that all such liars disappear, and Islam remains.

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THUMAMAH IBN UTHAL

From the same tribe — Banu Hanifah — came a very different man: ***Thumamah ibn Uthal***, chief of Yamamah. Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه relates that the Prophet's ﷺ horsemen captured him and tied him to one of the pillars of the mosque. For three days the Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked him: "What do you have, O Thumamah?" He replied: ***"Good, O Muhammad. If you kill, you kill one whose blood will be avenged; if you show favour, you show favour to one who is grateful; and if you want wealth, ask."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4372)

On the third day, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Release Thumamah."*** Thumamah went to a nearby palm grove, bathed, then returned to the mosque and declared the testimony of faith. He said: ***"O Muhammad, by Allah, there was no face on earth more hateful to me than yours, but now your face has become the dearest of all faces to me. By Allah, there was no religion more hateful to me than yours, but now your religion has become the dearest of all religions to me."***

What changed his heart? ***Three days watching the life of the mosque*** — the prayers, the Companions' conduct, the kindness shown to him — and ***release without conditions***. The Prophet's ﷺ forgiveness was stronger than the sword. Thumamah later went to Makkah for 'umrah, and when Quraysh mocked him, he said: ***"By Allah, not a single grain of wheat will reach you from Yamamah until the Prophet ﷺ permits it."*** When Musaylimah apostatised, Thumamah ***stood firm*** with Islam.

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‘ADI IBN HATIM AND THREE PROMISES

Another figure who came to Madinah was ***‘Adi ibn Hatim at-Ta’i***, son of Hatim at-Ta’i, famed in Arab history for his generosity. ‘Adi relates that while he was with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, a man came complaining of ***poverty***, and another complaining of ***highway robbery***. Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ made him three promises (Sahih al-Bukhari 3595):

THE PROPHET'S ﷺ PROMISE	WHAT WAS WITNESSED
A woman will travel from al-Hirah to the Ka‘bah fearing none but Allah	‘Adi saw it himself
The treasures of Khosrau will be opened	‘Adi took part in opening them
A time will come when people carry gold as charity but find no one to take it	‘Adi said: “If you live long, you will see it”

At that time, Islam was still confined to Arabia, Persia was a great empire, and the roads were full of robbers. These promises seemed impossible. But ‘Adi lived long enough to see ***two of them come true***. In the time of ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Aziz, historians mention that it was hard to find poor people to receive zakat.

The lesson: when we see the weak state of the Ummah today, remember these promises. ***Security, prosperity and honour*** come to those who believe and act righteously, even when at first it seems impossible.

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THE ETIQUETTE OF RECEIVING DELEGATIONS

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ paid great attention to ***how delegations were received***. Some delegations were lodged in the homes of Companions, and they were hosted and given gifts on departure. 'Umar رضى الله عنه once suggested he buy a cloak ***to adorn himself for the Eid and for delegations*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 886) — showing that dressing well to receive guests was a known custom (though that cloak was declined because it was silk).

This mattered so much that it was among ***the last instructions of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ during his final illness. Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما narrates that he gave three instructions, among them: ***"Give gifts to the delegations as I used to give them"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 3053).

ETIQUETTE	EXAMPLE FROM THE SIRAH
A warm welcome	"Welcome, neither disgraced nor regretful"
Patience with the rough	Banu Tamim and Dimam were not rebuked
Praising good character	Al-Ashajj's forbearance and deliberateness
Teaching concisely	Four commands and four prohibitions
Giving gifts	"Give gifts to the delegations"
Firm in creed	The palm stalk for Musaylimah

The lesson for our mosques, schools and homes today: ***how we welcome guests and newcomers*** — especially those new to Islam — can decide whether they draw closer to the religion or away from it.

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BROTHERHOOD BEYOND THE TRIBE

The delegations came from different tribes, with different dialects, customs and histories of enmity. Some had fought one another for generations. But Islam gathered them under one banner. In the same surah that corrected Banu Tamim, Allah says:

"O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you" (Al-Hujurat 49:13) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 49:13.

For an Arab society deeply proud of lineage and tribe — like Banu Tamim, who came with orators and poets to boast — this verse was ***a revolution in thinking***. The measure of honour was no longer lineage, wealth or eloquence, but ***piety***.

The results were seen in the following generation: a former slave like ***Bilal*** from Abyssinia, ***Salman*** from Persia and ***Suhayb*** from Rome stood equal with the leaders of Quraysh. And ***Usamah ibn Zayd***, son of a former slave, was appointed to lead an army including senior Companions. Islamic brotherhood ***transcends tribe, race and colour***.

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AFTER THE YEAR OF DELEGATIONS: THE TRIAL OF APOSTASY

The Year of Delegations brought many tribes into Islam. But as noted at the start of this book, not all who entered had deep faith. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed away not long afterwards, several tribes ***apostatised***, and others ***refused to pay zakat***. This was the first trial Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه faced as caliph.

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrates that 'Umar asked Abu Bakr: "How can you fight people when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said that whoever says 'La ilaha illallah' has protected his wealth and life?" Abu Bakr replied: ***"By Allah, I will fight whoever separates prayer and zakat, for zakat is the right due on wealth. By Allah, if they withhold from me even a young goat they used to give the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, I would fight them for withholding it."*** 'Umar said: "By Allah, I saw that Allah had opened Abu Bakr's heart to fighting, and I knew it was the truth." (Sahih al-Bukhari 1399–1400)

See the link to the delegations: ***'Abd al-Qays*** were taught that zakat is part of faith; ***Dimam*** asked about zakat under oath; ***Mu'adh*** was ordered to collect zakat from the rich for the poor. Abu Bakr defended ***what the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had taught every delegation***. And ***Musaylimah***, who had asked for power, was finally defeated at the Battle of Yamamah.

Yet many tribes stood firm too — 'Abd al-Qays in Bahrain held on to Islam, Thumamah and part of Banu Hanifah stayed loyal, and Thaqif, the last to embrace Islam, ***did not apostatise***. Faith planted with knowledge and teaching, even in a short time, ***can endure***.

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THE MESSAGE TO EVERY DELEGATION

Each delegation returned home with its own lesson. The table below summarises what each one took back:

DELEGATION	MAIN LESSON
Thaqif (Ta'if)	No bargaining over tawhid and prayer
Banu Tamim	Courtesy towards the Prophet ﷺ; do not boast
'Abd al-Qays	A summary of Islam: faith, prayer, zakat, fasting, one-fifth
Dimam ibn Tha'labah	Clear conviction can change a whole people
Christians of Najran	Dialogue, proof and no compulsion in religion
People of Yemen	Tender hearts thirsty for knowledge
Banu Hanifah (Musaylimah)	Conditional faith is false faith
Thumamah ibn Uthal	Forgiveness is stronger than the sword

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***did not use one approach for everyone***. With the rough, he was patient; with the questioner, he answered clearly; with those who debated, he argued; with the power-seeker, he was firm; with the captive, he forgave. This is ***wisdom in da'wah*** — understanding each person and giving him what suits him.

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SOURCES OF THE STORY

The story of the Year of Delegations is narrated in many sources of differing grades:

EVENT	SOURCE AND GRADE
The Arabs waited for the Conquest	Sahih al-Bukhari 4302 — sahih
ʻUthman ibn Abi al-ʻAs as Thaqif's imam	Sahih Muslim 468 — sahih
ʻUrwah ibn Masʻud; Thaqif's conditions	Sirah books; Abu Dawud 3025 — debated
Destruction of al-Lat	Sirah books
Banu Tamim	Sahih al-Bukhari 4365, 4367 — sahih
Thabit ibn Qays	Sahih al-Bukhari 3613 — sahih
ʻAbd al-Qays and al-Ashajj	Sahih al-Bukhari 53; Sahih Muslim 17 — sahih
Dimam ibn Thaʻlabah	Sahih al-Bukhari 63 — sahih; his return: Ahmad
Najran and Abu ʻUbaydah	Sahih al-Bukhari 4380, 3744 — sahih
Yemen and the Ashʻaris	Sahih al-Bukhari 4388, 2486 — sahih
Uways al-Qarani	Sahih Muslim 2542 — sahih
Muʻadh to Yemen	Sahih al-Bukhari 4347, 3038 — sahih
At-Tufayl and Daws	Sahih al-Bukhari 2937 — sahih
Jarir and Dhul-Khalasah	Sahih al-Bukhari 4355–4357 — sahih
ʻAli to Yemen; Hamdan	Sahih al-Bukhari 4349–4350 — sahih; Hamdan: al-Bayhaqi
Musaylimah and al-ʻAnsi	Sahih al-Bukhari 4373, 4379 — sahih
Thumamah ibn Uthal	Sahih al-Bukhari 4372 — sahih
ʻAdi ibn Hatim	Sahih al-Bukhari 3595 — sahih

Imam al-Bukhari gathered many delegation stories in ***the Book of Military Expeditions***, with chapters dedicated to Banu Tamim, ʻAbd al-Qays, Banu Hanifah, Najran, the Ashʻaris and others. This shows how important this period is in the sirah — and how strong its narrations are.

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TABLE OF THE DELEGATIONS OF 9–10 AH

The scholars of sirah mention more than sixty delegations that came to Madinah after the Conquest of Makkah and Tabuk. Ibn Sa'd in al-Tabaqat and Ibn Hisham in al-Sirah list many of them. Not all of these stories have chains of equal strength: some are found in Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, while others are reported only in the books of sirah. This table gathers the delegations discussed in this eBook, together with their sources and grades.

DELEGATION	REGION	MAIN FIGURES	OUTCOME	SOURCE
Thaqif	Ta'if	'Abd Yalil ibn 'Amr; 'Uthman ibn Abi al-'As	Embraced Islam; al-Lat torn down	Sunan Abi Dawud 3025; Sahih Muslim 468; books of sirah
Banu Tamim	Eastern Najd	Al-Aqra' ibn Habis; 'Utarid; az-Zibriqan	Embraced Islam; Al-Hujurat 49:2–5 revealed	Sahih al-Bukhari 4365, 4367, 4845
'Abd al-Qays	Bahrain (al-Ahsa')	Al-Ashajj (al-Mundhir ibn 'A'idh)	Already Muslim; taught four commands and four prohibitions	Sahih al-Bukhari 53; Sahih Muslim 17–18
Banu Sa'd ibn Bakr	Hawazin (Najd)	Dimam ibn Tha'labah	Embraced Islam; called his people	Sahih al-Bukhari 63; Sahih Muslim 12
Christians of Najran	Najran (south)	Al-'Aqib and as-Sayyid	Kept their religion; jizyah treaty	Sahih al-Bukhari 4380; Al 'Imran 3:61
The Ash'aris	Yemen	Abu Musa al-Ash'ari	Embraced Islam; praised by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ	Sahih al-Bukhari 2486, 4388
Daws	Tihamah / Sarat	At-Tufayl ibn 'Amr	Prayed for guidance; embraced Islam	Sahih al-Bukhari 2937
Banu Hanifah	Yamamah	Musaylimah	Musaylimah demanded power; later apostatised	Sahih al-Bukhari 4373; Sahih Muslim 2273
Tayyi'	Mounts Aja' and Salma	'Adi ibn Hatim; Zayd al-Khayl	Embraced Islam	Sahih al-Bukhari 3595 ('Adi); books of sirah (Zayd)
Bajilah and Ahmas	Sarat of Yemen	Jarir ibn 'Abdillah	Dhul-Khalasah destroyed	Sahih al-Bukhari 4355–4357
Banu Layth	Around the Hijaz	Malik ibn al-Huwayrith	Learned the prayer over twenty nights	Sahih al-Bukhari 631
Kindah	Hadramawt	Al-Ash'ath ibn Qays	Embraced Islam	Books of sirah (Ibn Ishaq)
Banu 'Amir ibn Sa'sa'ah	Najd	'Amir ibn at-Tufayl; Arbad ibn Qays	Both refused; died on the way home	Books of sirah (Ibn Ishaq)

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Notice this variety: from great tribes such as Banu Tamim to a single man such as Dimam who came alone; from those who came to learn to those who came to demand power. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ dealt with each of them according to their situation.

Reference: Ibn Hisham, al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah (chapter on the delegations); Ibn Sa'd, al-Tabaqat al-Kubra (chapter on the wufud); Wikipedia, "Year of Delegations".

SIRAH NOTE: HOW MANY DELEGATIONS?

The numbers given in the books differ. Ibn Sa'd lists more than seventy delegations, some of them only a few people. These figures come from the books of sirah and history, not from sahih Hadith, so we mention them as the historians' estimate.

LESSON

Islam did not spread through one tribe alone, but because the door of Madinah was open to all. Every delegation was received with courtesy, taught with wisdom, and sent home as callers to their own people.

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QUR'ANIC VERSES AROUND THE YEAR OF DELEGATIONS

Several verses of the Qur'an are closely connected with the events of the Year of Delegations. Some of these connections are authentic in the Hadith; others rest on the views of the commentators. The following table states the status of each connection.

VERSE	BRIEF CONTENT	CONNECTION	STATUS OF THE CONNECTION
An-Nasr 110:1–3	When the help of Allah and the victory come, and people enter the religion of Allah in crowds	A picture of the Year of Delegations	Sahih al-Bukhari 4970 (Ibn 'Abbas's interpretation)
Al-Hujurat 49:2–5	Do not raise your voices; those who call from outside the chambers	Banu Tamim	Sahih al-Bukhari 4845, 4847
Al-Hujurat 49:13	We made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another	Brotherhood beyond the tribe	General lesson
Al-Hujurat 49:14	The Bedouins say: "We believe"	The delegation of Banu Asad	View of commentators (sirah report)
Al 'Imran 3:59–61	The likeness of 'Isa is as that of Adam; the verse of mubahalah	The Christians of Najran	Sahih Muslim 2404; Sahih al-Bukhari 4380
Al 'Imran 3:64	Come to a word that is common between us	Dialogue with the People of the Book	General lesson
At-Tawbah 9:97–99	The Bedouins: some disbelieve and some believe	The Bedouin tribes	General lesson

AN-NASR: THE SURAH THAT SIGNALLED THE END

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما understood Surah An-Nasr as a sign that the appointed time of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had drawn near, and 'Umar رضى الله عنه confirmed that interpretation (Sahih al-Bukhari 4970).

People entering Islam in crowds during the Year of Delegations was a sign that the mission was nearly complete. That is why the surah ends with the command to glorify, praise and seek forgiveness — not to boast.

Reference: Sahih al-Bukhari 4970; Surah An-Nasr (Quran.com); Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim.

LESSON

The greatest victory is met with seeking forgiveness. When success comes, a Muslim returns to Allah with glorification and repentance, because he knows that all of it is from Allah.

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MALIK IBN AL-HUWAYRITH: TWENTY NIGHTS IN MADINAH

Not every delegation came with tribal chiefs and poetry. There was a group of young men who came purely to learn. Malik ibn al-Huwayrith رضى الله عنه of Banu Layth relates:

"We came to the Prophet ﷺ, and we were young men of about the same age. We stayed with him for twenty nights. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was very merciful and gentle. When he thought we were missing our families, he asked us about the families we had left behind, and we told him. He said: ***Go back to your families, stay with them, teach them and instruct them. Pray as you have seen me pray. When the time of prayer comes, let one of you call the adhan, and let the eldest of you lead you in prayer.***"

Reference: Sahih al-Bukhari 631; also Nos. 628 and 6008; Sahih Muslim 674. Grade: Sahih.

THREE LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

PHRASE	LESSON
"Twenty nights"	A short but intensive education can transform a whole people. They learned by watching, not only by listening.
"He thought we were missing our families"	The Messenger of Allah ﷺ paid attention to the feelings of his students and did not keep them longer than needed.
"Pray as you have seen me pray"	A basic rule of worship: the prayer is taken from the example of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, not invented by oneself.

This Hadith also shows that the delegations were not only formal meetings between tribal chiefs. They were also short schools: young men came, learned, and then returned as teachers to their people.

LESSON

Knowledge is learned not to be stored away. "Go back to your families … teach them" — every student is a future teacher, and the home is the first place to pass on knowledge.

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OTHER DELEGATIONS IN THE BOOKS OF SIRAH

Besides the delegations whose stories are authentic in Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, the books of sirah tell of many more. These stories are mostly reported by Ibn Ishaq and Ibn Sa'd, and their chains are not as strong as sahih Hadith. We mention them to complete the picture, stating their grade.

ZAYD AL-KHAYL BECOMES ZAYD AL-KHAYR

Zayd ibn Muhalhil of the tribe of Tayyi' was known as Zayd al-Khayl ("Zayd of the Horses") for his skill in riding and keeping horses. According to Ibn Ishaq, when he came and embraced Islam, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ changed his title to Zayd al-Khayr ("Zayd the Good") and praised him. Ibn Ishaq also mentions that he died not long after returning to his people.

> **FROM THE BOOKS OF SIRAH: GRADE OF THE REPORT**
> The story of Zayd al-Khayl is reported by Ibn Ishaq without an authentic connected chain. It is well known in the books of sirah, but it is not found in Sahih al-Bukhari or Sahih Muslim.

KINDAH AND AL-ASH'ATH IBN QAYS

Ibn Ishaq reports that al-Ash'ath ibn Qays came with about eighty riders from Kindah, wearing cloaks embroidered with silk. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked: "Have you not embraced Islam?" They said yes.

He then asked about the silk, so they tore it off and threw it away. This story shows that Islam is not merely words, but changes the way one lives. Al-Ash'ath was later involved in the apostasy (riddah) and returned to Islam in the time of Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه.

BANU 'AMIR: TWO MEN WHO REFUSED

Not every delegation ended in guidance. According to Ibn Ishaq, 'Amir ibn at-Tufayl and Arbad ibn Qays of Banu 'Amir ibn Sa'sa'ah came with evil intentions towards the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, but Allah protected him. 'Amir demanded that power be shared, and he was refused. Both died on the way home: 'Amir from a swelling in the neck, and Arbad struck by lightning. Some commentators link Arbad's death to Ar-Ra'd 13:13, but that link comes from tafsir reports whose chains are discussed.

MUZAYNAH: A SMALL TRIBE THAT CAME EARLY

The scholars of sirah mention that the tribe of Muzaynah was among the first to come after the Conquest of Makkah. An-Nu'man ibn Muqarrin al-Muzani, who would later be a commander in the conquest of Persia, was among them. The number of members of the delegation given in the reports differs.

Reference: Ibn Hisham, al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah; Ibn Sa'd, al-Tabaqat al-Kubra; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah (chapter on the wufud).

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LESSON

The door of Madinah was open to all, but guidance remains in the hand of Allah. Some came and were transformed completely, and some came in arrogance and returned in loss. We read these stories aware of the difference between sahih reports and sirah reports.

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TIMELINE OF THE YEAR OF DELEGATIONS

The dates of some delegations cannot be fixed precisely. This table follows the order common in the books of sirah.

TIME	EVENT	SOURCE
Ramadan 8 AH	The Conquest of Makkah; tribes begin hastening to embrace Islam	Sahih al-Bukhari 4302
Late 8 AH – early 9 AH	Delegation of Muzaynah and some tribes around the Hijaz	Books of sirah
Muharram 9 AH	Zakat collectors sent to the tribes	Books of sirah
9 AH	Delegation of Banu Tamim; Al-Hujurat 49:2–5 revealed	Sahih al-Bukhari 4845, 4847
Rajab 9 AH	The Expedition of Tabuk	Series 24
Ramadan 9 AH	Delegation of Thaqif; al-Lat torn down	Books of sirah; Sunan Abi Dawud 3025
Dhul-Hijjah 9 AH	The Hajj of Abu Bakr; the proclamation of Bara'ah	Series 27
9–10 AH	Delegations of 'Abd al-Qays (second time), Dimam, Tayyi', Kindah, Bajilah	Sahih Hadith and books of sirah
9–10 AH	Delegation of Banu Hanifah with Musaylimah	Sahih al-Bukhari 4373
10 AH	Delegation of the Christians of Najran; the verse of mubahalah	Sahih al-Bukhari 4380
Early 10 AH	Mu'adh and Abu Musa sent to Yemen	Sahih al-Bukhari 4347
10 AH	'Ali sent to Yemen; Hamdan embraces Islam	Sahih al-Bukhari 4349; books of sirah
Dhul-Hijjah 10 AH	The Farewell Hajj	Series 28
Rabi' al-Awwal 11 AH	Death of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ; the trial of apostasy begins	Books of sirah

LESSON

In only about two years, almost the whole of the Arabian Peninsula came to Madinah. This great change did not come suddenly; it was the fruit of twenty years of patience before it.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE YEAR OF DELEGATIONS

1. WHY IS THE YEAR 9 AH CALLED THE YEAR OF DELEGATIONS?

Because in that year and the year after, delegations of tribes from all over the Arabian Peninsula came to Madinah to embrace Islam or to negotiate (chapter 1).

2. WHY DID THE TRIBES WAIT UNTIL AFTER THE CONQUEST OF MAKKAH?

They were waiting for the outcome between the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and Quraysh. When Makkah was conquered, they were convinced he was truly a prophet (Sahih al-Bukhari 4302; chapter 2).

3. WHAT WERE THE FOUR COMMANDS AND FOUR PROHIBITIONS GIVEN TO ʻABD AL-QAYS?

Commands: to believe in Allah, establish the prayer, pay zakat, fast Ramadan and hand over a fifth of the spoils. Prohibitions: four kinds of drinking vessels in which drinks easily became intoxicating (Sahih al-Bukhari 53; chapter 9).

4. WHAT WAS SPECIAL ABOUT DIMAM IBN THAʻLABAH?

He came alone, asked directly about the foundations of Islam under oath, then went home and his people embraced Islam (Sahih al-Bukhari 63; chapters 11–12).

5. WHAT IS MUBAHALAH?

A joint prayer invoking the curse of Allah upon whichever side is lying. The Christians of Najran declined to do it and chose a treaty instead (Al ʻImran 3:61; Sahih al-Bukhari 4380; chapter 14).

6. WERE THE CHRISTIANS OF NAJRAN FORCED TO EMBRACE ISLAM?

No. They kept their religion under the treaty, and Abu ʻUbaydah was sent with them as a trustworthy man (Sahih al-Bukhari 4380; chapter 15).

7. WHY WERE THE ASHʻARIS PRAISED?

Because they shared their food when supplies ran short, as if they were one family. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "They are of me and I am of them" (Sahih al-Bukhari 2486; chapter 17).

8. WHAT WAS THE ADVICE OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ TO MUʻADH AND ABU MUSA?

"Make things easy and do not make them hard, give glad tidings and do not drive people away, cooperate and do not differ" (Sahih al-Bukhari 3038, 4347; chapter 21).

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9. WHO WAS MUSAYLIMAH?

A man of Banu Hanifah who came with his people's delegation and demanded power after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He later claimed prophethood and was killed in the Battle of Yamamah (Sahih al-Bukhari 4373; chapter 24).

10. WHAT IS THE LESSON OF THE HADITH OF MALIK IBN AL-HUWAYRITH?

Knowledge is learned in order to be taught, and the prayer is taken from the example of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: "Pray as you have seen me pray" (Sahih al-Bukhari 631; chapter 35).

11. ARE ALL THE STORIES OF THE DELEGATIONS AUTHENTIC?

No. Some are authentic in the Hadith, while others, such as the stories of Zayd al-Khayl and Kindah, are reported only in the books of sirah (chapters 33 and 36).

12. WHAT IS THE CONNECTION OF SURAH AN-NASR WITH THIS YEAR?

The surah describes people entering Islam in crowds, and Ibn 'Abbas understood it as a sign that the appointed time of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had drawn near (Sahih al-Bukhari 4970; chapter 34).

LESSON

These questions remind us that the Year of Delegations is not just a list of tribes, but the story of people who came seeking the truth — and of how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ welcomed them.

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

The Year of Delegations was a year of ***harvest*** after twenty years of sowing. It shows that patience and effort in da'wah eventually bear fruit — even if the fruit comes late, and in unexpected forms.

LESSON	FROM THE YEAR OF DELEGATIONS
Victory opens hearts	The Arabs waited for the Conquest
Knowledge before rank	'Uthman ibn Abi al-'As appointed imam
Courtesy towards leaders	Al-Hujurat 49:1–5
Patience and calm	Al-hilm and al-anah
Clear conviction	Dimam changes his people
Trust is the condition of leadership	Abu 'Ubaydah, the trustworthy one
Make easy, not hard	Advice to Mu'adh and Abu Musa
Firm in creed	Musaylimah refused
Piety is the measure of honour	Al-Hujurat 49:13

THE YEAR OF DELEGATIONS IN OUR LIVES

Every day "delegations" come to us — new neighbours, colleagues asking about Islam, confused young people, new Muslims still learning. Some are rough like Banu Tamim, some blunt like Dimam, some gentle like the people of Yemen. The question is: ***how do we receive them?*** With the cheerful face and patience of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, or with harshness that drives them away?

In sha Allah, the series **The Prophet's Sirah** will continue with ***Book 27 — Abu Bakr's Hajj and the Declaration of Bara'ah***: in the Hajj season of 9 AH, Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه led the pilgrims, and 'Ali رضى الله عنه recited the opening of Surah At-Tawbah — the declaration that after that year, no polytheist would perform Hajj, and no one would circle the Ka'bah naked. And Allah knows best.

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PART SIX

Abu Bakr's Hajj and Bara'ah

The Prophet's Sirah — Series 27

The Proclamation at Mina, the End of the Pagan Hajj and the Death of the Chief Hypocrite, According to the Qur'an and Authentic Hadith

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ABU BAKR'S HAJJ AND BARA'AH

Book 26 told of delegation after delegation coming to Madinah to embrace Islam. Yet in Makkah, one matter was still unresolved: ***the Hajj*** — the worship founded by the Prophet Ibrahim عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ on tawhid — was still shared with the polytheists, and some of them still ***circled the House naked***.

This Book 27 tells how that matter was settled: the Hajj of 9 AH led by ***Abu Bakr as-Siddiq*** رضى الله عنه, the revelation of ***Surah Bara'ah***, and the proclamation of ***'Ali ibn Abi Talib*** رضى الله عنه at Mina. We will also look at two deaths in the same year: ***'Abdullah ibn Ubayy***, chief of the hypocrites, and ***Umm Kulthum***, daughter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

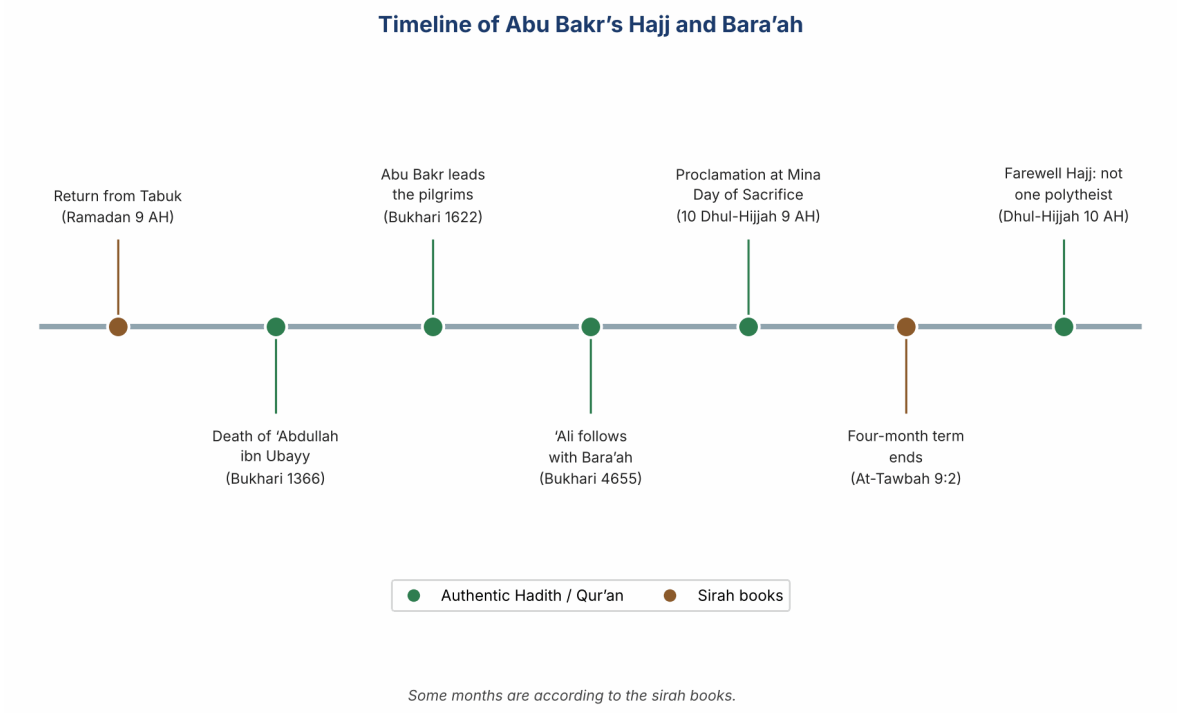

Figure 1: Timeline of Abu Bakr's Hajj and Bara'ah.

Note: The Qur'anic translation in this eBook is Sahih International. The grade of every Hadith is stated in its box. Information from the books of sirah — such as why the Prophet ﷺ did not perform Hajj that year, the exchange between Abu Bakr and 'Ali, and why Surah At-Tawbah has no basmalah — is placed in brown "Sirah Note" boxes, since most of it is narrated without a connected chain or with a debated one.

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THE HAJJ SEASON OF 9 AH

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned from Tabuk in Ramadan of 9 AH. Shawwal and Dhul-Qa'dah were filled with delegations from across Arabia. Then came the Hajj season. Makkah had been opened almost two years before, and the idols around the Ka'bah destroyed. But ***the polytheists still came for Hajj*** according to their pagan customs, because old covenants were still in force.

This was a strange situation: the Ka'bah was cleansed of idols, but ***the worship around it was not yet cleansed of shirk***. Muslims and polytheists circled the same place in different ways. Some polytheists still circled naked and recited the talbiyah with words of shirk: "Except a partner You have, whom You own."

The year 9 AH would end this situation, and pave the way for ***the Farewell Pilgrimage*** the following year — the only Hajj the Messenger of Allah ﷺ performed after the Hijrah, with the House truly pure for the believers.

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WHY THE PROPHET ﷺ DID NOT GO

SIRAH NOTE: WHY THE PROPHET ﷺ DID NOT PERFORM HAJJ IN 9 AH

Scholars mention several reasons why the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not go for Hajj himself that year. Among them, ***the polytheists still performed Hajj*** alongside the Muslims, and some circled naked; he did not wish to perform Hajj with them until that situation was corrected.

Another reason mentioned is his being occupied with receiving delegations from across Arabia, and the wisdom that his single Hajj should be ***a perfect example*** for the Ummah to follow. These reasons are ***the reasoning of scholars and sirah reports***, not explicit texts.

REFERENCES:
Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim, At-Tawbah 9:1; Ibn Hajar, Fath al-Bari.

Whatever the reason, his decision shows a beautiful principle: ***first purify, then perfect***. He sent Abu Bakr to prepare the way, and once the way was clear, he himself came a year later with over a hundred thousand Companions.

The lesson for us: something great needs ***preparation***. Before beginning something important — a marriage, a business, a da'wah project — first clear away its obstacles, so that when it is carried out, it can be carried out well.

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ABU BAKR, LEADER OF THE PILGRIMS

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ appointed ***Abu Bakr as-Siddiq*** رضى الله عنه as ***amir al-hajj*** — leader of the Muslim pilgrims that year. Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه mentions that Abu Bakr sent him "during the Hajj over which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had appointed him (Abu Bakr) as leader, before the Farewell Pilgrimage" (Sahih al-Bukhari 1622).

SIRAH NOTE: ABU BAKR'S COMPANY

The sirah authors mention that Abu Bakr left Madinah in Dhul-Qa'dah with ***about three hundred*** Companions, taking ***twenty sacrificial camels*** sent by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, while Abu Bakr himself brought five.

These details are ***sirah reports*** (Ibn Sa'd and al-Waqidi).

REFERENCES:

Ibn Sa'd, at-Tabaqat al-Kubra; al-Waqidi, al-Maghazi.

This appointment was very significant. Hajj is ***the greatest gathering of worship***, bringing together Muslims from all of Arabia. By appointing Abu Bakr to lead it, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ showed the whole Ummah ***Abu Bakr's standing*** as the one most trusted to lead in religious affairs — a sign the Companions later understood when choosing the first caliph.

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BARA'AH IS REVEALED

After Abu Bakr had set out, the opening of a very firm surah was revealed — ***Surah Bara'ah***, also known as Surah At-Tawbah. It begins with a proclamation:

"[This is a declaration of] disassociation, from Allah and His Messenger, to those with whom you had made a treaty among the polytheists" (At-Tawbah 9:1) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:1.

"So travel freely, [O disbelievers], throughout the land [during] four months but know that you cannot cause failure to Allah" (At-Tawbah 9:2) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:2.

"Bara'ah" means disassociation or release from obligation. The old covenants made with the polytheists — most of which they had violated — ***were ended***, with a fair period of notice. This surah is also among ***the last revealed***:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4654

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو الْوَلِيدِ، حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ الْبَرَاءَ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ يَقُولُ آخِرُ آيَةٍ نَزَلَتْ {يَسْتَفْتُونَكَ قُلِ اللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِي الْكَلاَلَةِ} وَآخِرُ سُورَةٍ نَزَلَتْ بَرَاءَةٌ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Ishaq said: I heard al-Bara' رضى الله عنه say: ***"The last verse revealed was {They ask you for a ruling. Say: Allah gives you a ruling concerning kalalah}, and the last surah revealed was Bara'ah."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Abu al-Walid at-Tayalisi, from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from Abu Ishaq as-Sabi'i, from al-Bara' ibn 'Azib رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Tafsir, Chapter: "(This is) a declaration of disassociation from Allah and His Messenger…", Hadith No. 4654; also No. 4364, 4605 and Muslim No. 1618.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4654

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This Hadith shows that Surah Bara'ah was ***the last surah revealed complete*** (or among the last). Its rulings therefore reflect ***the final stage*** of the relationship between the Islamic state and the polytheists of Arabia, after more than twenty years of da'wah, patience and broken covenants.

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‘ALI FOLLOWS

When the verses of Bara’ah were revealed, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent ***‘Ali ibn Abi Talib*** رضى الله عنه to follow Abu Bakr and recite them to the people at Hajj. Anas رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***“It is not fitting that it be conveyed except by a man of my family.”*** (Jami‘ at-Tirmidhi 3091, graded hasan gharib by at-Tirmidhi.)

Scholars explain the reason: in ***Arab custom***, a covenant was only revoked by the leader who made it, or by one of his closest kin. A proclamation by anyone else might not be accepted. So ‘Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, was sent so that ***no one could dispute*** the proclamation.

SIRAH NOTE: “ARE YOU A LEADER OR A MESSENGER?”

Ibn Ishaq relates that ‘Ali caught up with Abu Bakr at al-‘Arj (or Dajnan) on the way. When Abu Bakr saw him, he asked: ***“Have you come as a leader or as a messenger?”*** ‘Ali answered: ***“As a messenger.”*** So they continued together, Abu Bakr still leading the pilgrims, and ‘Ali reciting Bara’ah to the people. These details are ***sirah reports***.

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Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapters on Abu Bakr’s Hajj and Bara’ah; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.

See ***the harmony*** between these two great Companions. No rivalry, no struggle for power. Abu Bakr led the prayers and rites; ‘Ali delivered the proclamation. ***Each fulfilled the trust given to him.***

This episode also reflects the Prophet’s ﷺ care for clarity in communication. A proclamation of such weight had to reach every tribe in a form none could question. Choosing the right messenger, at the right place and time, was part of making sure the message was received — a lesson for anyone who must deliver important news.

It also shows ‘Ali’s place in the household of the Prophet ﷺ. He had grown up in the Prophet’s ﷺ home, was among the first to believe, and was married to Fatimah. Sending him as the family’s representative gave the proclamation the full authority of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself.

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THE PROCLAMATION AT MINA

Allah set the day of the proclamation in the Qur'an: ***"And [it is] an announcement from Allah and His Messenger to the people on the day of the greater pilgrimage that Allah is disassociated from the disbelievers, and [so is] His Messenger. So if you repent, that is best for you"*** (At-Tawbah 9:3) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:3.

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه, who was one of the announcers, tells what happened at Mina:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4655

حَدَّثَنَا سَعِيدُ بْنُ عُفَيْرٍ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي اللَّيْثُ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي عُقَيْلٌ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، وَأَخْبَرَنِي حُمَيْدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، أَنَّ أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ قَالَ بَعَثَنِي أَبُو بَكْرٍ فِي تِلْكَ الْحَجَّةِ فِي مُؤَذِّنِينَ، بَعَثَهُمْ يَوْمَ النَّحْرِ يُؤَذِّنُونَ بِمِنًى أَنْ لاَ يَحُجَّ بَعْدَ الْعَامِ مُشْرِكٌ، وَلاَ يَطُوفَ بِالْبَيْتِ عُرْيَانٌ. قَالَ حُمَيْدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ ثُمَّ أَرْدَفَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم بِعَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ، وَأَمَرَهُ أَنْ يُؤَذِّنَ بِبَرَاءَةَ. قَالَ أَبُو هُرَيْرَةَ فَأَذَّنَ مَعَنَا عَلِيٌّ يَوْمَ النَّحْرِ فِي أَهْلِ مِنًى بِبَرَاءَةَ، وَأَنْ لاَ يَحُجَّ بَعْدَ الْعَامِ مُشْرِكٌ، وَلاَ يَطُوفَ بِالْبَيْتِ عُرْيَانٌ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه said: Abu Bakr sent me during that Hajj among ***the announcers*** he sent on ***the Day of Sacrifice (10 Dhul-Hijjah)*** to proclaim at Mina: ***"After this year, no polytheist may perform Hajj, and no one may circle the House naked."*** Humayd ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman said: Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent ***'Ali ibn Abi Talib*** after (Abu Bakr), and ordered him ***to proclaim Bara'ah***. Abu Hurayrah said: So 'Ali proclaimed with us on the Day of Sacrifice to the people of Mina the Bara'ah, and that after this year no polytheist may perform Hajj, and no one may circle the House naked.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Sa'id ibn 'Ufayr, from al-Layth ibn Sa'd, from 'Uqayl ibn Khalid, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from Humayd ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn 'Awf, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Tafsir, Chapter: "So travel freely in the land for four months…", Hadith No. 4655; also No. 369, 1622, 4363 and Muslim No. 1347.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4655

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LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Note that the proclamation was delivered by ***many announcers***, not just one. Mina on the Day of Sacrifice was full of thousands of pilgrims from all over Arabia, and they had to make sure ***everyone heard it***. The sirah authors mention that Abu Hurayrah called out until his voice grew hoarse.

Note too that the verse opens ***the door of repentance***: "So if you repent, that is best for you." The proclamation was not merely a threat, but ***a final call*** to those still clinging to shirk to return to Allah.

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THE DAY OF THE GREATER HAJJ

Verse 3 mentions ***"the day of the greater pilgrimage"***. Which day is that? Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه explains:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 3177

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو الْيَمَانِ، أَخْبَرَنَا شُعَيْبٌ، عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ، أَخْبَرَنَا حُمَيْدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، أَنَّ أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ بَعَثَنِي أَبُو بَكْرٍ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ فِيمَنْ يُؤَذِّنُ يَوْمَ النَّحْرِ بِمِنًى لاَ يَحُجُّ بَعْدَ الْعَامِ مُشْرِكٌ، وَلاَ يَطُوفُ بِالْبَيْتِ عُرْيَانٌ. وَيَوْمُ الْحَجِّ الأَكْبَرِ يَوْمُ النَّحْرِ، وَإِنَّمَا قِيلَ الأَكْبَرُ مِنْ أَجْلِ قَوْلِ النَّاسِ الْحَجُّ الأَصْغَرُ. فَنَبَذَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ إِلَى النَّاسِ فِي ذَلِكَ الْعَامِ، فَلَمْ يَحُجَّ عَامَ حَجَّةِ الْوَدَاعِ الَّذِي حَجَّ فِيهِ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم مُشْرِكٌ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه said: Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه sent me among those who proclaimed on the Day of Sacrifice at Mina: ***"After this year, no polytheist may perform Hajj, and no one may circle the House naked." The Day of the Greater Hajj is the Day of Sacrifice***; it is called "greater" because people call the 'umrah the lesser Hajj. So Abu Bakr ***cast back (the covenants)*** to the people that year, and in the year of the Farewell Pilgrimage — when the Prophet ﷺ performed Hajj — ***not a single polytheist performed Hajj***.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Abu al-Yaman al-Hakam ibn Nafi', from Shu'ayb ibn Abi Hamzah, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from Humayd ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn 'Awf, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Jizyah, Chapter: How a covenant is revoked, Hadith No. 3177.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3177

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The Day of the Greater Hajj is the Day of Sacrifice — 10 Dhul-Hijjah, the day of Eid al-Adha, when pilgrims stone the pillar, offer their sacrifice, shave their heads and perform tawaf al-ifadah. It is the day with the most rites of Hajj. It is called "greater" because the Arabs called the 'umrah "the lesser Hajj".

The last line of this Hadith is very important: ***"in the year of the Farewell Pilgrimage … not a single polytheist performed Hajj."*** The proclamation of Abu Bakr and 'Ali succeeded completely. Within one year, the Hajj ***returned to pure tawhid*** as founded by the Prophet Ibrahim عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ.

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The phrase “the Day of the Greater Hajj” also shows the honour of the Day of Sacrifice. Many of the most important rites fall on it, and in the Farewell Pilgrimage the Prophet ﷺ delivered one of his great sermons on that very day. Choosing it for the proclamation ensured that the largest number of pilgrims, from every tribe, would hear it at once and carry it home.

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ABU HURAYRAH: THE ANNOUNCER AT MINA

One of the announcers Abu Bakr sent at Mina was ***Abu Hurayrah*** رضى الله عنه — a Companion of the tribe of Daws who embraced Islam around 7 AH, when Khaybar was opened. Although he was with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ for only about three or four years, he became ***the most prolific narrator of Hadith*** among the Companions.

How did this happen? Abu Hurayrah himself explained: ***"People say that Abu Hurayrah narrates too much Hadith… Our brothers among the Muhajirun were busy trading in the markets, and our brothers among the Ansar were busy with their property, while Abu Hurayrah stayed constantly with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, content with enough to fill his stomach. He was present when they were absent, and memorised when they did not"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 118).

He also related that he complained to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that he forgot easily. He told him to ***spread out his cloak***, then scooped something with both hands into it and said: "Gather it." Abu Hurayrah said: ***"After that I never forgot anything"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 119).

No wonder he was chosen to call out at Mina, and that it is he who narrates the proclamation to us in detail. Abu Hurayrah teaches us ***the value of time with a teacher*** and ***earnestness in memorising knowledge***. From the tribe of Daws, which once refused Islam (Book 26), came the greatest guardian of the Sunnah.

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NO MORE NAKED TAWAF

One of the things proclaimed was ***the prohibition of circling the House naked***. Why did the pagan Arabs do it? The commentators mention that some said: "We will not circle in clothes in which we have sinned." Only Quraysh (al-Hums) circled in clothing; others had to borrow clothes from Quraysh, or circle without clothes.

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 3028

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ، ح وَحَدَّثَنِي أَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ نَافِعٍ، - وَاللَّفْظُ لَهُ - حَدَّثَنَا غُنْدَرٌ، حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ سَلَمَةَ بْنِ كُهَيْلٍ، عَنْ مُسْلِمٍ الْبَطِينِ، عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ جُبَيْرٍ عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، قَالَ كَانَتِ الْمَرْأَةُ تَطُوفُ بِالْبَيْتِ وَهِيَ عُرْيَانَةٌ فَتَقُولُ مَنْ يُعِيرُنِي تِطْوَافًا تَجْعَلُهُ عَلَى فَرْجِهَا وَتَقُولُ الْيَوْمَ يَبْدُو بَعْضُهُ أَوْ كُلُّهُ فَمَا بَدَا مِنْهُ فَلاَ أُحِلُّهُ فَنَزَلَتْ هَذِهِ الآيَةَ { خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ}

TRANSLATION:

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما said: ***In the days of ignorance, a woman would circle the House without clothing***, saying: "Who will lend me a tawaf garment to cover my nakedness?" and she would recite verses acknowledging that her body was exposed. Then this verse was revealed: ***{Take your adornment (clothing) at every place of prayer}*** (Al-A'raf 7:31).

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Muhammad ibn Bashshar from Muhammad ibn Ja'far, and from Abu Bakr ibn Nafi' from Ghundar, from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from Salamah ibn Kuhayl, from Muslim al-Batin, from Sa'id ibn Jubayr, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Tafsir, Chapter: "Take your adornment at every place of prayer", Hadith No. 3028.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:3028

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The verse revealed did not only forbid nakedness, but ***commanded adornment***: "Take your adornment at every masjid." Islam raises human dignity: ***covering oneself is an honour***, and coming to the mosque in clean, neat clothing is courtesy towards Allah.

See how far misguidance can take people: in the name of "purity", they did something ***shameful and self-degrading***. When religion is invented according to whims, it can create practices contrary to human nature. Revelation came ***to restore people to their natural disposition***.

Covering the body in worship was not a new rule invented for this occasion. Allah had already commanded: "O children of Adam, take your adornment at every masjid" (Al-A'raf 7:31), and the scholars

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of tafsir explain that this verse was revealed precisely about those who circled the Ka'bah naked. The proclamation of 9 AH simply enforced at the House of Allah what the Qur'an had already established.

The pagans had justified their nakedness with a twisted piety: they claimed they would not worship in garments in which they had committed sins. Islam rejected this reasoning completely. Purity before Allah comes through repentance and sincerity, not through stripping away the dignity that Allah gave to the human being.

Today the simple white garments of ihram, worn by millions of pilgrims, are a living reversal of that pagan scene. Rich and poor, king and labourer, stand dressed alike, modest and equal before their Lord — exactly as the House of Ibrahim was meant to be honoured.

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THE TALBIYAH OF TAWHID AND OF SHIRK

The shirk of the pagan Hajj was not only in the tawaf, but also in ***the talbiyah*** — the call chanted by pilgrims. Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما narrates that the polytheists used to say: "Labbayka la sharika lak" (Here I am at Your call, You have no partner). The Messenger of Allah ﷺ would say: ***"Woe to you! Enough, enough (stop there)!"*** But they continued: ***"…except a partner You have, whom You own and who owns nothing"*** (Sahih Muslim 1185).

See how subtle that shirk was: they acknowledged Allah as the supreme Lord, ***yet added partners*** beneath Him. This was the reality of the shirk of Quraysh — not denying Allah, but ***associating*** something with Him.

The talbiyah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was ***pure tawhid***, as narrated by Ibn 'Umar: ***"Labbaykallahumma labbayk, labbayka la sharika laka labbayk, innal-hamda wan-ni'mata laka wal-mulk, la sharika lak"*** — Here I am, O Allah, here I am; You have no partner; all praise, blessing and dominion are Yours; You have no partner (Sahih al-Bukhari 1549).

Notice how this talbiyah ***repeats "You have no partner" twice***. It is like a direct answer to the pagan talbiyah of shirk. Every pilgrim who chants it today is ***proclaiming Bara'ah*** from shirk with his own tongue.

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AL-HUMS AND STANDING AT 'ARAFAH

Another pagan practice abolished was the privilege of ***al-Hums*** — the title of Quraysh and their allies, who considered themselves above other Arabs. Among their "privileges" was ***not standing at 'Arafah*** with the people, since 'Arafah lies outside the Sacred Precinct; they stopped only at Muzdalifah. Then Allah revealed (Sahih al-Bukhari 1665):

"Then depart from the place from where [all] the people depart and ask forgiveness of Allah. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful" (Al-Baqarah 2:199) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 2:199.

Interestingly, ***the Messenger of Allah ﷺ never followed this Hums practice***, even before prophethood. Jubayr ibn Mut'im رضى الله عنه — not yet a Muslim at the time — related that he lost his camel and went looking for it on the day of 'Arafah, and saw ***the Prophet ﷺ standing at 'Arafah*** with the people. He said: "He is one of the Hums, what is he doing here?" (Sahih al-Bukhari 1664)

The lesson is clear: in worship of Allah, ***there is no caste and no privilege of lineage***. All pilgrims stand in the same place, in the same ihram, asking forgiveness of the same Lord. The pride of Quraysh was dissolved by ***the equality of Hajj***.

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FOUR MONTHS AND COVENANTS HONOURED

The proclamation of Bara'ah was not a surprise attack. Allah gave the polytheists ***a period of four months*** to move freely, reflect and decide (At-Tawbah 9:2). More than that, the Qur'an excepted those ***faithful to their covenants***:

"Excepted are those with whom you made a treaty among the polytheists and then they have not been deficient toward you in anything or supported anyone against you; so complete for them their treaty until their term [has ended]. Indeed, Allah loves the righteous [who fear Him]" (At-Tawbah 9:4) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:4.

"So as long as they are upright toward you, be upright toward them. Indeed, Allah loves the righteous [who fear Him]" (At-Tawbah 9:7) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:7.

Note how both verses close with ***"Indeed, Allah loves the righteous"***. Honouring covenants with faithful polytheists is ***part of piety***. Islam does not permit treachery, even towards enemies.

The commentators mention tribes such as ***Banu Damrah*** and ***Banu Kinanah*** who were faithful to their covenants; their covenants were honoured until their terms ended. This is ***Islamic justice*** in relations between peoples: clear warning, a reasonable period, and faithfulness to promises.

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VERSE 9:5 IN ITS CONTEXT

The fifth verse of Surah At-Tawbah is often quoted out of context, either by those who wish to malign Islam or by those who misuse it. Allah says: ***"And when the sacred months have passed, then kill the polytheists wherever you find them and capture them and besiege them and sit in wait for them at every place of ambush. But if they should repent, establish prayer, and give zakah, let them [go] on their way. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful"*** (At-Tawbah 9:5) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:5.

Scholars of tafsir explain this verse in ***its specific context***: it is addressed to ***the polytheists of Arabia who fought the Muslims and violated their covenants***, after a four-month period of notice. It is not a general command to fight every non-Muslim in every place and age.

VERSE	LIMITS AND EXCEPTIONS
9:2	A four-month period of notice
9:4	Those faithful to covenants are exempt
9:6	Those seeking protection must be protected
9:7	As long as they are upright, you must be upright
9:5 (end)	If they repent, let them go
Al-Baqarah 2:256	No compulsion in religion

Other verses also set general principles: ***"Fight in the way of Allah those who fight you but do not transgress"*** (Al-Baqarah 2:190), and Allah does not forbid kindness and justice towards those who do not fight the Muslims (Al-Mumtahanah 60:8). Reading one verse without the others is ***an error in understanding the Qur'an***.

Muslim scholars throughout history applied this balanced reading. The great jurists distinguished between those at war with the Muslims and those living in peace or under treaty, and insisted that the latter be treated with justice and kindness. Understanding a verse with its context, its sister verses and the practice of the Prophet ﷺ protects us from both extremism and misrepresentation.

It is also worth noting that the verse ends with mercy: "Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful." Even in its sternest passage, Surah At-Tawbah keeps the door of return open, and the very next verse commands protection for anyone who asks for it. Firmness and mercy stand side by side in the Qur'an.

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"GRANT HIM PROTECTION SO THAT HE MAY HEAR"

Immediately after verse 9:5, Allah revealed a verse showing ***the true aim*** of Islam — not killing, but guidance:

"And if any one of the polytheists seeks your protection, then grant him protection so that he may hear the words of Allah. Then deliver him to his place of safety. That is because they are a people who do not know" (At-Tawbah 9:6) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:6.

This verse is astonishing. A polytheist — even from a people at war with Islam — who seeks protection ***must be protected***. He is given the chance to ***hear the words of Allah***, and afterwards, whether he believes or not, he must be ***escorted to a place of safety***. No compulsion, no threat.

The reason is given at the end: ***"That is because they are a people who do not know."*** Islam sees many who oppose it as people who ***have not yet known the truth***, not enemies to be wiped out. The task of the Muslims is to let them hear the truth, and guidance is in Allah's hands.

Ibn Kathir mentions that from this verse scholars derived the ruling that ***envoys and ambassadors*** from the enemy must be guaranteed safety. This is the basis of ***diplomatic immunity*** in Islam, centuries before it was recognised in modern international law.

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MOSQUES FOR THE BELIEVERS

Surah At-Tawbah also makes clear ***who is worthy to maintain the mosques of Allah***, especially al-Masjid al-Haram, long controlled by the polytheists:

"It is not for the polytheists to maintain the mosques of Allah [while] witnessing against themselves with disbelief" (At-Tawbah 9:17) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:17.

"The mosques of Allah are only to be maintained by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day and establish prayer and give zakah and do not fear except Allah" (At-Tawbah 9:18) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:18.

Quraysh used to boast of ***giving water to the pilgrims and maintaining al-Masjid al-Haram*** — while worshipping idols in it. Allah made clear that ***building and maintaining a structure*** is worthless without ***faith, prayer, zakat and fear of Allah***.

This verse 18 is ***the standard*** for every mosque committee today. Maintaining a mosque is not merely painting walls or building domes, but ***bringing it to life with worship***, knowledge and service to the community, by people who ***fear none but Allah***.

Historically, the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah was itself the model of such a mosque. It was a place of prayer, but also of learning, consultation, receiving delegations, caring for the poor of the Suffah, and even treating the wounded. Its walls were of mud brick and its roof of palm fronds, yet it was more alive than any palace of its time, because it was maintained by people of faith.

Verse 18 also ends with a gentle note of humility: "for it is expected that those will be of the [rightly] guided." Even those who fulfil every condition are only "expected" to be guided; they do not boast of it. Serving a mosque is an honour that should make us more humble, not more proud.

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"ALLAH WILL ENRICH YOU"

Another verse in the proclamation touches a very human worry: ***"O you who have believed, indeed the polytheists are unclean, so let them not approach al-Masjid al-Haram after this, their [final] year. And if you fear privation, Allah will enrich you from His bounty if He wills"*** (At-Tawbah 9:28) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:28.

Scholars explain that "unclean" here means ***spiritual impurity*** — the impurity of the creed of shirk — not physical impurity. Makkah's economy depended heavily on the Hajj season: pilgrims from all Arabia came to trade at markets like 'Ukaz and Dhul-Majaz. If the polytheists no longer came, ***what of trade?***

Allah answered with a promise: ***"Allah will enrich you from His bounty."*** And the promise was fulfilled. Within a few years, all of Arabia embraced Islam, and pilgrims came from ***all over the world***. Today, millions of pilgrims come to Makkah each year for Hajj and 'umrah — far beyond anything the merchants of pagan Makkah could have imagined.

The lesson: when obedience to Allah seems ***costly in worldly terms***, remember this verse. Leaving usury, bribery or unlawful trade may feel like a loss, but ***provision is in Allah's hands***, and He promises something better in its place.

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THE SACRED MONTHS AND NASI'

Surah At-Tawbah also corrected another pagan practice connected with Hajj — the manipulation of the calendar: ***"Indeed, the number of months with Allah is twelve [lunar] months in the register of Allah [from] the day He created the heavens and the earth; of these, four are sacred"*** (At-Tawbah 9:36) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:36.

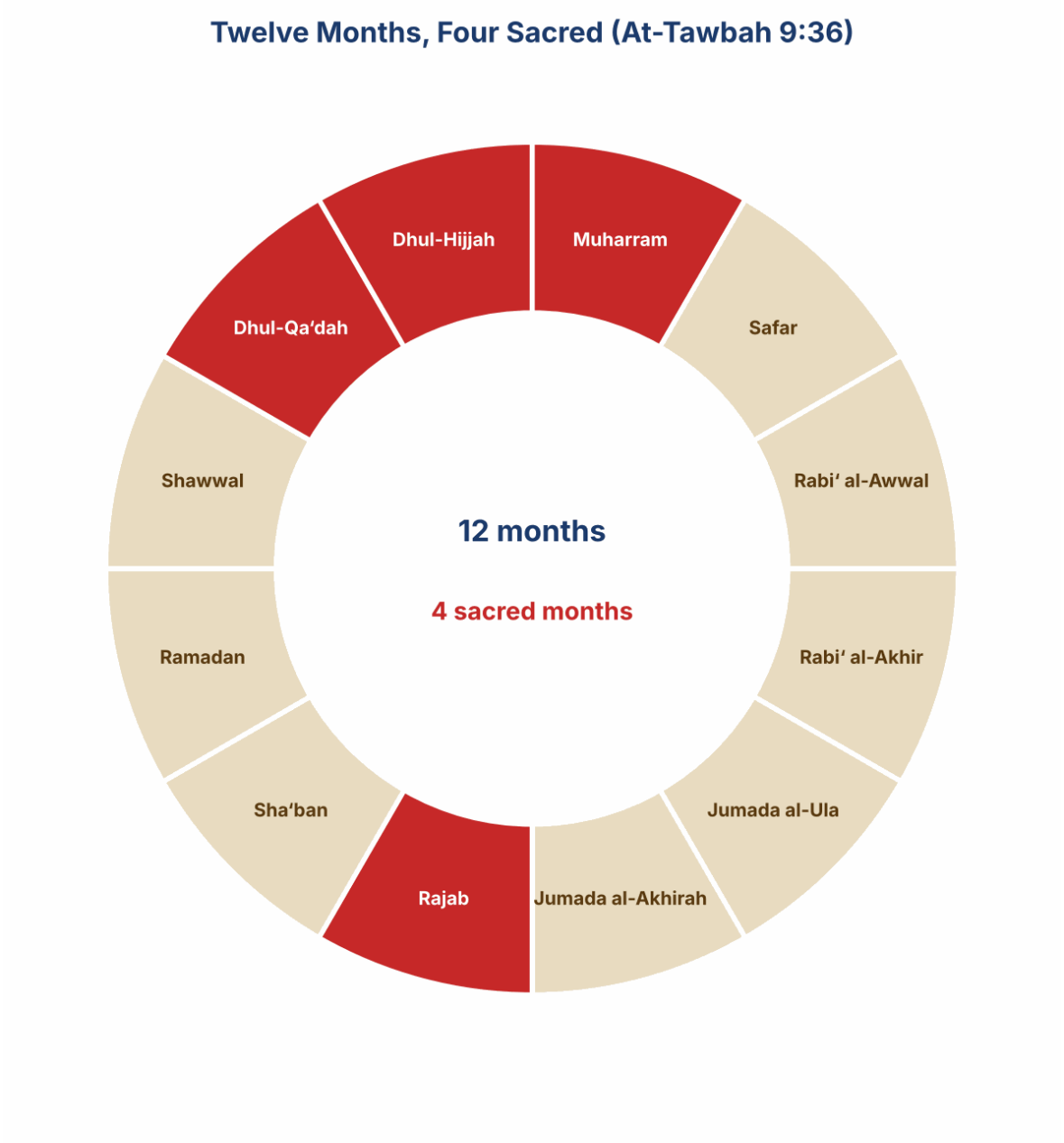

Figure 2: Twelve months and four sacred months.

"Indeed, the postponing [of restriction within sacred months] is an increase in disbelief by which those who have disbelieved are led [further] astray. They make it lawful one year and unlawful another year" (At-Tawbah 9:37) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:37.

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An-Nasi' was the pagan practice of postponing or shifting a sacred month to another month when they wished to fight, or adding a month so the Hajj season would fall at a time they preferred. As a result, the calendar became confused and the Hajj no longer fell in its true month.

In the Farewell Sermon a year later, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ announced: ***"Time has come round to its form on the day Allah created the heavens and the earth"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4662). The calendar had returned to its origin, and his Hajj fell exactly in the true Dhul-Hijjah. We will look at this in more detail in Book 28.

Why did the Arabs tamper with the calendar at all? Fighting, raiding and trade were the backbone of their economy, and three consecutive sacred months — Dhul-Qa'dah, Dhul-Hijjah and Muharram — felt too long to wait. So they declared a sacred month ordinary when it suited them and made up for it later. Outwardly they kept the count of four; in reality they emptied the sacredness of its meaning.

The lesson reaches far beyond the calendar. Changing what Allah has made lawful or unlawful to suit our desires, while keeping the outward form, is exactly what the verse calls "an increase in disbelief". A believer accepts the limits of Allah as they are, even when they are inconvenient, and does not look for clever ways around them.

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BACK TO THE WAY OF IBRAHIM

Everything that happened in 9 AH — the removal of shirk, naked tawaf, the talbiyah of shirk, the Hums privilege and the manipulation of the calendar — aimed at one thing: ***returning the Hajj to the way of Ibrahim*** عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. Allah had commanded the Prophet Ibrahim when he built the Ka'bah:

"Do not associate anything with Me and purify My House for those who perform Tawaf and those who stand [in prayer] and those who bow and prostrate" (Al-Hajj 22:26) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 22:26.

"And proclaim to the people the Hajj [pilgrimage]; they will come to you on foot and on every lean camel; they will come from every distant pass" (Al-Hajj 22:27) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 22:27.

Note: the first command to Ibrahim was ***"Do not associate anything with Me and purify My House."*** Centuries later, his own descendants — Quraysh — filled that House with three hundred and sixty idols. The Conquest of Makkah cleansed the House of idols; ***Bara'ah cleansed the worship around it***.

The Prophet Ibrahim's prayer for Makkah was also fully answered this year: ***"My Lord, make this city [Makkah] secure and keep me and my sons away from worshipping idols"*** (Ibrahim 14:35) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 14:35.

"So make hearts among the people incline toward them" (Ibrahim 14:37) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 14:37.

"Make hearts among the people incline toward them" — this prayer is answered to this day. The hearts of millions across the world ***long*** to go to Makkah for Hajj and 'umrah. And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, a descendant of Ibrahim through Isma'il, is the answer to another of Ibrahim's prayers: "Our Lord, send among them a messenger from themselves" (Al-Baqarah 2:129).

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WHY NO BASMALAH?

Surah At-Tawbah is ***the only surah*** in the Qur'an that does not begin with "Bismillahir-Rahmanir-Rahim". Why? Scholars have offered several views:

SIRAH NOTE: VIEWS ON THE ABSENCE OF THE BASMALAH

First view: Ibn 'Abbas asked 'Uthman why Surahs Al-Anfal and Bara'ah were placed side by side without a basmalah between them. 'Uthman answered that their stories were similar, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed away without making clear whether Bara'ah was part of Al-Anfal, so it was placed next to it without a basmalah (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3086; Sunan Abi Dawud 786). ***The chain of this report is graded weak*** by some scholars such as al-Albani.

Second view: It is narrated from 'Ali that the basmalah is ***a guarantee of safety*** (aman), whereas Bara'ah came down with the revoking of covenants and fighting, so it does not begin with the basmalah (al-Hakim). ***This report's chain is also debated.***

Third view (the majority): The Companions did not write the basmalah at its start in the mushaf because ***Jibril did not bring it*** with this surah. It follows ***tawqif*** (fixed by revelation), and this is the view held by many scholars such as al-Qurtubi.

REFERENCES:

al-Qurtubi, al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, opening of At-Tawbah; Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim.

Scholars also explain ***the ruling on recitation***: when reciting from the start of Surah At-Tawbah, ***the basmalah is not recited***, though the reciter may begin with seeking refuge (a'udhu billah). When starting from the middle of the surah, some scholars permit reciting the basmalah.

Whatever the view, one thing is clear: the arrangement of the Qur'an — including the presence or absence of the basmalah — ***was preserved with care*** by the Companions, without adding or removing a single verse. This is proof of ***Allah's protection*** of His Book (Al-Hijr 15:9).

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THE NAMES OF SURAH AT-TAWBAH

This surah has several names, each describing one side of its content. Sa'id ibn Jubayr said: I asked Ibn 'Abbas about Surah At-Tawbah. He said: ***"At-Tawbah? It is al-Fadihah (the Exposer). It kept being revealed: 'and among them…', 'and among them…', until they (the hypocrites) thought that not one of them would be left unmentioned in it"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4882).

NAME	WHY SO NAMED
At-Tawbah	It mentions the repentance of the Prophet, Muhajirun, Ansar and the three (9:117–118)
Bara'ah	It opens with the revoking of covenants (9:1)
Al-Fadihah	It exposes the secrets of the hypocrites
Al-Muqashqishah	It cleanses (the believers) of hypocrisy — mentioned by some commentators

Interestingly, the surah that is firmest against the hypocrites and polytheists is also called ***"At-Tawbah"*** — repentance. It reminds us that behind Allah's firmness, ***the door of mercy and repentance is always open***. Even verse 3, which proclaims Bara'ah, says: "if you repent, that is best for you."

The variety of these names shows how the Companions and early scholars reflected deeply on each surah. A name was not just a label, but a key to its themes. Reading At-Tawbah with all its names in mind — repentance, disassociation, exposure — helps us see how firmness, warning and mercy are woven together in one surah.

For the believer today, al-Fadihah is also a warning: deeds and intentions hidden from people are not hidden from Allah. The surah that exposed the hypocrites of Madinah invites each of us to examine our own hearts, and to correct what we would not want exposed on the Day when all secrets are revealed.

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ABU BAKR'S HAJJ: PREPARING FOR THE FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE

Abu Bakr's Hajj in 9 AH can be seen as ***preparation*** for the Farewell Pilgrimage the following year. In one Hajj season, several great matters were settled:

BEFORE 9 AH	AFTER THE PROCLAMATION
Polytheists performed Hajj	No polytheist performed Hajj
Naked tawaf	Covering obligatory
Talbiyah of shirk	Talbiyah of tawhid
Old, violated covenants	Covenants ended justly
Calendar manipulated (nasi')	Calendar restored

As a result, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ performed Hajj in 10 AH, he could ***teach the rites of Hajj perfectly*** to more than a hundred thousand people, in an atmosphere pure and united. He said then: ***"Take your rites from me"*** (Sahih Muslim 1297).

The lesson for managing any great undertaking: ***prepare in stages***. Abu Bakr was the "advance party" clearing the way, so that the main event could proceed smoothly.

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THE STANDING OF ABU BAKR

The appointment of Abu Bakr as leader of the Hajj was one of several ***signs*** from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about Abu Bakr's standing. Other signs would follow in the last months of his life. Abu Sa'id al-Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates that he said in a sermon: ***"If I were to take a khalil (closest friend) other than my Lord, I would take Abu Bakr"***, and he ordered that every door into the mosque be closed ***except the door of Abu Bakr*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 3654).

And during his final illness, he said: ***"Tell Abu Bakr to lead the people in prayer"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 664). The Companions later said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was pleased with Abu Bakr for our religion (the prayer), so shall we not be pleased with him for our worldly affairs?"

Leading the Hajj, leading the prayer, and the door left open — all of these show that ***Abu Bakr was being prepared*** to carry the great trust after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, without his having to state it outright.

The Companions who understood these signs chose him as the first caliph.

Abu Bakr's readiness for that trust was shaped by years of companionship: he was the first adult man to believe, the companion in the cave during the Hijrah, and the one who spent his wealth freely for Islam. His leadership of the Hajj was not a sudden honour, but the natural fruit of a life given entirely to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ.

For us, the lesson is that trust is earned over time. Responsibilities in a family, a mosque or a community should go to those whose record of faithfulness is long and clear, not merely to those who are eloquent or ambitious. Abu Bakr never asked for leadership; it came to him because of who he had been for twenty years.

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THE ZAKAT COLLECTOR AND THE GIFTS

Besides the Hajj, the year 9 AH also saw ***more organised management of zakat***. The sirah authors mention that early that year the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent zakat collectors to the tribes that had embraced Islam. In one incident, Abu Humayd as-Sa'idi رضى الله عنه narrates that he appointed a man of the tribe of Azd called ***Ibn al-Lutbiyyah*** to collect zakat. When he returned, he said: ***"This is for you, and this was given to me as a gift."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 7174)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood on the pulpit, praised Allah, then said: ***"Why does a collector we send come and say: 'This is for you and this is for me'? Why does he not sit in his father's or mother's house and see whether he is given gifts or not?"*** Then he raised both hands until the whiteness of his armpits showed, saying: ***"O Allah, have I not conveyed?"*** three times.

This Hadith is the basis of the ruling on ***gifts to officials*** in Islam: gifts given to someone ***because of his post*** belong to the state, not to him. The test is simple: "Would I be given this gift if I just sat at home?" This is ***an anti-corruption guideline*** set more than fourteen hundred years ago.

It also shows that as Islam spread and wealth began to flow in, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***did not allow trust to be corrupted***. He corrected it openly on the pulpit so all officials would hear. Just leadership requires ***transparency and accountability***.

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THE DEATH OF 'ABDULLAH IBN UBAYY

In the same year, before the Hajj season, there died a man who had troubled the Muslims for nearly nine years: ***'Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul***, chief of the hypocrites. He withdrew a third of the army at Uhud (Book 10), said "the more honourable will expel the more humble" (Book 14), and spread the slander in the affair of al-Ifk (Book 14). What was the Prophet's ﷺ attitude when he died?

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 1366

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ بُكَيْرٍ، حَدَّثَنِي اللَّيْثُ، عَنْ عُقَيْلٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، عَنْ عُبَيْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، عَنْ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ ـ رضى الله عنهم ـ أَنَّهُ قَالَ لَمَّا مَاتَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ أُبَيٍّ ابْنُ سَلُولَ دُعِيَ لَهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم لِيُصَلِّيَ عَلَيْهِ، فَلَمَّا قَامَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَثَبْتُ إِلَيْهِ فَقُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، أَتُصَلِّي عَلَى ابْنِ أُبَيٍّ وَقَدْ قَالَ يَوْمَ كَذَا وَكَذَا كَذَا وَكَذَا ـ أُعَدِّدُ عَلَيْهِ قَوْلَهُ ـ فَتَبَسَّمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَقَالَ أَخِّرْ عَنِّي يَا عُمَرُ. فَلَمَّا أَكْثَرْتُ عَلَيْهِ قَالَ إِنِّي خُيِّرْتُ فَاخْتَرْتُ، لَوْ أَعْلَمُ أَنِّي إِنْ زِدْتُ عَلَى السَّبْعِينَ فَغُفِرَ لَهُ لَزِدْتُ عَلَيْهَا. قَالَ فَصَلَّى عَلَيْهِ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم ثُمَّ انْصَرَفَ، فَلَمْ يَمْكُثْ إِلاَّ يَسِيرًا حَتَّى نَزَلَتِ الآيَتَانِ مِنْ {بَرَاءَةٌ} {وَلاَ تُصَلِّ عَلَى أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ مَاتَ أَبَدًا} إِلَى {وَهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ} قَالَ فَعَجِبْتُ بَعْدُ مِنْ جُرْأَتِي عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَوْمَئِذٍ، وَاللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ.

TRANSLATION:

'Umar ibn al-Khattab رضى الله عنه said: When ***'Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul*** died, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was called to pray over him. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood up (to pray), I leapt towards him and said: "O Messenger of Allah, will you pray over Ibn Ubayy, when on such-and-such a day he said such-and-such?" — listing his words one by one. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***smiled*** and said: **"Stand back from me, 'Umar."** When I persisted, he said: ***"I was given a choice, and I chose. If I knew that by adding more than seventy times he would be forgiven, I would add to it."*** So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed over him, then left. Shortly afterwards two verses of Bara'ah were revealed: ***{And do not pray over any of them who has died, ever…}*** up to ***{…while they were defiantly disobedient}***. 'Umar said: Afterwards I marvelled at my boldness towards the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that day. And Allah and His Messenger know best.

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CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Yahya ibn Bukayr, from al-Layth ibn Sa'd, from 'Uqayl ibn Khalid, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from 'Ubaydullah ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Utbah, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas, from 'Umar ibn al-Khattab رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Funerals, Chapter: The dislike of praying over the hypocrites, Hadith No. 1366; also No. 1269, 4670–4672 and Muslim No. 2400.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:1366

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This Hadith shows ***the Prophet's ﷺ extraordinary mercy***. Though Ibn Ubayy had hurt him and his family so badly, he still wished to pray over him, and even said that if seeking forgiveness more than seventy times could save him, he would do it. 'Umar, on the other hand, was firm out of zeal for the religion — and revelation later agreed with 'Umar's view.

Note also 'Umar's attitude afterwards: ***"Afterwards I marvelled at my boldness towards the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that day."*** Though revelation supported his view, he was not proud; instead he regretted how he had pressed the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. This is ***refined courtesy***.

The Prophet's ﷺ conduct at this funeral was not weakness towards hypocrisy, but strength of character.

He had endured Ibn Ubayy's plots for years without seeking revenge, and even at the end he hoped for his forgiveness. Only when Allah forbade it did he stop. Mercy was his default; firmness came only by divine command.

Ibn Ubayy's son 'Abdullah offers another lesson. He was a devoted Companion; the sirah books report that he once offered to deal with his own father himself if the Prophet ﷺ commanded it, and was told instead to treat his father kindly. Faith did not cut his duty to his parent, even a parent who opposed Islam; it refined it.

The career of Ibn Ubayy is a sobering warning. Before the Hijrah, the people of Madinah were about to crown him as their king; the arrival of the Prophet ﷺ ended that ambition. Instead of accepting the blessing that had come to his city, he let envy and wounded pride shape the rest of his life, and he died outwardly a Muslim but inwardly opposed to the Messenger ﷺ.

His story shows how worldly status can become a barrier to guidance. Ibn Ubayy saw Islam through the lens of what he had lost, not what he could gain. Every one of us can fall into the same trap in smaller ways — resenting the truth because it came through someone else, or because it cost us a position we wanted.

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Yet the Prophet ﷺ never exposed him by name, never had him killed, and never denied him the rights of a Muslim in this world. Judgment of hearts belongs to Allah alone. The believer's duty is to guard his own heart, to deal with others by what appears from them, and to leave what is hidden to the One who knows all secrets.

The Qur'an describes the hypocrites with remarkable precision: "And when they meet those who believe, they say, 'We believe'; but when they are alone with their evil ones, they say, 'Indeed, we are with you'" (Al-Baqarah 2:14). Ibn Ubayy's life matched this description — present at the prayers and in the ranks, yet working against the believers whenever he could.

Scholars of the sirah note that his death marked a turning point. With its most prominent figure gone, the hypocrite movement in Madinah lost its centre. Those who remained either repented sincerely, as the surah invited them to do, or faded into silence. Within a short time, the community that the Prophet ﷺ would leave behind was largely free of organised hypocrisy.

The fear of hypocrisy was so alive among the Companions that, it is reported, 'Umar رضى الله عنه would ask Hudhayfah, the keeper of the Prophet's ﷺ secrets about the hypocrites, whether his own name was among them. If the best of this ummah feared it for themselves, how much more should we examine our own hearts.

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THE PROPHET'S ﷺ SHIRT

Ibn Ubayy's son, also named ***'Abdullah***, was ***a sincere Companion*** and very different from his father. He came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and asked for his shirt to shroud his father, and he gave it (Sahih al-Bukhari 1269). Jabir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ came after Ibn Ubayy had been placed in his grave, ordered him taken out, placed him on his knees, blew a little of his saliva on him, and clothed him in his shirt (Sahih al-Bukhari 1350).

Why did he give his shirt? Jabir mentions one reason: on the day of Badr, ***al-'Abbas***, the Prophet's uncle, was brought as a captive without clothing. The Companions looked for a shirt to fit his tall frame, and only ***the shirt of 'Abdullah ibn Ubayy*** fitted. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ clothed al-'Abbas with it (Sahih al-Bukhari 3008). Sufyan ibn 'Uyaynah said: he wished to ***repay that favour*** of Ibn Ubayy.

See the character of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: he ***never forgot a small kindness***, even from an enemy within, even after eight years. He also ***honoured the righteous son***, who bore no blame for his father's sins. Compassion and loyalty to a favour are part of prophetic character.

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THE PROHIBITION OF PRAYING OVER HYPOCRITES

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed over Ibn Ubayy on the basis of a verse that gave ***a choice***:

"Ask forgiveness for them, [O Muhammad], or do not ask forgiveness for them. If you should ask forgiveness for them seventy times - never will Allah forgive them" (At-Tawbah 9:80) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:80.

He understood this verse as ***a choice*** ("ask forgiveness or do not"), and chose to ask forgiveness out of mercy. But then a verse came down ***forbidding it clearly***:

"And do not pray [the funeral prayer, O Muhammad], over any of them who has died - ever - or stand at his grave. Indeed, they disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger and died while they were defiantly disobedient" (At-Tawbah 9:84) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:84.

After this verse came down, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***no longer prayed*** over any hypocrite whose hypocrisy was known. Scholars explain that this prohibition is specific to those ***whose disbelief is clear***. As for a Muslim, even one who committed major sins, the funeral prayer is still offered and forgiveness sought for him.

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THE END OF THE HYPOCRITES' ERA

The death of 'Abdullah ibn Ubayy marked ***the end of an era***. For nearly nine years, the hypocrites of Madinah had an influential leader, who had almost been crowned king of Madinah before the coming of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. With his death, the ***political power*** of the hypocrites collapsed.

SIRAH NOTE: IBN UBAYY AND THE CROWN THAT NEVER WAS

The sirah authors relate that before the Hijrah, the Aws and Khazraj had almost agreed ***to crown 'Abdullah ibn Ubayy king of Madinah***, and were preparing a crown for him. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ arrived and the people of Madinah embraced Islam in numbers, that dream was shattered. Many scholars see this ***resentment*** as the main root of his hypocrisy. Usamah ibn Zayd رضى الله عنهما narrates part of this story in Sahih al-Bukhari (No. 4566), while the details of the crown come from ***the books of sirah***.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapters on Abu Bakr's Hajj and Bara'ah; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah.

Hypocrisy did not vanish completely — Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman still kept the names of some of them (Book 24). But after 9 AH, the hypocrites no longer had the strength ***to divide*** the Muslims openly. Surah At-Tawbah had exposed them, Masjid ad-Dirar had been demolished, and their leader was gone.

The lesson: ***resentment and envy*** can prevent a person from accepting a clear truth. Ibn Ubayy saw the truth of Islam every day, but ***the loss of the power*** he dreamed of closed his heart. Beware of disappointment with others turning into a disease of the heart.

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THE DEATH OF THE NEGUS

The year 9 AH also saw the death of a very special king in Islamic history: ***the Negus Ashamah***, King of Abyssinia. It was he who protected the Muslims who emigrated to Abyssinia when they were persecuted in Makkah, and who received the letter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ (Book 17).

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***announced the death of the Negus on the day he died***, went out to the prayer place, lined up the Companions in rows, and said takbir four times (Sahih al-Bukhari 1245). Jabir رضى الله عنه narrates that he said: ***"Today a righteous man has died, so stand and pray over your brother Ashamah"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 3877).

This event holds two astonishing things. First, ***a miracle***: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ knew of the Negus's death on the same day, though Abyssinia lay thousands of kilometres across the sea. Second, ***the funeral prayer in absentia***: he prayed over someone whose body was not before him. Scholars derive the ruling on the absentee funeral prayer from this Hadith.

Compare two deaths in the same year: ***'Abdullah ibn Ubayy***, who lived in Madinah right beside the Messenger of Allah ﷺ yet died in hypocrisy; and ***the Negus***, who never saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ yet died as ***"a righteous man"*** and "brother" of the Muslims. Physical closeness does not guarantee faith; what decides is ***the heart***.

The Negus's story also reminds us of the many Muslims across the world whom we will never meet, yet who are our brothers and sisters in faith. The Prophet ﷺ called a king in distant Abyssinia "your brother".

Praying for believers we do not know, and caring about their joys and sorrows, is part of the brotherhood Islam builds beyond borders.

It is also worth remembering the Negus's justice when the first Muslim emigrants reached his land. Quraysh sent envoys with gifts to have them returned, but he refused to hand over people who had sought his protection until he had heard them himself. His fairness preserved the young Muslim community at its weakest moment, and Allah honoured him at the end of his life.

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THE DEATH OF UMM KULTHUM

In the same year, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ suffered another personal grief: the death of his daughter ***Umm Kulthum*** رضى الله عنها. Umm Kulthum was the wife of ***'Uthman ibn 'Affan*** رضى الله عنه. Before that, 'Uthman had married her sister ***Ruqayyah***, who died at the time of Badr (Book 9). Because he married two daughters of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, 'Uthman was called ***Dhun-Nurayn*** — the possessor of two lights.

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 1285

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عَامِرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا فُلَيْحُ بْنُ سُلَيْمَانَ، عَنْ هِلاَلِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ قَالَ شَهِدْنَا بِنْتًا لِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ وَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم جَالِسٌ عَلَى الْقَبْرِ ـ قَالَ فَرَأَيْتُ عَيْنَيْهِ تَدْمَعَانِ قَالَ ـ فَقَالَ هَلْ مِنْكُمْ رَجُلٌ لَمْ يُقَارِفِ اللَّيْلَةَ. فَقَالَ أَبُو طَلْحَةَ أَنَا. قَالَ فَانْزِلْ. قَالَ فَنَزَلَ فِي قَبْرِهَا.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه said: We attended (the burial of) ***a daughter of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was sitting by the grave. I saw ***his eyes shedding tears***. He asked: **"Is there among you a man who did not lie with his wife last night?"** Abu Talhah said: "I." He said: **"Go down."** So he went down into her grave.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad al-Musnadi, from Abu 'Amir al-'Aqadi, from Fulayh ibn Sulayman, from Hilal ibn 'Ali, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Funerals, Hadith No. 1285; also No. 1342.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:1285

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Ibn Hajar in Fath al-Bari explains that the daughter mentioned in this Hadith is ***Umm Kulthum***, since Ruqayyah died while the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was at Badr. The picture of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***sitting by the grave with tears flowing*** shows how deep his love was as a father.

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THE TEARS OF THE PROPHET ﷺ

The Prophet's ﷺ tears at Umm Kulthum's grave were not the only ones. Anas رضى الله عنه describes the last moments of his son ***Ibrahim***, who died as an infant in 10 AH. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ took him, kissed him and smelled him, and his tears flowed. 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn 'Awf asked: "You too (weep), O Messenger of Allah?" He said: ***"O Ibn 'Awf, it is mercy."*** Then he said: ***"The eyes shed tears and the heart grieves, but we say only what pleases our Lord. And we are indeed saddened by your parting, O Ibrahim"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 1303).

This Hadith teaches ***the etiquette of grief in Islam***. Weeping does not contradict patience; it is ***mercy*** that Allah places in the heart. What is forbidden is wailing, tearing one's clothes, and words that show displeasure with Allah's decree.

The year 9 AH was a year of mingled victory and sorrow: victory at Tabuk, delegations coming in numbers, a purified Hajj — but also the loss of a daughter. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ met both with ***gratitude and patience***. This is the balance of a believer's life.

Tears of this kind are not a sign of weak faith but of a living heart. The Prophet ﷺ himself wept at the death of his son Ibrahim and said that the eyes shed tears and the heart grieves, yet we say only what pleases our Lord. Grief and acceptance can live together in the same heart.

Within a few years the Prophet ﷺ had buried Zaynab, Ruqayyah and now Umm Kulthum. Of all his children, only Fatimah would outlive him. These repeated losses show that the most beloved of Allah's creation was not spared the trials of family life; he bore them with patience, and so became a model for every grieving parent.

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THE CONTENTS OF THE BARA'AH PROCLAMATION

The proclamation at Mina on the Day of Sacrifice in 9 AH can be summarised as follows:

ITEM	CONTENT AND EVIDENCE
Revoking covenants	Covenants with treaty-breaking polytheists ended (9:1)
Period of notice	Four months to move freely (9:2)
Faithful covenants	Honoured until their term (9:4)
The door of repentance	"If you repent, that is best" (9:3)
Protection	Those seeking protection are protected (9:6)
Hajj	No polytheist to perform Hajj after this year (Bukhari 4655)
Tawaf	No naked tawaf (Bukhari 4655)
Al-Masjid al-Haram	Not to be approached by polytheists after this year (9:28)

This table shows that the proclamation of Bara'ah was ***a complete policy***: firm with traitors, just to the faithful, opening the door of repentance, protecting those seeking truth, and purifying worship. It was not merely a declaration of war.

Taken together, these points form a complete charter for the end of the pagan order in Arabia: no more shirk at the House of Allah, no more nakedness in worship, honour for covenants kept, and a clear period of grace for those who wished to reconsider. Every clause was announced openly, so no tribe could later claim it had not been told.

This openness is itself a principle of Islamic conduct. Treaties were not cancelled secretly or by surprise; the other side was given notice and time. The Qur'an elsewhere commands that if a breach is feared, the covenant should be returned to them "on equal terms" (Al-Anfal 8:58), so that both sides know where they stand.

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SOURCES OF THE STORY

The story of Abu Bakr's Hajj and the proclamation of Bara'ah is narrated in the following sources:

EVENT	SOURCE AND GRADE
Abu Bakr leads the Hajj	Sahih al-Bukhari 1622 — sahih
Proclamation at Mina; 'Ali follows	Sahih al-Bukhari 4655, 369 — sahih
Day of the Greater Hajj	Sahih al-Bukhari 3177 — sahih
Last surah revealed	Sahih al-Bukhari 4654 — sahih
Naked tawaf	Sahih Muslim 3028 — sahih
"A man of my family"	Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3091 — hasan gharib
"Leader or messenger?"	Ibn Ishaq — sirah
No basmalah	Tirmidhi 3086 — weak; scholars' views
Al-Fadihah	Sahih al-Bukhari 4882 — sahih
Death of Ibn Ubayy	Sahih al-Bukhari 1366, 1269, 1350 — sahih
Death of Umm Kulthum	Sahih al-Bukhari 1285 — sahih
Talbiyah and al-Hums	Sahih Muslim 1185; Sahih al-Bukhari 1549, 1664, 1665 — sahih
Ibn al-Lutbiyyah	Sahih al-Bukhari 7174 — sahih
Death of the Negus	Sahih al-Bukhari 1245, 3877 — sahih

The main events in this book are supported by ***sahih Hadith*** and ***verses of the Qur'an***, while details such as the size of Abu Bakr's company and his exchange with 'Ali come from the books of sirah.

Such careful sourcing is part of the trust we owe to the sirah. The life of the Prophet ﷺ is not a collection of legends but a history transmitted with chains of narrators, examined by scholars generation after generation. Distinguishing what is sahih from what is weak protects the honour of the Prophet ﷺ and the trust of the reader.

Readers who wish to go deeper can turn to the commentaries on Surah At-Tawbah in Tafsir Ibn Kathir and Tafsir at-Tabari, and to the chapters on this Hajj in Fath al-Bari, where the reports are gathered and compared in detail.

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A MAP OF SURAH AT-TAWBAH

The story of Abu Bakr's Hajj centres on the opening of Surah At-Tawbah. Yet this surah is long — 129 verses — and most of it was revealed around the Expedition of Tabuk and afterwards. To see where the verses of Bara'ah stand, the table below maps the contents of the whole surah by theme and shows where each part is discussed in this series.

VERSES	THEME	DISCUSSED IN
9:1–16	The proclamation of Bara'ah; the four months; covenants honoured; protection for whoever wishes to hear	Series 27 (chapters 4–14)
9:17–24	Mosques are for the believers; love of Allah above family and wealth	Series 27 (chapter 15)
9:25–27	The Day of Hunayn: great numbers are of no avail without the help of Allah	Series 22
9:28	The polytheists shall no longer approach al-Masjid al-Haram; "Allah will enrich you"	Series 27 (chapters 16, 35)
9:29–35	The People of the Book, jizyah, and the warning against hoarding gold and silver	Series 24
9:36–37	Twelve months; four sacred months; the prohibition of nasi'	Series 27 (chapter 17)
9:38–72	The call to Tabuk; the hypocrites' excuses; the traits of hypocrites and believers	Series 24
9:73–99	The hypocrites and the Bedouins; the prohibition of praying over hypocrites (9:84)	Series 24, 25; Series 27 (chapter 26)
9:100–106	The foremost (as-sabiqun al-awwalun); those who confessed their sins	Series 25
9:107–110	Masjid ad-Dirar	Series 25
9:111–116	The bargain with Allah; the prohibition of seeking forgiveness for polytheists (9:113)	This chapter
9:117–119	The repentance of the three Companions who stayed behind	Series 25
9:120–127	The reward for every step in the path of Allah; gaining understanding of the religion (9:122)	This chapter
9:128–129	The qualities of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: your hardship grieves him, and he is most kind to the believers	This chapter

Two stories in Sahih al-Bukhari relate to the last part of this surah. First, verse 9:113 — "It is not for the Prophet and those who believe to seek forgiveness for the polytheists" — is connected with the story of Abu Talib, the uncle of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, at the time of his death (Sahih al-Bukhari 4675).

Second, the last two verses of the surah, 9:128–129, were found by Zayd ibn Thabit رضى الله عنه with Abu

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Khuzaymah al-Ansari when the Qur'an was being compiled in the time of Abu Bakr (Sahih al-Bukhari 4679).

Verse 9:122 balances the whole spirit of jihad in this surah: "And it is not for the believers to go forth all together. Why should not a party from every group of them go forth, so that those who remain may gain understanding of the religion?" — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:122. This firm surah also affirms the value of knowledge.

Reference: Sahih al-Bukhari 4675; Sahih al-Bukhari 4679; Surah At-Tawbah (Quran.com).

LESSON

Surah At-Tawbah opens with the ending of covenants and closes with the tenderness of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ towards the believers (9:128). Its firmness against treachery goes hand in hand with mercy towards whoever wishes to return. We must not read one part and forget the rest.

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THE PEOPLE OF THE HAJJ OF 9 AH

This story involves many people — those who led, those who called out, those who narrated, and those who died in the same year. This table gathers them with their tribes and sources.

PERSON	TRIBE / RELATIONSHIP	ROLE IN THE STORY	SOURCE
Abu Bakr as-Siddiq	Quraysh, Banu Taym	Leader of the pilgrims in 9 AH	Sahih al-Bukhari 1622, 4655
‘Ali ibn Abi Talib	Quraysh, Banu Hashim; cousin and son-in-law of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ	Recited Bara’ah at Mina	Sahih al-Bukhari 4655; Jami‘ at-Tirmidhi 3091
Abu Hurayrah	Daws (Azd)	One of the announcers at Mina; narrator of the story	Sahih al-Bukhari 369, 3177, 4655
Humayd ibn ‘Abd ar-Rahman	Quraysh, Banu Zuhrah; son of ‘Abd ar-Rahman ibn ‘Awf	Tabi‘i; narrated from Abu Hurayrah	Sahih al-Bukhari 4655
Al-Bara’ ibn ‘Azib	Ansar, Aws (Banu Harithah)	Narrated that Bara’ah was the last surah revealed	Sahih al-Bukhari 4654
Ibn ‘Abbas	Quraysh, Banu Hashim; cousin of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ	Narrated the naked tawaf and the talbiyah of shirk	Sahih Muslim 3028, 1185
Jubayr ibn Mut‘im	Quraysh, Banu Nawfal	Saw the Prophet ﷺ standing at ‘Arafah before prophethood	Sahih al-Bukhari 1664
‘Abdullah ibn Ubayy	Ansar, Khazraj (Banu ‘Awf ibn al-Khazraj)	Leader of the hypocrites; died in 9 AH	Sahih al-Bukhari 1366, 1269
‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abdillah ibn Ubayy	Khazraj; son of Ibn Ubayy	A sincere Companion; asked for the Prophet’s ﷺ shirt	Sahih al-Bukhari 1269
‘Umar ibn al-Khattab	Quraysh, Banu ‘Adi	Objected when the Prophet ﷺ was about to pray over Ibn Ubayy	Sahih al-Bukhari 1366
The Negus (Ashamah)	King of Abyssinia	Died; the funeral prayer was offered in absentia	Sahih al-Bukhari 1245, 3877
Umm Kulthum bint Muhammad	Daughter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ; wife of ‘Uthman	Died in 9 AH	Sahih al-Bukhari 1285
‘Uthman ibn ‘Affan	Quraysh, Banu Umayyah	Husband of Ruqayyah, then of Umm Kulthum; called Dhun-Nurayn	Books of sirah
Ibn al-Lutbiyyah	Azd	The zakat collector rebuked for accepting gifts	Sahih al-Bukhari 7174

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HADITH NOTE: "NONE CONVEYS ON MY BEHALF EXCEPT ME OR 'ALI"

Besides the narration of Anas in Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3091 (chapter 5), at-Tirmidhi also narrates from Hubshi ibn Junadah that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "'Ali is from me and I am from 'Ali, and none conveys on my behalf except myself or 'Ali" (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3719).

At-Tirmidhi graded it hasan sahih gharib, and al-Albani graded it hasan with the support of other narrations. Its chain includes Sharik al-Qadi, whose memory was weak, and Abu Ishaq, who is known as a mudallis; so its strength depends on the supporting narrations. The scholars connect it with the event of Bara'ah: the ending of a covenant is delivered by the leader himself or by his closest relative.

Reference: Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3719; Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3091; Ibn Hajar, al-Isabah fi Tamyiz as-Sahabah.

LESSON

In a single year we see a trustworthy leader, earnest callers, careful narrators, and the passing of loved ones. The sirah is not the story of one figure alone, but of a whole community in which every member has a role.

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RULINGS FROM ABU BAKR'S HAJJ AND BARA'AH

The Hajj of 9 AH and the verses of Bara'ah are the source of many rulings, both in the rites of Hajj and in relations with non-Muslims. This table summarises them, together with the chapters that discuss them.

RULING	EVIDENCE	CHAPTER
Covering the 'awrah during tawaf; naked tawaf abolished	Sahih al-Bukhari 369; Sahih Muslim 3028; Al-A'raf 7:31	6, 9
Tawaf is like prayer, but speaking good words is allowed	Jami' at-Tirmidhi 960	This chapter
The ending of a covenant must be announced clearly, not by surprise	At-Tawbah 9:1–3; Al-Anfal 8:58; Sahih al-Bukhari 3177	4, 6, 12
A covenant with those who keep faith must be fulfilled until its term ends	At-Tawbah 9:4, 9:7	12
It is forbidden to kill a non-Muslim who has a covenant (mu'ahad)	Sahih al-Bukhari 3166	This chapter
Whoever seeks protection in order to hear about Islam must be protected	At-Tawbah 9:6	14
The Day of the Greater Hajj is the Day of Sacrifice (10 Dhul-Hijjah)	Sahih al-Bukhari 3177	7
The talbiyah in words of tawhid	Sahih al-Bukhari 1549; Sahih Muslim 1185	10
All pilgrims stand at 'Arafah; no privilege of lineage	Al-Baqarah 2:199; Sahih al-Bukhari 1664, 1665	11
Appointing a leader of the pilgrims (amir al-hajj)	Sahih al-Bukhari 1622	3
Not praying the funeral prayer over a manifest hypocrite	At-Tawbah 9:84; Sahih al-Bukhari 1366	26
The funeral prayer in absentia	Sahih al-Bukhari 1245	28

'Abdullah ibn 'Amr رضى الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever kills a mu'ahad (a non-Muslim who has a covenant) will not smell the fragrance of Paradise, though its fragrance can be smelt from a distance of forty years' travel" (Sahih al-Bukhari 3166). This hadith makes clear that the firmness of Bara'ah was only against those who betrayed their covenants, not against every non-Muslim.

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: "Tawaf around the House is like prayer, except that you are allowed to speak during it. So whoever speaks, let him speak only what is good" (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 960). Al-Albani graded it sahih; some hadith scholars hold that it is more likely the words of Ibn 'Abbas himself (mawquf). From it the scholars derive the rulings of purity and of covering the 'awrah during tawaf.

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FIQH NOTE: NON-MUSLIMS AND AL-MASJID AL-HARAM (AT-TAWBAH 9:28)

The scholars differ on the meaning of "let them not approach al-Masjid al-Haram". In the Shafi'i and Hanbali schools, non-Muslims are not permitted to enter the Haram of Makkah. In the Hanafi school, they are barred from Hajj and 'Umrah, but may enter for a need with permission. In the Maliki school, the prohibition covers all mosques except for a need.

The scholars also differ on covering the 'awrah during tawaf: the majority make it a condition for the validity of tawaf, while the Hanafi school regards it as an obligation that, if omitted, is made up with a sacrifice (dam). This summary is drawn from Tafsir al-Qurtubi and Tafsir Ibn Kathir; for practical rulings, refer to the fiqh books of your own school.

Reference: Sahih al-Bukhari 3166; Jami' at-Tirmidhi 960; Sahih al-Bukhari 369; al-Qurtubi, al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, At-Tawbah 9:28.

LESSON

These rulings show two faces of Islamic justice: in worship, all people are equal before Allah; in dealings with others, promises must be kept and lives under protection must be preserved. Firmness against traitors never makes injustice against the faithful lawful.

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THE PLACES IN THIS STORY

The story of Abu Bakr's Hajj moves from Madinah to Makkah, and then to the sites of the rites around it. The table below lists the main places and what happened there. Locations that are uncertain are marked as such.

PLACE	LOCATION	EVENT	SOURCE
Madinah	Hijaz	The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stayed in Madinah; Abu Bakr and ʻAli set out from here	Sahih al-Bukhari 1622
Dhul-Hulayfah	The miqat of the people of Madinah, south of Madinah	Where the pilgrims from Madinah entered ihram	Sahih al-Bukhari 1524
Al-ʻArj	On the Madinah–Makkah road; exact location uncertain	ʻAli caught up with Abu Bakr (according to Ibn Ishaq)	Books of sirah
Dajnan	Near Makkah; exact location uncertain	Another report of where ʻAli caught up	Books of sirah
Al-Masjid al-Haram	Makkah	The place of tawaf; naked tawaf abolished	Sahih al-Bukhari 369
ʻArafah	About 20 km south-east of Makkah; outside the Haram	All pilgrims stood; the pride of the Hums abolished	Sahih al-Bukhari 1665
Muzdalifah	Between ʻArafah and Mina	The place to spend the night after the standing	Al-Baqarah 2:198
Mina	About 8 km east of Makkah	The proclamation of Bara'ah on the Day of Sacrifice	Sahih al-Bukhari 4655
Abyssinia	East Africa (present-day Ethiopia)	The Negus died	Sahih al-Bukhari 1245

> **SIRAH NOTE: AL-ʻARJ OR DAJNAN?**
>
> Ibn Ishaq mentions that ʻAli caught up with Abu Bakr at al-ʻArj, while another report mentions Dajnan. Both are mentioned in the books of sirah and tafsir, and no sahih narration fixes the place with certainty. What is established in Sahih al-Bukhari is that ʻAli caught up and made the proclamation together with the announcers at Mina on the Day of Sacrifice.

Reference: Wikipedia, "Mina, Saudi Arabia"; Wikipedia, "Mount Arafat"; Sahih al-Bukhari 1524 (miqat); Ibn Hisham, al-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah.

LESSON

The same places — Mina, Muzdalifah, ʻArafah — are still visited by millions of pilgrims every year. Whenever we are at Mina, let us remember that here tawhid was proclaimed aloud, and here the Hajj was returned to Allah alone.

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TIMELINE OF THE YEAR 9 AH

This table arranges the events in this eBook in order of time, from the return from Tabuk to the Farewell Pilgrimage. The months are taken from the books of sirah and are approximate.

TIME	EVENT	SOURCE
Rajab 9 AH	The Negus died; the Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed over him in absentia	Sahih al-Bukhari 1245; date: books of sirah
Rajab–Ramadan 9 AH	The Expedition of Tabuk and the return to Madinah	Series 24
9 AH	Umm Kulthum, daughter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, died	Sahih al-Bukhari 1285; date: books of sirah
Shawwal–Dhul-Qa'dah 9 AH	Delegations from all over Arabia arrived in Madinah	Series 26
Dhul-Qa'dah 9 AH	'Abdullah ibn Ubayy died; the prohibition of praying over hypocrites was revealed	Sahih al-Bukhari 1366; At-Tawbah 9:84
Dhul-Qa'dah 9 AH	Abu Bakr set out as leader of the pilgrims	Sahih al-Bukhari 1622; books of sirah
Dhul-Qa'dah–Dhul-Hijjah 9 AH	The verses of Bara'ah were revealed; 'Ali was sent to follow	Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3091; books of sirah
9 Dhul-Hijjah 9 AH	The standing at 'Arafah	Books of sirah
10 Dhul-Hijjah 9 AH	The proclamation at Mina: no polytheist shall perform Hajj, no naked tawaf	Sahih al-Bukhari 4655, 3177
Dhul-Hijjah 9 AH – Rabi' al-Akhir 10 AH	The four-month period for the polytheists	At-Tawbah 9:2; Tafsir Ibn Kathir
10 AH	Ibrahim, son of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, died (date according to the books of sirah)	Sahih al-Bukhari 1303
Dhul-Hijjah 10 AH	The Farewell Pilgrimage; not a single polytheist performed Hajj	Sahih al-Bukhari 3177; Series 28

LESSON

Within a single year, the state of the Hajj changed completely. Great change can come quickly once its foundation has been built patiently over many years.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT ABU BAKR'S HAJJ AND BARA'AH

1. WHO LED THE HAJJ OF 9 AH?

Abu Bakr as-Siddiq رضى الله عنه, whom the Messenger of Allah ﷺ appointed as leader of the pilgrims (Sahih al-Bukhari 1622; chapter 3).

2. WHY DID THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ NOT PERFORM HAJJ THAT YEAR?

The scholars mention several reasons, among them that the polytheists were still performing Hajj and making tawaf naked. These reasons are the ijtihad of scholars and sirah reports, not an explicit text (chapter 2).

3. WHAT IS "BARA'AH"?

The proclamation ending the covenants with the polytheists who had betrayed their pledges, with a warning period of four months (At-Tawbah 9:1–2; chapter 4).

4. WHY WAS 'ALI SENT TO RECITE IT?

In Arab custom, a covenant was ended by the leader himself or by his closest relative. 'Ali was the cousin and son-in-law of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3091, 3719; chapters 5 and 34).

5. WHAT WERE THE FOUR THINGS ANNOUNCED AT MINA?

No polytheist would perform Hajj after that year; no one would make tawaf naked; existing covenants would be fulfilled until their term; and those without a covenant were given four months (Sahih al-Bukhari 4655, 3177; chapters 6 and 31).

6. WHEN IS THE DAY OF THE GREATER HAJJ?

The Day of Sacrifice, that is, 10 Dhul-Hijjah (Sahih al-Bukhari 3177; chapter 7).

7. WHY DID THE PEOPLE OF THE JAHILIYYAH MAKE TAWAF NAKED?

Some of them refused to make tawaf in clothes in which they had sinned, unless the clothes were borrowed from Quraysh. Allah revealed Al-A'raf 7:31 (Sahih Muslim 3028; chapter 9).

8. IS VERSE 9:5 A COMMAND TO FIGHT ALL NON-MUSLIMS?

No. The verse is specific to the polytheists who betrayed their covenants, after the warning period. Verses 9:4, 9:6 and 9:7 exempt those who kept faith and those who sought protection, and killing a mu'ahad is forbidden (Sahih al-Bukhari 3166; chapters 13 and 35).

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9. MAY NON-MUSLIMS ENTER AL-MASJID AL-HARAM?

The scholars differ on the meaning of At-Tawbah 9:28: the Shafi'i and Hanbali schools bar them from the Haram, the Hanafi school bars only Hajj and 'Umrah, and the Maliki school extends the prohibition to all mosques (chapter 35).

10. WHY DOES SURAH AT-TAWBAH HAVE NO BASMALAH?

The scholars give several explanations. The narration of 'Uthman in Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3086 is graded weak; others hold that the basmalah is a sign of mercy, while this surah opens with the ending of covenants (chapter 19).

11. WHO DIED IN THE YEAR 9 AH?

Among them were the Negus, 'Abdullah ibn Ubayy and Umm Kulthum, the daughter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ (chapters 24–29).

12. WHAT WAS THE EFFECT OF ABU BAKR'S HAJJ ON THE FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE?

The following year, not a single polytheist performed Hajj, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was able to teach the rites to more than a hundred thousand people in an atmosphere of pure tawhid (Sahih al-Bukhari 3177; chapter 21).

LESSON

These questions remind us that firm verses must be understood together with their context, the reasons for their revelation, and the verses around them. That is how the Qur'an was understood by the Companions.

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

Abu Bakr's Hajj and the proclamation of Bara'ah marked ***the final purification*** of the Sacred Land from shirk — the culmination of a struggle that began with the Prophet Ibrahim عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ building the Ka'bah and praying: "Make this city secure, and keep me and my sons away from worshipping idols" (Ibrahim 14:35).

LESSON	FROM THIS BOOK
Purify before perfecting	Abu Bakr's Hajj before the Farewell Hajj
Harmonious leadership	Abu Bakr leads, 'Ali proclaims
Faithful to covenants	The faithful have their terms honoured
Reading verses in context	At-Tawbah 9:5–7
Giving a chance to hear	"Protect him so that he may hear"
Provision is with Allah	"Allah will enrich you"
Repaying kindness	The shirt for Ibn Ubayy
Patience in grief	Tears at Umm Kulthum's grave

BARA'AH IN OUR LIVES

Every believer needs to make his own "Bara'ah": ***breaking with shirk and sin***, purifying his worship of practices not from the Sunnah, and making his heart a "Sacred Land" for Allah alone. But like the true Bara'ah, it is done ***justly, courteously and with the door of repentance open*** — not with hatred of people.

In sha Allah, the series **The Prophet's Sirah** will continue with ***Book 28 — The Farewell Pilgrimage***: the only Hajj of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ after the Hijrah, with more than a hundred thousand Companions, the rites of Hajj taught in person, and the day of 'Arafah when the verse came down: "This day I have perfected for you your religion". And Allah knows best.

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PART SEVEN

The Farewell Pilgrimage

The Prophet's Sirah — Series 28

The Only Hajj of the Prophet ﷺ, After the Hijrah, From Madinah to 'Arafah and Back, According to the Qur'an and Authentic Hadith

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THE FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE

Book 27 told how the Hajj was purified in 9 AH: Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه led the pilgrims, 'Ali رضى الله عنه proclaimed Bara'ah at Mina, and it was announced that after that year ***no polytheist could perform Hajj, and no one could circle the House naked***. The road to the House of Allah was now clear.

This Book 28 tells what happened a year later: ***the Farewell Pilgrimage*** in 10 AH — ***the only Hajj*** the Messenger of Allah ﷺ performed after the Hijrah. We will follow him step by step: leaving Madinah, entering ihram at Dhul-Hulayfah, tawaf and sa'i in Makkah, standing at 'Arafah, the night at Muzdalifah, stoning, sacrifice and shaving at Mina, up to the farewell tawaf and the journey home.

The main source of this book is ***the Hadith of Jabir ibn 'Abdullah*** رضى الله عنهما in Sahih Muslim — the longest and most complete hadith describing the Hajj of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ (Sahih Muslim 1218).

Scholars mention that more than a hundred rulings of fiqh have been derived from this hadith alone. His sermons during this Hajj will be explained in more detail in ***Book 29***.

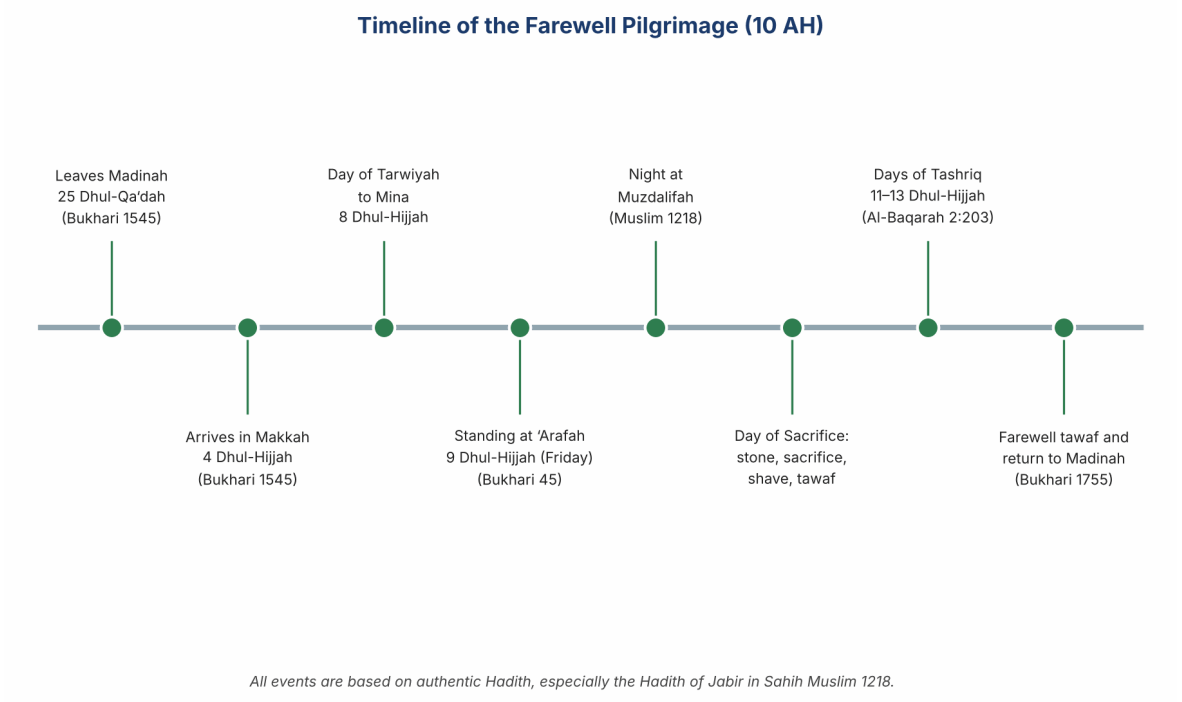

Figure 1: Timeline of the Farewell Pilgrimage.

Note: The Qur'anic translation in this eBook is Sahih International. The grade of every Hadith is stated in its box. Information from the books of sirah — such as estimates of the number of pilgrims and the other names of this Hajj — is placed in brown "Sirah Note" boxes, since most of it is narrated without a connected chain or with a debated one.

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THE ANNOUNCEMENT: THE PROPHET ﷺ WILL PERFORM HAJJ

The most complete account of the Farewell Pilgrimage reaches us through a touching meeting. Years after the death of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, a young man named ***Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn al-Husayn*** (Muhammad al-Baqir), a great-grandson of the Prophet ﷺ, came to the elderly and blind Companion ***Jabir ibn 'Abdullah*** رضى الله عنهما. Jabir placed his hand on the young man's chest and said: "Welcome, my nephew. Ask whatever you wish."

The young man asked about the Hajj of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Jabir indicated nine with his fingers, then said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stayed (in Madinah) for nine years without performing Hajj. Then in the tenth year it was announced to the people that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would perform Hajj."*** (Sahih Muslim 1218)

The announcement spread throughout Arabia. Jabir continued: ***"A great many people came to Madinah, all of them wishing to follow the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and do as he did."*** They did not come merely to perform Hajj, but to ***see for themselves how the Messenger of Allah ﷺ performed it***.

This is the spirit every Muslim should have: worship is not invented by ourselves, but ***follows the example of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ***. The Companions travelled great distances simply to learn the Sunnah from its source. Today we have the books of hadith that preserve that Sunnah — our task is to read them and act upon them.

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THE NAMES OF THIS HAJJ

This Hajj is known by several names. The most famous is ***Hajjat al-Wada' (the Farewell Pilgrimage)***, because in it the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was, as it were, bidding farewell to his Ummah. Ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما said: ***"We used to talk about the Farewell Pilgrimage while the Prophet ﷺ was among us, and we did not know what the Farewell Pilgrimage meant"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4402). Its meaning was understood only after he passed away a few months later.

> **SIRAH NOTE: OTHER NAMES OF THIS HAJJ**
>
> Scholars mention other names for this Hajj. Among them is ***Hajjat al-Islam***, since it was the only obligatory Hajj the Messenger of Allah ﷺ performed after Hajj was made obligatory; ***Hajjat al-Balagh*** (the Hajj of Conveying), since he asked the people: "Have I not conveyed?"; and ***Hajjat at-Tamam*** (the Hajj of Completion), because of the revelation of the verse of the perfection of the religion.
>
> These names do not contradict one another; each highlights one aspect of this great Hajj. They are mentioned in the books of sirah and hadith commentary, not in a specific text.
>
> **REFERENCES:**
> Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Farewell Pilgrimage; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah; Ibn al-Qayyim, Zad al-Ma'ad.

When was Hajj made obligatory? Scholars differ: some say in 6 AH, others in 9 AH. What is certain is that the obligation was established by the words of Allah:

"And [due] to Allah from the people is a pilgrimage to the House - for whoever is able to find thereto a way" (Ali 'Imran 3:97) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 3:97.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ performed several 'umrahs after the Hijrah — the 'Umrah of Fulfilment (Book 18) and the 'umrah from al-Ji'ranah (Book 23) — but he performed only ***one Hajj***. Every step he took in it therefore became ***the primary reference*** for Muslims throughout the ages.

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SETTING OUT FROM MADINAH

Ibn ʻAbbas رضى الله عنهما relates that the Prophet ﷺ left Madinah with his Companions ***after combing and oiling his hair and putting on the two garments of ihram (izar and rida')***. He did not forbid any kind of garment except those dyed with saffron. All that took place ***five days before the end of Dhul-Qa'dah*** — around 25 Dhul-Qa'dah, 10 AH (Sahih al-Bukhari 1545).

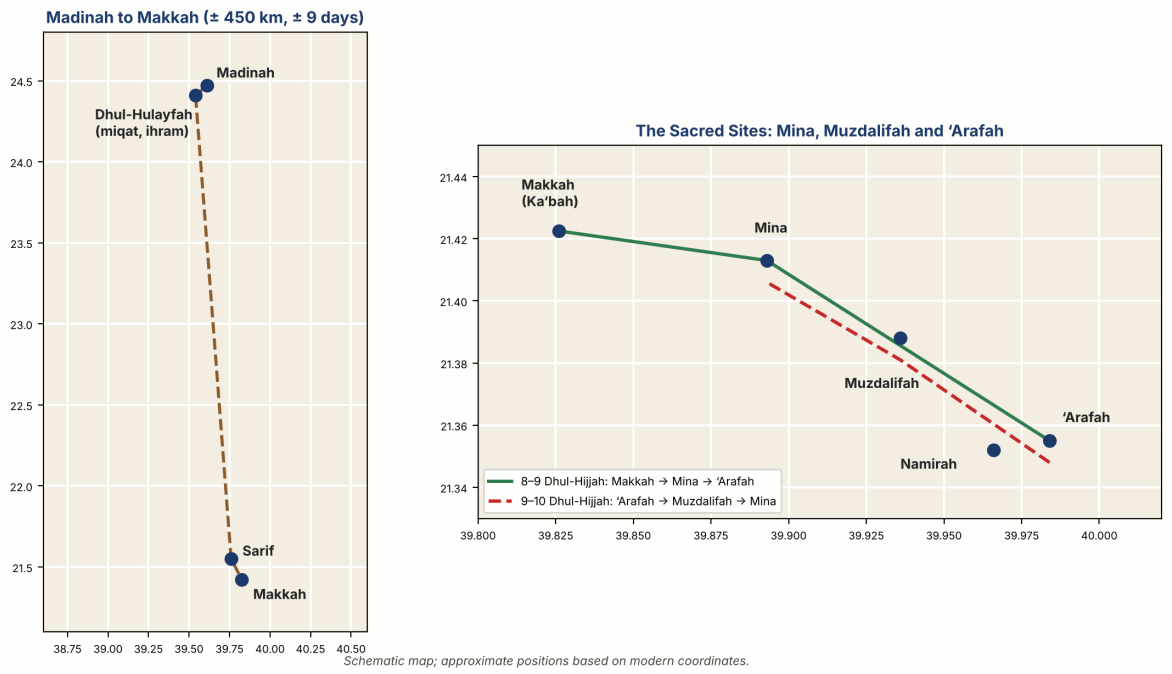

Figure 2: Schematic map of the Farewell Pilgrimage journey.

The journey of about 450 kilometres from Madinah to Makkah took ***around nine days***, since he arrived in Makkah on 4 Dhul-Hijjah. With him were ***all his wives***, his daughter Fatimah, and thousands of Companions — men, women, the elderly and children.

Notice his preparation: hair combed and oiled, garments ready. Hajj is not a dishevelled, disorganised journey; it begins with ***cleanliness, neatness and planning***. A Muslim setting out for Hajj today likewise needs to be prepared in knowledge, health, finances and provisions.

He also ***did not make things hard for people***: every kind of garment was allowed except those scented with saffron. From the very first step, the Farewell Pilgrimage displays the character of the Shari'ah — clear in its prohibitions, broad in its permissions.

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AT DHUL-HULAYFAH

The caravan stopped at ***Dhul-Hulayfah***, the miqat of the people of Madinah, about ten kilometres from the city. Here an event took place that shows the ease of the Shari'ah. Jabir relates: ***"Asma' bint 'Umays gave birth to Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr."*** She sent to ask the Messenger of Allah ﷺ what she should do. He said: ***"Take a bath, bind yourself with a cloth, and enter ihram."*** (Sahih Muslim 1218)

A woman who had just given birth was not sent home. She could ***continue her Hajj*** and perform all the rites except tawaf until she was pure. Asma' was the wife of Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه, and the child born, Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, would later become a well-known figure in Islamic history.

Jabir continued: ***"Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed in the mosque (of Dhul-Hulayfah), then mounted al-Qaswa'. When his camel stood up with him at al-Baida', I looked as far as my eyes could see in front of me: riders and people on foot; on my right the same, on my left the same, and behind me the same."*** (Sahih Muslim 1218)

At Dhul-Hulayfah he also ***marked the sacrificial camels*** (taqlid and ish'ar) so it would be known they were for the House. He brought his sacrificial animals himself from Madinah — something that would affect the type of Hajj he performed, as we will see in Chapter 13.

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THE TALBIYAH OF TAWHID

On his camel at al-Baida', the Messenger of Allah ﷺ began the talbiyah. Jabir says: ***"He raised his voice with tawhid."*** (Sahih Muslim 1218) The wording of his talbiyah is narrated by Ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 1549

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ يُوسُفَ، أَخْبَرَنَا مَالِكٌ، عَنْ نَافِعٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ ـ رضى الله عنهما ـ أَنَّ تَلْبِيَةَ، رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم لَبَّيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ لَبَّيْكَ، لَبَّيْكَ لاَ شَرِيكَ لَكَ لَبَّيْكَ، إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ وَالنِّعْمَةَ لَكَ وَالْمُلْكَ، لاَ شَرِيكَ لَكَ.

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما narrated that the talbiyah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was: ***"Labbayk Allahumma labbayk, labbayk la sharika laka labbayk, innal-hamda wan-ni'mata laka wal-mulk, la sharika laka"*** — "Here I am, O Allah, here I am. Here I am, You have no partner, here I am. Indeed all praise, all blessings and all sovereignty belong to You. ***You have no partner.***"

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Abdullah ibn Yusuf at-Tinnisi, from Imam Malik ibn Anas, from Nafi', the freedman of Ibn 'Umar, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Hajj, Chapter: The Talbiyah, Hadith No. 1549; also Muslim No. 1184.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:1549

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Compare this talbiyah with the pagan talbiyah we saw in Book 27: "Except a partner You have, whom You own." The talbiyah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ repeats ***"You have no partner" twice***, as if firmly shutting the door of shirk that had once been opened in the same place.

Jabir also mentions that people recited the talbiyah with additional phrases they used, and ***the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not reject any of it***, but he kept to his own talbiyah (Sahih Muslim 1218). This shows the breadth of the Shari'ah regarding good words of remembrance, while keeping the Sunnah wording as the best.

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The talbiyah is ***an answer to a call***. Thousands of years earlier, Allah commanded the Prophet Ibrahim عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: "And proclaim to the people the Hajj" (Al-Hajj 22:27). Every pilgrim who says "Labbayk" is as if saying: ***"Here I am, O Allah, answering Your call."***

The talbiyah is also a declaration of identity. As the pilgrims raised their voices, the valleys and hills of the Hijaz echoed with words of tawhid, where only a few years earlier the same places had echoed with the names of idols. The sound itself was a sign of how much had changed through the mission of the Prophet ﷺ.

Scholars recommend that men raise their voices with the talbiyah, while women say it so that those near them hear. It is repeated constantly from entering ihram until the stoning of Jamrat al-'Aqabah on the Day of Sacrifice — when climbing, descending, meeting other travellers and after the prayers.

For those who will never stand in ihram, the meaning of the talbiyah can still live in the heart: every time we answer the call to prayer, every time we leave something forbidden for Allah's sake, we are saying in our own way, "Here I am, O Allah."

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AN ACCEPTED HAJJ

What is promised to those who answer that call properly? Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrates:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 1521

حَدَّثَنَا آدَمُ، حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، حَدَّثَنَا سَيَّارٌ أَبُو الْحَكَمِ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ أَبَا حَازِمٍ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَقُولُ مَنْ حَجَّ لِلَّهِ فَلَمْ يَرْفُثْ وَلَمْ يَفْسُقْ رَجَعَ كَيَوْمِ وَلَدَتْهُ أُمُّهُ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه said: I heard the Prophet ﷺ say: ***"Whoever performs Hajj for Allah, and does not engage in rafath (sexual talk or conduct) nor commit sin, returns (free of sins) as on the day his mother gave birth to him."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Adam ibn Abi Iyas, from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from Sayyar Abu al-Hakam, from Abu Hazim al-Ashja'i, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Hajj, Chapter: The Virtue of an Accepted Hajj, Hadith No. 1521; also No. 1819, 1820 and Muslim No. 1350.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:1521

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This hadith mentions two conditions: ***no rafath*** (marital relations and talk leading to it while in ihram) and ***no fusuq*** (sin). Both are also mentioned in the Qur'an:

"there is [to be for him] no sexual relations and no disobedience and no disputing during Hajj" (Al-Baqarah 2:197) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 2:197.

The verse adds one more: ***no disputing***. Imagine hundreds of thousands of tired people, crowded together in the heat — that is where character is tested. An accepted Hajj is not merely valid in its pillars, but ***clean in its conduct***.

The reward is immense: returning ***"as on the day his mother gave birth to him"***, free of sin. In another hadith, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said that an accepted Hajj has no reward but Paradise (Sahih al-Bukhari 1773). This is the gift the pilgrims of the Farewell Pilgrimage brought home — and every pilgrim who follows in their footsteps.

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A SEA OF PEOPLE

Jabir's words — "as far as my eyes could see" — give a sense of the size of the caravan. In front, to the right, to the left and behind: ***a sea of people*** from every corner of Arabia. Only ten years earlier, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had left Makkah in secret with a single companion (Book 7). Now he returned with tens of thousands.

> **SIRAH NOTE: HOW MANY PILGRIMS WERE AT THE FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE?**
>
> No authentic hadith gives an exact number for the pilgrims of the Farewell Pilgrimage. The books of sirah mention various estimates: ***around 90,000***, ***114,000***, and some mention even more, including those who joined from Makkah, Yemen and elsewhere along the way.
>
> These figures are ***estimates by sirah authors***, not precise counts. What is certain from the Hadith of Jabir is that they were ***very many***, filling the view in every direction.
>
> **REFERENCES:**
> Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Farewell Pilgrimage; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah; Ibn al-Qayyim, Zad al-Ma'ad.

Jabir adds a very important statement: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was among us, the Qur'an was being revealed to him, and he knew its meaning. Whatever he did, we did too."*** (Sahih Muslim 1218)

Here lies the secret of the Farewell Pilgrimage's success: tens of thousands of people of different backgrounds, tribes and dialects, but ***one model to follow***. They did not ask "What is our tribe's opinion?" but ***"What did the Messenger of Allah ﷺ do?"*** True unity is born when everyone refers to the same source.

Imagine too the logistical challenge: water, food, rest stops and security for such a vast caravan, crossing the desert for nine days. Yet there is no authentic report of major disorder. The discipline of the Companions and the leadership of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ kept the journey orderly.

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'A'ISHAH'S TEARS AT SARIF

Along the way, a small but very human incident took place. The Mother of the Believers 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها relates:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 305

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو نُعَيْمٍ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْعَزِيزِ بْنُ أَبِي سَلَمَةَ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ الْقَاسِمِ، عَنِ الْقَاسِمِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ خَرَجْنَا مَعَ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم لاَ نَذْكُرُ إِلاَّ الْحَجَّ، فَلَمَّا جِئْنَا سَرِفَ طَمِثْتُ، فَدَخَلَ عَلَىَّ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَأَنَا أَبْكِي فَقَالَ {مَا يُبْكِيكِ}. قُلْتُ لَوَدِدْتُ وَاللَّهِ أَنِّي لَمْ أَحُجَّ الْعَامَ. قَالَ {لَعَلَّكِ نُفِسْتِ}. قُلْتُ نَعَمْ. قَالَ فَإِنَّ ذَلِكِ شَيْءٌ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى بَنَاتِ آدَمَ، فَافْعَلِي مَا يَفْعَلُ الْحَاجُّ، غَيْرَ أَنْ لاَ تَطُوفِي بِالْبَيْتِ حَتَّى تَطْهُرِي.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: We set out with the Prophet ﷺ, mentioning nothing but Hajj. When we reached ***Sarif***, my menses began. The Prophet ﷺ came in to me while ***I was weeping***. He asked: **"What makes you weep?"** I said: "By Allah, I wish I had not performed Hajj this year." He said: **"Perhaps your menses have begun?"** I said: "Yes." He said: ***"That is something Allah has decreed for the daughters of Adam. So do everything the pilgrim does, except do not circle the House until you are pure."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Abu Nu'aym al-Fadl ibn Dukayn, from 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn Abi Salamah al-Majishun, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn al-Qasim, from al-Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Menstruation, Chapter: The menstruating woman performs all the rites except tawaf, Hadith No. 305; also No. 294 and Muslim No. 1211.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:305

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Sarif is a place about ten miles from Makkah. 'A'ishah, who had so looked forward to Hajj with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, wept thinking her Hajj was ruined. See how he treated her: he ***came in to her***, ***asked why she was weeping***, and ***comforted her*** with reassuring words.

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His words — ***"That is something Allah has decreed for the daughters of Adam"*** — lifted shame and sadness from women. Menstruation is not a disgrace or a punishment, but a nature Allah has ordained. A menstruating woman may still perform ***all the rites of Hajj except tawaf***.

We will see the end of 'A'ishah's story in Chapter 30: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not let her go home with a disappointed heart. A good husband understands his wife's feelings, even while busy leading tens of thousands of people.

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ARRIVING IN MAKKAH

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ arrived in Makkah on ***4 Dhul-Hijjah*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 1545). He went straight to the Sacred Mosque. Jabir relates: ***"When we came with him to the House, he touched the corner (the Black Stone), then circled seven times: walking briskly (ramal) for three and walking normally for four."*** (Sahih Muslim 1218)

This was ***the tawaf of arrival (qudum)***. Imagine his feelings: Makkah, the birthplace he had left as a hunted man, now entered as an honoured Messenger, and the Ka'bah once surrounded by 360 idols now ***pure for tawhid*** (Book 21).

Ramal — walking briskly with short steps — was first prescribed in the 'Umrah of Fulfilment, when the Makkan polytheists claimed the Muslims had been weakened by the fever of Madinah (Book 18). In the Farewell Pilgrimage, though no polytheists were watching any more, he ***kept the ramal***. Scholars took the lesson that a Sunnah prescribed for a reason may remain as worship even after its reason has gone — as ***a remembrance of the struggle of the first generation***.

Ramal is done only by men, in the first three circuits of the tawaf of arrival (or of 'umrah). Women circle at a normal walk, as ramal conflicts with the requirements of modesty.

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THE BLACK STONE AND THE WORDS OF 'UMAR

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ began and ended his tawaf at ***the Black Stone***, and Jabir mentions that after praying at the Station of Ibrahim he ***returned to the corner and touched it*** (Sahih Muslim 1218). Why is this stone kissed and touched? 'Umar رضى الله عنه gave an answer that became a principle in worship:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 1597

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ كَثِيرٍ، أَخْبَرَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنِ الأَعْمَشِ، عَنْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ عَابِسِ بْنِ رَبِيعَةَ، عَنْ عُمَرَ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ أَنَّهُ جَاءَ إِلَى الْحَجَرِ الأَسْوَدِ فَقَبَّلَهُ، فَقَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ حَجَرٌ لاَ تَضُرُّ وَلاَ تَنْفَعُ، وَلَوْلاَ أَنِّي رَأَيْتُ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يُقَبِّلُكَ مَا قَبَّلْتُكَ.

TRANSLATION:

It is narrated from 'Umar رضى الله عنه that he came to ***the Black Stone*** and kissed it, then said: ***"I know that you are only a stone; you neither harm nor benefit. Had I not seen the Prophet ﷺ kiss you, I would not have kissed you."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Muhammad ibn Kathir, from Sufyan ath-Thawri, from Sulayman al-A'mash, from Ibrahim an-Nakha'i, from 'Abis ibn Rabi'ah, from 'Umar ibn al-Khattab رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Hajj, Chapter: What is mentioned about the Black Stone, Hadith No. 1597; also Muslim No. 1270.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:1597

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

'Umar's words are firm in tawhid: the stone ***neither harms nor benefits***. A Muslim does not worship stone, ask anything of it, or think it has power. It is kissed solely ***out of following the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ.

This is the difference between ***worship and superstition***: worship is done because there is evidence from Allah and His Messenger; superstition is done because one imagines the object itself has power. 'Umar said it aloud before the people — perhaps because many of them had only recently left idol worship.

In today's crowds, kissing the Black Stone is not obligatory. If one cannot touch it without harming others, it is enough to ***gesture*** towards it from afar. Pushing and hurting fellow Muslims for the sake of a recommended act is ***a mistake in priorities***.

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'Umar's statement also shows the courage of the Companions in protecting tawhid. He was the Commander of the Believers, standing before people who might have misunderstood, and he chose to speak clearly rather than leave room for superstition. Correct belief must be taught openly, especially where it is most easily confused.

The same principle applies to every sacred place. Muslims honour the Ka'bah, the Black Stone, the Station of Ibrahim and the Prophet's Mosque because Allah and His Messenger ﷺ honoured them, and in the way they honoured them. Rubbing walls, tying cloths or seeking blessings from objects without evidence is not part of the Sunnah.

In this way, the Hajj is a school of tawhid from beginning to end. Every rite — the talbiyah, the tawaf, the stone, the station, the sa'i, the standing — is directed to Allah alone, and performed in the way His Messenger ﷺ showed.

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AT THE STATION OF IBRAHIM

After the tawaf, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went to ***the Station of Ibrahim*** reciting:

"And take, [O believers], from the standing place of Abraham a place of prayer" (Al-Baqarah 2:125) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 2:125.

Jabir relates that he placed the Station between himself and the Ka'bah, then prayed two rak'ahs. In those two rak'ahs he recited ***Surah Al-Kafirun*** and ***Surah Al-Ikhlas*** (Sahih Muslim 1218).

The choice of these two surahs is deeply meaningful. ***Al-Kafirun*** is the surah of separation from shirk: "I do not worship what you worship." ***Al-Ikhlas*** is the surah of pure tawhid: "Say: He is Allah, the One." In the very place where idols were once worshipped, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***declared tawhid through prayer***.

The Station of Ibrahim is the stone on which the Prophet Ibrahim عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ stood while building the Ka'bah. Allah mentions it as one of the ***clear signs*** at the House (Ali 'Imran 3:97). Praying behind it connects every pilgrim with the father of the prophets, the original builder of this House, who built it on tawhid.

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SA'I: "I BEGIN WITH WHAT ALLAH BEGAN WITH"

From the Station of Ibrahim he returned to touch the Black Stone, then went out through the gate towards ***as-Safa***. As he drew near it, he recited:

"Indeed, as-Safa and al-Marwah are among the symbols of Allah" (Al-Baqarah 2:158) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 2:158.

Then he said: ***"I begin with what Allah began with."*** He began the sa'i at as-Safa because Allah mentions as-Safa first in the verse (Sahih Muslim 1218). A small but great lesson: ***the order in the Qur'an is meaningful***, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ acted upon it.

He climbed as-Safa until he could see the Ka'bah, faced the qiblah, declared the oneness of Allah and magnified Him, and said: ***"There is no god but Allah alone, with no partner. His is the dominion and His is the praise, and He is able to do all things. There is no god but Allah alone; He fulfilled His promise, helped His servant, and defeated the confederates alone."*** He repeated this three times, supplicating in between (Sahih Muslim 1218).

Note the phrase ***"defeated the confederates alone"***. It recalls the Battle of the Trench (Book 12), when ten thousand troops of the Confederates besieged Madinah and Allah drove them away with the wind. On the hill of as-Safa — where the Messenger of Allah ﷺ first called his people openly (Book 4) — he now praised Allah for the promise fulfilled.

Then he went down towards al-Marwah. When his feet reached the bottom of the valley, he ***ran***, and when he began to climb he walked, until he reached al-Marwah, where he did as he had done at as-Safa (Sahih Muslim 1218). That run in the valley recalls ***Hajar***, the mother of the Prophet Isma'il عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, who ran searching for water for her son.

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‘UMRAH ENTERS INTO HAJJ

On the last lap of sa‘i at al-Marwah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ made an announcement that surprised many: ***“If I had known before what I have come to know afterwards, I would not have brought the sacrificial animals and I would have made it an ‘umrah. So whoever among you has no sacrificial animal with him, let him leave ihram and make it an ‘umrah.”*** (Sahih Muslim 1218)

Why was this surprising? The pagan Arabs regarded ***performing ‘umrah in the months of Hajj as one of the gravest sins***. Now the Messenger of Allah ﷺ commanded them to do it, to ***abolish that pagan belief***. Some Companions were reluctant, since they wished to follow him exactly, but in the end they obeyed.

Suraqah ibn Malik ibn Ju‘shum stood up and asked: “O Messenger of Allah, is this for this year only, or forever?” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ interlaced his fingers and said twice: ***“‘Umrah has entered into Hajj — no, rather forever and ever.”*** (Sahih Muslim 1218)

This Suraqah was the man who chased the Messenger of Allah ﷺ during the Hijrah to win the reward offered by Quraysh (Book 7). Now he stood in Makkah as a Companion asking about the rulings of the religion. Thus does Allah change human hearts.

SIRAH NOTE: THE THREE TYPES OF HAJJ

From the Farewell Pilgrimage scholars identified three ways of performing Hajj: ***Ifrad*** (Hajj alone), ***Qiran*** (Hajj and ‘umrah in one ihram) and ***Tamattu‘*** (‘umrah first, leaving ihram, then entering ihram for Hajj on 8 Dhul-Hijjah).

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who had brought sacrificial animals, remained in ihram until the Day of Sacrifice.

Most scholars hold that he performed ***Qiran***. The Companions without sacrificial animals were told to make it ***Tamattu‘***. All three ways are valid, and scholars differ as to which is best.

REFERENCES:

Ibn al-Qayyim, Zad al-Ma‘ad; an-Nawawi, Sharh Sahih Muslim — chapter on the Hadith of Jabir.

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'ALI ARRIVES FROM YEMEN

At that time, ***'Ali ibn Abi Talib*** رضى الله عنه arrived from Yemen, where he had been sent to call to Islam and collect zakat (Book 26). He brought sacrificial camels for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. On arrival, he found his wife ***Fatimah*** رضى الله عنها had left ihram, put on dyed clothes and applied kohl. 'Ali disapproved, and Fatimah replied: ***"My father commanded me to do this."*** (Sahih Muslim 1218)

'Ali went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, expressing his displeasure and asking. He said: ***"She has told the truth, she has told the truth."*** Then he asked 'Ali what his intention had been on entering ihram. 'Ali said: "O Allah, I enter ihram for what Your Messenger has entered ihram for." He said: ***"I have the sacrificial animals with me, so do not leave ihram."*** (Sahih Muslim 1218)

This story shows several things. First, ***'Ali's wisdom***: not knowing the Prophet's ﷺ type of ihram, he intended whatever the Prophet ﷺ intended — and this was accepted (Sahih al-Bukhari 1557). Second, ***Fatimah's truthfulness***, affirmed by her father himself. Third, how 'Ali resolved his displeasure: not by quarrelling, but by ***referring to the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ.

Jabir mentions that the ***total number of sacrificial camels*** brought by 'Ali from Yemen and by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ from Madinah was ***one hundred***. We will see what happened to these camels on the Day of Sacrifice (Chapter 24).

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THE DAY OF TARWIYAH

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stayed on the outskirts of Makkah from 4 to 7 Dhul-Hijjah. Then came ***the Day of Tarwiyah (8 Dhul-Hijjah)***. Jabir relates: ***"When the Day of Tarwiyah came, they set out for Mina and entered ihram for Hajj. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ rode, and prayed there Zuhr, 'Asr, Maghrib, 'Isha' and Fajr."*** (Sahih Muslim 1218)

The name ***Tarwiyah*** means "giving water" or "supplying water". Historians mention that on that day pilgrims filled their water containers as provision for 'Arafah, since at that time there was no water source there.

At Mina, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***shortened the four-rak'ah prayers to two***, but did not combine them — each prayer at its time. Spending the night of 9 Dhul-Hijjah at Mina is Sunnah, not a pillar, but it serves as spiritual and physical preparation before the great day of 'Arafah.

The Companions who had left ihram after 'umrah now ***entered ihram again for Hajj*** from where they were. This is the practice of Hajj Tamattu' still followed by most pilgrims today.

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PASSING MUZDALIFAH ON TO 'ARAFAH

On the morning of 9 Dhul-Hijjah, after sunrise, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ordered that ***a tent of hair*** be pitched for him at ***Namirah***. Then he set out. Jabir mentions something very important: ***"Quraysh had no doubt that he would stop at al-Mash'ar al-Haram (Muzdalifah), as Quraysh used to do in the Days of Ignorance."*** (Sahih Muslim 1218)

We saw in Book 27 that Quraysh (al-Hums) considered themselves too noble to leave the Sanctuary for 'Arafah with everyone else. They stopped at Muzdalifah while other tribes went on to 'Arafah. Now the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, a Qurayshi of Banu Hashim, ***passed Muzdalifah*** and went on to 'Arafah, fulfilling the command of Allah:

"Then depart from the place from where [all] the people depart" (Al-Baqarah 2:199) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 2:199.

With that step, he ***abolished caste privilege*** in worship. At 'Arafah, Quraysh and Bedouin, noble and slave, stood on the same ground. There was no special place for those who thought themselves superior.

He reached Namirah and found his tent pitched. He ***rested there until the sun passed its zenith*** (Sahih Muslim 1218). Today, the Mosque of Namirah stands at that place, part of it inside the boundary of 'Arafah and part outside.

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THE SERMON IN THE VALLEY OF 'URANAH

After the sun passed its zenith, he had al-Qaswa' saddled and went to ***the bottom of the valley of 'Uranah***, where he addressed the people (Sahih Muslim 1218). This sermon — known as ***the Sermon of 'Arafah*** — will be explained in full in ***Book 29***. Here we look only at its outline, as narrated by Jabir.

THEME OF THE SERMON	SUMMARY
Sanctity of life and property	As sacred as this day, this month and this land
Matters of ignorance	All abolished "under my feet"
Blood-feuds of ignorance	Beginning with that of his own family
Usury of ignorance	Beginning with that of his uncle al-'Abbas
Women	"Fear Allah regarding women"
What to hold to	The Book of Allah — never astray if you hold to it
Testimony	"O Allah, bear witness" (three times)

Notice how he ***began with his own family***. The first blood-claim abolished was that of Ibn Rabi'ah ibn al-Harith, his relative; the first usury abolished was that of al-'Abbas, his uncle. A just leader ***does not exempt his own kin*** from the law.

At the end of the sermon he asked: ***"You will be asked about me, so what will you say?"*** They said: "We bear witness that you have conveyed, fulfilled (the trust) and given sincere counsel." He raised his forefinger to the sky, then pointed it at the people, saying: ***"O Allah, bear witness. O Allah, bear witness,"*** three times (Sahih Muslim 1218).

Then Bilal gave the adhan and iqamah, and he prayed ***Zuhr***; then iqamah again, and he prayed ***'Asr***, with no other prayer between them (Sahih Muslim 1218). This is ***early combining (jam' taqdim)*** at 'Arafah, so the rest of the time until sunset could be devoted entirely to supplication.

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THE DAY THE RELIGION WAS PERFECTED

On that day — the day of ‘Arafah, which fell on ***a Friday*** — one of the greatest verses of the Qur’an was revealed:

“This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion” (Al-Ma’idah 5:3) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 5:3.

So lofty is this verse that even a Jewish man envied it. ‘Umar رضى الله عنه relates:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 45

حَدَّثَنَا الْحَسَنُ بْنُ الصَّبَّاحِ، سَمِعَ جَعْفَرَ بْنَ عَوْنٍ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو الْعُمَيْسِ، أَخْبَرَنَا قَيْسُ بْنُ مُسْلِمٍ، عَنْ طَارِقِ بْنِ شِهَابٍ، عَنْ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ، أَنَّ رَجُلاً، مِنَ الْيَهُودِ قَالَ لَهُ يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، آيَةٌ فِي كِتَابِكُمْ تَقْرَءُونَهَا لَوْ عَلَيْنَا مَعْشَرَ الْيَهُودِ نَزَلَتْ لاَتَّخَذْنَا ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ عِيدًا. قَالَ أَىُّ آيَةٍ قَالَ {الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الإِسْلاَمَ دِينًا}. قَالَ عُمَرُ قَدْ عَرَفْنَا ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ وَالْمَكَانَ الَّذِي نَزَلَتْ فِيهِ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ بِعَرَفَةَ يَوْمَ جُمُعَةٍ.

TRANSLATION:

It is narrated from ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab رضى الله عنه that a Jewish man said to him: “O Commander of the Believers, there is a verse in your Book which you recite; ***had it been revealed to us Jews, we would have taken that day as a festival.***” ‘Umar asked: “Which verse?” He said: ***{This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favour upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion}***. ‘Umar said: ***“We know that day and the place where it was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ: he was standing at ‘Arafah, on a Friday.”***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from al-Hasan ibn as-Sabbah, who heard Ja‘far ibn ‘Awn, from Abu al-‘Umays, from Qays ibn Muslim, from Tariq ibn Shihab, from ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Faith, Chapter: The increase and decrease of faith, Hadith No. 45; also No. 4407, 4606, 7268 and Muslim No. 3017.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:45

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LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

'Umar's answer was subtle: there was no need to make that day a new festival, because ***it already was one***: the day of 'Arafah is a great day for the pilgrims, and Friday is the weekly festival of the Muslims. The verse came down on ***two great days at once***.

"This day I have perfected for you your religion" means ***the foundations of the religion are complete***: belief, worship, the lawful and the unlawful. No one after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ therefore has the right to add new acts of worship to the religion or take from it. Imam Malik said that whoever invents an innovation in Islam and considers it good has, as it were, claimed that Muhammad ﷺ betrayed the message, for Allah says: "This day I have perfected for you your religion."

SIRAH NOTE: THE TEARS OF 'UMAR

It is reported in the books of tafsir and sirah that when this verse was revealed, ***'Umar wept***. When asked, he said that ***nothing reaches perfection except that it then begins to decrease***. It was as if he sensed that the verse hinted at the nearness of the Prophet's ﷺ death.

This report is mentioned by Ibn Jarir at-Tabari and Ibn Kathir in their tafsirs, with a debated chain. Its meaning agrees with the fact that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed away about ***three months*** after this verse was revealed.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim, Al-Ma'idah 5:3; at-Tabari, Jami' al-Bayan. https://tafsir.app/ibn-katheer/5/3

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"HAJJ IS 'ARAFAH"

After the prayer, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ rode to the place of standing, turning his camel towards the large rocks with the path of those on foot in front of him, and faced the qiblah. ***He kept standing there until the sun set***, the yellow light had somewhat gone, and the disc of the sun disappeared (Sahih Muslim 1218). For hours he supplicated, remembered Allah and implored Him.

Why is 'Arafah so important? The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Hajj is 'Arafah."*** Whoever reaches 'Arafah before dawn on the Day of Sacrifice has attained Hajj (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 889 — sahih). Standing at 'Arafah is ***the most essential pillar of Hajj***; without it, Hajj is not valid. And about the virtue of this day, 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها narrates:

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1348

حَدَّثَنَا هَارُونُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ الأَيْلِيُّ، وَأَحْمَدُ بْنُ عِيسَى، قَالاَ حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ وَهْبٍ، أَخْبَرَنِي مَخْرَمَةُ بْنُ بُكَيْرٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ يُونُسَ بْنَ يُوسُفَ، يَقُولُ عَنِ ابْنِ الْمُسَيَّبِ، قَالَ قَالَتْ عَائِشَةُ إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ مَا مِنْ يَوْمٍ أَكْثَرَ مِنْ أَنْ يُعْتِقَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ عَبْدًا مِنَ النَّارِ مِنْ يَوْمِ عَرَفَةَ وَإِنَّهُ لَيَدْنُو ثُمَّ يُبَاهِي بِهِمُ الْمَلاَئِكَةَ فَيَقُولُ مَا أَرَادَ هَؤُلاَءِ.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"There is no day on which Allah frees more servants from the Fire than the day of 'Arafah.*** He draws near, then ***boasts of them before the angels***, and says: 'What do these people want?'"

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Harun ibn Sa'id al-Ayli and Ahmad ibn 'Isa, from 'Abdullah ibn Wahb, from Makhramah ibn Bukayr, from his father, Bukayr ibn al-Ashajj, from Yunus ibn Yusuf, from Sa'id ibn al-Musayyib, from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Hajj, Chapter: The virtue of Hajj, 'Umrah and the day of 'Arafah, Hadith No. 1348.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:1348

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Imagine the sight Allah boasts of before the angels: tens of thousands of people, dressed alike, dusty and sweating, raising their hands in a dry plain. They do not ask for wealth or status, but for ***forgiveness and mercy***. Allah asks — and He knows best — "What do these people want?"

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For those not performing Hajj, the day of ‘Arafah is still a great day. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said that

fasting the day of ‘Arafah expiates the sins of the previous year and the coming year (Sahih Muslim 1162). The mercy of this day embraces the whole Ummah, not only those at ‘Arafah.

The Prophet ﷺ himself spent the afternoon of ‘Arafah in supplication. In a hadith narrated by at-Tirmidhi,

he said that the best supplication is the supplication of the day of ‘Arafah, and the best words he and the prophets before him said were: “There is no god but Allah alone, with no partner; His is the dominion and His is the praise, and He is able to do all things.” Scholars have graded this hadith hasan due to its supporting chains.

Pilgrims therefore fill these hours with remembrance, seeking forgiveness, and asking for the good of this world and the Hereafter, for themselves, their families and the whole Ummah. It is not a day for idle talk or sightseeing, but for the heart to stand before its Lord.

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"CALMLY, O PEOPLE!"

When the sun had set, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ departed from 'Arafah. He ***had Usamah ibn Zayd*** رضى الله عنهما ride behind him — Usamah, son of Zayd ibn Harithah, the freed slave whom he loved. Before tens of thousands of Arab nobles, the one chosen to ride behind the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was ***a dark-skinned young man, the son of a former slave***.

Jabir relates that he ***pulled al-Qaswa's reins so tightly that her head almost touched the saddle***, and he signalled with his right hand to the people: ***"O people, calmly, calmly!"*** Whenever he came to a sandy rise, he loosened the rein a little so the camel could climb (Sahih Muslim 1218).

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما also relates that he heard loud shouting and the beating of camels behind him, so he signalled with his whip and said: ***"O people, be calm, for righteousness is not in hastening"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 1671).

This lesson is highly relevant in today's crowded Hajj, when millions move at once. ***Calm and discipline*** are not mere manners, but save lives. Worship performed by pushing and hurting others loses its spirit, even if its outward form is perfect.

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THE NIGHT AT MUZDALIFAH

The caravan reached ***Muzdalifah*** after dark. There the Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed ***Maghrib and 'Isha' with one adhan and two iqamahs***, with no voluntary prayer between them. Then he ***lay down and slept until dawn*** (Sahih Muslim 1218). This is what Allah commanded:

"But when you depart from 'Arafat, remember Allah at al- Mash'ar al-Haram" (Al-Baqarah 2:198) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 2:198.

Note: after a whole day of supplication at 'Arafah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***slept***. He did not spend that night in long night prayer, because the next day was the busiest of the Hajj. His Sunnah teaches ***balance***: worship needs energy, and the body has a right to rest.

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها relates that ***Sawdah*** رضى الله عنها, his wife who was heavy and slow-moving, ***asked permission to leave early*** from Muzdalifah before the crowds, and he permitted her (Sahih al-Bukhari 1681). From this scholars derived ***a concession for the weak***, women, the elderly and those caring for them, to leave Muzdalifah after midnight.

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AL-MASH'AR AL-HARAM AND THE VALLEY OF MUHASSIR

After praying Fajr at its earliest time, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ rode al-Qaswa' until he reached ***al-Mash'ar al-Haram***. There he faced the qiblah, supplicated, said takbir and tahlil and declared the oneness of Allah, ***and kept standing until the sky was very bright***. Then he set off ***before sunrise*** (Sahih Muslim 1218).

Leaving before sunrise was also ***a correction of pagan practice***. The polytheists used to wait for the sun to rise over Mount Thabir before leaving Muzdalifah (Sahih al-Bukhari 1684). The Messenger of Allah ﷺ differed from them, just as he differed from them by leaving 'Arafah after sunset.

This time the one riding behind him was ***al-Fadl ibn al-'Abbas***, a handsome young man. A group of women passed by them, and al-Fadl began to look at them. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***placed his hand on al-Fadl's face*** and turned it away. Al-Fadl turned to the other side to look, and he turned his hand to that side too (Sahih Muslim 1218).

See how he taught: ***without anger, without shaming***, only with a gentle hand turning the gaze away. Lowering the gaze is a command of Allah, and even in the midst of Hajj the Messenger of Allah ﷺ guarded it. When he reached ***the bottom of the valley of Muhassir***, he ***urged his camel on a little*** (Sahih Muslim 1218) — scholars mention this valley as connected with the event of the army of the elephant, and the Sunnah is to pass through it quickly.

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STONING JAMRAT AL-'AQABAH

From the valley of Muhassir, he took the middle road leading to ***the Great Jamrah (Jamrat al-'Aqabah)***. He stoned it with ***seven small pebbles***, saying takbir with each throw — pebbles the size of a chickpea, flicked with the fingertips — from the bottom of the valley (Sahih Muslim 1218). On this day, only Jamrat al-'Aqabah is stoned.

While stoning from his mount, he spoke words that became the governing principle of the whole Hajj. Jabir رضى الله عنه narrates:

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1297

حَدَّثَنَا إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، وَعَلِيُّ بْنُ خَشْرَمٍ، جَمِيعًا عَنْ عِيسَى بْنِ يُونُسَ، - قَالَ ابْنُ خَشْرَمٍ أَخْبَرَنَا عِيسَى، - عَنِ ابْنِ جُرَيْجٍ، أَخْبَرَنِي أَبُو الزُّبَيْرِ، أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ جَابِرًا، يَقُولُ رَأَيْتُ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَرْمِي عَلَى رَاحِلَتِهِ يَوْمَ النَّحْرِ وَيَقُولُ لِتَأْخُذُوا مَنَاسِكَكُمْ فَإِنِّي لاَ أَدْرِي لَعَلِّي لاَ أَحُجُّ بَعْدَ حَجَّتِي هَذِهِ.

TRANSLATION:

Jabir رضى الله عنه said: I saw the Prophet ﷺ ***stoning (the jamrah) while on his mount on the Day of Sacrifice***, saying: ***"Take your rites (from me), for I do not know — perhaps I will not perform Hajj after this Hajj of mine."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Ishaq ibn Ibrahim (Ibn Rahawayh) and 'Ali ibn Khashram, both from 'Isa ibn Yunus (Ibn Khashram said: 'Isa told us), from Ibn Jurayj, from Abu az-Zubayr, that he heard Jabir ibn 'Abdullah رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Hajj, Chapter: It is recommended to stone Jamrat al-'Aqabah on the Day of Sacrifice while riding, Hadith No. 1297.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:1297

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

"Take your rites from me" — this is why every detail of the Farewell Pilgrimage was narrated so carefully by the Companions. They understood this might be the last chance. And the words ***"perhaps I will not perform Hajj after this Hajj of mine"*** came true: he passed away less than three months later.

Stoning the jamrah is not stoning the devil in the sense that the pillar is the devil. It is ***an act of obedience and remembrance***, following the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and recalling our enmity towards Satan. So there is no point in rage, throwing shoes or large stones; the Sunnah is small pebbles, with takbir and calm.

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Some scholars link the origin of stoning the jamarat to the story of the Prophet Ibrahim عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ rejecting the temptation of Satan at those places. Reports of this are found in books of athar and tafsir, but what is certain for us is this: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stoned, and we stone ***because we follow him***.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also warned against excess in this matter. He chose small pebbles and said:

"Beware of extremism in religion, for those before you were destroyed only by extremism in religion" (Sunan Ibn Majah 3029 — sahih). It was said in the context of choosing pebbles for stoning, yet it became a general principle for the whole religion.

Today, the multi-level Jamarat bridge allows millions of pilgrims to stone more safely. Yet discipline is still needed: following the assigned schedules, not turning back against the flow, and protecting the elderly and women. This is how his words "calmly, calmly" apply in a modern setting.

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ONE HUNDRED SACRIFICIAL CAMELS

Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went to the place of sacrifice. He ***slaughtered sixty-three camels with his own hand***, then gave the rest to ‘Ali, who slaughtered them, and he made ‘Ali a partner in his sacrifice. Then he ordered that ***a piece of meat from each camel*** be put in a pot and cooked; he and ‘Ali ate of its meat and drank of its broth (Sahih Muslim 1218).

Scholars have noticed the number ***sixty-three***: it equals ***the age of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ*** at that time. Some suggested it was as if one camel for each year of his life, in gratitude. This is ***a scholarly observation***, not an explicit text, but it is beautiful to reflect upon.

Yet Allah reminds us what truly reaches Him: ***“Their meat will not reach Allah, nor will their blood, but what reaches Him is piety from you”*** (Al-Hajj 22:37) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 22:37.

A hundred camels was enormous wealth. Yet what is valued is not the number, but ***the piety behind the sacrifice***. The meat was distributed to the poor, in line with the command: “So eat of them and feed the miserable and poor” (Al-Hajj 22:28).

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***slaughtered most of his sacrifice himself***. This shows that a leader is not ashamed to work with his own hands, and that it is better to slaughter one’s own sacrifice if able.

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A PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO SHAVE

After the sacrifice, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***shaved his head***. He then prayed: ***"O Allah, have mercy on those who shave."*** The Companions said: "And those who shorten (their hair), O Messenger of Allah?" He prayed again: "O Allah, have mercy on those who shave." They asked again, and finally he said: ***"And those who shorten."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 1727)

The repeated prayer for those who shave shows that ***shaving is better*** for men, since it expresses complete submission — removing the hair that adorns one, for Allah's sake. Yet shortening is also valid and prayed for. For women, what is prescribed is ***to trim a little*** from the ends of the hair, not to shave.

By shaving or shortening, the pilgrim reaches ***the first release (tahallul awwal)***: all ihram restrictions are lifted except marital relations. Full release comes after the tawaf al-ifadah.

The books of hadith mention that the hair of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ shaved that day ***was distributed among the Companions*** (Sahih Muslim 1305). They kept it out of love for him. This is specific to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and may not be extended to anyone else.

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"DO IT, THERE IS NO HARM"

On the Day of Sacrifice, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ performed four acts in order: ***stoning, sacrificing, shaving, then tawaf***. But not everyone managed or knew to follow that order. So they came asking:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 1736

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ يُوسُفَ، أَخْبَرَنَا مَالِكٌ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، عَنْ عِيسَى بْنِ طَلْحَةَ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَقَفَ فِي حَجَّةِ الْوَدَاعِ، فَجَعَلُوا يَسْأَلُونَهُ، فَقَالَ رَجُلٌ لَمْ أَشْعُرْ فَحَلَقْتُ قَبْلَ أَنْ أَذْبَحَ. قَالَ اذْبَحْ وَلاَ حَرَجَ. فَجَاءَ آخَرُ فَقَالَ لَمْ أَشْعُرْ فَنَحَرْتُ قَبْلَ أَنْ أَرْمِيَ. قَالَ ارْمِ وَلاَ حَرَجَ. فَمَا سُئِلَ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنْ شَىْءٍ قُدِّمَ وَلاَ أُخِّرَ إِلاَّ قَالَ افْعَلْ وَلاَ حَرَجَ.

TRANSLATION:

'Abdullah ibn 'Amr رضى الله عنهما narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***stopped during the Farewell Pilgrimage***, and the people began asking him. A man said: "I did not realise, and I shaved before slaughtering." He said: **"Slaughter, there is no harm."** Another came and said: "I did not realise, and I slaughtered before stoning." He said: **"Stone, there is no harm."** On that day he was not asked about anything done earlier or later except that he said: ***"Do it, there is no harm."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Abdullah ibn Yusuf at-Tinnisi, from Imam Malik ibn Anas, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from 'Isa ibn Talhah, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'As رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Hajj, Chapter: Giving verdicts on a mount near the jamrah, Hadith No. 1736; also No. 83, 124 and Muslim No. 1306.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:1736

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This hadith is one of the greatest proofs of ***ease in the Shari'ah***. In a crowded setting, with tens of thousands performing Hajj for the first time, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ neither scolded nor burdened them. His answer was brief and reassuring: ***"Do it, there is no harm."***

Note also that he ***stopped and made time*** to answer people's questions in the middle of the busiest day. A good leader and teacher does not regard questions as a nuisance. Scholars and Hajj guides today should follow this attitude: ***make things easy, not difficult***.

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But this ease does not mean worship may be done however one likes. The questioners said "I did not realise" — they erred, they were not playing about. The Shari'ah eases the way for those who ***sincerely try***, and this principle covers every act of worship in our lives.

This hadith also teaches humility to those who give religious verdicts. Ease was the Prophet's ﷺ way whenever he was given a choice between two matters, as long as it was not sinful. A scholar who makes everything hard is not following the Sunnah more closely, but less.

At the same time, the people asked before acting further. They did not assume their own opinion was enough; they went to the one who knew. A Muslim who is unsure about his worship should likewise ask those of knowledge, and those of knowledge should answer with clarity and mercy.

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TAWAF AL-IFADAH AND THE WATER OF ZAMZAM

After that, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ rode to the House and performed ***tawaf al-ifadah*** — a pillar of Hajj without which the Hajj is invalid. He ***prayed Zuhr in Makkah*** (Sahih Muslim 1218). With this tawaf, he reached full release from ihram.

Then he came to ***Banu 'Abd al-Muttalib***, who were giving pilgrims Zamzam water to drink, and said: ***"Draw water, O Banu 'Abd al-Muttalib. Were it not that people would take this task of giving water from you, I would draw it with you."*** They handed him a bucket, and he drank from it (Sahih Muslim 1218).

These words show ***the wisdom of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ. He wanted to help, but knew that if he drew water himself, people would consider it a Sunnah of Hajj and ***crowd in to draw water***, and the right of the family of 'Abd al-Muttalib to give water (siqayah) — inherited since his grandfather's time — would be lost. He considered ***the effect of his actions on the Ummah***.

Zamzam itself is a continuing gift from Allah since the time of the Prophet Isma'il عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and his mother Hajar. The Prophet's ﷺ grandfather, 'Abd al-Muttalib, re-dug the well after it had been buried for centuries. Now his grandson drank from it in the Hajj that perfected the religion.

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THE DAYS OF TASHRIQ AT MINA

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned to Mina and stayed there during ***the days of Tashriq*** (11, 12 and 13 Dhul-Hijjah). Allah says of these days:

"And remember Allah during [specific] numbered days" (Al-Baqarah 2:203) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 2:203.

On each day of Tashriq, after the sun passes its zenith, ***all three jamarat are stoned***: the Small (first) Jamrah, the Middle, then al-'Aqabah, each with seven pebbles. Ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما, who followed the Sunnah meticulously, would stone the first Jamrah, then move forward to level ground and ***stand for a long time facing the qiblah, raising his hands in supplication***; likewise after the second, but he did not stop after Jamrat al-'Aqabah. He said: "This is how I saw the Prophet ﷺ do it" (Sahih al-Bukhari 1751).

His uncle ***al-'Abbas*** رضى الله عنه asked permission to spend the nights of Mina in Makkah because of his duty of giving water to the pilgrims, and he ***permitted him*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 1634). From this scholars derived a concession for those with duties serving the pilgrims.

The verse also gives a choice: ***"whoever hastens [his departure] in two days - there is no sin upon him; and whoever delays - there is no sin upon him"***. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself stayed until the third day (13 Dhul-Hijjah), then left for al-Abtah (al-Muhassab) on the outskirts of Makkah.

SIRAH NOTE: SURAH AN-NASR AND THE DAYS OF TASHRIQ

Some reports in the books of tafsir mention that ***Surah An-Nasr*** — "When the victory of Allah has come and the conquest" — was revealed at Mina during the days of Tashriq of the Farewell Pilgrimage, and that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ understood from it that his death was near.

The reports about the time and place of its revelation ***have debated chains*** according to hadith scholars. What is authentic is Ibn 'Abbas's رضى الله عنهما interpretation before 'Umar that this surah was ***a sign of the nearness of the Prophet's ﷺ death*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4970).

REFERENCES:

Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim, Surah An-Nasr. https://tafsir.app/ibn-katheer/110/1

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THE SERMON OF THE DAY OF SACRIFICE

Besides the sermon at ‘Arafah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ also addressed the people at Mina on ***the Day of Sacrifice***. Ibn ‘Abbas رضى الله عنهما relates that he asked: ***“O people, what day is this?”*** They said: “A sacred day.” He asked: “What land is this?” They said: “A sacred land.” He asked: “What month is this?” They said: “A sacred month.” (Sahih al-Bukhari 1739)

Then he said: ***“Your blood, your property and your honour are sacred to one another, like the sanctity of this day of yours, in this land of yours, in this month of yours.”*** He repeated it several times, then raised his head and said: ***“O Allah, have I not conveyed? O Allah, have I not conveyed?”*** Ibn ‘Abbas said: “By Him in whose Hand is my soul, that was his final counsel to his Ummah.”

He closed the sermon with the instruction: ***“Let the one present convey to the one absent. Do not revert after me to disbelief, striking one another’s necks.”*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 1739). The instruction ***“let the one present convey to the one absent”*** is why this knowledge has reached us today.

The contents of the sermons of the Farewell Pilgrimage — at ‘Arafah, at Mina on the Day of Sacrifice and during the days of Tashriq — will be gathered and explained more fully in ***Book 29: The Farewell Sermon***, in sha Allah. There we will see how these sermons became ***a charter of human rights*** far ahead of its time.

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'A'ISHAH'S 'UMRAH AND SAFIYYAH'S MENSES

Do we remember 'A'ishah's رضى الله عنها tears at Sarif? She became pure in time and performed Hajj, but she was sad that the other Companions were going home with ***Hajj and 'umrah***, while her 'umrah had turned into Hajj because of her menses. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ told her brother ***'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Abi Bakr*** to take her to ***at-Tan'im***, where she entered ihram and performed 'umrah after the Hajj (Sahih al-Bukhari 1785).

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not say "Never mind, your Hajj is valid." He ***fulfilled his wife's wish*** to go home with the same reward as others. The place where she entered ihram is today known as ***Masjid 'A'ishah*** at at-Tan'im, where many in Makkah enter ihram for 'umrah to this day.

Another of his wives, ***Safiyyah bint Huyayy*** رضى الله عنها, got her menses just before the day of departure. When told, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked: ***"Will she hold us back?"*** They said Safiyyah ***had already performed tawaf al-ifadah***. He said: ***"Then she will not (hold us back)."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 1757)

Both stories show ***the attention of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to women's circumstances*** in Hajj. The rulings for menstruating women — performing every rite except tawaf, and being excused from the farewell tawaf if they have done tawaf al-ifadah — are all taken from these events.

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THE FAREWELL TAWAF

Before leaving Makkah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ performed ***the farewell tawaf (tawaf al-wada')*** before dawn, then set off home to Madinah. Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما states its ruling:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 1755

حَدَّثَنَا مُسَدَّدٌ، حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنِ ابْنِ طَاوُسٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ ـ رضى الله عنهما ـ قَالَ أُمِرَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يَكُونَ آخِرُ عَهْدِهِمْ بِالْبَيْتِ، إِلاَّ أَنَّهُ خُفِّفَ عَنِ الْحَائِضِ.

TRANSLATION:

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما said: ***The people were commanded that their last act (before leaving Makkah) be at the House (the farewell tawaf)***, except that ***it was lightened for the menstruating woman***.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Musaddad ibn Musarhad, from Sufyan ibn 'Uyaynah, from 'Abdullah ibn Tawus, from his father, Tawus ibn Kaysan, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Hajj, Chapter: The Farewell Tawaf, Hadith No. 1755; also Muslim No. 1328.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:1755

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The farewell tawaf makes ***the Ka'bah the pilgrim's final act*** in Makkah. A courteous guest does not leave his host's house without bidding farewell. So too the pilgrim leaves the House of Allah: with tawaf, supplication and a heart reluctant to part.

The concession for the menstruating woman, as in the story of Safiyyah, shows once again that ***the Shari'ah does not burden people beyond their capacity***. She need not wait for days or hold back the whole caravan.

For the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, this tawaf truly was ***a farewell***. He would not see the Ka'bah again. The House built by his forefather Ibrahim عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, cleansed by him of idols, and made the qiblah of the whole Ummah — he left it for the last time that morning.

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RETURN TO MADINAH AND GHADIR KHUMM

On the way home, the caravan stopped at a watering place called ***Khumm***, between Makkah and Madinah. ***Zayd ibn Arqam*** رضى الله عنه relates that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood and addressed them, praised Allah, gave counsel and reminders, then said: ***"O people, I am only a human being; the messenger of my Lord (the angel of death) is about to come and I shall answer. I leave among you two weighty things: the first is the Book of Allah, in which is guidance and light, so hold fast to the Book of Allah… and the people of my household. I remind you of Allah concerning the people of my household,"*** three times (Sahih Muslim 2408).

In another narration he said about 'Ali رضى الله عنه: ***"Whoever I am his mawla, 'Ali is his mawla"*** (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3713 — sahih). Ahl as-Sunnah scholars explain that ***mawla*** here means ***love and support***. Earlier, Buraydah رضى الله عنه had complained about 'Ali concerning his share of the khumus in Yemen, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Do not hate him, for he is entitled to more than that from the khumus"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4350).

The counsel at Ghadir Khumm contains two trusts: ***holding fast to the Book of Allah***, and ***honouring the household of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ. Loving the Ahl al-Bayt — 'Ali, Fatimah, al-Hasan, al-Husayn and his family — is part of faith, without exaggeration and without belittling the other Companions. The two trusts complete one another.

The caravan continued to Madinah. On seeing the city, he said takbir and supplicated as was his custom on returning from a journey. He returned to Madinah at the end of Dhul-Hijjah, 10 AH — and in ***less than three months*** he would leave this world (Book 30).

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IFRAD, QIRAN AND TAMATTU': HOW DID THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ PERFORM HAJJ?

Chapter 13 briefly mentioned the three ways of performing Hajj that are known from the Farewell Pilgrimage. This chapter explains them further, because this is the question prospective pilgrims ask most often: which Hajj should I intend, and which Hajj did the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself perform?

TYPE	METHOD	DAM (SACRIFICE)	BASIC EVIDENCE
Ifrad	Ihram for Hajj only; 'Umrah (if desired) is done after Hajj	Not required	Sahih Muslim 1211 ('A'ishah: some of us entered ihram for Hajj only)
Qiran	Ihram for Hajj and 'Umrah together; remaining in ihram until the Day of Sacrifice	Required	Sahih Muslim 1251; Sahih al-Bukhari 1534
Tamattu'	'Umrah first in the months of Hajj, leaving ihram, then entering ihram for Hajj on 8 Dhul-Hijjah	Required	Al-Baqarah 2:196; Sahih Muslim 1218

The Qur'an itself mentions Tamattu': "Then whoever performs 'Umrah followed by Hajj [enjoying the ease in between] must offer whatever sacrificial animal can be obtained" — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 2:196.

THE EVIDENCE ON THE HAJJ OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ pronounce the talbiyah for Hajj and 'Umrah together, saying: Labbayka 'umratan wa hajjan (Here I am for 'Umrah and Hajj)" (Sahih Muslim 1251).

'Umar ibn al-Khattab رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said in the Valley of al-'Aqiq: "Last night a messenger from my Lord came to me and said: Pray in this blessed valley, and say: 'Umrah within Hajj" (Sahih al-Bukhari 1534).

On the other hand, 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ "entered ihram for Hajj" (Sahih Muslim 1211), and this narration is relied upon by those who hold that he performed Hajj Ifrad.

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FIQH NOTE: THE SCHOLARS' DIFFERENCES

The scholars differ on the type of Hajj the Messenger of Allah ﷺ performed. Many leading scholars, including al-Nawawi in his commentary on Sahih Muslim and Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn al-Qayyim in Zad al-Ma'ad, hold that he performed Hajj Qiran, because he brought sacrificial animals and did not leave ihram until the Day of Sacrifice. The narrations that mention Ifrad are explained as referring to the start of his ihram or to the acts of Hajj themselves.

The schools also differ on which method is best for the Ummah: the Hanafi school prefers Qiran; the Maliki and Shafi'i schools prefer Ifrad (with certain conditions in the Shafi'i school); and the Hanbali school prefers Tamattu', based on the saying of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: "If I had known at the start what I came to know later, I would not have brought the sacrificial animals, and I would have made it 'Umrah" (Sahih Muslim 1218).

All three methods are valid by consensus. Most Malaysian pilgrims today perform Hajj Tamattu' because they arrive early in the Holy Land. Prospective pilgrims are advised to follow the guidance of their Hajj course and the school they follow.

Reference: Sahih Muslim 1251; Sahih al-Bukhari 1534; Sahih Muslim 1211; Ibn al-Qayyim, Zad al-Ma'ad; al-Nawawi, Sharh Sahih Muslim.

LESSON

One Hajj of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave rise to three valid methods. This shows the breadth of the Shari'ah: Allah did not confine worship to one form only, and differences of opinion that rest on evidence should be respected, not made a cause of dispute.

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THE PEOPLE OF THE FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE

Tens of thousands took part in the Farewell Pilgrimage, but a few names appear again and again in the authentic narrations. This table gathers them with their tribes, relationships and sources.

PERSON	TRIBE / RELATIONSHIP	ROLE IN THE STORY	SOURCE
Jabir ibn ʻAbdillah	Ansar, Khazraj (Banu Salimah)	Narrator of the longest hadith on the Prophet's ﷺ Hajj	Sahih Muslim 1218
ʻA'ishah bint Abi Bakr	Quraysh, Banu Taym; wife of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ	Menstruated at Sarif; ʻUmrah from at-Tanʻim after Hajj	Sahih al-Bukhari 305, 1785
Sawdah bint Zamʻah	Quraysh, Banu ʻAmir ibn Lu'ayy; wife of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ	Permitted to leave Muzdalifah early	Sahih al-Bukhari 1681
Safiyyah bint Huyayy	Banu an-Nadir; wife of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ	Menstruated before departure; the farewell tawaf was waived	Sahih al-Bukhari 1757
Fatimah bint Muhammad	Daughter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ; wife of ʻAli	Left ihram after ʻUmrah	Sahih Muslim 1218
ʻAli ibn Abi Talib	Quraysh, Banu Hashim; cousin and son-in-law of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ	Came from Yemen bringing sacrificial animals	Sahih Muslim 1218
Al-ʻAbbas ibn ʻAbd al-Muttalib	Banu Hashim; uncle of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ	Permitted to spend the nights in Makkah for the duty of siqayah	Sahih al-Bukhari 1634
Al-Fadl ibn al-ʻAbbas	Banu Hashim; cousin of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ	Rode behind him from Muzdalifah to Mina	Sahih al-Bukhari 1544, 1513
Usamah ibn Zayd	Kalb (by descent); son of Zayd ibn Harithah, freed by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ	Rode behind him from ʻArafah to Muzdalifah; shaded him	Sahih al-Bukhari 1544; Sahih Muslim 1298
Bilal ibn Rabah	Of Abyssinian origin; freed by Abu Bakr	Called the adhan at ʻArafah; held the reins of his camel	Sahih Muslim 1218, 1298
Umm al-Husayn al-Ahmasiyyah	Bajilah (Ahmas)	Witnessed him stoning Jamrat al-ʻAqabah and narrated it	Sahih Muslim 1298
Abu Talhah al-Ansari	Ansar, Khazraj (Banu an-Najjar)	Given the Prophet's ﷺ hair after shaving to distribute	Sahih Muslim 1305
Asma' bint ʻUmays	Khathʻam; wife of Abu Bakr	Gave birth to Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr at Dhul-Hulayfah	Sahih Muslim 1218
ʻAbd ar-Rahman ibn Abi Bakr	Quraysh, Banu Taym; brother of ʻA'ishah	Took ʻA'ishah to at-Tanʻim for ʻUmrah	Sahih al-Bukhari 1785

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PERSON	TRIBE / RELATIONSHIP	ROLE IN THE STORY	SOURCE
A woman of Khath'am	Khath'am	Asked about Hajj on behalf of her elderly father	Sahih al-Bukhari 1513

Two young men rode behind the Messenger of Allah ﷺ at two stages of the journey: Usamah from 'Arafah to Muzdalifah, and al-Fadl from Muzdalifah to Mina (Sahih al-Bukhari 1544). Umm al-Husayn related that when he stoned Jamrat al-'Aqabah, one of Usamah and Bilal held the reins of his camel, and the other raised a cloth to shade him from the heat (Sahih Muslim 1298).

After shaving, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ handed his hair to Abu Talhah al-Ansari to distribute among the people (Sahih Muslim 1305). The Companions' love for him was such that even a single hair was treasured.

Reference: Sahih al-Bukhari 1544; Sahih Muslim 1298; Sahih Muslim 1305; Ibn Hajar, al-Isabah fi Tamyiz as-Sahabah.

LESSON

In one caravan were gathered family members, wives, freed slaves, the Ansar, women from distant tribes and young men. Each had a place and the attention of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Hajj gathers people regardless of rank.

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THE PILGRIMS' QUESTIONS AND THE EASE OF HAJJ

Throughout the Farewell Pilgrimage, people came to ask the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about their own situations. Chapter 26 related the questions on the Day of Sacrifice. This chapter gathers several other questions whose answers became the basis of rulings to this day.

HAJJ ON BEHALF OF AN INFIRM FATHER

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما narrated that a woman of Khath'am came in the year of the Farewell Pilgrimage and said: "O Messenger of Allah, the obligation of Hajj that Allah has prescribed for His servants has reached my father when he is very old and cannot sit firmly on a mount. May I perform Hajj on his behalf?" He said: "Yes." (Sahih al-Bukhari 1513)

This hadith is the evidence for hajj badal: performing Hajj on behalf of someone unable to do so because of a lasting infirmity or who has died. According to the Shafi'i and Hanbali schools, the person standing in must first have performed Hajj for himself.

THE HAJJ OF A CHILD

Ibn 'Abbas narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ met a group of riders at ar-Rawha'. A woman lifted up a child and asked: "Does this one have a Hajj?" He said: "Yes, and you will have a reward." (Sahih Muslim 1336)

The scholars explain that a child's Hajj is valid and rewarded, but it does not discharge the obligatory Hajj; he must perform Hajj again when he reaches puberty and is able.

HAJJ ONCE IN A LIFETIME

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave a sermon: "O people, Allah has made Hajj obligatory upon you, so perform Hajj." A man asked: "Every year, O Messenger of Allah?" He remained silent until the man repeated it three times. Then he said: "If I had said yes, it would have become obligatory, and you would not have been able to do it." (Sahih Muslim 1337)

A PILGRIM WHO DIED IN IHRAM

Ibn 'Abbas narrated that a man was standing at 'Arafah when he fell from his camel and died. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Wash him with water and lote leaves, shroud him in his two garments, do not perfume him and do not cover his head, for he will be raised on the Day of Resurrection reciting the talbiyah." (Sahih al-Bukhari 1265)

Every year some pilgrims die in the Holy Land. This hadith brings comfort to their families: death in ihram is a noble ending.

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NOTE: OTHER CONCESSIONS IN THIS BOOK

Several other concessions were discussed in earlier chapters: a woman who has just given birth continues her ihram (chapter 4), a menstruating woman performs all the rites except tawaf (chapter 8), the weak leave Muzdalifah early (chapter 21), and a menstruating woman who has already performed tawaf al-ifadah is excused from the farewell tawaf (chapter 30).

Reference: Sahih al-Bukhari 1513; Sahih Muslim 1336; Sahih Muslim 1337; Sahih al-Bukhari 1265.

LESSON

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ answered every question in a way that made things easier, and he disliked questions that added burdens. The Shari'ah of Hajj is built on ability: the infirm are substituted for, children are rewarded, and the obligation is only once in a lifetime.

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THE PLACES OF THE FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE: THEN AND NOW

Almost every place where the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stopped during the Farewell Pilgrimage still exists and is visited by millions of pilgrims every year. This table links the places in this story with their condition today.

PLACE	EVENT IN THE FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE	TODAY
Dhul-Hulayfah	Miqat; prayer and the start of the talbiyah; Asma' gave birth (chapter 4)	Known as Abyar 'Ali; the Miqat Mosque (Masjid ash-Shajarah) is about 14 km from al-Masjid an-Nabawi
Al-Bayda'	The talbiyah as the camel stood up (chapter 4)	High ground near Dhul-Hulayfah
Sarif	'A'ishah's menses began (chapter 8)	Near at-Tan'im, north of Makkah
Al-Masjid al-Haram	Tawaf, sa'i and tawaf al-ifadah (chapters 9–12, 27)	Expanded many times; the sa'i area is now multi-storey
Mina	The Day of Tarwiyah; the days of Tashriq (chapters 15, 28)	A city of tents; Masjid al-Khayf
Namirah and the Valley of 'Uranah	His tent; the sermon of 'Arafah (chapters 16–17)	Masjid Namirah; part of the building lies in the Valley of 'Uranah, outside the boundary of 'Arafah, and is marked with signs
'Arafah	The standing; verse 5:3 revealed (chapters 18–19)	Jabal ar-Rahmah; the boundaries are marked
Muzdalifah and al-Mash'ar al-Haram	The night stay and remembrance (chapters 21–22)	Masjid al-Mash'ar al-Haram
The Valley of Muhassir	He quickened his pace (chapter 22)	Marked between Muzdalifah and Mina
Jamrat al-'Aqabah and the Jamarat	Stoning (chapters 23, 28)	The five-storey Jamarat Bridge, built after the old bridge was demolished in 2006
At-Tan'im	'A'ishah's 'Umrah (chapter 30)	Masjid 'A'ishah; the place where Makkah's residents enter ihram for 'Umrah
Ghadir Khumm	The sermon on the return journey (chapter 32)	Near al-Juhfah, between Makkah and Madinah

The Jamarat Bridge today has five storeys, and its foundations were designed to carry up to twelve. Masjid Namirah covers about 110,000 square metres and can hold more than 400,000 worshippers. Inside it, signs mark the boundary of 'Arafah, because part of the mosque lies in the Valley of 'Uranah — the valley that, according to narrations in al-Muwatta' and Sunan Ibn Majah, is excluded from the place of standing.

Reference: Saudipedia, "Miqat Dhu al-Hulayfah"; Saudipedia, "How Many Floors Does the Jamaraat Bridge Have?"; Discover Makkah, "Namira Mosque"; Wikipedia, "Masjid al-Namirah".

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LESSON

The places of Hajj have changed in appearance, but the rites remain as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught them. A pilgrim who knows the history of each place will feel as though he is following his footsteps one by one.

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DAY-BY-DAY TIMELINE

This table arranges the journey of the Farewell Pilgrimage day by day, based on the hadith of Jabir (Sahih Muslim 1218) and other narrations. Some dates are estimates of the sirah authors and are marked as such.

DATE (10 AH)	EVENT	SOURCE
25 Dhul-Qa'dah	Left Madinah after Zuhr; prayed 'Asr as two rak'ahs at Dhul-Hulayfah and spent the night there	Sahih al-Bukhari 1545; books of sirah
26 Dhul-Qa'dah	Entered ihram and began the talbiyah; Asma' bint 'Umays gave birth	Sahih Muslim 1218
Around 3 Dhul-Hijjah	'A'ishah's menses began at Sarif	Sahih al-Bukhari 305
4 Dhul-Hijjah	Entered Makkah; tawaf and sa'i; those without sacrificial animals left ihram	Sahih al-Bukhari 1545; Sahih Muslim 1218
5–7 Dhul-Hijjah	He stayed at al-Abtah; 'Ali arrived from Yemen	Sahih Muslim 1218
8 Dhul-Hijjah (Tarwiyah)	To Mina; prayed from Zuhr until Fajr the next day there	Sahih Muslim 1218
9 Dhul-Hijjah (Friday)	Namirah; sermon in the Valley of 'Uranah; Zuhr and 'Asr combined; standing until sunset; Al-Ma'idah 5:3 revealed	Sahih Muslim 1218; Sahih al-Bukhari 45
Night of 10 Dhul-Hijjah	Muzdalifah: Maghrib and 'Isha' combined, slept until Fajr	Sahih Muslim 1218
10 Dhul-Hijjah (Sacrifice)	Al-Mash'ar al-Haram, the Valley of Muhassir, Jamrat al-'Aqabah, sacrifice, shaving, tawaf al-ifadah, the sermon of the Day of Sacrifice	Sahih Muslim 1218; Sahih al-Bukhari 1739
11–13 Dhul-Hijjah (Tashriq)	Stoning the three Jamarat after the sun passed the meridian	Sahih al-Bukhari 1751
13 Dhul-Hijjah	Left Mina and stopped at al-Muhassab (al-Abtah)	Books of sirah
Night of 14 Dhul-Hijjah	'A'ishah performed 'Umrah from at-Tan'im	Sahih al-Bukhari 1785
14 Dhul-Hijjah	The farewell tawaf and departure for Madinah	Sahih al-Bukhari 1755
18 Dhul-Hijjah	The sermon at Ghadir Khumm (date according to the books of sirah)	Sahih Muslim 2408; books of sirah
End of Dhul-Hijjah	Arrival in Madinah	Books of sirah

LESSON

The whole Farewell Pilgrimage lasted about a month, yet every day was filled with lessons. A pilgrim today who understands this sequence will be calmer, because he knows what is done on each day and why.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE

1. WHY IS THIS HAJJ CALLED THE FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE?

Because the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was as if bidding farewell to the Ummah, and he passed away about three months later (Sahih al-Bukhari 4402; chapter 2).

2. HOW MANY TIMES DID THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ PERFORM HAJJ AFTER THE HIJRAH?

Only once: the Farewell Pilgrimage in 10 AH (chapter 1).

3. WHICH TYPE OF HAJJ DID THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ PERFORM?

Most leading scholars hold that it was Qiran, because he brought sacrificial animals and pronounced the talbiyah for 'Umrah and Hajj; some hold that it was Ifrad (Sahih Muslim 1251, 1211; chapter 33).

4. HOW MANY PILGRIMS TOOK PART IN THE FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE?

No figure is given in an authentic hadith. The books of sirah mention estimates such as 90,000 and 114,000; what is certain is that they were very many (Sahih Muslim 1218; chapter 7).

5. WHEN WAS THE VERSE "THIS DAY I HAVE PERFECTED FOR YOU YOUR RELIGION" REVEALED?

On the afternoon of the Day of 'Arafah, a Friday, while the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was standing (Sahih al-Bukhari 45; chapter 18).

6. WHAT DOES "TAKE YOUR RITES FROM ME" MEAN?

Every act in the Hajj of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is a guide. He said it while stoning Jamrat al-'Aqabah (Sahih Muslim 1297; chapter 23).

7. MAY A PERSON PERFORM HAJJ ON BEHALF OF HIS PARENTS?

Yes, if the parents have a lasting infirmity or have died, and (according to the Shafi'i and Hanbali schools) he has performed Hajj himself (Sahih al-Bukhari 1513; chapter 35).

8. IS A CHILD'S HAJJ VALID?

It is valid and rewarded, but he must perform the obligatory Hajj when he reaches puberty and is able (Sahih Muslim 1336; chapter 35).

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9. WHAT IF THE ORDER OF THE RITES ON THE DAY OF SACRIFICE IS MIXED UP?

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ answered "Do it, there is no harm" to those who did something earlier or later (Sahih al-Bukhari 1736; chapter 26).

10. MAY A MENSTRUATING WOMAN PERFORM HAJJ?

Yes; she performs all the rites except tawaf until she is pure, and she is excused from the farewell tawaf if she has already performed tawaf al-ifadah (Sahih al-Bukhari 305, 1757; chapters 8, 30).

11. WHERE DID THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ GIVE HIS SERMON ON THE DAY OF 'ARAFAH?

In the Valley of 'Uranah, near the site of today's Masjid Namirah (Sahih Muslim 1218; chapters 17, 36). The content of that sermon is explained in Series 29.

12. HOW MANY CAMELS DID THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ SACRIFICE?

One hundred; he slaughtered sixty-three with his own hand and 'Ali slaughtered the rest (Sahih Muslim 1218; chapter 24).

LESSON

Questions about Hajj will never run out, but their answers return to one source: what the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did and taught. That was his counsel in this farewell pilgrimage.

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

The Farewell Pilgrimage was not merely an act of worship; it was ***the greatest open classroom*** in Islamic history, where the Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught tens of thousands in person. His rites can be summarised as follows:

DATE AND PLACE	WHAT THE PROPHET ﷺ DID
25 Dhul-Qa'dah, Dhul-Hulayfah	Bath, ihram, prayer, talbiyah
4 Dhul-Hijjah, Makkah	Tawaf of arrival (ramal), prayer at the Station, sa'i
8 Dhul-Hijjah, Mina	Five prayers, shortened, not combined
9 Dhul-Hijjah, 'Arafah	Sermon, Zuhr–'Asr combined, standing until sunset
Night of the 10th, Muzdalifah	Maghrib–'Isha' combined, sleep, early Fajr
10 Dhul-Hijjah, Mina	Stone al-'Aqabah, sacrifice, shave, sermon
10 Dhul-Hijjah, Makkah	Tawaf al-ifadah, drinking Zamzam
11–13 Dhul-Hijjah, Mina	Stone three jamarat, long supplication
14 Dhul-Hijjah, Makkah	Farewell tawaf, return to Madinah

From this journey we can draw the following lessons:

LESSON	FROM THIS BOOK
Following the Sunnah	"Take your rites from me"
Pure tawhid	The talbiyah, as-Safa, the Station of Ibrahim
Worship, not superstition	'Umar and the Black Stone
Equality	All stand at 'Arafah; Usamah rides behind
Ease	"Do it, there is no harm"
Calm	"O people, calmly, calmly!"
Care for women	'A'ishah, Asma', Sawdah, Safiyyah
The religion is complete	Al-Ma'idah 5:3 at 'Arafah

HAJJ IN OUR LIVES

Not everyone is able to perform Hajj, but every Muslim can carry ***the spirit of Hajj*** in his life: answering Allah's call with "Labbayk", affirming His oneness in every affair, guarding the tongue from quarrels, staying calm amid life's crowds, and always ***following the example of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ in worship. And for those who are able, let them not delay it.

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In sha Allah, the series **The Prophet's Sirah** will continue with ***Book 29 — The Farewell Sermon***: a full explanation of the sermons of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ at 'Arafah and Mina — the sanctity of life, property and honour, the abolition of usury and pagan vendettas, the rights of women, human equality, and the counsel to hold fast to the Book of Allah. And Allah knows best.

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PART EIGHT

The Farewell Sermon

The Prophet's Sirah — Series 29

The Prophet's ﷺ Counsel at 'Arafah and Mina: Human Dignity, Women's Rights, Equality and His Final Charge to the Ummah, According to the Qur'an and Authentic Hadith

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THE FAREWELL SERMON

Book 28 followed the Messenger of Allah ﷺ step by step through the Farewell Pilgrimage — from Madinah to Dhul-Hulayfah, Makkah, Mina, 'Arafah, Muzdalifah and back. In the midst of those rites, he stopped several times to ***address*** tens of thousands of pilgrims. These addresses are known as ***the Farewell Sermon (Khutbat al-Wada')***.

This Book 29 explains the contents of those sermons theme by theme: ***the sanctity of life, property and honour***; ***the abolition of usury and pagan vendettas***; ***the rights of women and the household***; ***lineage, wills and debts***; ***holding fast to the Book of Allah***; ***equality and brotherhood***; and the great charge: ***"Let the one present convey to the one absent."***

We will use only wordings that are ***sahih or hasan*** from the books of hadith. There is a widely circulated text of the "Farewell Sermon" presented as one long, complete speech; parts of it are authentic, parts come from sirah books without a strong chain. Chapter 29 will examine those popular wordings one by one.

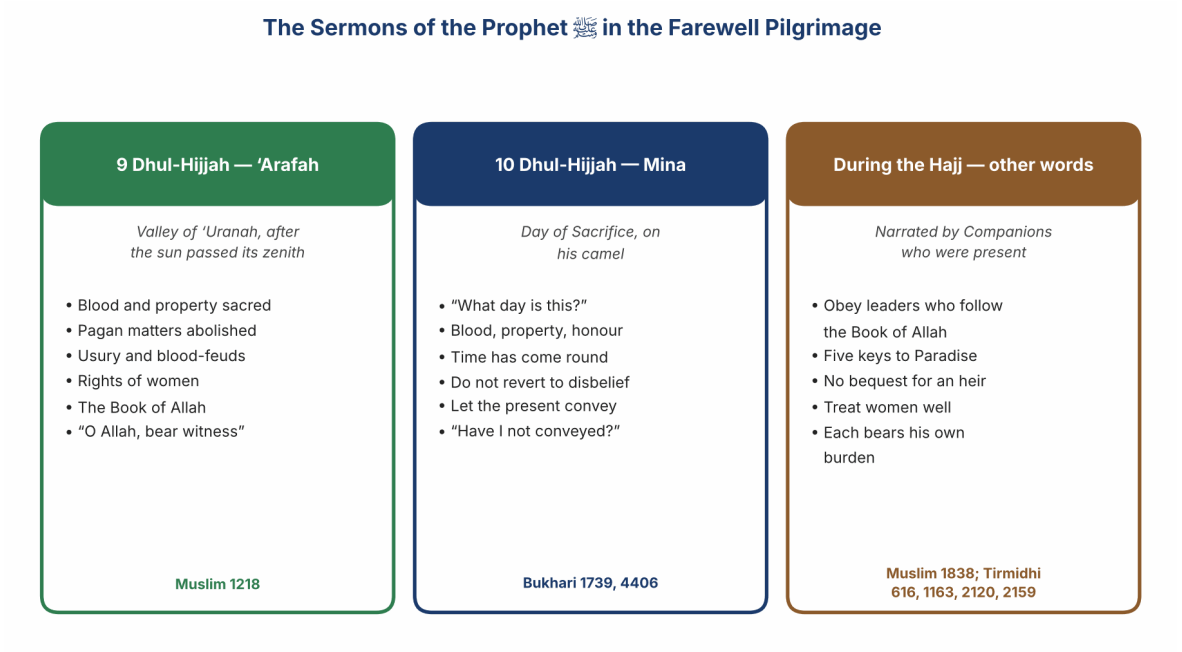

Figure 1: The sermons of the Prophet ﷺ in the Farewell Pilgrimage.

Note: The Qur'anic translation in this eBook is Sahih International. The grade of every Hadith is stated in its box. Wordings of the sermon found in sirah books without a strong chain are placed in brown "Sirah Note" boxes with an explanation of their grade.

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THE SERMONS OF THE FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE

Many assume the Farewell Sermon was a single speech. In fact, authentic hadiths show that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ addressed the people ***more than once*** during that Hajj. The most famous is ***the sermon at 'Arafah*** on 9 Dhul-Hijjah, in the bottom of the valley of 'Uranah, after the sun passed its zenith and before the Zuhr and 'Asr prayers (Sahih Muslim 1218).

The second sermon was at ***Mina on the Day of Sacrifice*** (10 Dhul-Hijjah), when he asked "What day is this?" (Sahih al-Bukhari 1739). Abu Bakrah رضى الله عنه mentions that he spoke from his camel while a man held its rein (Sahih al-Bukhari 67). Scholars also mention a sermon on ***the days of Tashriq*** at Mina.

In addition, the Companions present — Jabir, Abu Bakrah, Ibn 'Abbas, Ibn 'Umar, Jarir, Abu Umamah, 'Amr ibn al-Ahwas, Umm al-Husayn and many others — each narrated ***the part they heard***. When these narrations are gathered, a complete picture emerges of the final counsel of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to his Ummah.

Why did he speak on these days? Because this was ***the largest gathering*** of Muslims in his lifetime: representatives of almost every tribe in Arabia were in one place. A message delivered here would be carried home to every corner of the land.

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HOW DO WE KNOW THIS SERMON?

Below are the main sources for the wording of the Farewell Sermon used in this eBook, with their narrators and grades:

SOURCE	NARRATOR AND MAIN CONTENT
Sahih Muslim 1218	Jabir — the 'Arafah sermon: blood, property, usury, women, the Book of Allah
Sahih al-Bukhari 4406, 67	Abu Bakrah — Day of Sacrifice: time has come round, sanctity, convey
Sahih al-Bukhari 1739	Ibn 'Abbas — "that was his final counsel to his Ummah"
Sahih al-Bukhari 121	Jarir — "do not revert to disbelief after me"
Sahih Muslim 1838	Umm al-Husayn — obey leaders who follow the Book of Allah
Tirmidhi 1163, 2159, 3087	'Amr ibn al-Ahwas — women, usury, personal responsibility
Tirmidhi 616, 2120	Abu Umamah — five keys to Paradise; wills, lineage, debts
Musnad Ahmad	A Companion — no superiority of Arab over non-Arab

This table shows something remarkable: a sermon delivered more than 1,400 years ago reaches us through ***multiple Companions, with connected chains***, recorded in books examined by hadith scholars generation after generation. No other ancient leader's speech has been preserved in this way.

SIRAH NOTE: THE "COMPLETE" TEXT OF THE FAREWELL SERMON

The complete, continuous text of the Farewell Sermon, as often recited, comes mostly from ***Ibn Ishaq's as-Sirah*** (via Ibn Hisham) and other sirah books, which gather various wordings into one speech. Some of its wording is supported by authentic hadith; some is narrated without a connected chain.

We therefore do not reject that text wholesale, but ***give priority to authentic wordings***, and state the grade of others where needed (see Chapter 29).

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Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Farewell Pilgrimage; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah; Ibn al-Qayyim, Zad al-Ma'ad.

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"ASK THE PEOPLE TO BE SILENT"

How could one man's voice reach tens of thousands without a loudspeaker? The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used two means. First, he asked the people to ***be silent and listen***. Jarir ibn 'Abdullah رضى الله عنه narrates:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 121

حَدَّثَنَا حَجَّاجٌ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ مُدْرِكٍ، عَنْ أَبِي زُرْعَةَ، عَنْ جَرِيرٍ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ لَهُ فِي حَجَّةِ الْوَدَاعِ اسْتَنْصِتِ النَّاسَ فَقَالَ لاَ تَرْجِعُوا بَعْدِي كُفَّارًا يَضْرِبُ بَعْضُكُمْ رِقَابَ بَعْضٍ.

TRANSLATION:

Jarir ibn 'Abdullah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said to him during the Farewell Pilgrimage: ***"Ask the people to be silent (and listen)."*** Then he said: ***"Do not revert after me to disbelief, striking one another's necks."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Hajjaj ibn Minhal, from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from 'Ali ibn Mudrik, from Abu Zur'ah ibn 'Amr ibn Jarir, from Jarir ibn 'Abdullah al-Bajali رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Knowledge, Chapter: Keeping silent to listen to scholars, Hadith No. 121; also No. 4405 and Muslim No. 65.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:121

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Imam al-Bukhari placed this hadith in ***the Book of Knowledge***, under the chapter "Keeping silent to listen to scholars". The first etiquette of seeking knowledge is ***listening attentively***. Before delivering the most important message of his life, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ made sure the atmosphere was calm and hearts were ready.

SIRAH NOTE: THOSE WHO RELAYED HIS VOICE

The sirah books mention a second means: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had ***relayers*** who repeated his words loudly so that those far away could hear. Ibn Ishaq names ***Rabi'ah ibn Umayyah ibn Khalaf*** as the one who repeated the sermon at 'Arafah. In a narration of Abu Dawud, 'Ali رضى الله عنه is mentioned relaying his words at Mina.

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These reports are found in sirah books and the Sunan, with varying grades; yet their meaning is reasonable, since without relayers a single human voice could not reach so vast a crowd.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Farewell Pilgrimage; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah; Ibn al-Qayyim, Zad al-Ma'ad.

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"WHAT DAY IS THIS?"

At Mina on the Day of Sacrifice, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ began his sermon in an extraordinary way: ***asking questions whose answers everyone already knew***. Abu Bakrah رضى الله عنه narrates:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4406

حَدَّثَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْوَهَّابِ، حَدَّثَنَا أَيُّوبُ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ أَبِي بَكْرَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي بَكْرَةَ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ الزَّمَانُ قَدِ اسْتَدَارَ كَهَيْئَةِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالأَرْضَ، السَّنَةُ اثْنَا عَشَرَ شَهْرًا مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ حُرُمٌ ثَلاَثَةٌ مُتَوَالِيَاتٌ ذُو الْقَعْدَةِ وَذُو الْحِجَّةِ وَالْمُحَرَّمُ، وَرَجَبُ مُضَرَ الَّذِي بَيْنَ جُمَادَى وَشَعْبَانَ، أَىُّ شَهْرٍ هَذَا قُلْنَا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ. فَسَكَتَ حَتَّى ظَنَنَّا أَنَّهُ سَيُسَمِّيهِ بِغَيْرِ اسْمِهِ. قَالَ أَلَيْسَ ذُو الْحِجَّةِ. قُلْنَا بَلَى. قَالَ فَأَىُّ بَلَدٍ هَذَا. قُلْنَا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ، فَسَكَتَ حَتَّى ظَنَنَّا أَنَّهُ سَيُسَمِّيهِ بِغَيْرِ اسْمِهِ. قَالَ أَلَيْسَ الْبَلْدَةَ. قُلْنَا بَلَى. قَالَ فَأَىُّ يَوْمٍ هَذَا قُلْنَا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ، فَسَكَتَ حَتَّى ظَنَنَّا أَنَّهُ سَيُسَمِّيهِ بِغَيْرِ اسْمِهِ. قَالَ أَلَيْسَ يَوْمَ النَّحْرِ. قُلْنَا بَلَى. قَالَ فَإِنَّ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَأَمْوَالَكُمْ ـ قَالَ مُحَمَّدٌ وَأَحْسِبُهُ قَالَ وَأَعْرَاضَكُمْ ـ عَلَيْكُمْ حَرَامٌ كَحُرْمَةِ يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا، فِي بَلَدِكُمْ هَذَا، فِي شَهْرِكُمْ هَذَا وَسَتَلْقَوْنَ رَبَّكُمْ، فَيَسْأَلُكُمْ عَنْ أَعْمَالِكُمْ، أَلاَ فَلاَ تَرْجِعُوا بَعْدِي ضُلاَّلاً، يَضْرِبُ بَعْضُكُمْ رِقَابَ بَعْضٍ، أَلاَ لِيُبَلِّغِ الشَّاهِدُ الْغَائِبَ، فَلَعَلَّ بَعْضَ مَنْ يُبَلَّغُهُ أَنْ يَكُونَ أَوْعَى لَهُ مِنْ بَعْضِ مَنْ سَمِعَهُ ـ فَكَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ إِذَا ذَكَرَهُ يَقُولُ صَدَقَ مُحَمَّدٌ صلى الله عليه وسلم ثُمَّ قَالَ ـ أَلاَ هَلْ بَلَّغْتُ. مَرَّتَيْنِ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Bakrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: ***"Time has come round to its form on the day Allah created the heavens and the earth. The year is twelve months, four of which are sacred: three in succession — Dhul-Qa'dah, Dhul-Hijjah and Muharram — and the Rajab of Mudar, which is between Jumada and Sha'ban."*** He asked: "Which month is this?" We said: "Allah and His Messenger know best." He was silent until we thought he would give it another name. He said: "Is it not Dhul-Hijjah?" We said: "Yes." He asked: "Which land is this?"… "Is it not al-Baldah (Makkah)?" … "Which day is this?"… "Is it not the Day of Sacrifice?" We said: "Yes." He said: ***"Then your blood, your property — Muhammad (the narrator) said: I think he also said: and your honour — are sacred to you, like the sanctity of this day of yours, in this land of yours, in this month of yours. You will meet your Lord and He will ask you about your deeds. Beware, do not go astray after me, striking one another's necks. Let the one present convey***

to the one absent; perhaps some of those to whom it is conveyed will understand it better than some who heard it." Then he said twice: ***"Have I not conveyed?"***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Muhammad ibn al-Muthanna, from 'Abd al-Wahhab ath-Thaqafi, from Ayyub as-Sakhtiyani, from Muhammad ibn Sirin, from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Abi Bakrah, from Abu Bakrah Nufay' ibn al-Harith رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions, Chapter: The Farewell Pilgrimage, Hadith No. 4406; also No. 67, 105, 1741, 3197, 4662 and Muslim No. 1679.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4406

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Notice his teaching method: ***a question, then silence***. The Companions answered "Allah and His Messenger know best", and he was silent until they thought the day would be renamed. That silence ***captured attention*** and prepared minds to receive something important.

Then he linked something ***already believed*** — the sanctity of the Day of Sacrifice, the month of Dhul-Hijjah and the land of Makkah — with something ***that had to be believed***: the sanctity of every Muslim's blood, property and honour. The Arabs had long honoured that day, month and place. Now he said: ***people are more sacred still***.

This method is known in modern education as ***linking new learning to prior knowledge***. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used it more than 1,400 years ago, and the result: his words were memorised and narrated by many Companions in almost identical wording.

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THE SANCTITY OF LIFE

The first thing mentioned in the sermons at 'Arafah and Mina was ***blood*** — that is, human life. In pagan society, a life could be lost over a camel, a line of poetry or an inherited vendetta. The War of Basus between Bakr and Taghlib is said to have lasted decades over a single camel. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ declared that the blood of every Muslim is ***sacred*** like the most sacred day, month and land.

The Qur'an had long established this principle: ***"And do not kill the soul which Allah has forbidden, except by right"*** (Al-Isra' 17:33) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 17:33.

Indeed, one life is equated with all of humanity: ***"whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land - it is as if he had slain mankind entirely"*** (Al-Ma'idah 5:32) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 5:32.

The Farewell Sermon made this Qur'anic principle ***a public law*** proclaimed before the whole Ummah. No life could any longer be taken because of tribe, status or vendetta. Only ***a just court*** based on the Shari'ah could decide punishment, not individuals or tribes.

Today, when human life is so cheap in many places — in war, crime and terrorism — this message remains relevant. A Muslim who understands the Farewell Sermon will never deem anyone's blood lawful in the name of religion, for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself declared it ***sacred***.

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THE SANCTITY OF PROPERTY

After blood, he mentioned ***property***. In pagan society, raiding caravans and seizing other tribes' wealth was a source of pride. Now the Messenger of Allah ﷺ declared that every Muslim's property is ***sacred and may not be taken without right***, just like his life.

"O you who have believed, do not consume one another's wealth unjustly but only [in lawful] business by mutual consent" (An-Nisa' 4:29) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 4:29.

The sanctity of property covers many aspects of modern life: ***no cheating in trade, no bribery, no taking public funds, no delaying debts without cause***, and no encroaching on others' land or intellectual property. All of it falls under "your property is sacred to one another".

Note that he mentioned ***blood and property together***. In Islam, protecting another's property is no small matter; it ranks with protecting his life. Indeed, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said that whoever is killed defending his property is a martyr (Sahih al-Bukhari 2480).

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THE SANCTITY OF HONOUR

In the narrations of Abu Bakrah and Ibn 'Abbas, he added a third thing: ***'ird*** — honour or dignity. A person's honour is violated when he is ***backbitten, slandered, insulted or humiliated***. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ placed it alongside blood and property.

In another hadith he said: ***"All of a Muslim is sacred to another Muslim: his blood, his wealth and his honour"*** (Sahih Muslim 2564). In the same hadith he said: "Piety is here" — pointing to his chest three times — "it is evil enough for a man to look down on his Muslim brother."

In the age of social media, this message is urgent. One post, one screenshot or one rumour can ***destroy someone's honour*** within minutes and spread to thousands. A Muslim who understands the Farewell Sermon will think twice before sharing anything that stains another's name.

Blood, property and honour — these three cover a person's ***physical, economic and social security***. Scholars later formulated the ***Maqasid ash-Shari'ah*** (objectives of the Shari'ah): protecting religion, life, intellect, lineage and property. The Farewell Sermon is among the clearest foundations of this framework.

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"UNDER MY FEET"

At 'Arafah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Behold, everything of the matters of ignorance is under my feet, abolished."*** (Sahih Muslim 1218) The expression "under my feet" is an Arabic idiom meaning ***completely annulled*** and of no further worth.

What were these "matters of ignorance"? They included ***pride in lineage***, ***inherited vendettas***, ***oppressive usury***, ***mistreatment of women***, ***arbitrary tampering with the calendar***, and ***customs of shirk in worship***. All had been addressed one by one over twenty-three years of da'wah, and were now formally declared ended.

This did not mean all Arab customs were abolished. Good customs — generosity, honouring guests, keeping promises, courage — were ***kept and purified***. What was abolished was what contradicted tawhid and justice. This is Islam's attitude to culture: ***filtering, not erasing***.

For us today, every society has its own "jahiliyyah": bribery taken as normal, racism, extravagance at celebrations, or customs that wrong women. The spirit of the Farewell Sermon calls us to put all of that ***"under our feet"***.

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PAGAN BLOOD-FEUDS ABOLISHED

He continued: ***"And the blood-claims of ignorance are abolished. The first of our blood-claims I abolish is that of Ibn Rabi'ah ibn al-Harith, who was nursed among Banu Sa'd and killed by Hudhayl."*** (Sahih Muslim 1218)

Ibn Rabi'ah was ***a relative of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself*** from Banu Hashim. By pagan custom, his family had the right to take revenge on the tribe of Hudhayl, a vendetta that could be inherited for generations. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ chose to ***begin the forgiveness with his own family***, before asking others to do the same.

This is ***leadership by example***. A leader who asks the people to sacrifice while exempting his own family loses their trust. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did the opposite: the first burden was placed on the shoulders of his own family.

The abolition of blood-feuds ended ***a cycle of violence*** that had ravaged the Arab tribes for centuries. In its place, Islam gave just retribution through the authorities, with the door of ***forgiveness and blood-money*** wide open.

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THE USURY OF AL-'ABBAS ABOLISHED

Then he said: ***"And the usury of ignorance is abolished. The first of our usury I abolish is that of al-'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib; it is abolished entirely."*** (Sahih Muslim 1218) Al-'Abbas, his uncle, was a wealthy merchant who had lent at interest in pagan times.

The Qur'an had commanded: ***"O you who have believed, fear Allah and give up what remains [due to you] of interest, if you should be believers"*** (Al-Baqarah 2:278) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 2:278.

In the narration of 'Amr ibn al-Ahwas, he explained: ***"You may have your principal; you do no wrong, nor are you wronged"*** (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3087 — hasan). This matches the wording of verse 2:279. The lender does not lose his capital; only ***the oppressive increase*** is abolished.

Once again, he ***began with his own family***. The usury owed to al-'Abbas may have been large, but it was cancelled before anyone else's. Today, when the world's financial system depends heavily on interest, Muslims continue to build a just ***Islamic finance*** — an effort rooted in this proclamation at 'Arafah.

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"TIME HAS COME ROUND"

The sermon at Mina began with a statement about time: ***"Time has come round to its form on the day Allah created the heavens and the earth"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4406). What did it mean?

Allah says: ***"Indeed, the number of months with Allah is twelve [lunar] months"*** (At-Tawbah 9:36) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:36.

As we saw in Book 27, the pagan Arabs practised ***an-Nasi'*** — postponing sacred months and adding months — until the calendar no longer matched the true months. In the year of the Farewell Pilgrimage, by Allah's decree, the cycle ***came back exactly*** to its origin: the Hajj fell in the true Dhul-Hijjah.

He then named the four sacred months: ***Dhul-Qa'dah, Dhul-Hijjah, Muharram and Rajab***. With this declaration, the lunar Hijri calendar became ***fixed*** — no more additions or postponements. It is this calendar that Muslims use for fasting, Hajj and zakat to this day.

Note that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ began a sermon about human sanctity with ***the sanctity of time***.

The sacred months are times Allah has honoured; if even time has sanctity, how much more the people who live in it.

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"FEAR ALLAH CONCERNING WOMEN"

In the midst of the sermon at ʻArafah, before tens of thousands of Arab men, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave special attention to ***women***: ***"Fear Allah concerning women. You have taken them on the trust of Allah, and made their intimacy lawful by the word of Allah."*** (Sahih Muslim 1218)

A wife is ***a trust from Allah*** in her husband's hands. The marriage contract is not a sale, but a bond sealed in the name of Allah. Whoever betrays this trust betrays Allah. The same counsel is narrated by ʻAmr ibn al-Ahwas رضى الله عنه in more detail:

HADITH — JAMIʻ AL-TIRMIDHI, NO. 1163

حَدَّثَنَا الْحَسَنُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ الْخَلاَّلُ، حَدَّثَنَا الْحُسَيْنُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ الْجُعْفِيُّ، عَنْ زَائِدَةَ، عَنْ شَبِيبِ بْنِ غَرْقَدَةَ، عَنْ سُلَيْمَانَ بْنِ عَمْرِو بْنِ الأَحْوَصِ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي أَبِي أَنَّهُ، شَهِدَ حَجَّةَ الْوَدَاعِ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَحَمِدَ اللَّهَ وَأَثْنَى عَلَيْهِ وَذَكَّرَ وَوَعَظَ فَذَكَرَ فِي الْحَدِيثِ قِصَّةً فَقَالَ أَلاَ وَاسْتَوْصُوا بِالنِّسَاءِ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّمَا هُنَّ عَوَانٌ عِنْدَكُمْ لَيْسَ تَمْلِكُونَ مِنْهُنَّ شَيْئًا غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ إِلاَّ أَنْ يَأْتِينَ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبَيِّنَةٍ فَإِنْ فَعَلْنَ فَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ ضَرْبًا غَيْرَ مُبَرِّحٍ فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلاَ تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلاً أَلاَ إِنَّ لَكُمْ عَلَى نِسَائِكُمْ حَقًّا وَلِنِسَائِكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ حَقًّا فَأَمَّا حَقُّكُمْ عَلَى نِسَائِكُمْ أَلاَّ يُوطِئْنَ فُرُشَكُمْ مَنْ تَكْرَهُونَ وَلاَ يَأْذَنَّ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ لِمَنْ تَكْرَهُونَ أَلاَ وَحَقُّهُنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ تُحْسِنُوا إِلَيْهِنَّ فِي كِسْوَتِهِنَّ وَطَعَامِهِنَّ. قَالَ أَبُو عِيسَى هَذَا حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ صَحِيحٌ. وَمَعْنَى قَوْلِهِ عَوَانٌ عِنْدَكُمْ. يَعْنِي أَسْرَى فِي أَيْدِيكُمْ.

TRANSLATION:

Sulayman ibn ʻAmr ibn al-Ahwas said: My father told me that he attended the Farewell Pilgrimage with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He praised Allah, extolled Him, reminded and admonished… then said: ***"Behold, I enjoin you to treat women well, for they are like those in your care;*** you have no authority over them beyond that, unless they commit manifest indecency. If they do, then avoid them in bed and strike them in a way that causes no harm. If they obey you, then do not seek a way against them. ***Behold, you have rights over your wives, and your wives have rights over you.*** Your right over them is that they do not let anyone you dislike tread on your furnishings, nor admit into your homes anyone you dislike. ***Behold, their right over you is that you treat them well in their clothing and their food."*** Abu ʻIsa (at-Tirmidhi) said: This hadith is hasan sahih.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from al-Hasan ibn ʻAli al-Khallal, from al-Husayn ibn ʻAli al-Juʻfi, from Zaʼidah ibn Qudamah, from Shabib ibn Gharqadah, from Sulayman ibn ʻAmr ibn al-Ahwas, from his father, ʻAmr ibn al-Ahwas رضى الله عنه.

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REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in Jami' at-Tirmidhi, Book of Suckling, Chapter: The rights of the wife over her husband, Hadith No. 1163; also No. 3087 and Sunan Ibn Majah No. 1851.

GRADE: SAHIH — Imam at-Tirmidhi graded it hasan sahih; graded sahih by Darussalam.

Source: https://sunnah.com/tirmidhi:1163

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Imagine the impact of this counsel on a society which, before Islam, ***buried baby girls alive***, inherited a father's wives like property, and gave women no inheritance. At his farewell gathering, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ chose to ***remind men of women's rights***.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also said in another hadith: ***"The best of you are those best to their families, and I am the best of you to my family"*** (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3895 — sahih). The measure of a man's goodness is not outside the home, but ***how he treats his wife and family***.

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THE RIGHTS OF HUSBAND AND WIFE

The Farewell Sermon affirms that ***rights run both ways***: "You have rights over your wives, and your wives have rights over you." This matches the words of Allah:

"And due to the wives is similar to what is expected of them, according to what is reasonable" (Al-Baqarah 2:228) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 2:228.

HUSBAND'S RIGHTS	WIFE'S RIGHTS
She does not admit those he dislikes into the home	Good provision of food
She guards her honour and the household	Proper clothing
She does not spend his wealth without permission	Kind treatment (ma'ruf), never oppression

The Qur'an also commands husbands: ***"And live with them in kindness"*** (An-Nisa' 4:19) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 4:19.

The wife's rights in the sermon are qualified by the word ***"bil-ma'ruf"*** — in a good and fitting manner. It is not merely bare food and clothing, but treatment befitting the husband's means and the wife's dignity. The Muslim household is built on ***affection and mercy*** (Ar-Rum 30:21), not on power alone.

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UNDERSTANDING CORRECTION IN MARRIAGE

The hadith of the Farewell Sermon mentions steps if a wife commits ***manifest indecency***: separation in bed, then ***"a strike that causes no harm"***. This is often misunderstood, so it must be read together with ***its context and the Prophet's ﷺ own practice***.

First, it applies only to ***a grave and manifest offence***, not ordinary disagreement. Second, it is ***a last step*** after counsel and separation. Third, scholars of tafsir such as Ibn 'Abbas explained that it is ***not painful***, such as with a tooth-stick (siwak) — more a gesture of reproach than a punishment. It is ***forbidden*** on the face, and forbidden if it leaves a mark or injury.

Fourth — and most importantly — 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ never struck anything with his hand, neither a woman nor a servant, except when fighting in the path of Allah"*** (Sahih Muslim 2328). The example of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is ***never to strike at all***.

Therefore, domestic violence that hurts, injures or humiliates ***has no place in Islam***, and whoever commits it contradicts the very sermon that commands kindness to women. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also said of men who beat their wives: ***"Those are not the best among you"*** (Sunan Abi Dawud 2146 — sahih).

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LINEAGE, BEQUESTS AND INHERITANCE

The Farewell Sermon also touched on ***family law and inheritance***. Abu Umamah al-Bahili رضى الله عنه narrates what he heard:

HADITH — JAMI' AL-TIRMIDHI, NO. 2120

حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ حُجْرٍ، وَهَنَّادٌ، قَالاَ حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ بْنُ عَيَّاشٍ، حَدَّثَنَا شُرَحْبِيلُ بْنُ مُسْلِمٍ الْخَوْلاَنِيُّ، عَنْ أَبِي أُمَامَةَ الْبَاهِلِيِّ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فِي خُطْبَتِهِ عَامَ حَجَّةِ الْوَدَاعِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَعْطَى كُلَّ ذِي حَقٍّ حَقَّهُ فَلاَ وَصِيَّةَ لِوَارِثٍ الْوَلَدُ لِلْفِرَاشِ وَلِلْعَاهِرِ الْحَجَرُ وَحِسَابُهُمْ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَمَنِ ادَّعَى إِلَى غَيْرِ أَبِيهِ أَوِ انْتَمَى إِلَى غَيْرِ مَوَالِيهِ فَعَلَيْهِ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ التَّابِعَةُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لاَ تُنْفِقُ امْرَأَةٌ مِنْ بَيْتِ زَوْجِهَا إِلاَّ بِإِذْنِ زَوْجِهَا. قِيلَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَلاَ الطَّعَامَ قَالَ ذَلِكَ أَفْضَلُ أَمْوَالِنَا. ثُمَّ قَالَ الْعَارِيَةُ مُؤَدَّاةٌ وَالْمِنْحَةُ مَرْدُودَةٌ وَالدَّيْنُ مَقْضِيٌّ وَالزَّعِيمُ غَارِمٌ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Umamah al-Bahili رضى الله عنه said: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say in his sermon in the year of the Farewell Pilgrimage: ***"Allah has given every rightful person his right. So there is no bequest for an heir.*** The child belongs to the (lawful) bed, and for the fornicator is (nothing but) the stone, and their reckoning is with Allah. ***Whoever claims to be the son of other than his father***, or attaches himself to other than his patrons, upon him is the continuing curse of Allah until the Day of Resurrection. A woman may not spend anything from her husband's house without his permission." It was said: "O Messenger of Allah, not even food?" He said: "That is the best of our wealth." Then he said: ***"A borrowed item must be returned, a loaned benefit must be given back, a debt must be paid, and the guarantor is liable."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from 'Ali ibn Hujr and Hannad ibn as-Sari, from Isma'il ibn 'Ayyash, from Shurahbil ibn Muslim al-Khawlani, from Abu Umamah al-Bahili رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in Jami' at-Tirmidhi, Book of Wills, Chapter: No bequest for an heir, Hadith No. 2120; also Sunan Abi Dawud No. 2870 and Sunan Ibn Majah No. 2713.

GRADE: HASAN — Imam at-Tirmidhi graded it hasan sahih; graded hasan by Darussalam.

Source: https://sunnah.com/tirmidhi:2120

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

"Allah has given every rightful person his right" — that is, through the verses of inheritance in Surah An-Nisa'. Hence ***no bequest for an heir***: one may not increase a particular heir's share by bequest, for that would wrong the other heirs. Bequests are only for non-heirs, and not beyond a third of the estate.

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"The child belongs to the bed" means a child born within a valid marriage is attributed to the husband. This ***protects children and families*** from accusations and disputes that could destroy a home. In pagan times, men could claim another's child as their own through adultery; Islam closed that door.

He also cursed whoever ***claims descent from other than his father***. Changing one's lineage for worldly gain — status, wealth or pride — is a major sin. This also explains why Islam preserves ***the knowledge of lineage*** so carefully.

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TRUSTS, DEBTS AND GUARANTEES

At the end of Abu Umamah's narration, he mentioned four principles of dealings, brief yet vast in meaning: ***"A borrowed item must be returned, a loaned benefit must be given back, a debt must be paid, and the guarantor is liable."*** (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 2120)

PRINCIPLE	MEANING AND MODERN EXAMPLE
Borrowed items are returned	Books, vehicles or tools borrowed must be returned in good condition
Loaned benefits are given back	Something given for temporary use (like a milk-camel) is returned
Debts are paid	Personal loans, credit and study loans must be settled
The guarantor is liable	Whoever guarantees another's debt bears its risk

A strong society is built on ***trust***. When loans are not returned and debts are not paid, trust disappears, and people stop helping one another. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ emphasised debts so much that at first he would not pray the funeral prayer over someone who died in debt without leaving payment (Sahih al-Bukhari 2289).

This counsel was given in a Hajj sermon — an act of worship that wipes away sins. Yet scholars explain that ***rights owed to people, including debts, are not wiped away*** by Hajj; they must be paid or forgiven by their owners.

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THE BOOK OF ALLAH: A HOLD THAT NEVER FAILS

Towards the end of the sermon at 'Arafah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ left the most important thing to hold to: ***"And I have left among you something after which you will never go astray if you hold fast to it: the Book of Allah."*** (Sahih Muslim 1218)

"And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided" (Ali 'Imran 3:103) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 3:103.

Note the condition: ***"if you hold fast to it"***. Having the Qur'an on a shelf, or reciting it without understanding or acting on it, is not yet "holding fast". Holding fast means ***reading, understanding, acting upon and judging by*** it.

In his address at Ghadir Khumm a few days later (Book 28), he mentioned ***the Book of Allah*** and urged care for ***his household*** (Sahih Muslim 2408). This charge of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ shows that the Ummah's path to safety always begins with the Qur'an.

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"THE BOOK OF ALLAH AND MY SUNNAH"

Many have heard the wording ***"I have left among you two things; you will not go astray as long as you hold to them: the Book of Allah and my Sunnah."*** Is this wording from the Farewell Sermon? And is it authentic?

SIRAH NOTE: THE GRADE OF "THE BOOK OF ALLAH AND MY SUNNAH"

This wording is narrated by Imam Malik in ***al-Muwatta'*** as a ***balagh*** ("it reached me") without a chain, and by al-Hakim in al-Mustadrak with a debated chain. Some scholars graded it hasan due to supporting routes. In Sahih Muslim, the wording of the 'Arafah sermon mentions only ***"the Book of Allah"***.

Nevertheless, ***its meaning is true and agreed upon***: the Qur'an itself commands obedience to the Messenger and referral to his Sunnah. The Book of Allah cannot be properly understood and practised without the explanation of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

REFERENCES:

Malik, al-Muwatta', Book of Decree; al-Hakim, al-Mustadrak; al-Albani, Silsilat al-Ahadith as-Sahihah.

Allah says: ***"obey Allah and obey the Messenger"*** (An-Nisa' 4:59) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 4:59.

How do we know how to pray, the number of rak'ahs, the rates of zakat or how to perform Hajj? The Qur'an commands them generally; ***the Sunnah explains them in detail***. The Farewell Pilgrimage itself is an example: Allah says "complete the Hajj", and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said "take your rites from me" (Book 28).

Thus whoever claims the Qur'an alone is enough and rejects the Sunnah is in fact ***not holding to the Qur'an***, for it is the Qur'an itself that commands obedience to the Messenger. Both are ***one hold*** that cannot be separated.

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FIVE KEYS TO PARADISE

Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه, who was thirty years old at the Farewell Pilgrimage, remembered a short but complete counsel on ***the path to Paradise***:

HADITH — JAMI' AL-TIRMIDHI, NO. 616

حَدَّثَنَا مُوسَى بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ الْكِنْدِيُّ الْكُوفِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا زَيْدُ بْنُ الْحُبَابِ، أَخْبَرَنَا مُعَاوِيَةُ بْنُ صَالِحٍ، حَدَّثَنِي سُلَيْمُ بْنُ عَامِرٍ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ أَبَا أُمَامَةَ، يَقُولُ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَخْطُبُ فِي حَجَّةِ الْوَدَاعِ فَقَالَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ رَبَّكُمْ وَصَلُّوا خَمْسَكُمْ وَصُومُوا شَهْرَكُمْ وَأَدُّوا زَكَاةَ أَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَطِيعُوا ذَا أَمْرِكُمْ تَدْخُلُوا جَنَّةَ رَبِّكُمْ. قَالَ فَقُلْتُ لأَبِي أُمَامَةَ مُنْذُ كَمْ سَمِعْتَ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم هَذَا الْحَدِيثَ قَالَ سَمِعْتُهُ وَأَنَا ابْنُ ثَلاَثِينَ سَنَةً. قَالَ أَبُو عِيسَى هَذَا حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ صَحِيحٌ.

TRANSLATION:

Sulaym ibn 'Amir said: I heard Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه say: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ deliver a sermon during the Farewell Pilgrimage, and he said: ***"Fear Allah your Lord; pray your five prayers; fast your month; pay the zakat of your wealth; and obey those in charge of your affairs — you will enter the Paradise of your Lord."*** Sulaym said: I asked Abu Umamah: "How old were you when you heard this hadith from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ?" He said: "I heard it when I was thirty years old."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi: from Musa ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman al-Kindi al-Kufi, from Zayd ibn al-Hubab, from Mu'awiyah ibn Salih, from Sulaym ibn 'Amir, from Abu Umamah al-Bahili رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam at-Tirmidhi in Jami' at-Tirmidhi, Chapters on Travel, Hadith No. 616; at-Tirmidhi said: hasan sahih.

GRADE: HASAN — Imam at-Tirmidhi graded it hasan sahih; graded hasan by Darussalam.

Source: https://sunnah.com/tirmidhi:616

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

These five are ***the foundations of a Muslim's life***: taqwa (the heart's bond with Allah), the five daily prayers, the fast of Ramadan, zakat, and obedience to leaders in what is right. Nothing complicated or hidden; the path to Paradise is ***clear and open*** to anyone.

Notice the words ***"your five"*** and ***"your month"***. He attributed those acts of worship to the Ummah — "yours" — as if saying: these belong to you, guard them. After he was gone, these acts of worship would bind the Ummah to his teaching.

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This counsel also reminds us that ***consistent*** basic deeds are worth more than occasional extra deeds. A Muslim who sincerely guards these five is on the path the Messenger of Allah ﷺ showed in his final days.

The order of these five is also instructive. It begins with ***taqwa***, the inner state of the heart, and then moves to outward acts. Without taqwa, prayer becomes movement without presence, fasting becomes mere hunger, and zakat becomes a tax. With taqwa, every act becomes worship.

It ends with ***obedience to those in authority***, reminding the Ummah that personal piety must be joined with social order. A community of praying individuals who cannot cooperate under any leadership will fall apart; a community that obeys its leaders in what is right can carry the message forward together.

Abu Umamah's note that he was thirty years old when he heard these words also shows how carefully the Companions remembered the circumstances of what they heard. Such details help scholars verify narrations, and remind us that these words were heard by real people at a real moment in history.

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OBEYING LEADERS WHO FOLLOW THE BOOK OF ALLAH

In a tribal society obsessed with lineage, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ delivered a revolutionary principle of leadership. Umm al-Husayn رضى الله عنها heard it:

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1838

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى، حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ يَحْيَى بْنِ حُصَيْنٍ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ جَدَّتِي، تُحَدِّثُ أَنَّهَا سَمِعَتِ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَخْطُبُ فِي حَجَّةِ الْوَدَاعِ وَهُوَ يَقُولُ وَلَوِ اسْتُعْمِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَبْدٌ يَقُودُكُمْ بِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ فَاسْمَعُوا لَهُ وَأَطِيعُوا.

TRANSLATION:

Yahya ibn Husayn said: I heard my grandmother (Umm al-Husayn رضى الله عنها) relate that she heard the Prophet ﷺ deliver a sermon during the Farewell Pilgrimage, saying: ***"Even if a slave is appointed over you, as long as he leads you by the Book of Allah, listen to him and obey."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Muhammad ibn al-Muthanna, from Muhammad ibn Ja'far (Ghundar), from Shu'bah ibn al-Hajjaj, from Yahya ibn Husayn, from his grandmother, Umm al-Husayn al-Ahmasiyyah رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Leadership, Chapter: The obligation to obey rulers in what is not sinful, Hadith No. 1838; also No. 1298.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:1838a

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

This hadith contains two great lessons. First, ***fitness to lead is not based on lineage***. Even a former slave, if he leads by the Book of Allah, must be obeyed. This demolished the tribal arrogance that only nobles were fit to rule.

Second, obedience is ***conditional***: "as long as he leads you by the Book of Allah". In another hadith he said: ***"There is no obedience in sin; obedience is only in what is right"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 7257). Islam does not teach blind obedience, nor rebellion that leads to bloodshed.

This balance — obedience in good, refusal of sin, and preserving unity — is the foundation of ***the stability of Muslim society***. It was sorely needed right after the Prophet's ﷺ death, when the Ummah had to choose a new leader (Book 30).

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NO SUPERIORITY OF ARAB OVER NON-ARAB

One of the greatest principles associated with the Farewell Sermon is ***human equality***. Its basis is the word of Allah: ***"Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you"*** (Al-Hujurat 49:13) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 49:13.

SIRAH NOTE: "NO SUPERIORITY OF AN ARAB OVER A NON-ARAB"

Imam Ahmad narrates in al-Musnad from a Companion who heard the sermon of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ during the days of Tashriq: ***"O people, your Lord is one and your father is one. Behold, there is no superiority of an Arab over a non-Arab, nor of a non-Arab over an Arab, nor of a red-skinned over a black-skinned, nor of a black-skinned over a red-skinned, except by taqwa."***

This hadith was graded ***sahih*** by Shaykh al-Albani (Silsilat as-Sahihah 2700) and its chain was graded sahih by Shu'ayb al-Arna'ut in his edition of the Musnad. Its meaning agrees fully with verse 49:13 above.

REFERENCES:
Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Musnad (No. 23489); al-Albani, Silsilat al-Ahadith as-Sahihah 2700.

Imagine these words spoken among the people ***proudest of lineage*** in the world at that time. Arabs called others "'Ajam" — the mute, the inarticulate. Now they were told that language, skin colour and lineage ***give no superiority*** before Allah.

This principle had been practised before it was proclaimed: ***Bilal*** of Abyssinia was the Prophet's ﷺ muezzin; ***Salman*** of Persia was said to be "one of us, the household"; ***Suhayb*** of Rome and ***Usamah***, son of a freed slave, led and were honoured. At 'Arafah, this principle was announced to the whole Ummah.

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A MUSLIM IS THE BROTHER OF A MUSLIM

In the narration of ‘Amr ibn al-Ahwas about the sermon of the Farewell Pilgrimage, he said: ***“Behold, a Muslim is the brother of a Muslim; nothing of his brother is lawful for a Muslim except what he freely permits”*** (Jami‘ at-Tirmidhi 2159 — hasan).

Islamic brotherhood is not a mere slogan. In another hadith he explained its meaning: a Muslim ***does not wrong his brother, abandon him to be wronged, humiliate him or look down on him*** (Sahih Muslim 2564). Brotherhood carries ***rights and responsibilities***.

This brotherhood had been built since the first day in Madinah, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ made the Muhajirun and Ansar brothers (Book 8). At ‘Arafah, it was extended: now ***every Muslim in the world*** is a brother, regardless of tribe or nation.

Today the Ummah numbers nearly two billion, of many races, languages and schools. The Farewell Sermon reminds us that ***what unites us is greater*** than what divides us.

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"DO NOT REVERT TO DISBELIEF AFTER ME"

One counsel was repeated by many Companions in almost the same words: ***"Do not revert after me to disbelief, striking one another's necks."*** Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما swore that this was his final counsel to his Ummah:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 1739

حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، حَدَّثَنِي يَحْيَى بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا فُضَيْلُ بْنُ غَزْوَانَ، حَدَّثَنَا عِكْرِمَةُ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ ـ رضى الله عنهما ـ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم خَطَبَ النَّاسَ يَوْمَ النَّحْرِ فَقَالَ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ. أَىُّ يَوْمٍ هَذَا. قَالُوا يَوْمٌ حَرَامٌ. قَالَ فَأَىُّ بَلَدٍ هَذَا. قَالُوا بَلَدٌ حَرَامٌ. قَالَ فَأَىُّ شَهْرٍ هَذَا. قَالُوا شَهْرٌ حَرَامٌ. قَالَ فَإِنَّ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَأَمْوَالَكُمْ وَأَعْرَاضَكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ حَرَامٌ، كَحُرْمَةِ يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا، فِي بَلَدِكُمْ هَذَا فِي شَهْرِكُمْ هَذَا. فَأَعَادَهَا مِرَارًا، ثُمَّ رَفَعَ رَأْسَهُ فَقَالَ اللَّهُمَّ هَلْ بَلَّغْتُ اللَّهُمَّ هَلْ بَلَّغْتُ. قَالَ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ ـ رضى الله عنهما ـ فَوَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ إِنَّهَا لَوَصِيَّتُهُ إِلَى أُمَّتِهِ ـ فَلْيُبْلِغِ الشَّاهِدُ الْغَائِبَ، لاَ تَرْجِعُوا بَعْدِي كُفَّارًا يَضْرِبُ بَعْضُكُمْ رِقَابَ بَعْضٍ.

TRANSLATION:

Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ addressed the people on the Day of Sacrifice and said: "O people, what day is this?" They said: "A sacred day." He asked: "What land is this?" They said: "A sacred land." He asked: "What month is this?" They said: "A sacred month." He said: ***"Then your blood, your property and your honour are sacred to you, like the sanctity of this day of yours, in this land of yours, in this month of yours."*** He repeated it several times, then raised his head and said: ***"O Allah, have I conveyed? O Allah, have I conveyed?"*** Ibn 'Abbas said: ***"By Him in whose Hand is my soul, that was his final counsel to his Ummah"*** — "So let the one present convey to the one absent. Do not revert after me to disbelief, striking one another's necks."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Ali ibn 'Abdullah al-Madini, from Yahya ibn Sa'id al-Qattan, from Fudayl ibn Ghazwan, from 'Ikrimah, the freedman of Ibn 'Abbas, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Hajj, Chapter: The sermon on the days of Mina, Hadith No. 1739.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:1739

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LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Why is mutual killing called ***"disbelief"***? Scholars explain that it does not mean leaving Islam absolutely, but ***the deed of disbelievers*** — for killing one another was the trait of the Days of Ignorance, before Allah united their hearts through Islam. It shows how ***grave a sin*** it is for a Muslim to kill his brother.

It was as if the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had seen what would happen. Within a few decades of his death, the Ummah was tested with ***strife and civil war***. This counsel remains a warning to every generation: political, sectarian or worldly disagreements ***never make Muslim blood lawful***.

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SATAN AND THE SINS WE BELITTLE

In the narration of ‘Amr ibn al-Ahwas, he gave a subtle warning: ***“Behold, Satan has despaired of ever being worshipped in this land of yours, but he will be obeyed in deeds of yours that you consider trivial, and he will be content with that”*** (Jami‘ at-Tirmidhi 2159 — hasan).

In another hadith he said: ***“Satan has despaired of being worshipped by those who pray in the Arabian Peninsula, but (he strives) in sowing discord among them”*** (Sahih Muslim 2812).

These two hadiths reveal ***Satan’s strategy*** after the triumph of tawhid. When he could no longer make people worship idols, he turned to two paths: ***small sins*** considered trivial, and ***enmity among Muslims***. Both seem small, but can bring down an Ummah.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ once likened small sins to ***sticks of wood*** gathered one by one by a group of travellers until they could light a fire to cook their food (Musnad Ahmad — sahih). Sins considered trivial, if persisted in, can destroy.

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EACH BEARS HIS OWN BURDEN

In the same narration, he said: ***"Behold, no one commits a crime except against himself. Behold, a father is not held responsible for his son's crime, nor a son for his father's crime"*** (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 2159).

In the pagan tribal system, if someone killed, ***his whole tribe*** became the target of revenge — his brother, his son, even the completely innocent. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ abolished this concept of ***collective punishment***. Each person is responsible for his own deeds.

This principle is also in the Qur'an: ***"And no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another"*** (Al-An'am 6:164). It became the basis of criminal justice recognised worldwide today: ***punishment only for the offender***, not his family.

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"LET THE ONE PRESENT CONVEY"

Almost every narration of the Farewell Sermon ends with the same command: ***"Let the one present convey to the one absent."*** And he added: ***"Perhaps the one present will convey it to someone who understands it better than he does"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 67).

Imam al-Bukhari placed this hadith in the Book of Knowledge under the chapter: ***"The saying of the Prophet ﷺ: Perhaps one to whom it is conveyed understands better than one who heard."*** This is the foundation of ***hadith transmission***: the Companions conveyed to the Successors, the Successors to the next generation, until it reached us.

He also prayed for those who convey: ***"May Allah brighten the face of a man who hears my words, understands them, memorises them and conveys them"*** (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 2658 — sahih). Everyone who teaches, writes or shares authentic knowledge ***is included in this prayer***.

This command also carries a trust: what is conveyed must be ***accurate***. That is why hadith scholars were so meticulous in checking chains and wordings. In today's age of instant sharing, we must ***verify before we convey***, especially when attributing something to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

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"O ALLAH, BEAR WITNESS"

At the end of the sermon at 'Arafah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked: ***"You will be asked about me, so what will you say?"*** They said: "We bear witness that you have conveyed, fulfilled and counselled." He raised his forefinger to the sky, then pointed it at them: ***"O Allah, bear witness"*** — three times (Sahih Muslim 1218).

This was the fulfilment of Allah's command: ***"O Messenger, announce that which has been revealed to you from your Lord"*** (Al-Ma'idah 5:67) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 5:67.

For twenty-three years, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ conveyed the message in hardship and ease — mocked in Makkah, boycotted in Shi'b Abi Talib, stoned at Ta'if, fought at Badr, Uhud and the Trench. Now, before more than a hundred thousand witnesses, he asked: ***"Have I not conveyed?"*** And they bore witness: ***"Yes."***

This testimony also becomes ***a trust upon us***. On the Day of Resurrection, this Ummah will bear witness that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ conveyed the message. And we will be asked: ***what did we do with what was conveyed?***

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SIGNS OF FAREWELL

Throughout the Farewell Pilgrimage there were signs that this was ***the last meeting***. At Jamrat al-'Aqabah he said: ***"Take your rites from me, for I do not know — perhaps I will not perform Hajj after this Hajj of mine"*** (Sahih Muslim 1297).

SIRAH NOTE: "PERHAPS I WILL NOT MEET YOU AGAIN"

In Ibn Ishaq's narration, the sermon at 'Arafah begins: ***"O people, listen to my words, for I do not know — perhaps I will never meet you again after this year in this place."*** This wording is found in the sirah books with a debated chain.

Its meaning is supported by the authentic hadith of Muslim 1297 above, and by the very name "Farewell Pilgrimage" (Sahih al-Bukhari 4402).

REFERENCES:

Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on the Farewell Pilgrimage; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah; Ibn al-Qayyim, Zad al-Ma'ad.

The revelation of ***"This day I have perfected for you your religion"*** (Al-Ma'idah 5:3) at 'Arafah was also understood by some Companions as a sign that the mission of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was nearly complete. So too Ibn 'Abbas's interpretation of Surah An-Nasr (Sahih al-Bukhari 4970).

Less than three months later, in Rabi' al-Awwal of 11 AH, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed away in Madinah. The Farewell Sermon truly became his ***last public testament*** to the Ummah. The story of his illness and death will be told in ***Book 30***, in sha Allah.

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POPULAR WORDINGS THAT NEED CHECKING

The text of the Farewell Sermon is widely shared on social media, in lectures and books. Below are popular wordings with ***their sources and grades***, so that we convey them faithfully:

WORDING	SOURCE AND GRADE
"Your blood, property and honour are sacred…"	Bukhari 67, 1739, 4406; Muslim 1218 — SAHIH
"Pagan matters under my feet"; usury and blood	Muslim 1218 — SAHIH
"Fear Allah concerning women"	Muslim 1218 — SAHIH; Tirmidhi 1163 — SAHIH
"I have left you the Book of Allah"	Muslim 1218 — SAHIH
"The Book of Allah and my Sunnah"	Muwatta' (balagh), al-Hakim — debated; meaning true
"No superiority of Arab over non-Arab…"	Musnad Ahmad — SAHIH (al-Albani)
"Do not revert to disbelief after me"	Bukhari 121, 1739 — SAHIH
"Perhaps I will not meet you again…"	Ibn Ishaq — debated chain; meaning supported by Muslim 1297
"You will meet your Lord…"	Bukhari 4406 — SAHIH

From this table we can see that ***almost all the main contents*** of the popular Farewell Sermon have an authentic basis. What needs care is ***the exact wording*** and additions with no source.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Whoever deliberately lies about me, let him take his seat in the Fire"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 110). So before sharing "the full text of the Farewell Sermon", check its source, and give priority to the authentic wordings.

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THE FAREWELL SERMON AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Many researchers describe the Farewell Sermon as one of the earliest ***declarations of human rights*** in history. Compare its principles with modern documents:

FAREWELL SERMON PRINCIPLE (10 AH / 632 CE)	SIMILAR MODERN DOCUMENT
Life, property and honour are inviolable	Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, Articles 3, 12, 17
No superiority of race or colour	UDHR 1948, Articles 1–2; Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 1965
Women's rights over husbands	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women 1979
Each bears his own burden	Modern criminal justice (personal liability)
Abolition of oppressive usury	Modern consumer and anti-loan-sharking laws

The difference is significant. The Universal Declaration of 1948 was born after two world wars that took tens of millions of lives, and it is a human document that can be amended. The Farewell Sermon was delivered ***more than 1,300 years earlier***, and it is rooted in ***revelation*** — those rights are given by Allah, not by human agreement, and so no power may revoke them (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, United Nations).

Yet we must be honest: this comparison is not merely for pride. The value of the Farewell Sermon lies in ***its practice***. If Muslims themselves do not protect one another's blood, property and honour, then that great sermon remains a text that is read, not a way of life.

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SUMMARY OF THE SERMON

The contents of the Farewell Sermon can be summarised in eight main themes, as in the following figure:



Figure 2: Eight main themes of the Farewell Sermon.

THEME	MAIN COUNSEL AND SOURCE
Human sanctity	Blood, property, honour sacred (Bukhari 4406)
Paganism abolished	Blood-feuds and usury, beginning with his own family (Muslim 1218)
Women	A trust from Allah; mutual rights (Muslim 1218; Tirmidhi 1163)
Family and property	Lineage, wills, debts, loans (Tirmidhi 2120)
What to hold to	The Book of Allah; obey just leaders (Muslim 1218, 1838)
Equality	Taqwa is the measure of honour (Al-Hujurat 49:13; Ahmad)

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THEME	MAIN COUNSEL AND SOURCE
Warnings	Do not kill one another; beware of small sins (Bukhari 121; Tirmidhi 2159)
The trust of da'wah	Let the present convey; "O Allah, bear witness" (Bukhari 67; Muslim 1218)

These eight themes do not stand alone; all of them revolve around one thing: ***taqwa of Allah***. Human sanctity, justice, women's rights and equality all spring from the awareness that every person will ***meet his Lord and be asked about his deeds*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4406).

This table also shows that the Farewell Sermon covers ***every aspect of life***: our relationship with Allah, with ourselves, with family, with society and with leaders. Islam is not merely worship in the mosque, but a complete way of life — in harmony with the verse revealed on the same day: "This day I have perfected for you your religion."

A teacher, parent or speaker can use these eight themes as ***a simple teaching outline*** for the Farewell Sermon — one theme per week, with the related authentic hadith and examples of practice in daily life.

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THE FAREWELL SERMON FOR US TODAY

The Farewell Sermon is not merely history. Each of its counsels can be translated into ***daily action*** for a Muslim today:

COUNSEL	OUR PRACTICE TODAY
Sanctity of blood	Rejecting violence; caring for safety on roads and at work
Sanctity of property	Honesty in business, rejecting bribery, protecting public funds
Sanctity of honour	No backbiting, slander or shaming on social media
Rights of women	Kindness to wives, mothers, daughters and women colleagues
Debts and trusts	Paying debts on time, returning what is borrowed
The Book of Allah	Reading, understanding and acting on the Qur'an daily
Equality	Rejecting racism and pride in lineage
Convey	Sharing authentic knowledge, verifying before spreading

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ delivered this sermon to an Ummah newly emerged from ignorance. Today, with advances in technology and knowledge, our challenges differ but the foundation is the same: ***protecting people***, for human beings are Allah's honoured creation.

And above all, this sermon was delivered on the day Allah said ***"This day I have perfected for you your religion"*** (Al-Ma'idah 5:3). This religion is complete; our task is not to add to it or take from it, but ***to practise it and convey it*** faithfully.

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A COMPLETE MAP OF THE FAREWELL SERMON: WORDING, SOURCES AND GRADES

Chapter 2 listed the main sources of the Farewell Sermon, and Chapter 29 checked the grades of its popular wordings. This chapter brings both together in one map: each important wording, the Companion who narrated it, its source and grade, the Qur'anic verse behind it, and the chapter of this eBook that explains it.

WORDING OF THE SERMON	NARRATOR AND SOURCE	GRADE	RELATED VERSE	CH.
"Ask the people to be silent"	Jarir — Bukhari 121	Sahih	—	3
"What day is this? What month is this?"	Abu Bakrah — Bukhari 4406, 67	Sahih	At-Tawbah 9:36	4
"Your blood, your property and your honour are sacred to you"	Jabir — Muslim 1218; Abu Bakrah — Bukhari 67; Ibn 'Abbas — Bukhari 1739	Sahih	Al-Isra' 17:33; An-Nisa' 4:29	5–7
"The affairs of ignorance are under my feet"	Jabir — Muslim 1218	Sahih	Al-Ma'idah 5:50	8
The blood of Ibn Rabi'ah ibn al-Harith abolished	Jabir — Muslim 1218	Sahih	—	9
The usury of al-'Abbas abolished	Jabir — Muslim 1218	Sahih	Al-Baqarah 2:278–279	10
"Time has come round"; the four sacred months	Abu Bakrah — Bukhari 4406	Sahih	At-Tawbah 9:36–37	11
"Fear Allah concerning women"	Jabir — Muslim 1218; 'Amr ibn al-Ahwas — Tirmidhi 1163	Sahih	An-Nisa' 4:19; Al-Baqarah 2:228	12–14
Bequests, lineage, loans and debts	Abu Umamah — Tirmidhi 2120	Hasan	An-Nisa' 4:11–12	15–16
"I leave you the Book of Allah"	Jabir — Muslim 1218	Sahih	Ali 'Imran 3:103	17
"The Book of Allah and my Sunnah"	Malik, al-Muwatta' (balaghan); al-Hakim	Discussed; meaning true	An-Nisa' 4:59	18
"Pray your five prayers…"	Abu Umamah — Tirmidhi 616	Sahih	—	19
Obeying a leader who leads by the Book of Allah	Umm al-Husayn — Muslim 1838	Sahih	An-Nisa' 4:59	20
"No superiority of an Arab over a non-Arab"	A Companion — Ahmad 23489	Sahih (al-Albani; al-Arna'ut)	Al-Hujurat 49:13	21

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WORDING OF THE SERMON	NARRATOR AND SOURCE	GRADE	RELATED VERSE	CH.
"Do not revert to disbelief after me"	Jarir — Bukhari 121; Ibn 'Abbas — Bukhari 1739	Sahih	Ali 'Imran 3:103	23
"Let the one present convey"	Abu Bakrah — Bukhari 67, 105	Sahih	Al-Ma'idah 5:67	26

This map shows that almost every main wording of the Farewell Sermon rests on a sahih or hasan hadith, and every one of its messages is rooted in a verse of the Qur'an. The sermon was not a new teaching; it was a summary of the Qur'an delivered by the Messenger who was sent with it.

SIRAH NOTE: WORDINGS WITHOUT A SOURCE

Besides the wordings above, there are passages circulating on social media under the label "Farewell Sermon" that are not found in any reliable book of hadith or sirah — for example long statements about workers' rights, the environment or the progress of knowledge, written in a modern style.

The safe rule is this: if a wording cannot be shown with its source — the name of the book, the hadith number and its grade — then do not attribute it to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, even if its meaning is good. The meaning may be passed on as advice, not as a saying of the Prophet.

Reference: Sahih Muslim 1218; Sahih al-Bukhari 67; Sahih al-Bukhari 4406; Jami' at-Tirmidhi 2120; al-Albani, Silsilat al-Ahadith as-Sahihah 2700.

LESSON

The trust of conveying demands accuracy. Before repeating a "saying of the Prophet", ask three questions: who narrated it, in which book, and what is its grade? A map like this helps us convey the Farewell Sermon with confidence and honesty.

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THE NARRATORS OF THE FAREWELL SERMON

The Farewell Sermon reached us through a group of Companions from many tribes and regions. Some were from Makkah and Madinah, others from Ta'if, Yemen and the interior of Najd. This variety is itself proof of how widely the sermon spread from its very first day.

COMPANION	TRIBE / ORIGIN	PART NARRATED	SOURCE
Jabir ibn 'Abdullah	Khazraj (Banu Salimah), Madinah	The long sermon at 'Arafah	Muslim 1218
Abu Bakrah (Nufay' ibn al-Harith)	From Ta'if; freedman of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ	Sermon of the Day of Sacrifice: time come round, sanctity, "convey"	Bukhari 67, 4406; Muslim 1679
'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas	Banu Hashim, Quraysh; cousin of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ	Sermon of the Day of Sacrifice; "that was his bequest"	Bukhari 1739
'Abdullah ibn 'Umar	Banu 'Adi, Quraysh	Sermon of the Day of Sacrifice; "do not revert to disbelief"	Bukhari 1742
Jarir ibn 'Abdullah	Bajilah, Yemen	"Ask the people to be silent"; "do not revert to disbelief"	Bukhari 121
Abu Umamah al-Bahili	Bahilah	Five keys to Paradise; bequests, lineage, debts	Tirmidhi 616, 2120
'Amr ibn al-Ahwas	Jusham	Women; each bears his own sin	Tirmidhi 1163, 2159, 3087
Umm al-Husayn	Ahmas (Bajilah)	Obeying a leader who holds to the Book of Allah	Muslim 1838
Rafi' ibn 'Amr	Muzaynah	'Ali conveying the sermon at Mina	Abu Dawud 1956
Zayd ibn Arqam	Khazraj, Madinah	The sermon at Ghadir Khumm	Muslim 2408

Notice that one of the narrators is a woman: Umm al-Husayn رضى الله عنها, who performed Hajj with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and narrated his advice on obeying leaders (Sahih Muslim 1838; see also Siri 28). Women were not only listeners to the Farewell Sermon; they were also its guardians and transmitters.

Rafi' ibn 'Amr al-Muzani رضى الله عنه described the scene of the sermon at Mina: "I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ addressing the people at Mina when the sun had risen high, on a grey mule, while 'Ali was conveying his words; some people were standing and some were sitting" (Sunan Abi Dawud 1956; graded sahih by al-Albani). This report supports what was mentioned in the Sirah Note of Chapter 3 about those who relayed his voice.

Reference: Sunan Abi Dawud 1956; Sahih Muslim 1838; Sahih al-Bukhari 1742; Sahih Muslim 1679.

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LESSON

True knowledge is preserved by many people, not by one. Each Companion kept a part, and when the parts are gathered a complete picture appears. So it is with us: everyone who learns and conveys even a single hadith becomes part of this chain of trust.

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THE ART OF DELIVERY IN THE FAREWELL SERMON

The previous chapters explained what was conveyed in the Farewell Sermon. This chapter looks at how it was conveyed. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used a range of techniques that made his message stay in the hearts of tens of thousands of listeners — techniques that preachers, teachers and parents can still use today.

TECHNIQUE	EXAMPLE IN THE SERMON	SOURCE
Preparing the setting	"Ask the people to be silent"	Bukhari 121
A visible position	Speaking from a camel or mule so that he could be seen	Bukhari 67; Abu Dawud 1956
A question that opens the mind	"What day is this?" — then silence, until they thought he would call it by another name	Bukhari 1739, 4406
A familiar comparison	The sanctity of life is "like the sanctity of this day of yours, in this month of yours, in this land of yours"	Muslim 1218
Leading by example	The blood and usury of his own family abolished first	Muslim 1218
Repetition for emphasis	"Have I not conveyed?" repeated several times	Bukhari 1739
A hand gesture	Raising his index finger to the sky, then pointing to the people: "O Allah, bear witness"	Muslim 1218
Handing over responsibility	"Let the one present convey to the one absent"	Bukhari 67

In Jabir's hadith he describes the closing moment of the sermon at 'Arafah: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked, "You will be asked about me, so what will you say?" They replied, "We bear witness that you have conveyed, fulfilled the trust and given sincere counsel." Then he raised his index finger to the sky and pointed it towards the people, saying, "O Allah, bear witness; O Allah, bear witness" — three times (Sahih Muslim 1218).

These techniques are not merely the art of public speaking. Each one aims to make listeners understand, remember and act. A question opens the mind; a comparison brings the meaning close; an example proves sincerity; repetition strengthens memory; and handing over the trust turns every listener into a messenger.

LESSON

True content needs to be conveyed in a good way. A preacher or teacher can follow the Farewell Sermon: begin by gaining attention, use questions and comparisons, start the example with yourself, repeat what matters most, and end by handing the trust to the listeners.

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GHADIR KHUMM: THE AUTHENTIC WORDING AND HOW IT IS UNDERSTOOD

Siri 28 mentioned the stop of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ at Ghadir Khumm, a watering place between Makkah and Madinah, on the way back from the Farewell Pilgrimage. There he addressed the people once more. Because this sermon is often discussed, this chapter gathers its authentic wordings together with the understanding of the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah.

THE WORDING IN SAHIH MUSLIM

Zayd ibn Arqam رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood to address them at a watering place called Khumm, between Makkah and Madinah. He praised Allah, gave advice and reminders, then said: "O people, I am only a human being; the messenger of my Lord is about to come and I will answer him. I leave among you two weighty things: the first is the Book of Allah, in which there is guidance and light, so take the Book of Allah and hold fast to it… and the people of my household. I remind you of Allah concerning the people of my household" — repeated three times (Sahih Muslim 2408).

THE WORDING IN JAMI' AT-TIRMIDHI

At-Tirmidhi narrated from Abu Sarihah or Zayd ibn Arqam that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Whoever I am his mawla, 'Ali is his mawla" (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3713). At-Tirmidhi graded it hasan gharib, and al-Albani graded it sahih because of its many chains (Silsilat al-Ahadith as-Sahihah 1750).

SIRAH NOTE: THE BACKGROUND OF THE SERMON AT GHADIR KHUMM

The scholars of sirah and hadith mention the background of this sermon. 'Ali رضى الله عنه had just returned from Yemen and met the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in Makkah during the Hajj (Siri 28). Some members of his force in Yemen were displeased with 'Ali's firmness over the khumus property and complained about him. Buraydah رضى الله عنه himself admitted: "I disliked 'Ali", and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked, "O Buraydah, do you dislike 'Ali? Do not dislike him, for his right in the khumus is more than that" (Sahih al-Bukhari 4350). The scholars, including Ibn Kathir in al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah, explain that the sermon at Ghadir Khumm came to make clear 'Ali's standing and to remove that displeasure.

THE UNDERSTANDING OF AHL AS-SUNNAH WAL-JAMA'AH

The scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah understand the word "mawla" in this hadith to mean love, support and loyalty: whoever loves and supports the Messenger of Allah ﷺ should love and support 'Ali. Loving 'Ali and the Prophet's household is part of faith, and hating them is a sign of hypocrisy (Sahih Muslim 78, about 'Ali).

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The message at Ghadir Khumm brings together two trusts: holding fast to the Book of Allah, and honouring the family of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Neither conflicts with love for the other Companions. Ahl as-Sunnah honour the whole of the Prophet's household and all the Companions, and guard their tongues from reviling any of them.

Reference: Sahih Muslim 2408; Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3713; Sahih al-Bukhari 4350; Sahih Muslim 78; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah — the event of Ghadir Khumm.

LESSON

A misunderstanding among the Companions was resolved by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ through open explanation and praise for the one who had been misunderstood. That is how disputes are put out: by making the true position clear, honouring the one who is in the right, and inviting everyone back to mutual love.

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TIMELINE OF THE SERMONS OF THE FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE

The sermons of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ at the end of his life fall within just a few weeks. This table arranges them by date, with their places and sources.

DATE	PLACE	EVENT / CONTENT	SOURCE
9 Dhul-Hijjah 10 AH (Friday)	Valley of 'Uranah, 'Arafah	Sermon of 'Arafah: blood, property, usury, women, the Book of Allah	Muslim 1218
9 Dhul-Hijjah 10 AH, afternoon	'Arafah	Revelation of "This day I have perfected for you your religion"	Bukhari 45; Al-Ma'idah 5:3
10 Dhul-Hijjah (Day of Sacrifice)	Mina	Sermon: "What day is this?"; time come round; "convey"	Bukhari 1739, 4406, 67
10 Dhul-Hijjah	Jamrat al-'Aqabah	"Take your rites from me"	Muslim 1297
Days of Tashriq (11–13 Dhul-Hijjah)	Mina	"No superiority of an Arab over a non-Arab"	Ahmad 23489
Days of Tashriq (according to some tafsir reports)	Mina	Surah An-Nasr understood as a sign of his approaching death	Bukhari 4970; tafsir books
18 Dhul-Hijjah 10 AH (according to sirah books)	Ghadir Khumm	"I leave among you two weighty things"	Muslim 2408; Tirmidhi 3713
End of Dhul-Hijjah 10 AH	Madinah	The Messenger of Allah ﷺ arrives back in Madinah	Sirah books
End of Safar 11 AH	Madinah	The illness of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ begins	Sirah books; Siri 30
Rabi' al-Awwal 11 AH	Madinah	The Messenger of Allah ﷺ passes away — less than three months after the Farewell Sermon	Bukhari 4466; Siri 30

SIRAH NOTE: THE DATES IN THE TABLE

The dates 9 and 10 Dhul-Hijjah are certain from sahih hadith. The date 18 Dhul-Hijjah for Ghadir Khumm, the date of arrival in Madinah and the date the illness began are taken from the sirah books and are well-known estimates. The exact date of the passing of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in Rabi' al-Awwal is discussed by the scholars; the well-known view is Monday, 12 Rabi' al-Awwal 11 AH.

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LESSON

In less than three months, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave his final counsel at ‘Arafah, at Mina and at Ghadir Khumm, then returned to his Lord. Every opportunity was used to advise the Ummah. Our lives are also limited; use every opportunity to convey goodness while there is still time.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FAREWELL SERMON

1. HOW MANY TIMES DID THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ GIVE A SERMON DURING THE FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE?

At least at 'Arafah (9 Dhul-Hijjah), at Mina on the Day of Sacrifice (10 Dhul-Hijjah) and on the Days of Tashriq, and then at Ghadir Khumm on the way home (Chapters 1, 37).

2. IS THE LONG, COMPLETE TEXT OF THE FAREWELL SERMON AUTHENTIC?

The connected complete text comes mostly from the sirah books (Ibn Ishaq). Most of its content is supported by sahih hadith, but some wordings have no connected chain. Give priority to the wordings from the hadith books (Chapters 2, 29, 33).

3. IS THE WORDING "THE BOOK OF ALLAH AND MY SUNNAH" AUTHENTIC?

In Sahih Muslim, the sermon at 'Arafah mentions "the Book of Allah" only. The wording "and my Sunnah" is narrated by Malik as a balaghan report and by al-Hakim; its grade is discussed, but its meaning is true on the basis of An-Nisa' 4:59 (Chapter 18).

4. IS "NO SUPERIORITY OF AN ARAB OVER A NON-ARAB" A SAYING OF THE PROPHET ﷺ?

Yes. It is narrated by Imam Ahmad (al-Musnad 23489) and graded sahih by al-Albani and Shu'ayb al-Arna'ut (Chapter 21).

5. WHO RELAYED THE VOICE OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ TO THE PEOPLE?

At Mina, 'Ali رضى الله عنه conveyed his words (Sunan Abi Dawud 1956, sahih according to al-Albani). At 'Arafah, Ibn Ishaq mentions Rabi'ah ibn Umayyah ibn Khalaf (Chapters 3, 34).

6. WHAT DOES "TIME HAS COME ROUND" MEAN?

The calendar had returned exactly to how it was on the day Allah created the heavens and the earth, after it had been corrupted by the pagan practice of an-Nasi'; the four sacred months were restored (Sahih al-Bukhari 4406; At-Tawbah 9:36–37; Chapter 11).

7. WHY DID THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ BEGIN WITH THE BLOOD AND USURY OF HIS OWN FAMILY?

So that no one could say he had exempted his own relatives. A just leader begins with himself (Sahih Muslim 1218; Chapters 9, 10).

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8. WHAT RIGHTS OF THE WIFE ARE MENTIONED IN THE SERMON?

The wife is a trust from Allah; the husband must provide her food and clothing in a fitting manner. Both sides have rights and responsibilities (Sahih Muslim 1218; Jami' at-Tirmidhi 1163; Chapters 12–14).

9. WHAT WAS SAID AT GHADIR KHUMM?

Two weighty things: the Book of Allah and a reminder about his household (Sahih Muslim 2408), and "Whoever I am his mawla, 'Ali is his mawla" (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3713) (Chapter 36).

10. HOW IS THE FAREWELL SERMON CONNECTED TO AL-MA'IDAH 5:3?

The verse "This day I have perfected for you your religion" was revealed on the afternoon of that same day of 'Arafah (Sahih al-Bukhari 45). The sermon was a summary of the religion that had been perfected (Chapters 32, 37).

11. MAY WE SHARE THE "FULL TEXT OF THE FAREWELL SERMON" ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

Yes, if every wording attributed to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ comes with its source. Avoid wordings without a source, because lying in his name is a major sin (Sahih al-Bukhari 110; Chapters 29, 33).

12. WHO ARE "THOSE ABSENT" IN THE SAYING "LET THE ONE PRESENT CONVEY"?

Every Muslim who was not there, including us today. Abu Bakrah reports that he said: "perhaps the one to whom it is conveyed will understand it better than the one who heard it" (Sahih al-Bukhari 67; Chapter 26).

LESSON

These questions show that the Farewell Sermon is still alive in the discussions of the Ummah today. The answers always return to authentic sources — and that is the best way to fulfil the trust of "convey".

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

The Farewell Sermon is ***a summary of the mission*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ over twenty-three years, delivered to the largest gathering of the Ummah in his time. From it we draw the following lessons:

LESSON	FROM THIS BOOK
Effective teaching	"What day is this?" — question, silence, connection
Leadership by example	His own family's blood-claims and usury cancelled first
Justice for all	Blood, property, honour; each bears his own burden
The dignity of women	"Fear Allah concerning women"
Equality	Taqwa is the only measure
Holding to revelation	The Book of Allah, explained by the Sunnah
The trust of conveying	Let the present convey to the absent — accurately

WE ARE "THE ONES ABSENT"

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said "let the one present convey to the one absent", ***we are the ones who were absent***. This counsel has crossed more than fourteen centuries to reach us. Now it is our turn to be ***"the ones present"*** for the generations to come — by practising it and conveying it.

In sha Allah, the series **The Prophet's Sirah** will continue with ***Book 30 — The Illness and Death of the Prophet*** ﷺ: his final days in Madinah, his last counsels, Abu Bakr leading the prayer, and the saddest day in the history of the Ummah. And Allah knows best.

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PART NINE

The Highest Companion

The Prophet's Sirah — Series 30

The Illness and Death of the Prophet ﷺ, His Final Counsels and the Saddest Day in the History of the Ummah, According to the Qur'an and Authentic Hadith

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THE HIGHEST COMPANION

Books 28 and 29 took us to ‘Arafah and Mina, hearing the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: ***“Perhaps I will not perform Hajj after this Hajj of mine.”*** Those words came true. Less than three months after returning to Madinah, he fell ill, and on ***a Monday in Rabi‘ al-Awwal, 11 AH***, he returned to his Lord.

This Book 30 tells of those final days guided by authentic hadiths, especially the narrations of ‘A’ishah رضى الله عنها, who nursed him in her house until the last moment. We will see ***his patience in pain***, ***his final counsels***, ***the smile of Monday morning***, his last words ***“O Allah, the Highest Companion”***, and how Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه steadied an Ummah about to collapse with grief.

This is a heart-rending story. Yet it is also a story that ***strengthens faith***: that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was a human being who died like other humans, and that this religion depends on ***Allah, the Ever-Living***, not on anyone besides Him.

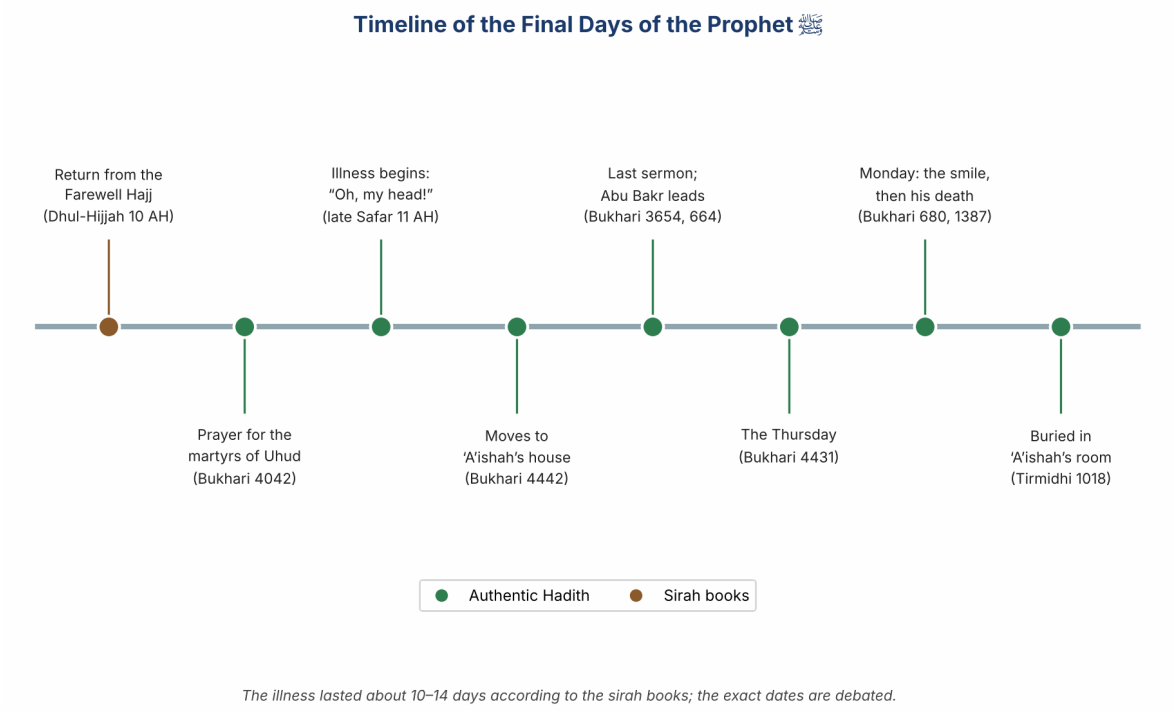

Figure 1: Timeline of the final days of the Prophet ﷺ.

Note: The Qur’anic translation in this eBook is Sahih International. The grade of every Hadith is stated in its box. Reports about his final days found in sirah books without a strong chain are placed in brown “Sirah Note” boxes, and inauthentic stories — such as long dialogues with the Angel of Death — are not included.

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MADINAH AFTER THE FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned to Madinah at the end of Dhul-Hijjah, 10 AH. Islam had spread across Arabia; delegation after delegation had come to accept Islam (Book 26); the Hajj had been purified (Book 27); and the religion had been perfected (Book 28). Outwardly, there was no sign that anything momentous was about to happen.

The months of Muharram and Safar of 11 AH passed as usual. He continued to teach, lead the prayers and manage the affairs of the state. He also prepared ***an army under the command of Usamah ibn Zayd*** to be sent to the borders of Syria — where Usamah's father, Zayd ibn Harithah, had been martyred at Mu'tah (Book 19).

Yet for those who looked closely, ***signs of farewell*** had long been visible: the name "Farewell Pilgrimage", the verse of the perfection of the religion, Surah An-Nasr, and his words at Mina. The closest Companions — Abu Bakr, Ibn 'Abbas, Fatimah — began to sense it before the others.

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SIGNS OF FAREWELL

One of the clearest signs came in the preceding Ramadan, when Jibril reviewed the Qur'an with him twice. During his final illness, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ told Fatimah in confidence: ***"Jibril used to review the Qur'an with me once every year, and this year he reviewed it with me twice. I see this only as a sign that my time has drawn near."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 3624)

Another sign was Surah An-Nasr: ***"When the victory of Allah has come and the conquest"*** (An-Nasr 110:1) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 110:1.

'Umar رضى الله عنه once asked the senior Companions of Badr about the meaning of this surah. Some said it was a command to glorify Allah upon victory. Then 'Umar asked the young Ibn 'Abbas, who replied: ***"It is (a sign of) the death of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, which Allah informed him of."*** 'Umar said: "I know nothing of it except what you know." (Sahih al-Bukhari 4970)

When the task was complete — Makkah opened, people entering Islam in crowds — the time had come to ***glorify, seek forgiveness, and return to Allah***. This is the beauty of the Prophet's ﷺ life: he did not live for himself; once the trust was fulfilled, he was ready to go home.

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FAREWELL TO THE MARTYRS OF UHUD

Towards the end of his life, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went to ***Uhud*** — where seventy Companions had been martyred eight years earlier, including his uncle Hamzah (Book 10). 'Uqbah ibn 'Amir رضى الله عنه relates what he saw:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4042

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحِيمِ، أَخْبَرَنَا زَكَرِيَّاءُ بْنُ عَدِيٍّ، أَخْبَرَنَا ابْنُ الْمُبَارَكِ، عَنْ حَيْوَةَ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ بْنِ أَبِي حَبِيبٍ، عَنْ أَبِي الْخَيْرِ، عَنْ عُقْبَةَ بْنِ عَامِرٍ، قَالَ صَلَّى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم عَلَى قَتْلَى أُحُدٍ بَعْدَ ثَمَانِي سِنِينَ، كَالْمُوَدِّعِ لِلأَحْيَاءِ وَالأَمْوَاتِ، ثُمَّ طَلَعَ الْمِنْبَرَ فَقَالَ إِنِّي بَيْنَ أَيْدِيكُمْ فَرَطٌ، وَأَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدٌ، وَإِنَّ مَوْعِدَكُمُ الْحَوْضُ، وَإِنِّي لأَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ مَقَامِي هَذَا، وَإِنِّي لَسْتُ أَخْشَى عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ تُشْرِكُوا، وَلَكِنِّي أَخْشَى عَلَيْكُمُ الدُّنْيَا أَنْ تَنَافَسُوهَا. قَالَ فَكَانَتْ آخِرَ نَظْرَةٍ نَظَرْتُهَا إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم.

TRANSLATION:

'Uqbah ibn 'Amir رضى الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed over the martyrs of Uhud after eight years, ***like one bidding farewell to the living and the dead***. Then he ascended the pulpit and said: ***"I am going ahead of you, and I am a witness over you. Your meeting place with me is the Pool (al-Hawd), and I am looking at it from this place of mine. I do not fear that you will associate partners with Allah, but I fear that this world will tempt you and you will compete with one another for it."*** 'Uqbah said: ***That was my last look at the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Muhammad ibn 'Abd ar-Rahim, from Zakariyya ibn 'Adi, from 'Abdullah ibn al-Mubarak, from Haywah ibn Shurayh, from Yazid ibn Abi Habib, from Abu al-Khayr Marthad ibn 'Abdullah, from 'Uqbah ibn 'Amir al-Juhani رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions, Chapter: The Battle of Uhud, Hadith No. 4042; also No. 1344, 3596, 6590 and Muslim No. 2296.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4042

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

"Like one bidding farewell to the living and the dead" — 'Uqbah could sense the atmosphere of farewell in his prayer and sermon. He visited the Companions who had gone before him, and counselled those still living.

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Notice his concern: ***not shirk***, for tawhid was firmly rooted, but ***this world***. He knew wealth and power would come to this Ummah — and indeed, within decades the Persian and Roman empires fell. The greatest test of a victorious Ummah is not poverty, but ***competing for this world***.

He also mentioned ***al-Hawd***, his Pool on the Day of Resurrection, as ***the meeting place***. For every Muslim who longs for him, this is the promise: we will meet him at that Pool, if we remain on his path.

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SUPPLICATION AT AL-BAQI‘

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ had the habit of visiting the graveyard of ***Baqi‘ al-Gharqad*** in Madinah at night. ‘A’ishah رضى الله عنها narrates that he would go out at the end of the night to al-Baqi‘ and say:

“Peace be upon you, abode of believing people. What you were promised has come to you… and we, if Allah wills, shall join you. O Allah, forgive the people of Baqi‘ al-Gharqad.” (Sahih Muslim 974)

SIRAH NOTE: THE VISIT TO AL-BAQI‘ AT THE START OF HIS ILLNESS

Ibn Ishaq narrates from ***Abu Muwayhibah***, a servant of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, that one night at the start of his illness he woke him and said: “I have been commanded to seek forgiveness for the people of al-Baqi‘.” He prayed for them, and mentioned that he had been given the choice between the keys of the world’s treasures and remaining in it followed by Paradise, or meeting his Lord and Paradise — and he chose ***to meet his Lord***.

This report is in as-Sirah of Ibn Hisham and the Musnad of Ahmad; some scholars graded its chain weak. Its meaning is supported by the authentic hadith of “the servant given the choice” (Chapter 9).

REFERENCES:
Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah; Ahmad, al-Musnad (ed. al-Arna’ut).

Visiting graves is ***a Sunnah*** that reminds us of death. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***“Visit the graves, for they remind you of death”*** (Sahih Muslim 976). He himself, at the end of his life, often prayed for those who had departed.

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"OH, MY HEAD!"

His illness began with ***a headache***. 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها relates that one day she herself complained: "Oh, my head!" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ joked with her, then said: ***"Rather I — oh, my head!"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 5666). The books of sirah mention that this was the beginning of the illness that led to his death, at the end of Safar or the start of Rabi' al-Awwal.

Notice how, even in pain, he still ***joked affectionately*** with his wife. His relationship with 'A'ishah was full of love and warmth to the very end. It teaches us that illness should not make us harsh towards those we love.

He also experienced very high fevers. In one narration, 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud رضى الله عنه touched him and said: "O Messenger of Allah, you have a very high fever." He said: ***"Yes, my fever is like that of two of your men."*** Ibn Mas'ud asked: "Is that because you receive a double reward?" He said: "Yes." Then he said: ***"No Muslim is afflicted with harm except that Allah sheds his sins as a tree sheds its leaves"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 5648).

The prophets are the people ***most severely tested***. The illness of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was not a sign of weakness or Allah's displeasure, but ***an elevation of rank***. For every sick Muslim, this hadith is a comfort: every pain borne with patience sheds sins.

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THE EFFECT OF THE POISON OF KHAYBAR

In his illness, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ felt pain stemming from an old event. 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها narrates that he said: ***"O 'A'ishah, I still feel the pain of the food I ate at Khaybar. Now is the time I feel my aorta being cut because of that poison."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4428)

As told in Book 16, after the conquest of Khaybar, a Jewish woman named Zaynab bint al-Harith presented ***a poisoned roast sheep***. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ chewed a little and spat it out, but the effect of the poison remained in his body for ***about four years***.

From this hadith, some scholars such as Ibn Mas'ud and az-Zuhri held that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ died ***a martyr***, from the effect of an enemy's poison. Allah combined for him the honour of ***prophethood and martyrdom*** together.

Even so, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***did not take personal revenge*** on that woman at first, nor blame the Jews collectively. He bore the pain for years with patience, without complaining to people.

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"WHERE WILL I BE TOMORROW?"

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was a husband most just to his wives; he took turns staying at their houses.

During his illness he continued to take turns, but often asked: ***"Where will I be tomorrow? Where will I be tomorrow?"*** — for he was waiting for 'A'ishah's turn (Sahih al-Bukhari 4450).

His wives understood that wish. With great love, they ***allowed him to stay in 'A'ishah's house***. 'A'ishah herself relates:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4442

حَدَّثَنَا سَعِيدُ بْنُ عُفَيْرٍ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي اللَّيْثُ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي عُقَيْلٌ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي عُبَيْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُتْبَةَ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ، أَنَّ عَائِشَةَ، زَوْجَ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَتْ لَمَّا ثَقُلَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَاشْتَدَّ بِهِ وَجَعُهُ اسْتَأْذَنَ أَزْوَاجَهُ أَنْ يُمَرَّضَ فِي بَيْتِي، فَأَذِنَّ لَهُ، فَخَرَجَ وَهُوَ بَيْنَ الرَّجُلَيْنِ تَخُطُّ رِجْلاَهُ فِي الأَرْضِ، بَيْنَ عَبَّاسِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ وَبَيْنَ رَجُلٍ آخَرَ. قَالَ عُبَيْدُ اللَّهِ فَأَخْبَرْتُ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بِالَّذِي قَالَتْ عَائِشَةُ، فَقَالَ لِي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ عَبَّاسٍ هَلْ تَدْرِي مَنِ الرَّجُلُ الآخَرُ الَّذِي لَمْ تُسَمِّ عَائِشَةُ قَالَ قُلْتُ لاَ. قَالَ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ هُوَ عَلِيٌّ. وَكَانَتْ عَائِشَةُ زَوْجُ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم تُحَدِّثُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم لَمَّا دَخَلَ بَيْتِي وَاشْتَدَّ بِهِ وَجَعُهُ قَالَ هَرِيقُوا عَلَىَّ مِنْ سَبْعِ قِرَبٍ لَمْ تُحْلَلْ أَوْكِيَتُهُنَّ لَعَلِّي أَعْهَدُ إِلَى النَّاسِ. فَأَجْلَسْنَاهُ فِي مِخْضَبٍ لِحَفْصَةَ زَوْجِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، ثُمَّ طَفِقْنَا نَصُبُّ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ تِلْكَ الْقِرَبِ، حَتَّى طَفِقَ يُشِيرُ إِلَيْنَا بِيَدِهِ أَنْ قَدْ فَعَلْتُنَّ قَالَتْ ثُمَّ خَرَجَ إِلَى النَّاسِ فَصَلَّى لَهُمْ وَخَطَبَهُمْ.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها, wife of the Prophet ﷺ, said: When the illness of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ grew severe, he ***asked his wives' permission to be nursed in my house***, and they permitted him. He came out walking between two men, ***his feet dragging on the ground***, between al-'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib and another man. 'Ubaydullah said: I told 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas, and he asked: "Do you know who the man was whom 'A'ishah did not name?" I said: "No." Ibn 'Abbas said: "It was ***'Ali ibn Abi Talib***." 'A'ishah related: When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ entered my house and his illness worsened, he said: ***"Pour over me seven water-skins whose mouths have not been untied, so that I may give counsel to the people."*** So we seated him in a large tub belonging to Hafsah, wife of the Prophet ﷺ, and poured water over him from those water-

skins until he gestured to us with his hand: "You have done it." Then he went out to the people, prayed with them and addressed them.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Sa'id ibn 'Ufayr, from al-Layth ibn Sa'd, from 'Uqayl ibn Khalid, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from 'Ubaydullah ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Utbah ibn Mas'ud, from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers رضى الله عنها, and 'Ubaydullah from 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions, Chapter: The illness and death of the Prophet ﷺ, Hadith No. 4442; also No. 198, 665 and Muslim No. 418.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4442

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

See how meticulous the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was in ***justice*** among his wives: though sick and weak, he did not move to 'A'ishah's house without ***asking permission*** of all the others. This is a great lesson for husbands with more than one wife — and for anyone entrusted with justice.

Notice too the two who supported him: ***al-'Abbas***, his uncle, and ***'Ali***, his cousin and son-in-law. His feet dragged on the ground — a heart-rending picture of how weak he was at that time.

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SEVEN WATER-SKINS AND THE LAST SERMON

In the same hadith, 'A'ishah relates that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked for ***seven unopened water-skins*** to be poured over him, ***"so that I may give counsel to the people."*** The cool water eased his fever a little, and he went out to the mosque, prayed with them and addressed them (Sahih al-Bukhari 4442).

Even in intense pain, his greatest wish was ***to counsel the Ummah***. He did not ask merely to rest; he asked for strength to convey. This is the nature of a Messenger who ***is deeply concerned for his Ummah's good*** (At-Tawbah 9:128).

That sermon was his ***last sermon*** from the pulpit. In authentic narrations, its contents included ***the servant given the choice***, the virtue of ***Abu Bakr***, ***counsel concerning the Ansar***, and ***a warning against taking graves as places of worship***. We will look at them one by one in the following chapters.

About the Ansar, he said: ***"I enjoin you to treat the Ansar well, for they are my confidants and the keepers of my secrets. They have fulfilled what was upon them, and what is due to them remains. So accept the good from those who do good among them, and overlook the faults of those who err"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 3799).

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THE SERVANT WHO WAS GIVEN THE CHOICE

From the pulpit, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ made a statement that seemed general, but only one Companion understood its true meaning. Abu Sa'id al-Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 3654

حَدَّثَنِي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عَامِرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا فُلَيْحٌ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي سَالِمٌ أَبُو النَّضْرِ، عَنْ بُسْرِ بْنِ سَعِيدٍ، عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيِّ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ قَالَ خَطَبَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم النَّاسَ وَقَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَيَّرَ عَبْدًا بَيْنَ الدُّنْيَا وَبَيْنَ مَا عِنْدَهُ فَاخْتَارَ ذَلِكَ الْعَبْدُ مَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ. قَالَ فَبَكَى أَبُو بَكْرٍ، فَعَجِبْنَا لِبُكَائِهِ أَنْ يُخْبِرَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم عَنْ عَبْدٍ خُيِّرَ. فَكَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم هُوَ الْمُخَيَّرَ وَكَانَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ أَعْلَمَنَا، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم إِنَّ مِنْ أَمَنِّ النَّاسِ عَلَىَّ فِي صُحْبَتِهِ وَمَالِهِ أَبَا بَكْرٍ، وَلَوْ كُنْتُ مُتَّخِذًا خَلِيلاً غَيْرَ رَبِّي لاَتَّخَذْتُ أَبَا بَكْرٍ، وَلَكِنْ أُخُوَّةُ الإِسْلاَمِ وَمَوَدَّتُهُ، لاَ يُبْقَيَنَّ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ بَاب إِلاَّ سُدَّ، إِلاَّ بَاب أَبِي بَكْرٍ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri رضى الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ addressed the people and said: ***"Allah has given a servant the choice between this world and what is with Him, and that servant has chosen what is with Allah."*** Then ***Abu Bakr wept***. We were surprised at his weeping, since the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was only speaking of a servant who had been given a choice. ***It turned out that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself was the servant given the choice, and Abu Bakr was the most knowledgeable of us.*** The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"The person who has done me the most favour with his companionship and his wealth is Abu Bakr. Were I to take a khalil (intimate friend) other than my Lord, I would take Abu Bakr, but (what binds us) is the brotherhood and love of Islam. Let no door into the mosque remain open except the door of Abu Bakr."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad al-Musnadi, from Abu 'Amir al-'Aqadi, from Fulayh ibn Sulayman, from Salim Abu an-Nadr, from Busr ibn Sa'id, from Abu Sa'id al-Khudri رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Virtues of the Companions, Chapter: "Close the doors except the door of Abu Bakr", Hadith No. 3654; also No. 466, 3904 and Muslim No. 2382.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3654

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LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The other Companions were puzzled: why did Abu Bakr weep when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ spoke of "a servant"? They did not realise that ***the servant was the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself***, and his choice was ***to return to Allah***. Abu Bakr, the closest companion, understood the hint instantly.

This hadith shows that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***chose the Hereafter willingly***. He was offered this world, but chose what is with Allah. Throughout his life he lived simply — sleeping on a mat, going days without a fire lit in his kitchen — and in the end he chose ***to meet his Lord***.

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THE STANDING OF ABU BAKR

In the same sermon, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave ***the highest praise*** to Abu Bakr: ***"The person who has done me the most favour with his companionship and his wealth is Abu Bakr. Were I to take a khalil other than my Lord, I would take Abu Bakr."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 3654)

He also ordered: ***"Let no door into the mosque remain open except the door of Abu Bakr."*** The Companions' houses around the mosque had small doors opening straight into it; all were closed except Abu Bakr's. Scholars see this as ***a hint*** at Abu Bakr's position as leader after him.

Abu Bakr's companionship began at the dawn of the da'wah: he was the first adult man to believe (Book 3), accompanied him in the Cave of Thawr during the Hijrah (Book 7), spent his wealth freeing tortured slaves, and gave ***all his wealth*** in preparing for Tabuk (Book 24). The Prophet's ﷺ praise at the end of his life was ***recognition*** of that whole life.

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"TELL ABU BAKR TO LEAD THE PRAYER"

When his illness grew so severe that he could not go out to the mosque, he said: ***"Tell Abu Bakr to lead the people in prayer."*** 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها tried to suggest someone else, saying: ***"Abu Bakr is a tender-hearted man; when he stands in your place he will not be able (to hold back his tears)."*** He repeated his order up to three times, and Abu Bakr led the prayer (Sahih al-Bukhari 664).

Abu Bakr led ***seventeen prayers*** according to the sirah reports. In an authentic narration, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ felt somewhat better, came out supported by two men and sat beside Abu Bakr. Abu Bakr followed his prayer, and the people followed Abu Bakr's (Sahih al-Bukhari 664).

The Companions later reasoned: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ approved Abu Bakr for (leading) our religion, so how can we not approve him for (leading) our worldly affairs?"*** Leading the prayer was the most honoured position in the early Muslim community, and Abu Bakr's appointment to it became one of ***the strongest arguments*** for pledging allegiance to him as caliph.

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A WARNING ABOUT GRAVES

Among the counsels the Messenger of Allah ﷺ repeated in his illness was a warning against ***glorifying graves***. 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها narrates:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4441

حَدَّثَنَا الصَّلْتُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عَوَانَةَ، عَنْ هِلاَلٍ الْوَزَّانِ، عَنْ عُرْوَةَ بْنِ الزُّبَيْرِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ ـ رضى الله عنها ـ قَالَتْ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم فِي مَرَضِهِ الَّذِي لَمْ يَقُمْ مِنْهُ لَعَنَ اللَّهُ الْيَهُودَ، اتَّخَذُوا قُبُورَ أَنْبِيَائِهِمْ مَسَاجِدَ. قَالَتْ عَائِشَةُ لَوْلاَ ذَلِكَ لأُبْرِزَ قَبْرُهُ. خَشِيَ أَنْ يُتَّخَذَ مَسْجِدًا.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: The Prophet ﷺ said during the illness from which he did not rise: ***"Allah cursed the Jews; they took the graves of their prophets as places of worship."*** 'A'ishah said: ***Were it not for that, his grave would have been made prominent; but he feared it would be taken as a place of worship.***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from as-Salt ibn Muhammad, from Abu 'Awanah al-Waddah, from Hilal al-Wazzan, from 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr, from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions, Chapter: The illness and death of the Prophet ﷺ, Hadith No. 4441; also No. 435, 1330, 1390 and Muslim No. 529.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4441

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Why was this counsel so important in his final moments? Because he knew that ***excessive love*** for righteous people can lead to shirk. The people of the Prophet Nuh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ began worshipping idols when they made statues of their righteous men; the People of the Book made the graves of their prophets places of worship.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***guarded his Ummah's tawhid to his last breath***. He did not want his own grave to become a place of worship. The Companions understood this: his grave was placed inside 'A'ishah's room, not in the open. Visiting his grave and greeting him is lawful, but ***supplication and asking are for Allah alone***.

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THE THURSDAY

Ibn ʻAbbas رضى الله عنهما narrates the event known as ***the Thursday***: his illness worsened, and he said:

"Bring me (writing material); I will write for you something after which you will never go astray." Those present disagreed; some wanted to bring it, others said he was gravely ill and the Qur'an was sufficient. He said: ***"Leave me; the state I am in is better than what you are calling me to."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4431)

Then he gave ***three instructions***: to expel the polytheists from the Arabian Peninsula, to honour delegations as he used to honour them, and a third that the narrator forgot (Sahih al-Bukhari 4431).

SIRAH NOTE: UNDERSTANDING THE EVENT OF THURSDAY

Ahl as-Sunnah scholars explain that had the writing been ***obligatory***, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would not have abandoned it because of anyone's disagreement, just as he never abandoned conveying revelation despite opposition. He lived ***several more days*** after the Thursday and gave many counsels orally.

The Qur'an itself states that the religion had been perfected (Al-Ma'idah 5:3), and he had left the Book of Allah as the thing to hold to (Book 29). This event therefore cannot be used to disparage the Companions or doubt the completeness of the religion.

REFERENCES:

an-Nawawi, Sharh Sahih Muslim; Ibn Hajar, Fath al-Bari — Books of Knowledge and Military Expeditions.

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"THE PRAYER, THE PRAYER!"

What was the final counsel of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to the Ummah? 'Ali ibn Abi Talib رضى الله عنه said: ***"The last words the Messenger of Allah ﷺ spoke were: The prayer, the prayer! Fear Allah regarding those your right hands possess."*** (Sunan Abi Dawud 5156 — sahih)

Two things: ***the prayer*** — the right of Allah, the pillar of the religion; and ***slaves*** — the weakest group in society. In his final moments, he combined ***the right of Allah and the right of the weakest people*** in one counsel.

Today, "those your right hands possess" extends to all under our care and authority: ***employees, domestic helpers, migrant workers*** and anyone dependent on us. Wronging them, withholding their wages or demeaning them goes against the final counsel of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

What of our prayers? If a father's last words are cherished by his children, then ***the last words of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ*** are even more worthy of being kept. Guarding the five daily prayers is the clearest proof of a Muslim's love for him.

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THE ARMY OF USAMAH

Before his illness, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ appointed ***Usamah ibn Zayd***, still young — about eighteen according to the sirah authors — to lead an army to the Roman frontier. Some questioned the appointment of that young man over senior Companions. He stood and said: ***"If you question his leadership, you questioned his father's leadership before. By Allah, his father was worthy of leadership… and he (Usamah) is among the people dearest to me after him."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4469)

Usamah's army was camped at al-Jurf, outside Madinah, when his illness worsened, and they delayed their departure. After his death, ***Abu Bakr*** — in his first decision as caliph — still sent the army, despite many people's fears, because ***it was the command of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ.

The lesson: leadership in Islam is based on ***competence and trustworthiness***, not age or lineage alone. And the command of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***was carried out even after he was gone*** — that is true loyalty.

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FATIMAH'S TEARS AND SMILE

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها relates that ***Fatimah*** came to visit her father; ***her walk was like the walk of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ. He welcomed her: "Welcome, my daughter," seated her beside him and whispered something to her. ***Fatimah wept.*** Then he whispered something again, and ***Fatimah smiled***. 'A'ishah said: "I have never seen joy so close to sorrow as today" (Sahih al-Bukhari 3623).

Fatimah refused to reveal the secret while her father lived. After his death she related: the first time, he told her that ***Jibril had reviewed the Qur'an twice that year, a sign his death was near***, so she wept. The second time, he said: ***"Are you not pleased to be the leader of the women of Paradise?"*** and that she would be ***the first of his family to follow him*** — so she smiled (Sahih al-Bukhari 3624).

Both pieces of news came true: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ died a few days later, and ***Fatimah died about six months after her father***. Her smile was not joy at parting, but ***joy at meeting again*** the father she loved.

Note too ***Fatimah's trustworthiness***: she kept her father's secret even when asked by 'A'ishah, his closest wife. Keeping secrets is part of the character inherited from the prophetic household.

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THE SMILE OF MONDAY MORNING

On the morning of ***Monday***, the last day of the Prophet's ﷺ life, an event took place that the Companions never forgot. Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه relates:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 680

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو الْيَمَانِ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنَا شُعَيْبٌ، عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي أَنَسُ بْنُ مَالِكٍ الأَنْصَارِيُّ ـ وَكَانَ تَبِعَ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَخَدَمَهُ وَصَحِبَهُ أَنَّ أَبَا بَكْرٍ كَانَ يُصَلِّي لَهُمْ فِي وَجَعِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم الَّذِي تُوُفِّيَ فِيهِ، حَتَّى إِذَا كَانَ يَوْمُ الاِثْنَيْنِ وَهُمْ صُفُوفٌ فِي الصَّلاَةِ، فَكَشَفَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم سِتْرَ الْحُجْرَةِ يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْنَا، وَهْوَ قَائِمٌ كَأَنَّ وَجْهَهُ وَرَقَةُ مُصْحَفٍ، ثُمَّ تَبَسَّمَ يَضْحَكُ، فَهَمَمْنَا أَنْ نَفْتَتِنَ مِنَ الْفَرَحِ بِرُؤْيَةِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم، فَنَكَصَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ عَلَى عَقِبَيْهِ لِيَصِلَ الصَّفَّ، وَظَنَّ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم خَارِجٌ إِلَى الصَّلاَةِ، فَأَشَارَ إِلَيْنَا النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم أَنْ أَتِمُّوا صَلاَتَكُمْ، وَأَرْخَى السِّتْرَ، فَتُوُفِّيَ مِنْ يَوْمِهِ.

TRANSLATION:

Az-Zuhri said: Anas ibn Malik al-Ansari رضى الله عنه told me that ***Abu Bakr led the people in prayer*** during the Prophet's ﷺ final illness, until ***Monday***, when, as they stood in rows for prayer, the Prophet ﷺ lifted the curtain of his room and looked at us while standing. ***His face was like a page of the mushaf***, then he ***smiled and laughed***. We were almost distracted (in prayer) out of joy at seeing the Prophet ﷺ. Abu Bakr stepped back to join the row, thinking the Prophet ﷺ was coming out to pray. But the Prophet ﷺ signalled to us: "Complete your prayer," and let the curtain fall. ***He passed away that same day.***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Abu al-Yaman al-Hakam ibn Nafi', from Shu'ayb ibn Abi Hamzah, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from Anas ibn Malik al-Ansari رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Call to Prayer, Chapter: People of knowledge and virtue are most entitled to lead the prayer, Hadith No. 680; also No. 681, 754, 4448 and Muslim No. 419.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:680

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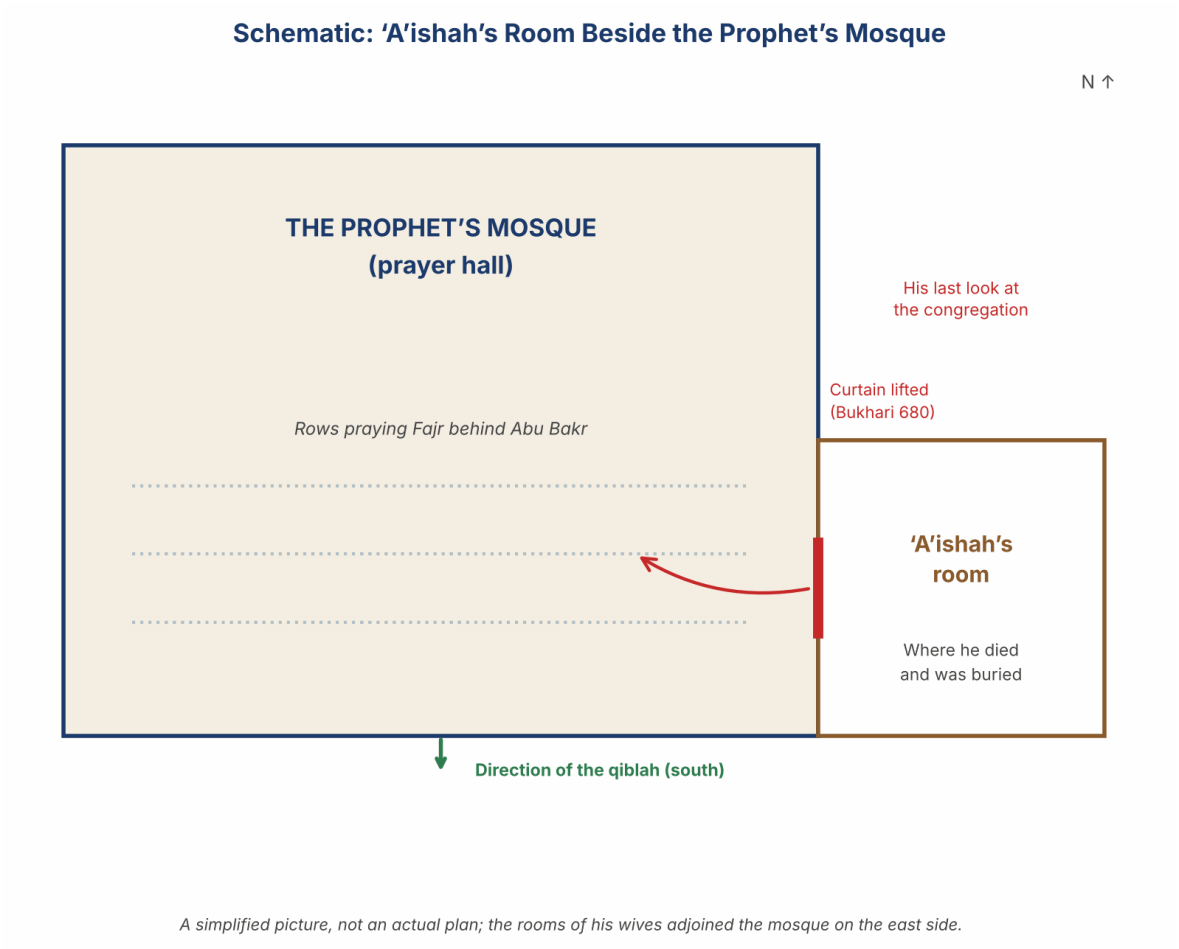

Figure 2: Schematic of 'A'ishah's room beside the Prophet's Mosque.

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Imagine the sight the Messenger of Allah ﷺ beheld that morning: ***the rows of his Ummah*** standing orderly towards the qiblah, behind Abu Bakr, praying Fajr in congregation. Twenty-three years earlier, he had prayed alone or with a handful of people in secret in Makkah. Now ***the mosque was full*** of a believing, orderly Ummah.

That smile was ***the smile of a Messenger seeing the fruit of his mission***. The trust had been fulfilled; the Ummah stood on its own feet; the prayer was established even without him as imam. That was the Companions' last sight of his face in life.

The Companions who saw him that morning thought he had recovered. Many went home or about their business happily, including Abu Bakr, who went to his house at as-Sunh. They did not know ***it was farewell***.

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THE LAST SIWAK

Towards midday on that Monday, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was in 'A'ishah's room, ***leaning against 'A'ishah's chest***. 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Abi Bakr — 'A'ishah's brother — came in holding ***a fresh siwak***, cleaning his teeth with it. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ looked at the siwak (Sahih al-Bukhari 4438).

'A'ishah understood that look. She took the siwak, ***softened it with her teeth***, and gave it to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He cleaned his teeth with it — 'A'ishah said: ***"I never saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ clean his teeth better than that."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4438)

'A'ishah later recalled with deep gratitude: ***"Among Allah's favours upon me is that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ died in my house, on my day, between my chest and my neck, and Allah joined my saliva with his saliva at his death."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4449)

To his last moments, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ maintained ***cleanliness*** — one of the Sunnahs he loved most. He once said that were it not a burden on his Ummah, he would have commanded the siwak at every prayer (Sahih al-Bukhari 887). This small Sunnah was among his very last acts in this world.

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"O ALLAH, THE HIGHEST COMPANION"

Beside the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was a vessel of water. He put his hand in the water and wiped his face, saying: ***"There is no god but Allah. Indeed, death has its agonies."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4449) Then he raised his hand and looked up. 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها relates those final moments:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4463

حَدَّثَنَا بِشْرُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ، قَالَ يُونُسُ قَالَ الزُّهْرِيُّ أَخْبَرَنِي سَعِيدُ بْنُ الْمُسَيَّبِ، فِي رِجَالٍ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْعِلْمِ أَنَّ عَائِشَةَ قَالَتْ كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَقُولُ وَهْوَ صَحِيحٌ إِنَّهُ لَمْ يُقْبَضْ نَبِيٌّ حَتَّى يَرَى مَقْعَدَهُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ، ثُمَّ يُخَيَّرُ. فَلَمَّا نَزَلَ بِهِ وَرَأْسُهُ عَلَى فَخِذِي غُشِيَ عَلَيْهِ، ثُمَّ أَفَاقَ، فَأَشْخَصَ بَصَرَهُ إِلَى سَقْفِ الْبَيْتِ ثُمَّ قَالَ اللَّهُمَّ الرَّفِيقَ الأَعْلَى. فَقُلْتُ إِذًا لاَ يَخْتَارُنَا. وَعَرَفْتُ أَنَّهُ الْحَدِيثُ الَّذِي كَانَ يُحَدِّثُنَا وَهْوَ صَحِيحٌ قَالَتْ فَكَانَتْ آخِرَ كَلِمَةٍ تَكَلَّمَ بِهَا اللَّهُمَّ الرَّفِيقَ الأَعْلَى.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: When he was in good health, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to say: ***"No prophet is taken (in death) until he is shown his place in Paradise and then given the choice."*** When death approached him, ***his head was on my thigh***. He fainted, then came to, looked up at the ceiling of the house and said: ***"O Allah, (I choose) the Highest Companion (ar-Rafiq al-A'la)."*** I said (to myself): "Then he is not choosing us." And I understood that this was what he used to tell us when he was healthy. ***The last words he spoke were: "O Allah, the Highest Companion."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Bishr ibn Muhammad, from 'Abdullah ibn al-Mubarak, from Yunus ibn Yazid, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from Sa'id ibn al-Musayyib, from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions, Chapter: The last words of the Prophet ﷺ, Hadith No. 4463; also No. 4437, 6348, 6509 and Muslim No. 2444.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4463

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Who is "the Highest Companion"? The Qur'an explains: ***"those will be with the ones upon whom Allah has bestowed favor of the prophets, the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs and the righteous. And excellent are those as companions"*** (An-Nisa' 4:69) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 4:69.

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'A'ishah narrates that he also prayed: ***"O Allah, forgive me, have mercy on me, and join me with the Highest Companion."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4440) Then his hand fell, and ***his noble soul returned to its Creator***. Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ ***was given the choice***, and he chose Allah — just as throughout his life he had always chosen Allah. His last words were not about wealth, power or family, but about ***meeting his Lord*** and the companions of Paradise.

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THE GRIEF OF FATIMAH

No one felt that loss more than his only surviving child, ***Fatimah*** رضى الله عنها. Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه narrates:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4462

حَدَّثَنَا سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ، حَدَّثَنَا حَمَّادٌ، عَنْ ثَابِتٍ، عَنْ أَنَسٍ، قَالَ لَمَّا ثَقُلَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم جَعَلَ يَتَغَشَّاهُ، فَقَالَتْ فَاطِمَةُ ـ عَلَيْهَا السَّلاَمُ ـ وَاكَرْبَ أَبَاهُ. فَقَالَ لَهَا لَيْسَ عَلَى أَبِيكِ كَرْبٌ بَعْدَ الْيَوْمِ. فَلَمَّا مَاتَ قَالَتْ يَا أَبَتَاهْ، أَجَابَ رَبًّا دَعَاهُ، يَا أَبَتَاهْ مَنْ جَنَّةُ الْفِرْدَوْسِ مَأْوَاهُ، يَا أَبَتَاهْ إِلَى جِبْرِيلَ نَنْعَاهْ. فَلَمَّا دُفِنَ قَالَتْ فَاطِمَةُ ـ عَلَيْهَا السَّلاَمُ ـ يَا أَنَسُ، أَطَابَتْ أَنْفُسُكُمْ أَنْ تَحْثُوا عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم التُّرَابَ

TRANSLATION:

Anas رضى الله عنه said: When the illness of the Prophet ﷺ grew severe, he began to lose consciousness. ***Fatimah*** رضى الله عنها said: ***"How great is my father's distress!"*** He said to her: ***"There will be no more distress for your father after today."*** When he died, she said: "O my father, who answered the call of the Lord who summoned him. O my father, whose abode is the Garden of Firdaws. O my father, to Jibril we announce his death." When he was buried, Fatimah said: ***"O Anas, how could your hearts bear to pour earth over the Messenger of Allah ﷺ?"***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Sulayman ibn Harb, from Hammad ibn Zayd, from Thabit al-Bunani, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions, Chapter: The illness and death of the Prophet ﷺ, Hadith No. 4462.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4462

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

"There will be no more distress for your father after today" — these words comfort every believer who loses a loved one. For the believer, death is ***the end of worldly pain*** and the beginning of a better life.

Fatimah's words ***"how could your hearts bear to pour earth over the Messenger of Allah ﷺ?"*** show how heavy the loss was. Yet she did not wail or tear her clothes; her grief was expressed in words of

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courtesy and faith — for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had taught: "The eyes shed tears and the heart grieves, but we say only what pleases our Lord" (Sahih al-Bukhari 1303).

Fatimah's grief also shows that sorrow at the death of loved ones is natural and not a sign of weak faith. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself wept at the deaths of his son Ibrahim and his daughters. What Islam forbids is not tears, but wailing, tearing clothes and words of objection to Allah's decree.

Her words to Anas also reflect the deep love the Prophet's ﷺ family and Companions had for him. Burying him with their own hands was the hardest thing they had ever done. For us, who never saw him, the way to share that love is to follow his Sunnah and send blessings upon him often.

Fatimah lived only about six months after her father, as he had told her. She was the first of his household to follow him, and he had given her the glad tidings that she would be the leader of the women of Paradise — a comfort that turned her tears into a smile.

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THE DARKEST DAY

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه, who served the Messenger of Allah ﷺ for ten years, describes the difference between two days of his life: ***"On the day the Messenger of Allah ﷺ entered Madinah, everything in it shone. And on the day he died, everything in it became dark."*** (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3618 — hasan)

Anas added: ***"We had not yet dusted our hands of (the soil of) the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, as we buried him, before we felt our hearts change."*** His loss was not merely the loss of a leader, but ***the loss of a light*** that had illuminated their daily lives.

That day, Madinah was filled with weeping. Some Companions sat down unable to stand; some were struck dumb; some could not accept the reality. Scholars mention that ***the greatest calamity*** to befall the Muslims was the death of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, for with it revelation from heaven ceased.

In one narration, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said that when someone is struck by a calamity, let him remember the calamity of losing him, for it is ***the greatest calamity*** (Sunan Ibn Majah 1599 — its chain is debated; al-Albani graded it sahih due to supporting routes). Every grief of ours, compared with that loss, becomes lighter.

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THE BEWILDERMENT OF 'UMAR

When news of the death spread, ***'Umar ibn al-Khattab*** رضى الله عنه — the firmest and boldest of Companions — could not accept it. He stood and said: ***"By Allah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has not died!"*** He said Allah would raise him up again (Sahih al-Bukhari 3667).

'Umar later admitted: ***"By Allah, nothing came to my mind except that."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 3667) This was not a sign of weak faith, but of ***love so deep*** that the shock overwhelmed his reason.

This story teaches that ***even the strongest can falter*** in a great calamity. What matters is returning to the truth when reminded — and that is what 'Umar did as soon as Abu Bakr recited the verse of the Qur'an.

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"WHOEVER WORSHIPPED MUHAMMAD…"

While Madinah was in confusion, ***Abu Bakr*** رضى الله عنه arrived from his house at as-Sunh. He spoke to no one, went straight into 'A'ishah's room, and found his beloved friend. 'A'ishah and Ibn 'Abbas relate what happened next:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4454

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ بُكَيْرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا اللَّيْثُ، عَنْ عُقَيْلٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي أَبُو سَلَمَةَ، أَنَّ عَائِشَةَ، أَخْبَرَتْهُ أَنَّ أَبَا بَكْرٍ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ أَقْبَلَ عَلَى فَرَسٍ مِنْ مَسْكَنِهِ بِالسُّنْحِ حَتَّى نَزَلَ، فَدَخَلَ الْمَسْجِدَ فَلَمْ يُكَلِّمِ النَّاسَ حَتَّى دَخَلَ عَلَى عَائِشَةَ، فَتَيَمَّمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَهْوَ مُغَشًّى بِثَوْبِ حِبَرَةٍ، فَكَشَفَ عَنْ وَجْهِهِ ثُمَّ أَكَبَّ عَلَيْهِ فَقَبَّلَهُ وَبَكَى. ثُمَّ قَالَ بِأَبِي أَنْتَ وَأُمِّي، وَاللَّهِ لاَ يَجْمَعُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ مَوْتَتَيْنِ، أَمَّا الْمَوْتَةُ الَّتِي كُتِبَتْ عَلَيْكَ فَقَدْ مُتَّهَا. قَالَ الزُّهْرِيُّ وَحَدَّثَنِي أَبُو سَلَمَةَ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، أَنَّ أَبَا بَكْرٍ، خَرَجَ وَعُمَرُ يُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فَقَالَ اجْلِسْ يَا عُمَرُ، فَأَبَى عُمَرُ أَنْ يَجْلِسَ. فَأَقْبَلَ النَّاسُ إِلَيْهِ وَتَرَكُوا عُمَرَ، فَقَالَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ أَمَّا بَعْدُ مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ يَعْبُدُ مُحَمَّدًا صلى الله عليه وسلم فَإِنَّ مُحَمَّدًا قَدْ مَاتَ، وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ يَعْبُدُ اللَّهَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ حَىٌّ لاَ يَمُوتُ، قَالَ اللَّهُ {وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلاَّ رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ} إِلَى قَوْلِهِ {الشَّاكِرِينَ} وَقَالَ وَاللَّهِ لَكَأَنَّ النَّاسَ لَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَنْزَلَ هَذِهِ الآيَةَ حَتَّى تَلاَهَا أَبُو بَكْرٍ، فَتَلَقَّاهَا مِنْهُ النَّاسُ كُلُّهُمْ فَمَا أَسْمَعُ بَشَرًا مِنَ النَّاسِ إِلاَّ يَتْلُوهَا. فَأَخْبَرَنِي سَعِيدُ بْنُ الْمُسَيَّبِ أَنَّ عُمَرَ قَالَ وَاللَّهِ مَا هُوَ إِلاَّ أَنْ سَمِعْتُ أَبَا بَكْرٍ تَلاَهَا فَعَقِرْتُ حَتَّى مَا تُقِلُّنِي رِجْلاَىَ، وَحَتَّى أَهْوَيْتُ إِلَى الأَرْضِ حِينَ سَمِعْتُهُ تَلاَهَا أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَدْ مَاتَ.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها narrated: Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه came on horseback from his home at as-Sunh. He dismounted, entered the mosque, and spoke to no one until he came into 'A'ishah's room and went straight to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who was covered with a striped Yemeni cloth. He uncovered his face, then ***bent over him, kissed him and wept***, and said: ***"May my father and mother be your ransom. By Allah, Allah will not bring two deaths upon you. As for the death decreed for you, you have died it."*** Ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما said: Abu Bakr came out while 'Umar was speaking to the people. Abu Bakr said: "Sit down, 'Umar." 'Umar refused. So the people turned to Abu Bakr and left 'Umar. Abu Bakr said: ***"To proceed:***

whoever among you worshipped Muhammad ﷺ, then Muhammad has died. And whoever among you worships Allah, then Allah is Ever-Living and does not die." Allah says: {Muhammad is not but a messenger; [other] messengers have passed on before him…} up to {…the grateful}. Ibn 'Abbas said: By Allah, it was as if the people had not known that Allah had revealed this verse until Abu Bakr recited it; then all the people took it from him, and I heard no one but reciting it. Sa'id ibn al-Musayyib said that 'Umar said: ***"By Allah, as soon as I heard Abu Bakr recite it, I was stunned until my legs could not carry me, and I fell to the ground when I heard him recite it, (realising) that the Prophet ﷺ had died."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Yahya ibn Bukayr, from al-Layth ibn Sa'd, from 'Uqayl ibn Khalid, from Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri, from Abu Salamah ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman, from 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها and 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas رضى الله عنهما; and az-Zuhri from Sa'id ibn al-Musayyib.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions, Chapter: The illness and death of the Prophet ﷺ, Hadith No. 4452–4454; also No. 1241, 3667, 3668.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:4454

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The verse Abu Bakr recited was: ***"Muhammad is not but a messenger. [Other] messengers have passed on before him. So if he was to die or be killed, would you turn back on your heels [to unbelief]?"*** (Ali 'Imran 3:144) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 3:144.

See Abu Bakr's steadfastness. He wept and kissed his friend's face — ***his grief was no less than anyone's***. Yet when he went out to the Ummah, he spoke ***calmly, clearly and on the basis of revelation***. He did not let emotion drown the truth.

The words ***"whoever worshipped Muhammad, Muhammad has died; and whoever worships Allah, Allah is Ever-Living and does not die"*** are among the most important ever spoken in Islamic history. They ***saved the Ummah's tawhid*** at its most critical moment, and established that this religion depends on Allah, not on any human being.

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"INDEED, YOU ARE TO DIE"

In another narration, Abu Bakr also recited this verse (Sahih al-Bukhari 3667):

"Indeed, you are to die, and indeed, they are to die" (Az-Zumar 39:30) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 39:30.

And Allah says: ***"And We did not grant to any man before you eternity [on earth]"*** (Al-Anbiya' 21:34) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 21:34.

These verses had been revealed years earlier, and the Companions had recited them many times. Yet Ibn 'Abbas said: ***"It was as if the people did not know Allah had revealed this verse until Abu Bakr recited it."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4454) Grief can make one forget what one already knows — and the role of the knowledgeable is ***to remind***.

These verses also affirm ***the humanity of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ. He is the noblest of humans, beloved of Allah, leader of the prophets — yet still a human who died. This distinguishes Islam from beliefs that raise prophets or saints to divinity. We love him with all our hearts, but ***we worship Allah alone***.

For us, this verse is a reminder: if even the Messenger of Allah ﷺ died, how much more we. ***"Every soul will taste death"*** (Ali 'Imran 3:185). The question is not whether we will die, but ***in what state*** we will meet Allah.

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THE PLEDGE TO ABU BAKR

Before his body was buried, the Muslims had to settle a matter of great importance: ***who would lead?*** The Ansar gathered at ***the Saqifah of Banu Sa'idah***, and Abu Bakr, 'Umar and Abu 'Ubaydah went to meet them (Sahih al-Bukhari 3668).

After discussion, 'Umar رضى الله عنه said to Abu Bakr: ***"Rather we pledge allegiance to you, for you are our chief, the best of us, and the most beloved of us to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ."*** Then 'Umar took Abu Bakr's hand and pledged allegiance to him, and the people followed (Sahih al-Bukhari 3668).

Within a short time, an Ummah almost divided by grief was again ***united under one leadership***. The signs the Messenger of Allah ﷺ left — Abu Bakr as imam of the prayer, his door left open, and his praise — helped the Companions reach agreement.

The story of Abu Bakr's caliphate and the Rightly Guided Caliphs lies outside the scope of this Prophet's Sirah series. In sha Allah, it may become a series of its own in the future.

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WASHING HIS BLESSED BODY

On Tuesday, his family began ***washing the body of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ. 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها relates that they did not know whether to remove his clothes as with other dead, or wash him in his clothes. When they disagreed, Allah cast sleep upon them, then a voice was heard from a corner of the house — no one knew whose: ***"Wash the Prophet in his clothes."*** So they washed him in his shirt (Sunan Abi Dawud 3141 — hasan).

> **SIRAH NOTE: WHO WASHED HIM?**
>
> The sirah books mention that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was washed by ***'Ali ibn Abi Talib***, helped by ***al-'Abbas*** and his two sons ***al-Fadl and Qutham***, together with ***Usamah ibn Zayd*** and ***Shuqran***, his freed slave (mawla). 'Ali said while washing him: "May my father and mother be your ransom; you were good in life and in death."
>
> This is reported in Sunan Ibn Majah and as-Sirah of Ibn Hisham with debated chains, but its meaning is well known among the sirah authors.
>
> **REFERENCES:**
> Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah (from Ibn Ishaq) — chapter on his illness and death; Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa an-Nihayah; Ibn al-Qayyim, Zad al-Ma'ad.

Scholars mention that washing him in his clothes was ***a special honour*** for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

For other Muslims, the Sunnah is to wash the body with the private parts covered, by the closest relatives or those most knowledgeable in washing the dead.

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THE SHROUD AND THE FUNERAL PRAYER

'A'ishah narrates: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was shrouded in three white Yemeni sheets of cotton, without a shirt or a turban."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 1264) His simplicity remained even in his shroud.

SIRAH NOTE: THE FUNERAL PRAYER WITHOUT AN IMAM

The sirah books and some narrations mention that the Companions ***prayed over the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in small groups***, entering 'A'ishah's room group after group — men, then women, then children — ***without an imam*** leading them.

Ibn Majah's narration of this is graded weak, but it is supported by other reports in al-Muwatta' and the sirah books. Scholars explain that this was because ***the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was their imam*** in life and after death, and so that everyone might have the honour of praying over him.

REFERENCES:
Sunan Ibn Majah 1628 (weak); Malik, al-Muwatta'; Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah an-Nabawiyyah.

Because so many wished to pray over him, the process took the whole of Tuesday until Wednesday night. Every Companion wished for ***a last chance*** to pray for him.

From these narrations we learn the Sunnah of shrouding a man in ***three white sheets***, without extravagance. An expensive shroud adds nothing to the honour of the dead; what counts is ***the deeds they take with them***.

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BURIED WHERE HE DIED

The Companions differed about ***where*** the Messenger of Allah ﷺ should be buried. Then Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه said: ***"I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say something I have not forgotten: Allah does not take a prophet except in the place where He wishes him to be buried."*** So they buried him ***at the place of his bed***, in 'A'ishah's room (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 1018 — sahih).

His grave was dug as a ***lahd*** (a niche at the side of the grave), and he was buried on ***Wednesday night***. Today, that room lies within the Prophet's Mosque, known as ***al-Hujrah an-Nabawiyyah***. Beside him were later buried Abu Bakr and 'Umar رضى الله عنهما, the two companions who accompanied him in life and death.

Remember his counsel in his illness: do not take graves as places of worship (Chapter 12). That is why his grave ***was not made prominent in the open***. Visiting his mosque and greeting him is Sunnah, but supplication and requests are ***for Allah alone***.

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WHAT THE PROPHET ﷺ LEFT BEHIND

What did the leader who had united all of Arabia leave behind? 'Amr ibn al-Harith رضى الله عنه, brother of the Mother of the Believers Juwayriyah, said: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ left no dinar, no dirham, no male or female slave, nor anything else, except his white mule, his weapons and a piece of land he had given in charity."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 2739)

Indeed, when he died he ***was still in debt***. 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها narrates:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 2916

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ كَثِيرٍ، أَخْبَرَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنِ الأَعْمَشِ، عَنْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنِ الأَسْوَدِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ ـ رضى الله عنها ـ قَالَتْ تُوُفِّيَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَدِرْعُهُ مَرْهُونَةٌ عِنْدَ يَهُودِيٍّ بِثَلاَثِينَ صَاعًا مِنْ شَعِيرٍ. وَقَالَ يَعْلَى حَدَّثَنَا الأَعْمَشُ دِرْعٌ مِنْ حَدِيدٍ. وَقَالَ مُعَلًّى حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْوَاحِدِ حَدَّثَنَا الأَعْمَشُ وَقَالَ رَهَنَهُ دِرْعًا مِنْ حَدِيدٍ.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: ***The Messenger of Allah ﷺ died while his coat of armour was pledged with a Jewish man for thirty sa' of barley.*** Ya'la said: al-A'mash said: "an iron coat of armour". Mu'alla said: 'Abd al-Wahid related from al-A'mash: "he pledged an iron coat of armour."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Muhammad ibn Kathir, from Sufyan ath-Thawri, from Sulayman al-A'mash, from Ibrahim an-Nakha'i, from al-Aswad ibn Yazid, from 'A'ishah, Mother of the Believers رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Jihad, Chapter: What is said about the Prophet's ﷺ armour, Hadith No. 2916; also No. 2068, 4467 and Muslim No. 1603.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:2916

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

The armour worn in battle — a symbol of strength — ***was pledged to buy food for his family***. This was the Messenger who had authority over the spoils of Khaybar, Hunayn and all Arabia, yet chose to live ***poor and simple***. He distributed wealth to others, and lived on just enough.

Note too that he dealt with ***a Jewish man*** — showing that fair dealings with non-Muslims are permitted, and that he took no advantage of his position. Scholars mention he did not borrow from wealthy Companions so they would not feel obliged to waive the debt.

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His simplicity was not forced poverty, but a choice. Wealth passed through his hands in great quantities — whole valleys of livestock after Hunayn, gold and silver from Bahrain — and he gave it away the same day. He used to say that he did not like to keep even a little gold with him overnight while it could be given to those in need.

He also taught the Ummah to be careful with debts. Though he himself died with his armour in pledge, it was a debt for his family's food, recorded and known, and it was settled after his death. A Muslim may borrow for real needs, but should record the debt, intend to repay it, and avoid borrowing for luxury.

For us, this chapter is a mirror. We leave behind houses, cars and savings; he left behind a mule, his weapons, a piece of land given in charity — and a religion that has guided billions. True wealth is measured not by what we keep, but by what we leave that continues to benefit others.

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"WE ARE NOT INHERITED FROM"

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"We (prophets) are not inherited from; what we leave is charity."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 6727) When Fatimah رضى الله عنها asked Abu Bakr about her share of Fadak and the fay' property, Abu Bakr conveyed this hadith, and affirmed that he would ***continue to spend that property as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had spent it***, on his family and the interests of the Ummah (Sahih al-Bukhari 3712).

The wisdom is great: prophets are sent ***to convey the message, not to amass wealth*** for their descendants. If a prophet's property were inherited, some might think the mission aimed to build family wealth. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also said that the prophets ***bequeath knowledge***; whoever takes it has taken an abundant share (Sunan Abi Dawud 3641).

That is the ***true inheritance*** of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: the Qur'an, the Sunnah and noble character. This inheritance belongs not to one family alone, but to ***the whole Ummah*** until the Day of Resurrection.

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HIS AGE AND THE DATE OF HIS DEATH

'A'ishah narrates: ***"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ died at the age of sixty-three."*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 4466)

She also mentioned that he died on ***a Monday*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 1387). Below is a summary of information about his death:

ITEM	INFORMATION AND SOURCE
Age	63 years (Sahih al-Bukhari 4466)
Day of death	Monday (Sahih al-Bukhari 1387)
Time	Forenoon / towards midday, after Fajr (Bukhari 680)
Month and year	Rabi' al-Awwal 11 AH (June 632 CE)
Date	12 Rabi' al-Awwal according to the well-known view; other views exist
Place	'A'ishah's house beside the Prophet's Mosque (Bukhari 4450)
Length of illness	About 10–14 days according to the sirah books
Burial	Wednesday night, where he died (Tirmidhi 1018)

A remarkable fact: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was born on a Monday, received the first revelation on a Monday (Sahih Muslim 1162), and died on a Monday. That is why he encouraged ***voluntary fasting on Mondays***.

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SENDING BLESSINGS AND LOVING HIM

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has died, but ***our bond with him is not broken***. Allah commands:

"Indeed, Allah confers blessing upon the Prophet, and His angels [ask Him to do so]. O you who have believed, ask [Allah to confer] blessing upon him and ask [Allah to grant him] peace" (Al-Ahzab 33:56) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 33:56.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Whoever sends blessings upon me once, Allah sends blessings upon him tenfold"*** (Sahih Muslim 408). Sending blessings is ***how we express love and gratitude*** to the Messenger who sacrificed his whole life to convey guidance to us.

Allah describes his love for his Ummah: ***"Grievous to him is what you suffer; [he is] concerned over you and to the believers is kind and merciful"*** (At-Tawbah 9:128) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 9:128.

Love for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is not merely a feeling, but ***following his Sunnah***. Allah says: "Say:

If you love Allah, then follow me" (Ali 'Imran 3:31). Every time we pray as he prayed, behave as he behaved, and convey his teaching, we are ***keeping his legacy alive***.

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A TIMELINE OF HIS ILLNESS, DAY BY DAY

The previous chapters told the story of the final days of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ by theme. This chapter arranges those events again in order of time, so that the reader can follow the course of his illness from its beginning to his burial. Most of the events are narrated in authentic hadith, but the exact day and date of some of them are estimates of the sirah scholars; the "Status" column explains this.

One important clue comes from 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها herself: his illness began in the house of Maymunah, one of his wives, before he asked permission to be nursed in the house of 'A'ishah (Sahih Muslim 418; Sahih al-Bukhari 4442).

TIME	EVENT	SOURCE	STATUS
Ramadan 10 AH	Jibril reviews the Qur'an with him twice	Bukhari 3624	Sahih
Dhul-Hijjah 10 AH	The Farewell Pilgrimage; Surah An-Nasr understood as a sign of his passing	Bukhari 4970; Series 29	Sahih
Safar 11 AH	The army of Usamah prepared; visits to the martyrs of Uhud and al-Baqi'	Bukhari 4469, 4042; Muslim 974	Sahih; month per the sirah books
End of Safar / early Rabi' al-Awwal	The illness begins in the house of Maymunah; "Oh, my head!"	Muslim 418; Bukhari 5666	Sahih; date estimated
First days of the illness	Still taking turns; "Where will I be tomorrow?"; moves to 'A'ishah's house supported by al-'Abbas and 'Ali	Bukhari 4442, 4450	Sahih
Some days before his death	Seven water-skins; the last sermon: the servant given the choice, counsel about the Ansar	Bukhari 4442, 3654, 3799	Sahih
Five days before his death	"I am free before Allah of taking a khalil"; the prohibition of taking graves as places of worship	Muslim 532	Sahih
Thursday (four days before)	The incident of the writing materials; three counsels	Bukhari 4431	Sahih
Maghrib, in the last days	The last prayer he led: Surah Al-Mursalat	Bukhari 4429	Sahih; day per the sirah books
'Isha', the same day	Fainting repeatedly; "Tell Abu Bakr to lead the prayer"	Bukhari 687, 664	Sahih
Three days before his death	"Let none of you die except while thinking well of Allah"	Muslim 2877	Sahih

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TIME	EVENT	SOURCE	STATUS
Saturday or Sunday	Feels some relief; comes out for Zuhr supported by two men and sits beside Abu Bakr	Bukhari 687	Sahih; day per the sirah books
Sunday	Frees his slaves and gives away his remaining wealth in charity	Sirah books	Sirah Note
Monday, at Fajr	Lifts the curtain of his room and smiles at the rows	Bukhari 680	Sahih
Monday, mid-morning	The secret to Fatimah; the siwak; "the Highest Companion"; his passing	Bukhari 3623, 4438, 4463	Sahih
Monday, after his passing	The bewilderment of 'Umar; Abu Bakr's address; Ali 'Imran 3:144; the Saqifah	Bukhari 3667, 3668	Sahih
Tuesday	The general pledge; the body washed, shrouded and prayed over	Abi Dawud 3141; Bukhari 1264	Hasan / Sahih; details from the sirah books
Wednesday night	Buried where he died, in the room of 'A'ishah	Tirmidhi 1018; sirah books	Sahih; night per the sirah books
After the burial	Abu Bakr dispatches the army of Usamah	Chapter 15; sirah books	Well known in the sirah

SIRAH NOTE: THE LENGTH OF HIS ILLNESS AND THE DATE OF HIS DEATH

The sirah scholars differ about the length of his illness. The majority view is about thirteen days; some reports mention twelve, fourteen or ten days.

That he died on a Monday is authentic (Sahih al-Bukhari 1387). As for the date, the well-known view is 12 Rabi' al-Awwal, held by Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Sa'd and many scholars. There are also the views of 1 and 2 Rabi' al-Awwal. As-Suhayli and Ibn Hajar discussed the difficulty of reconciling 12 Rabi' al-Awwal with a Monday, since the Day of 'Arafah in 10 AH fell on a Friday; Ibn Hajar strengthened the view of 2 Rabi' al-Awwal. This difference is a matter of reckoning (ijtihad) and affects nothing in the foundations of the religion.

The report that he freed his slaves and gave away his remaining dinars in charity on the Sunday is found in the sirah books; its meaning agrees with the authentic hadith that he left behind no dinar or dirham (Sahih al-Bukhari 2739).

References: Sahih Muslim 418; Sahih al-Bukhari 4429; Sahih Muslim 532; Sahih Muslim 2877; Ibn Hajar, Fath al-Bari — Kitab al-Maghazi, chapter on the illness and death of the Prophet ﷺ; HadithAnswers, "The Date of the Passing of Rasulullah".

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THE PEOPLE IN THE TIMELINE

Many names appear in his final days. This table explains how each person was related to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, so that the reader is not confused about their lineage.

NAME	RELATION TO THE PROPHET ﷺ	ROLE IN HIS FINAL DAYS
‘A’ishah bint Abi Bakr	Wife; daughter of Abu Bakr	Nursed him; he passed away resting against her chest
Maymunah bint al-Harith	Wife	His illness began in her house (Muslim 418)
Umm al-Fadl Lubabah bint al-Harith	Wife of al-‘Abbas; sister of Maymunah; mother of Ibn ‘Abbas	Narrated the last Maghrib prayer (Bukhari 4429)
Fatimah bint Muhammad	Daughter; the only one of his children still alive	Received the two secrets; “O my father”
‘Ali ibn Abi Talib	Cousin (son of Abu Talib) and son-in-law	Supported him as he walked; washed his body
Al-‘Abbas ibn ‘Abd al-Muttalib	Paternal uncle	Supported him to the house of ‘A’ishah
Al-Fadl and Qutham ibn al-‘Abbas	Cousins	Helped wash his body (sirah books)
‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbas	Cousin	Narrated the Thursday (Bukhari 4431)
Usamah ibn Zayd	Son of Zayd ibn Harithah and Umm Ayman	Commander of the army to the Syrian frontier
Abu Bakr as-Siddiq	Closest Companion; father-in-law (father of ‘A’ishah)	Led the prayer; the address after his death; caliph
‘Umar ibn al-Khattab	Companion; father-in-law (father of Hafsah)	The Thursday; bewilderment after his death
‘Abd ar-Rahman ibn Abi Bakr	Full brother of ‘A’ishah	Brought the last siwak
Anas ibn Malik	Ansari (Banu an-Najjar, Khazraj); his servant	Narrated the last look at the rows (Bukhari 680)
Jabir ibn ‘Abdillah	Ansari (Banu Salimah, Khazraj)	Heard the counsel to think well of Allah (Muslim 2877)
Jundub ibn ‘Abdillah al-Bajali	Companion from the tribe of Bajilah	Heard the counsel five days before his death (Muslim 532)

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LESSON

This timeline shows that the final days of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ were not empty. Every day held a counsel, an act of worship and a preparation for the Ummah. Illness did not stop him from conveying the message; it only changed the manner — from the pulpit to the room, from the sermon to the whisper.

It also teaches us to distinguish between what is authentic and what is estimated. The main events are established in authentic hadith; the exact day and date of some of them are the ijtihad of the sirah scholars, and we state this honestly.

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STRIVING TO RISE AND THE LAST PRAYER

One of the most moving images of the final days of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is his determination to pray with his Ummah, even though his body had become very weak. ‘Ubaydullah ibn ‘Abdillah asked ‘A’ishah رضى الله عنها about his illness, and she related:

His illness became severe, and he asked: “Have the people prayed?” We said: “No, they are waiting for you, O Messenger of Allah.” He said: “Put water for me in the tub.” He bathed, then tried to get up, but fainted. When he came round, he asked again: “Have the people prayed?” — and this was repeated three times. The people were waiting in the mosque for the ‘Isha’ prayer. Finally he sent word to Abu Bakr to lead them (Sahih al-Bukhari 687).

Abu Bakr was a tender-hearted man, and he said to ‘Umar: “O ‘Umar, lead the people.” ‘Umar replied: “You are more entitled to it.” So Abu Bakr led the prayer during those days. Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ felt some relief and came out for the Zuhr prayer supported by two men — one of them al-‘Abbas. Abu Bakr wanted to step back, but he signalled to him not to step back, and sat down beside him. Abu Bakr prayed following the prayer of the Prophet ﷺ, and the people prayed following the prayer of Abu Bakr (Sahih al-Bukhari 687).

THE LAST PRAYER HE LED

Umm al-Fadl bint al-Harith — wife of al-‘Abbas and mother of Ibn ‘Abbas — narrates: “I heard the Prophet ﷺ recite Surah Al-Mursalat in the Maghrib prayer. After that he did not lead us in prayer again until Allah took him.” (Sahih al-Bukhari 4429)

Surah Al-Mursalat is a surah about the Day of Resurrection, with a stirring refrain: “Woe, that Day, to the deniers” (Al-Mursalat 77:15) — Tafsir Ibn Kathir 77:15. His last recitation as imam was a reminder of the Hereafter — a fitting message from a Messenger who was preparing to return to his Lord.

RUQYAH WITH HIS OWN BLESSED HAND

‘A’ishah رضى الله عنها narrates that whenever the Messenger of Allah ﷺ fell ill, he would recite al-Mu‘awwidhat (the surahs of seeking refuge), blow over his body and wipe it with his hand. In the illness from which he died, it was ‘A’ishah who recited them and blew, and she wiped his body with his own hand, hoping for its blessing (Sahih al-Bukhari 4439).

References: Sahih al-Bukhari 687; Sahih al-Bukhari 4429; Sahih al-Bukhari 4439; Al-Mursalat 77:15.

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LESSON

Three times he tried to rise and three times he fainted — all for the sake of the congregational prayer. What then of us, healthy as we are, who hear the adhan and delay? This story is a gentle rebuke to everyone who takes the prayer lightly.

The story also shows the manners of Abu Bakr and ‘Umar: each put the other forward instead of competing for position. And when the Prophet ﷺ came out, Abu Bakr immediately wanted to step back — a sign of respect that did not change even though he had been appointed imam.

Finally, ruqyah with the Qur’an is a Sunnah in illness. It does not replace medicine and treatment, but completes them with reliance upon Allah.

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THE FINAL COUNSELS OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ

A person's last words are usually about what matters most to them. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ left several counsels in his final days, scattered across various narrations. This chapter gathers them in one place.

Jundub ibn 'Abdillah al-Bajali رضى الله عنه said: I heard the Prophet ﷺ, five days before he died, say: "I declare myself free before Allah of taking any of you as a khalil (closest friend), for Allah has taken me as His khalil just as He took Ibrahim as His khalil. Were I to take anyone of my Ummah as a khalil, I would have taken Abu Bakr as a khalil. Indeed, those before you used to take the graves of their prophets and righteous people as places of worship. Do not take graves as places of worship; I forbid you from that." (Sahih Muslim 532)

Jabir ibn 'Abdillah رضى الله عنهما said: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, three days before he died, say: "Let none of you die except while thinking well of Allah." (Sahih Muslim 2877)

COUNSEL	SOURCE	CH.
No khalil except Allah; the standing of Abu Bakr	Muslim 532; Bukhari 3654	9, 10
Do not take graves as places of worship	Muslim 532; Bukhari 4441	12
Treat the Ansar well	Bukhari 3799	8
Expel the polytheists from the Arabian Peninsula	Bukhari 4431	13
Honour delegations and envoys	Bukhari 4431	13
Send forth the army of Usamah	Bukhari 4468, 4469	15
Abu Bakr to lead the prayer	Bukhari 664, 687	11, 34
Think well of Allah at death	Muslim 2877	35
The prayer, the prayer; and those whom your right hands possess	Abi Dawud 5156	14

Arranged together, these counsels cover tawhid (do not take graves as places of worship, think well of Allah), worship (the prayer), social justice (slaves and the weak), the unity of the Ummah (the Ansar, the leadership of Abu Bakr), and the security of the state (the army of Usamah, the Arabian Peninsula). All of them summarise the message he had conveyed for twenty-three years.

References: Sahih Muslim 532; Sahih Muslim 2877; Sahih al-Bukhari 4431; Sunan Abi Dawud 5156.

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LESSON

Not one of his final counsels concerned wealth or the interests of his own family. All of them were about Allah, the prayer and people — especially the weak. This is the true measure of a leader: what occupies his mind in his final moments.

The counsel to "think well of Allah" teaches that a believer does not face death in despair. Thinking well of Allah does not mean abandoning deeds; it means doing deeds while hoping for His mercy.

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THE SUNNAH IN FACING ILLNESS AND DEATH

The final days of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ are not only history; they are also a practical guide for every Muslim family caring for a sick relative or facing a death. Many Sunnahs related to illness and funerals can be seen in the room of 'A'ishah during those days, supported by other hadith.

SUNNAH	EXAMPLE IN HIS FINAL DAYS	GENERAL EVIDENCE
Patience and hoping for reward	A fever as severe as that of two men (Chapter 5)	Bukhari 5648
Ruqyah with the Qur'an	'A'ishah recited al-Mu'awwidhat	Bukhari 4439
Writing one's will early	He gave his counsels verbally	Bukhari 2738
Thinking well of Allah	The counsel three days before his death	Muslim 2877
Reminding of the word of tawhid	"La ilaha illallah; truly death has its agonies"	Muslim 916; Bukhari 4449
Keeping clean	The last siwak	Bukhari 4438, 887
Covering the body of the deceased	His body was covered with a hibarah cloth	Bukhari 5814
Closing the eyes and praying for the deceased	The Companions prayed for him	Muslim 920
Weeping without wailing	Fatimah; Anas; the Companions	Bukhari 1303
Hastening the funeral arrangements	Washed, shrouded and buried	Abi Dawud 3141; Bukhari 1264

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Prompt those of you who are dying to say: La ilaha illallah." (Sahih Muslim 916) The scholars explain that this prompting (talqin) should be done gently, without pressing the dying person to repeat it so often that it burdens them.

Ibn 'Umar رضى الله عنهما narrates that he said: "It is not right for a Muslim who has something to bequeath to spend two nights without having his will written down with him." (Sahih al-Bukhari 2738)

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها mentions that when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ died, his body was covered with a striped Yemeni cloth called a hibarah (Sahih al-Bukhari 5814). When Abu Salamah died, the Prophet ﷺ himself closed his eyes and said: "When the soul is taken, the sight follows it." Then he prayed for him (Sahih Muslim 920).

References: Sahih Muslim 916; Sahih Muslim 920; Sahih al-Bukhari 2738; Sahih al-Bukhari 5814; Sahih al-Bukhari 4439.

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LESSON

Death is certain, yet many families are unprepared for it. Writing a will, settling debts and learning how to prepare a body for burial are preparations taught by the Sunnah — not a sign of despair, but a sign of responsibility.

For those caring for the sick, the example of 'A'ishah, Fatimah and his family teaches patience, gentleness and supplication. For those who have lost someone, weeping is natural; what is forbidden is wailing and questioning the decree of Allah.

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POPULAR REPORTS THAT NEED CHECKING

Because the passing of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is such a moving event, many stories about it circulate in talks, books and social media. Some are authentic, some are weak, and some are fabricated. This chapter checks several popular reports, so that we speak about him with trustworthiness.

REPORT	SOURCE	GRADE	WHAT IS AUTHENTIC
The Angel of Death asked his permission; Jibril visited him on several consecutive days	At-Tabarani, al-Mu'jam al-Kabir; al-Bayhaqi, Dala'il an-Nubuwwah	Weak chains (mursal / mu'dal; weak narrators); some scholars see the routes as supporting one another	"No prophet is taken until … he is given the choice" (Bukhari 4463)
'Ukkashah demanded retaliation from him in front of the people	At-Tabarani	Fabricated (Ibn al-Jawzi, as-Suyuti); its narrator 'Abd al-Mun'im ibn Idris was judged a liar	His justice is established in many authentic hadith
His last words were "Ummati, ummati" (my Ummah, my Ummah)	Not found in authentic reports about the moment of his death	No authentic source for this context	Last words: "O Allah, the Highest Companion" (Bukhari 4463)
Abu Bakr led exactly seventeen prayers	Sirah books	The number comes from sirah reports	Abu Bakr led the prayer "during those days" (Bukhari 687, 680)
He died on 12 Rabi' al-Awwal	Ibn Ishaq; Ibn Sa'd	The well-known view; there are also views of 1 and 2 Rabi' al-Awwal	A Monday (Bukhari 1387)

About the wording "Ummati, ummati": his love for his Ummah is firmly established. 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr narrates that he recited the verses about Prophet Ibrahim and Prophet 'Isa, then raised his hands and supplicated: "O Allah, my Ummah, my Ummah," and wept. Allah sent Jibril and said: "We will please you concerning your Ummah and will not grieve you." (Sahih Muslim 202) But this event was not at the moment of his death; his authentic last words were about the Highest Companion.

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SIRAH NOTE: HOW TO TELL THE STORY OF HIS PASSING

Weak reports about the sirah may be mentioned by scholars while stating their weakness, especially when their meaning does not contradict authentic reports. Fabricated reports, however, may not be narrated except to expose their fabrication.

The story of his passing in the authentic hadith is moving enough without additions: the last look at the rows, the last siwak, "the Highest Companion", the tears of Fatimah, and the address of Abu Bakr. It is better for us to learn and convey these narrations accurately.

References: Sahih Muslim 202; Sahih al-Bukhari 4463; Office of the Mufti of the Federal Territories, Irsyad al-Hadith 295 (the story of 'Ukkashah, in Malay); Irsyad al-Hadith 441 (the Angel asking permission, in Malay); al-Haythami, Majma' az-Zawa'id.

LESSON

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said that lying about him is not like lying about anyone else (Sahih al-Bukhari 1291). For this reason, love for him must be accompanied by care in conveying his story. True love is conveying what is true.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PASSING OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ

1. HOW LONG WAS THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ ILL?

According to the majority of the sirah scholars, about thirteen days; other views range from ten to fourteen days (Chapters 31, 33).

2. WHERE DID HIS ILLNESS BEGIN?

In the house of Maymunah رضى الله عنها (Sahih Muslim 418). Then, with the permission of his other wives, he was nursed in the house of 'A'ishah until he died (Sahih al-Bukhari 4450; Chapter 7).

3. WHAT CAUSED HIS ILLNESS?

The hadith mention a very severe fever (Sahih al-Bukhari 5648) and pain from the poisoned food at Khaybar (Sahih al-Bukhari 4428). Some scholars hold that he died a martyr because of the effect of that poison (Chapter 6).

4. WHO LED THE PRAYER WHILE HE WAS ILL?

Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, by his own command (Sahih al-Bukhari 664, 687; Chapters 11, 34).

5. WHAT WAS THE LAST PRAYER HE LED?

The Maghrib prayer, with the recitation of Surah Al-Mursalat, according to the narration of Umm al-Fadl (Sahih al-Bukhari 4429; Chapter 34).

6. HOW DO WE UNDERSTAND THE INCIDENT OF THE THURSDAY?

He asked for writing materials, and the Companions differed because they wished to lighten the burden on him in his illness. He lived several more days and did not repeat the request; instead he gave his counsels verbally. Ahl as-Sunnah explain that the religion had already been perfected (Al-Ma'idah 5:3), and this incident cannot be used as a pretext to revile the Companions (Sahih al-Bukhari 4431; Chapter 13).

7. WHAT WERE HIS LAST WORDS?

"O Allah, the Highest Companion" (Sahih al-Bukhari 4463). His last counsel to the Ummah was about the prayer and slaves (Sunan Abi Dawud 5156). The two do not conflict: one was his last counsel to people, the other his last supplication to Allah (Chapters 14, 19).

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8. IS IT TRUE THAT THE ANGEL OF DEATH ASKED HIS PERMISSION?

That story is narrated by at-Tabarani and al-Bayhaqi with weak chains. What is authentic is that every prophet is shown his place in Paradise and then given the choice, and he chose the Highest Companion (Sahih al-Bukhari 4463; Chapter 37).

9. WHAT IS THE EXACT DATE OF HIS DEATH?

A Monday, in the month of Rabi' al-Awwal, 11 AH, is certain. The date of 12 Rabi' al-Awwal is the well-known view; there are also the views of 1 and 2 Rabi' al-Awwal (Sahih al-Bukhari 1387; Chapters 31, 33).

10. WHY WAS HE BURIED IN THE ROOM OF 'A'ISHAH?

Because Abu Bakr narrated his saying that a prophet is buried where he dies (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 1018; Chapter 28).

11. WHY WAS THERE NO IMAM FOR HIS FUNERAL PRAYER?

According to the sirah books, the Companions entered group after group and prayed over him without an imam, so that everyone would have the honour of praying over him. The narration of Ibn Majah about this is graded weak, but it is supported by other reports (Chapter 27).

12. HOW CAN WE "MEET" HIM TODAY?

By sending blessings upon him (Al-Ahzab 33:56), following his Sunnah (Ali 'Imran 3:31), and hoping to be among the "brothers" he longed for — those who believe in him without ever having seen him (Sahih Muslim 249; Chapter 32).

LESSON

These questions show that the passing of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is still discussed by the Ummah today. The answers must return to the Qur'an and authentic hadith, conveyed with adab and love, without adding or taking away.

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

The final days of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ hold countless lessons. Among the most important:

LESSON	FROM THIS BOOK
Preparing for death	Visiting Uhud and al-Baqi'; "the servant given the choice"
Patience in illness	High fever, Khaybar's poison, still counselling
Justice to family	Asking his wives' permission to be nursed with 'A'ishah
Guarding tawhid	Forbidding graves as places of worship
Prayer and the weak	"The prayer, the prayer; those your right hands possess"
Leadership	Abu Bakr leading prayer; Usamah's army
Steadfast faith	"Whoever worships Allah, Allah is Ever-Living"
Detachment from the world	Armour in pledge; "we are not inherited from"

A MESSAGE FOR US

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has gone, but the Qur'an and his Sunnah remain. Whenever we grieve that we never met him, let us remember his words: ***"I wish to see our brothers."*** The Companions asked: "Are we not your brothers?" He said: ***"You are my companions; our brothers are those who have not yet come."*** (Sahih Muslim 249). May we be among those he longed for, and be united with him at ***the Pool***.

In sha Allah, the series **The Prophet's Sirah** will continue with ***Book 31 — The Shama'il of the Prophet*** ﷺ: his physical features, character, worship and daily life, as narrated by the Companions who saw him — so that we may "know" him though we never met him. And Allah knows best.

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SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2:261

مَّثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمۡوَٰلَهُمۡ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنۢبَتَتۡ سَبۡعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنۢبُلَةٖ مِّاْئَةُ حَبَّةٖۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُضَٰعِفُ لِمَن يَشَآءُۚ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ٢٦١

The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/2:261

SURAH SABA' 34:39

قُلۡ إِنَّ رَبِّي يَبۡسُطُ ٱلرِّزۡقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ مِنۡ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَقۡدِرُ لَهُۥۚ وَمَآ أَنفَقۡتُم مِّن شَيۡءٖ فَهُوَ يُخۡلِفُهُۥۖ وَهُوَ خَيۡرُ ٱلرَّٰزِقِينَ ٣٩

Say, "Indeed, my Lord extends provision for whom He wills of His servants and restricts [it] for him. But whatever thing you spend [in His cause] - He will compensate it; and He is the best of providers."

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/34:39

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2588

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ، وَابْنُ، حُجْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، - وَهُوَ ابْنُ جَعْفَرٍ - عَنِ الْعَلاَءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ « مَا نَقَصَتْ صَدَقَةٌ مِنْ مَالٍ وَمَا زَادَ اللَّهُ عَبْدًا بِعَفْوٍ إِلاَّ عِزًّا وَمَا تَوَاضَعَ أَحَدٌ لِلَّهِ إِلاَّ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Charity does not decrease wealth.

Allah does not increase a servant who forgives except in honour. And no one humbles himself for the sake of Allah except that Allah raises him in rank."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Yahya bin Ayyub, Qutaibah bin Sa'id and 'Ali bin Hujr, from Isma'il bin Ja'far, from al-'Ala' bin 'Abd al-Rahman, from his father 'Abd al-Rahman bin Ya'qub, from Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه .

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Virtue, Good Manners and Joining the Ties of Kinship (Kitab al-Birr wa al-Silah wa al-Adab), chapter on the encouragement of forgiveness and humility, Hadith No. 2588.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:2588

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1631

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ، - يَعْنِي ابْنَ سَعِيدٍ - وَابْنُ حُجْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، - هُوَ ابْنُ جَعْفَرٍ - عَنِ الْعَلاَءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ « إِذَا مَاتَ الإِنْسَانُ انْقَطَعَ عَنْهُ عَمَلُهُ إِلاَّ مِنْ ثَلاَثَةٍ إِلاَّ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ جَارِيَةٍ أَوْ عِلْمٍ يُنْتَفَعُ بِهِ أَوْ وَلَدٍ صَالِحٍ يَدْعُو لَهُ ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "When a person dies, his deeds come to an end except for three: an ongoing charity, knowledge that is benefited from, or a righteous child who prays for him."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Yahya bin Ayyub, Qutaibah bin Sa'id and 'Ali bin Hujr, from Isma'il bin Ja'far, from al-'Ala' bin 'Abd al-Rahman, from his father 'Abd al-Rahman bin Ya'qub, from Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه .

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Wills (Kitab al-Wasiyyah), chapter on the reward that reaches a person after his death, Hadith No. 1631.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:1631

JAZAKUMULLAHU KHAIRAN KATHIRA

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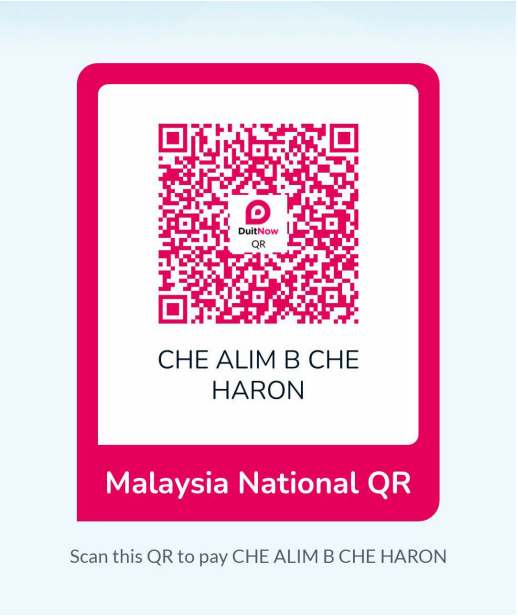

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