

The Life of Prophet Muhammad

Lesson 72



The Battle of Khaybar

- Al-Waqidi (d. 207AH) writes:

و كان من كان بالمدينة من اليهود يقولون حين تجهّز النبيّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّمَ إِلَى خَيْبَرَ: مَا أَمْنَعُ وَ اللهُ خَيْبَرَ مِنْكُمْ! لَوْ رَأَيْتُمْ خَيْبَرَ وَ حَصُونَهَا وَ رَجَالَهَا لَرَجَعْتُمْ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَصْلُوا إِلَيْهِمْ

In Medina, there were a group of Jews who said to the Muslims, as they were preparing to set off for Khaybar:

By God, how impenetrable is the fortress of Khaybar! If you were to see Khaybar and its fortress and its men, you would retreat before reaching it.

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حصون شامخات فى ذرى الجبال، و الماء فيها واتن، إن بخيبر لألف دارع، ما كانت أسد و غطفان يمتنعون
من العرب قاطبة إلا بهم، فأنتم تطيقون خيبر؟

They have towering fortress in the mountains, and the water is free-flowing.
Khaybar has 1000 men with shields. The tribes of Asad and Ghatafan
(Jewish allies) were protected through them. You really think you can
withstand Khaybar?!

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فجعلوا يوحون بذلك إلى أصحاب النبي صلى الله عليه وآله فيقول أصحاب النبي قد وعدنا الله نبيّه ان يغنّمه
إياها

So they revealed this to the companions of the Prophet (s) and the
companions of the Prophet (s) replied:

Verily, God has promised his Prophet (s) the spoils [of Kaybar].

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و خرج مع رسول الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّمَ) من المدينة عشرون امرأة: أمّ سلمة زوجته، و صفية بنت عبد المطلب، و أمّ أيمن، و سلمى امرأة أبي رافع مولاة النبي صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّمَ، و امرأة عاصم بن عدى وُلدت سهلة بنت عاصم بخيبر، و أمّ عمارة نسيبة بنت كعب، و أمّ منيع و هي أمّ شبّاث، و كعبية بنت سعد الأسلمية، و أمّ مطاع الأسلمية، و أمّ سليم بنت ملحان، و أمّ الضحّاك بنت مسعود الحارثية، و هند بنت عمرو ابن حزام، و أمّ العلاء الأنصارية، و أمّ عامر الأشهلية، و أمّ عطية الأنصارية، و أمّ سليط.

“Twenty women from Medina joined the Prophet on his expedition....”

- These women joined the army as nurses and water-carriers

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- The Prophet places Siba' ibn 'Urfuṭah al-Ghifārī as his deputy and sets out at the end of Ṣafar or the first of Rabī' I with two guides from Ashja'. He orders the guides to lead them to Khaybar from a western approach so that the Muslim army prevents any contact between the Jews and Ghaṭafān

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- The Jews of Medina send a man to Khaybar to inform them that the Prophet's troops are few and that they should stand strong; they also send a man to pretend like a traveler and spread false rumors that the Ghāṭafān are already on their way and that Khaybar is invincible, but they sniff him out as a spy and beat the truth out of him

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- The Prophet sends Sa'd ibn 'Ubadah to the leader of Ghatafan, 'Uyaynah ibn Hishn. He tempts him to abandon the Jews in exchange for a year's harvest of Khaybar's dates. He refuses. Sa'd advises a show of bravado to scare him into deserting as he deserted in Aḥzaḅ. It works.

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- Narrations state that when the Muslims were marching, they were so enthusiastic they were shouting at the top of their voices, "Allahu akbar! Allahu akbar! La ilaha illaLlah!" but the Prophet (s) said:
- "O people, be gentle with yourselves. For verily, the One you are calling out to is not deaf. He can hear you and see you and is nearer to you than your jugular vein,"

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- When the Messenger of God drew near to Khaybar, he said to the people: "Halt".
- The people halted and he raised his hand towards the sky and said:

" اللهم رب السماوات السبع وما أظللن، ورب الأرضين السبع وما أقللن، ورب الشياطين وما أضللن، أسألك خيرا هذه القرية وخير ما فيها، وأعوذ بك من شرها وشر ما فيها

"O Allah, Lord of the seven heavens and what they shade, Lord of the seven earths and what they maintain, Lord of the devils and what they lead astray, I ask You for the good of this village and the good of what is in it and I seek refuge with You from its evil and the evil that is in it.

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- Al-Mufid (d. 413 AH) in his book Al-Irshdad notes an incident where someone attempted to assassinate the Prophet (s):

فلما كان نصف النهار نادانا منادي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله، فاجتمعنا إليه فإذا عنده رجل جالس، فقال: " إن هذا جاءني وأنا نائم، فسل سيفي وقال: يا محمد، من يمنعك مني اليوم! قلت: الله يمنعني منك، فشام السيف وهو جالس كما ترون لا حراك به " فقلنا:

يا رسول الله، لعل في عقله شيئاً، فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله.

" نعم دعوه " ثم صرفه ولم يعاقبه.

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- The Prophet (s) besieged Khaybar for more than twenty days. At that time the standard was held by the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (a).
- Ali was suffering from pains in his eyes which kept him from the battle (for a time).
- The Muslims military strategy was to attack the Jews in front of their forts and at the sides.

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فلما كان ذات يوم فتحوا الباب، وقد كانوا خندقوا على أنفسهم، وخرج مرحب برجله يتعرض للحرب، فدعا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله أبا بكر فقال له: "أخذ الراية" فأخذها - في جمع من المهاجرين - فاجتهد ولم يغن شيئا، فعاد يؤنب القوم الذين اتبعوه ويؤنبونه.

- One day they overcame the gate but they had dug a trench around themselves. Marḥab came out on foot to oppose them in battle. The Prophet (s), summoned Abu Bakr and said to him: "Take the standard." He took it with a number of the Emigrants and they fought without achieving anything. He returned vigorously denouncing the people who had followed him while they were just as vigorously blaming him.

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فلما كان من الغد تعرض لها عمر، فسار بها غير بعيد، ثم رجع يجبن أصحابه ويجبنونه.

The next day he gave it to Umar. The latter went a little way with it and then came back accusing his followers of cowardice while they were also accusing him of cowardice.

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- Al-Hakim Al-Naysapuri (d. 405 AH) in his magnum opus Al-Mustadrak ala al-Sahihayn:

حدثنا أبو بكر أحمد بن سلمان الفقيه ، ببغداد ، ثنا محمد بن عبد الله بن سليمان ، ثنا القاسم بن أبي شيبة ، ثنا يحيى بن يعلى ، ثنا معقل بن عبيد الله ، عن أبي الزبير ، عن جابر رضي الله عنه ، " أن النبي صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم دفع الراية يوم خيبر إلى عمر رضي الله عنه ، فانطلق ، فرجع يجبن أصحابه ويجبنونه " .

هذا حديث صحيح على شرط مسلم ، ولم يخرجاه .

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فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وآله. " ليست هذه الراية لمن حملها، جيئوني بعلي بن أبي طالب " فقيل له: إنه أرمد، فقال. " أرونيه تروني رجلا يحب الله ورسوله ويحبه الله ورسوله، يأخذها بحقها ليس بفرار ".

Then the Prophet (s) said: "This standard is not for anyone to carry whom they can accuse of cowardice to me. It is for Ali ibn Abi Talib.

"He has an eye ailment he was told.

"Show him to me and you will show me a man who loves Allah and His Messenger and whom Allah and His Messenger love. He takes things up in the right way and he will not flee," he said.

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فجاؤوا بعلي عليه السلام يقودونه إليه، فقال له النبي صلى الله عليه وآله: " ما تشتكي يا علي؟ قال: رمد ما أبصر معه، وصداع برأسي، فقال له: اجلس وضع رأسك على فخذي " ففعل علي عليه السلام ذلك، فدعا له النبي صلى الله عليه وآله وتفل في يده فمسحها على عينيه ورأسه، فانفتحت عيناه وسكن ما كان يجده من الصداع

They brought Ali ibn Abi Talib (a) leading him to him.

"What is troubling you, Ali?" the Prophet (s) asked him.

"Sore eyes which prevent me from seeing and a pain in my head," he answered.

"Sit down," he told him, "and put your head on my thigh."

Ali did that and the Prophet (s) prayed for him. He put some saliva into his hand and rubbed it on his eye and his head. His eyes opened and the pain in the head which he had had was eased.

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وقال له: " خذ الراية وامض بها، فجبرئيل معك، والنصر أمامك، والرعب مبعوث في صدور القوم، واعلم - يا علي - أنهم يجدون في كتابهم: أن الذي يدمر عليهم اسمه آليا، فإذا لقيتهم فقل: أنا علي، فإنهم يخذلون إن شاء الله ."

He said: "Take the standard and set forth with it. Gabriel is with you. Victory is in front of you and terror is spread into the hearts of the enemy. Be aware, Ali, that they have found in their Book that the name of the one who will destroy them is Īliyā. When you meet them, say: I am Ali then they will forsake (the field) if Allah, the Exalted, wishes."

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قال علي عليه السلام: " فمضيت بها حتى أتيت الحصون، فخرج مرحب وعليه مغفر وحجر قد ثقبه مثل البيضة على رأسه، وهو يرتجز ويقول.

قد علمت خير أني مرحب * شاك سلاحي بطل مجرب

- Ali (a) reported: I set out with it until I came to the fortress. Marḥab came out. He was wearing a helmet in which a stone had made a hole showing the white of his head. He was reciting:

Khaybar knows that I am Marḥab - the carrier of arms, a hero who has

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فقلت:

أنا الذي سمّتي أمي حيدرة ليث لغابات شديد قسورة أكيكم بالسيف كيل السندرة

I answered:

I am he whom my mother called a lion. Like a lion of the forests, fierce in strength, With my sword I will make you weigh the weight of an ear torn off.

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فاختلفنا ضربتين، فبدرته فضربته ففقدت الحجر والمغفر ورأسه حتى وقع السيف في أضراسه وخر صريعا".

وجاء في الحديث أن أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام لما قال: " أنا علي ابن أبي طالب " قال حبر من أحبار القوم. غلبتم وما أنزل على موسى . فدخل قلوبهم من الرعب ما لم يمكنهم معه الاستيطان به.

- We exchanged blows. I came quickly against him and struck him. I cut through (the place where) the hole (was) in the helmet and through his head so that my sword reached his teeth. He fell dead.
- it is reported that when the Commander of the Faithful said: "I am Ali ibn Abi Talib ," one of the rabbis of the people called out to them: "I swear by what was revealed to Moses that you are defeated." As a result such terror entered their hearts that they were not able to bear it.

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لما قتل أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام مرحبا، رجع من كان معه وأغلقوا باب الحصن عليهم دونه، فصار أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام إليه فعالجه حتى فتحه، وأكثر الناس من جانب الخندق لم يعبروا معه، فأخذ أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام باب الحصن فجعله على الخندق جسرا لهم حتى عبروا وظفروا بالحصن ونالوا الغنائم.

When the Commander of the Faithful (a) killed Marḥab, those who had gone out with Marḥab withdrew and barred the gate of the fortress to keep him out. The Commander of the Faithful (a) advanced against it. He worked on it until he opened it. However, most of the people from the other side of the trench did not come across against him. Thus did the Commander of the Faithful (a), capture the gate of the fortress. Then he used it as a bridge across the trench so that they might go across and conquer the fortress. They seized booty.

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فلما انصرفوا من الحصون، أخذه أمير المؤمنين بيمناه فدحا به أذرا من الأرض، وكان الباب يغلقه عشرون رجلا منهم.

When they withdrew from the fortress the Commander of the Faithful, peace be on him, took the gate in his right hand and spread it out many metres over the ground. It used to take twenty men to lock that gate.