

TARIKH (History)

Lesson 1

Luqmān ('a) the Wise

Luqmān al-Hakim (Luqmān the Wise) ('a) was the nephew of Nabi Ayyub ('a) and lived in the time of Nabi Dāwud ('a). Although some believe he may have been a prophet (nabi), he is not generally believed to be a prophet but rather a man who was blessed by Allāh with a lot of wisdom.

Hadrat Luqmān ('a) was an extremely pious man and used to mostly remain silent while he pondered about the nature of life. He loved worshipping Allāh and sometimes he would come to Nabi Dāwud ('a) to discuss matters.

Allāh loved Luqmān ('a) very much. He is mentioned by name in the Qur'ān and in fact an entire surah is named after him. Some of his words of wisdom that he gave as advice to his son is quoted in the Qur'ān. Allāh says about Luqmān ('a):

﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ وَمَنْ يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَانُ لِابْنِهِ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَى وَهْنٍ... أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِي يَا بُنَيَّ إِنَّهَا إِنْ تَكُنْ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ فَتَكُنْ فِي وَلَوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ... صَخْرَةً أَوْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ أَوْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَأْتِ بِهَا اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ. يَا بُنَيَّ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَانْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأَصْبِرْ عَلَى مَا أَصَابَكَ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ وَاقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ وَاغْضُضْ مِنْ صَوْتِكَ إِنَّ أَنْكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ الْحَمِيرِ﴾

Indeed We gave to Luqmān wisdom, saying, 'give thanks to Allāh; for whoever gives thanks, he only gives thanks for his own self (i.e. own good); and whoever is ungrateful, (it is his own loss); for indeed Allāh is All-sufficient, the most praised.'

When Luqmān said to his son, as he advised him: 'O my son! Do not make anyone as partners to Allāh. Associating anything with Allāh is indeed a great injustice.'

We have enjoined man concerning his parents: His mother carried him through weakness upon weakness... Give thanks to Me and to your parents. To Me is the return....

O my son! Even if it should be the weight of a mustard seed, and [even though] it should be in a rock, or in the heavens, or in the earth, Allāh will bring it out. Indeed Allāh is All-attentive, All-aware.

O my son! Maintain the prayer (salāh) and order what is right and forbid what is wrong, and be patient over whatever may visit you. That is indeed the steadiest of ways.

Do not turn your cheek in scorn from the people, and do not walk proudly on the earth. Indeed Allāh does not like any conceited boaster. Be modest and lower your voice. Indeed the most unpleasant of voices is (to bray like) the donkey's voice.'

- Surah Luqmān, 31:12-19

Hadrat Luqmān ('a) was a black man from Ethiopia. Some say he was a carpenter and others say he later became a judge in the court of the King Nabi Dāwud ('a). Some historians say that when you looked at Luqmān ('a) you would not know his lofty position with Allāh because he was not very good looking. Yet he was very eloquent when he spoke and was known for his wisdom and judgements.

The narration that he was not good looking may not be true but the lesson we are meant to learn is that Allāh does not care what a person looks like as much as he cares about a person's inner beauty and how pure his or her heart is. The other lesson is that we should not judge people by their looks. Some of the most evil people in the world may be physically very good looking and rich in their dress, home and cars. And some of the most pious and devoted believers in Allāh may be very ordinary looking and poor in their means of living.

Hadrat Luqmān ('a) is said to have lived for a very long time, some say 1,000 years, from the time of Nabi Dāwud ('a) to the time of Nabi Yunus ('a). His words of wisdom are found in many books and still serve as great lessons in *akhlāq* for human beings.

The following is a short story from the life of the wise Luqmān ('a) that we can all remember and benefit from.

The Pleasure of Allāh, Not the Pleasure of People

One day, Hadrat Luqmān ('a) decided to give his son a practical demonstration of why you can never please everyone in the world so you should only worry about pleasing Allāh.

He took his son and his donkey and set out. First he told his son to sit on the donkey and he walked besides him. When they got further down the road, they met a man who said, 'what a shameless son! He is riding the donkey and making his father walk!' Then the man said to the boy, 'you should get down and let your father ride!'

And so they changed places. Hadrat Luqmān ('a) now rode the donkey and the boy walked. Soon they came across another man. He looked at them with surprise and said to Luqmān, 'what an inconsiderate father you are! You are the adult and you are riding the donkey and making your poor little child walk! He is a child! He should be on the donkey, not you!'

And so both Luqmān ('a) and his son sat on the donkey and rode along together. Further down the trail, they met another man. He shook his head in disbelief and anger. Then he said, 'Ah! The poor animal! How can both of you ride the donkey together! You will hurt the poor donkey! Don't you know only one person should ride the donkey at a time!'

And so both Luqmān ('a) and his son got off the donkey and they both began walking besides the donkey. Then they met another man who laughed at them and said, 'how silly! You've got a donkey and no one is riding it! Why walk when you have a donkey?!'

And so Hadrat Luqmān ('a) turned to his son and explained to him what he had seen. No matter what they did, there was always someone who disagreed and thought they were wrong. In other words, no matter how hard you work, you cannot please everyone. Even if many praise you, there will always be one who will condemn you.

So to succeed in life and know what is right and what is wrong, Luqmān ('a) told his son to always think about what Allāh has ordered and forbidden and to live in this world trying to please Allāh and not people. A person who tries his or her best to please Allāh will always succeed. A person who tries to please people will never succeed.

Lesson 2

Muhājirun & Ansār and The Change of Qībla

The Declaration of Brotherhood

After his arrival in Madina, Rasulullāh (s) was faced with three new challenges that he had to address immediately:

- The differences that existed between the tribes and cultures of the Muslims.
- The influence of the Jews of Madina who lived within and outside the city and possessed enormous wealth but did not recognize Rasulullāh (s) as the Messenger of Allāh that they had been waiting for.
- The danger of attack from the Quraysh in Makkah and other idol worshippers from the rest of Arabia.

Rasulullāh (s) first tackled the issue concerning the Muslims. Firstly the people who had migrated with him from Makkah (the Muhājirun) and the local Muslims who lived in Madina (the Ansār) had been brought up in different environments and there was a great difference in their thinking and culture. And secondly, within the Ansār of Madina, the tribes of Aws and Khazraj had been sworn enemies of each other and had been fighting for over a hundred years.

Rasulullāh (s) first made sure there was peace between the tribes of Aws and Khazraj. He convinced them to now unite on their faith (i.e. on Islām) and to forget their old differences. Then Rasulullāh (s) turned his attention to the needs of the Muhājirun. These brave Muslims had left all their wealth and possessions in Makkah to come with Rasulullāh (s) to Madina. They had no wealth or property. On the command of Allāh, Rasulullāh (s) established a brotherhood between the Muhājirun and Ansār. He paired off each Muhājir with one of the Ansār and declared them brothers. The generous Ansār gave over one half of their wealth to their new brothers from Makkah so that they could live comfortably in Madina.

At the end of all the pairings, only Imām Ali ('a) was left. He asked Rasulullāh (s) who his brother would be. Rasulullāh (s) said to him, 'O Ali, you are my brother, in this world as well as the next!'

Pact with the Jews

The second issue was to engage the wealthy Jews of Madina in dialogue so as to ensure there is security for everyone. Madina was now an Islāmic State but the Jews

did not recognize Rasulullāh (s) as Allāh’s Messenger. Rasulullāh (s) therefore drafted an agreement (also called ‘a pact’) to establish peace between the Muslims and the Jews. This was a new thing for the Arabs. For the first time, they were introduced to the idea of a Constitution that outlined the principles of freedom, order and justice. Part of the agreement that Rasulullāh (s) signed with the Jews included the following:

- Both parties agree to live together peaceful as one nation. The Muslims and Jews are free to practise their own laws and religion.
- If anyone kills another person by mistake, they must pay the blood money as necessary.
- The authority of resolving differences shall always rest with Allāh and His Messenger.
- When the Muslims fight for the defence of Madina, the Jews must help defend the city and they agree not to plot against the Muslims or the Islāmic government in Madina.

Both Rasulullāh (s) and the Jewish leaders signed this agreement and agreed to live side-by-side without harming each other or allowing any outside forces to harm either party.

The only matter left now was the threat from the Quraysh of Makkah. We will look at this in the next lesson.

The Change of Qibla

When Allāh first ordered Rasulullāh (s) and all Muslims to offer the daily salāh, they prayed facing Bayt al-Muqaddas in Jerusalem. This was the practice in Makkah and continued in Madina until the 17th month after Hijrah.

In Madina, the Jews also said their prayers facing Bayt al-Muqaddas. They used to make fun of the Muslims by saying, “Muhammad claims to have a religion whose laws overrule all previous laws, yet he does not have his own qibla and offers his prayers facing the qibla of the Jews.”

When Rasulullāh (s) heard this, he used to come out at night and look at the heavens waiting for Allāh to reveal something about it. Then Allāh revealed to him:

﴿قَدْ نَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا...﴾

Many a time We have seen you turn your face towards the heavens. We will make you turn towards a Qibla that will please you...

- Surah al-Baqarah, 2:144

One day, while Rasulullāh (s) and the Muslims were in the midst of salāh, the command came from Allāh to change the Qibla from Bayt al-Muqaddas to the Ka'bah in Makkah. After Rasulullāh (s) had already completed two rak'ahs of the dhuhr salāh, the angel Jibrāil ('a) came to him and held the hand of Rasulullāh (s) and turned him around completely towards the Ka'bah in Makkah.

As Rasulullāh (s) turned from facing Bayt al-Muqaddas in Jerusalem and faced the Ka'bah in Makkah, Imām Ali ('a) also turned with him. The other Muslims were confused by this action and only a few followed the example of Imām Ali ('a).

The masjid where this happened is known as 'Masjid Qiblatayn', which means 'The Mosque of Two Qiblas'. This masjid still exists in Madina today.

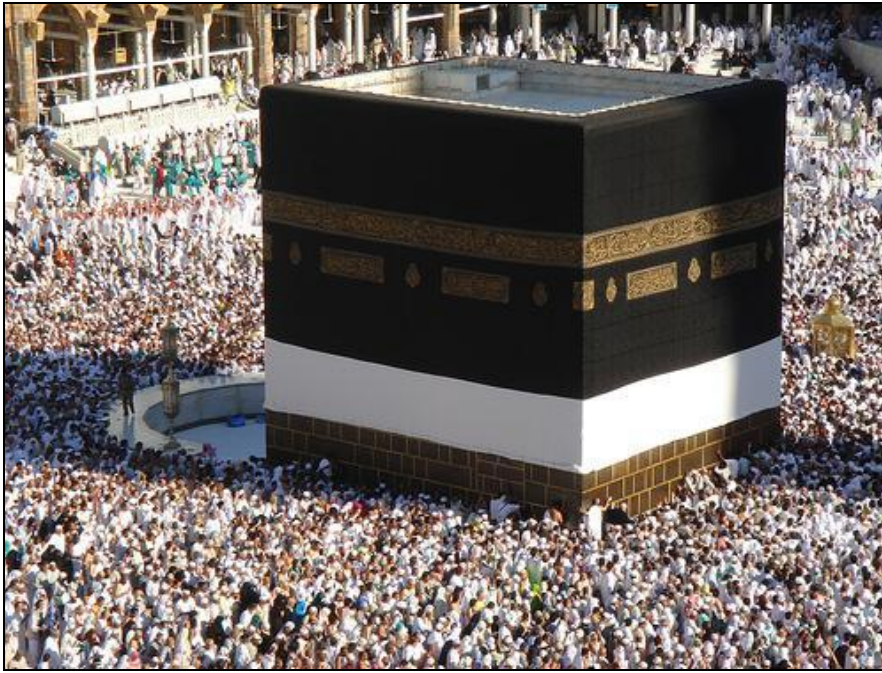


Masjid Qiblatayn in Madina

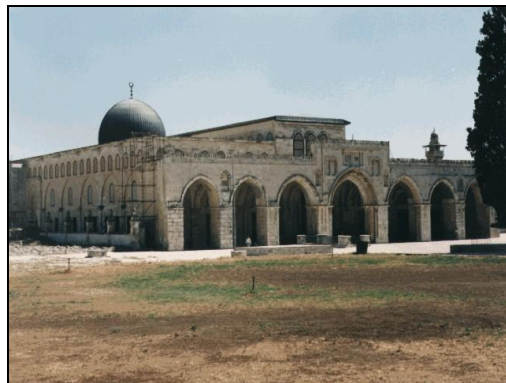
One of the miracles of Rasulullāh (s) was that even though he was praying in Madina and there was no compass to calculate the direction of Makkah, he was able to turn to the exact location of the Ka'bah without the use of any scientific instrument or computation and without any hesitation.

The old qibla (Bayt al-Muqaddas) was north of Madina and the new qibla (Ka'bah in Makkah) was south of Madina.

The Ka'bah remains the qibla for all Muslims even today and will remain so until the Day of Judgement.



The Ka'bah in Masjid al-Harām, Makkah



The picture above shows Masjid al-Aqsa in Bayt al-Muqaddas (Jerusalem). It was the first qibla in Islām and where Rasulullāh (s) stopped on his way to the heavens for mi'rāj. It is the 3rd holiest masjid in Islām after Masjid al-Harām in Makkah and Masjid an-Nabawi in Madina. A lot of people confuse Masjid al-Aqsa (above) with Masjid Qubbat as-Sakhra (below), the structure with the golden dome nearby.



Lesson 3

The Battle of Badr

Even after migrating to Madina, Rasulullāh (s) and the Muslims continued to be threatened and even attacked by their enemies.

Roughly speaking, Rasulullāh (s) launched 80 campaigns during the ten years in Madina, from his migration in 622 CE (1 AH) to his passing away in 632 CE (11 AH). Some of these campaigns were nothing more than exploration missions. All they did was to watch the movements of some clan or tribe. Some were missionary expeditions. Many others were minor skirmishes.

But there were five major battles that are recorded in great detail in Islāmic history. These were:

- The Battle of Badr 2 AH
- The Battle of Uhud 3 AH
- The Battle of Ahzāb 5 AH
- The Battle of Khaybar 6 AH
- The Battle of Hunayn 8 AH

Besides these there were other important events such as the Treaty of Hdaybiya (6 AH), the Battle of Dhāt as-Salāsīl (8 AH), the Freeing of Makkah (8 AH), the Battle of Tāif (8 AH), the Battle of Mu'tah (8 AH), the Event of Mubāhala (9 AH), and the Expedition to Tabuk (9 AH).

A battle or expedition in which Rasulullāh (s) himself led the army of Islām is called a 'Ghazwa' (such as the five battles mentioned above) and an expedition in which Rasulullāh (s) did not participate himself but sent out from Madina under the command of any one of his companions is called a 'Sariyya'.

The Battle of Badr

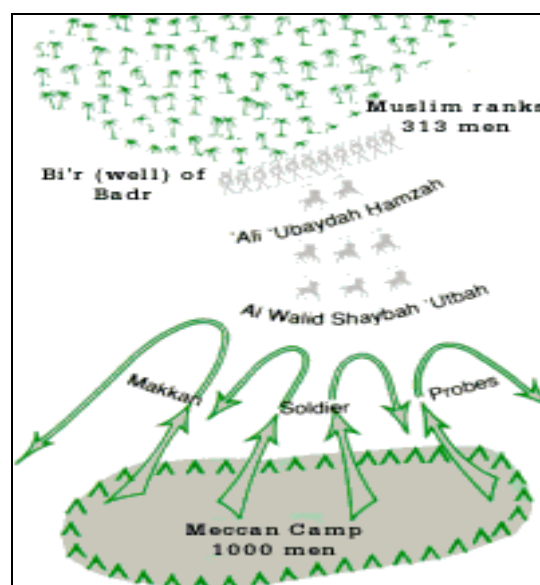
The migration of Rasulullāh (s) to Madina made the enemies in Makkah even more hostile, and they were constantly wondering how they could overthrow him, and put an end to Islām. They decided to prepare to attack Madina. A trade caravan was sent to Syria that year, under the leadership of Abu Sufyān (the grandfather of Yazid) and every Quraysh contributed his savings. Also, when the Muhājirun Muslims abandoned their homes to migrate to Madina, their homes and all their possessions that they had to leave behind were confiscated by the Quraysh leaders and they decided they would sell the possessions of the Muslims and use it to fight them! It was decided that all the profits made from that trade journey would not be given to the traders but would be spent on arms, horses and other items for war against the Muslims of Madina instead.

When Rasulullāh (s) found out that Abu Sufyān was returning from Syria with a caravan full of weapons and money to be used against the Muslims, he decided to set out and intercept the caravan. In the meantime Abu Sufyān found out that the Muslims were heading towards him so he sent a messenger ahead to inform the Quraysh leaders. On receiving the message, a well-equipped army consisting of 1000 men, 700 camels and 100 horses left Makkah under the command of Abu Jahl.

Rasulullāh (s) had left with 313 men of whom 80 were from the Muhājirun and 233 were Ansār. The Muslims were poorly equipped. Between all of them, they had only 2 horses and 70 camels. Some of the Muslims had a sword but no shield and others had a shield but no sword. Imām Ali ('a) held the banner of the Muslim army as they headed towards the village of Badr. The Muslims were still expecting to meet Abu Sufyān's caravan from Syria and to stop him. They were not aware of the Makkan army heading towards them. When they stopped to camp at the water wells of Badr, which was 80 miles from Madina and 200 miles from Makkah, they came to know of the approaching army. Both the Muhājirun and the Ansār expressed their loyalty to Rasulullāh (s) and agreed to fight the polytheist Quraysh army if they had to.

Before the Makkan army led by Abu Jahl reached 'Badr', Abu Sufyān changed his route and he sent a message to Abu Jahl to say that the caravan was now safe and there was no need to fight. But Abu Jahl was so eager to fight that he refused to listen and decided not to turn back but to continue marching towards Madina.

The two forces met at Badr on Friday 17th Ramadān 2 AH (13th January 624 CE). According to Arab custom, a fight would have some individual combat before the general war began. Three of the infidel warriors, Utba (the father-in-law of Abu Sufyān), his brother Shayba and Al-Walid came out of their ranks and challenged the Muslims. Imām Ali ('a), Hamza (the uncle of Rasulullāh (s)) and Ubayda (a cousin of Rasulullāh (s)) responded to the challenge.



Hamza killed Shayba while Imām Ali (‘a) killed Al-Walid. Ubayda was injured but Imām Ali (‘a) and Hamza came to his rescue and killed Utba. Three more infidels came out to fight and Imām Ali (‘a) and Hamza killed them too. A further three came out to fight but they too were killed. Now the Quraysh began to hesitate. An all out war broke out. The Muslims broke up the ranks of the Quraysh and soon their bravest champions fell. The Quraysh began fleeing and in their haste they threw away their armour and abandoned their animals with all their camp equipments.

To ensure the enemy is completely demoralized, Allāh also helped the Muslims with a special favour. He sent down angels in the form of warriors so that when the enemies saw the Muslims, they suddenly seemed so many in numbers that it filled them with terror. This is mentioned in the Qur’ān:

﴿قَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ آيَةٌ فِي فِئَتَيْنِ الْتَقَتَا فِئَةٌ تُقَاتِلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَأُخْرَى كَافِرَةٌ يَرَوْنَهُمْ مِثْلَهُمْ رَأْيَ الْعَيْنِ وَاللَّهُ يُؤَيِّدُ بِنَصْرِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّأُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ﴾

There was certainly a sign for you in the two armies that met: one force fighting in the way of Allāh and the other faithless, who saw them visibly twice as many. Allāh strengthens with His help whomever He wishes. There is indeed a moral in that for those who have insight.

- Surah Al-Imrān, 3:13

﴿وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِبَدْرٍ وَأَنْتُمْ أَذِلَّةٌ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ إِذْ تَقُولُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَلَنْ يَكْفِيَكُمْ أَنْ يُمِدَّكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِثَلَاثَةِ آلَافٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُنَزَّلِينَ بَلَىٰ إِنْ تَصَبَرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَيَأْتُوكُم مِّن فُورِهِمْ هَذَا يُمِدَّكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِخَمْسَةِ آلَافٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِينَ﴾

Certainly Allāh helped you at Badr, when you were abased [in the enemy’s eyes]. So be wary of Allāh so that you may give thanks. When you (O Rasulullāh) were saying to the faithful, ‘Is it not enough for you that your Lord should help you with three thousand angels sent down?’ Yes, if you are steadfast and Godwary, □ and should they come at you suddenly, your Lord will help you with five thousand marked angels.

- Surah Al-Imrān, 3:123-125

By the end of the battle, 70 of the Quraysh were killed and 70 more were taken prisoners. Among the dead was Abu Jahl, the leader of the army and an archenemy of Rasulullāh (s). This was Imām Ali (‘a)’s first battle. He killed 36 of the 70 – more than half - of the attacking polytheists. The Muslims lost 14 men.

The 70 Makkans who were taken by the Muslims as prisoners were treated with exceptional kindness. The prisoners who were rich, paid ransom and were set free. The others were asked to teach ten children each to read and write and this teaching

was to pay as their ransom. Even though most Arabs were illiterate, this shows how much importance Rasūlullāh (s) gave to learning and knowledge even from the early days in Madina.

Some of the prisoners were so moved by the kindness of the Muslims that they became Muslims themselves. One of the prisoners said in later days, 'blessings be on the men of Madina. They made us ride on camels while they themselves walked, they gave us wheat and bread to eat when there was little of it while they only ate dates.'

In that same year, Allāh revealed that from the following year it would be wājib to fast in the month of Ramadān.

Consequences of the Battle of Badr

The Battle of Badr was very significant as the first military confrontation between the Muslims and their enemies.

Firstly the victory gave tremendous courage and faith to the ill-equipped poor Muslims that Allāh was on their side because nothing short of a miracle helped them that day.

Secondly, it not only demoralized the powerful Quraysh clan in Makkah and weakened them because a number of their leaders were killed, but it also sent shockwaves throughout Arabia forcing the neighbouring polytheist and Jewish tribes to realize that Islām was able to defend itself.

Thirdly, it demonstrated how faithful some of the early Muslims were. Some of them had to fight against their own fathers, brothers, sons and close relatives for the sake of the Truth.

A lesson for us to learn from the Battle of Badr even today is that numbers do not matter. Even physical strength and military supremacy does not matter. When it comes to defending Islām, only faith and trust in Allāh matters. If we show courage and obey the leader appointed over us, Allāh guarantees us victory. We shall see more of how this is always true, in the next lesson.

One unfortunate outcome of the battle of Badr was that Islām's victory lit up new and fiercer fires of hatred and hostility in the hearts of the Banu Umayya against Rasūlullāh (s), Imām Ali ('a) and the Ahl al-Bayt ('a).

To Muslims, Imām Ali ('a) was the symbol of the victory in all the battles of Islām but to the Banu Umayya, he was the symbol of the destruction of their polytheism and their privileges. Imām Ali ('a) not only killed many of them in battle but he also was the one who stood on the shoulders of Rasūlullāh (s) during the Freeing of Makkah (Fath Makkah) and pull down all their idols from the Ka'bah breaking them into

pieces. Therefore, for generations to come, their friends and their supporters never forgave Imām Ali (‘a) for the role he played before, during and after the battle of Badr.

After the Battle of Badr, Abu Sufyān from the Banu Umayya clan became the leader of Makkah. He continued to fight Rasulullāh (s) until the Freeing of Makkah when he accepted Islām only to save himself. His son Mu‘āwiya later was the archenemy of Imām Ali (‘a) and Imām Hasan (‘a). When Mu‘āwiya became the Caliph of the Muslims he ordered all the cities and towns to curse Imām Ali (‘a) from every pulpit and before every Friday Prayer (Salāt al-Jumu‘ah) and this continued for 70 years. Mu‘āwiya’s son Yazid also murdered Imām Husayn (‘a), the son of Imām Ali (‘a). One of the reasons was the hatred for Imām Ali (‘a), and when the head of Imām Husayn (‘a) was presented before Yazid in Sham (Damascus), he drank wine and sang poetry saying, ‘I wish my forefathers of Badr would have been here to see how I have avenged them. Then they would have said to me, “Well done, O Yazid!”’

The Marriage of Sayyida Fātima (‘a) to Imām Ali (‘a)

Because of the excellence of Sayyida Fātima (‘a), Rasulullāh (s) received numerous offers for her hand in marriage from wealthy families and chiefs of tribes. He refused them all, saying that he was waiting for the order of Allāh regarding the person to whom his daughter should be married.

The Muslims realised that the person who marries this great lady would not need to be rich and powerful, but would have to possess her qualities of truthfulness, piety and excellence. Therefore, some people suggested to Imām Ali (‘a) that he should go to Rasulullāh (s) and place a proposal from himself. Imām Ali (‘a) also wished this, and he approached Rasulullāh (s). Imām Ali (‘a) felt shy to make his request but when Rasulullāh (s) encouraged him to speak what was on his mind, he managed to tell him. In the meantime, Jibrāil (‘a) also said to Rasulullāh (s) that Allāh had married Sayyida Fātima (‘a) to Imām Ali (‘a) in paradise.

When Rasulullāh (s) heard the proposal from Imām Ali (‘a) he was so pleased that he smiled and said, ‘It is a welcome and happy proposal.’ However, he asked Imām Ali (‘a) to wait until he asked his daughter. When Rasulullāh (s) mentioned the proposal of Imām Ali (‘a) to Sayyida Fātima (‘a), she remained quiet due to her modesty but only smiled. Rasulullāh (s) understood her willingness and declared, ‘Her silence is her consent.’

In those days, Imām Ali (‘a) owned nothing except his sword and armour. He was advised by Rasulullāh (s) to sell the armour to meet the expense of marriage. With the money from the sale, he purchased some basic items for his new life that was about to begin. These items included: some perfume, a shirt and robe, some pillows and bedding, a curtain, a mat, two millstones for grinding flour, a water skin, a wooden bowl for milk, a container for water, some jars, two silver bracelets and a copper vessel.

Rasulullāh (s) himself performed the marriage ceremony. This was also in the month of Ramadān 2 AH, after the Battle of Badr. The wedding was very simple but beautiful and blessed. The Muhājirun and Ansār gathered for the wedding and Imām Ali (‘a) arranged for a feast (*walima*) in honour of his wife.

Rasulullāh (s) blessed both couples. The dearest of all human beings to him was his daughter Fātima (‘a) and he said, ‘had it not been for Ali, there would have been no match for Fātima.’

From this marriage Imām Ali (‘a) and Sayyida Fātima (‘a) were blessed with five children: Imām al-Hasan (‘a), Imām al-Husayn (‘a), Sayyida Zaynab (‘a), Sayyida Umm Kulthum (‘a), and Hadrat Muhsin (‘a) who died before he was born when Sayyida Fātima (‘a) was injured when her home was attacked and set on fire.

Class Activity:

The Teacher’s DVD contains a 10-minute video clip from the movie ‘The Message’ showing the Battle of Badr. In this video you will see:

- The Rules of Battle in Islām. Bilāl announces them in this movie.
- Bilāl killing his previous master Umayya who had tortured him a lot.
- Rasulullāh (s) orders the prisoners to be freed if they can teach any Muslim to read and write. This shows the importance of knowledge in Islām.

Lesson 4

The Battle of Uhud

The battle of Uhud was the second battle of Islām that was fought in Shawwāl 3 AH (625 CE). When the Quraysh lost the Battle of Badr and some of their prominent leaders were killed, they were furious and wanted to take revenge.

A well-equipped army consisting of 3000 soldiers under the command of Abu Sufyān was prepared. The army of Abu Sufyān marched towards Madina and fought the Muslims at the foot of Mount Uhud, just 3 miles outside Madina.



A panoramic view of Mount Uhud Madina in recent times

Rasulullāh (s) had left Madina with 1000 men but Abdullah b. Ubay, the leader of the hypocrites in Madina deserted the Muslims with 300 other hypocrites and halfway through the march, turned around and went back to Madina.

The Muslims now numbered only 700 of whom only 100 had armour and there were only two horses.

Rasulullāh (s) took his position below a mountain. He posted 50 archers under the command of Abdullah b. Jubayr to stand on guard at the top of the mountain and to make sure that no one could come around and attack the Muslims from behind where there was a pass between two small mountains. Rasulullāh (s) seemed to know what would happen because he strictly told these archers not to leave their post at the top of the mountain whether the Muslims were winning or losing.

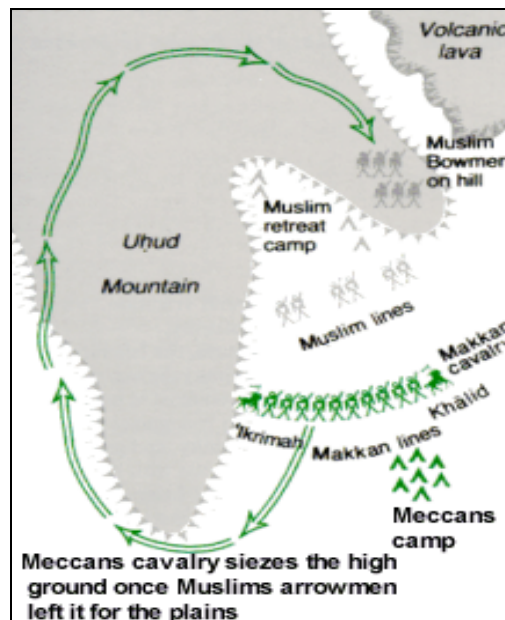
As the battle began, Talha the standard-bearer and a champion of the Makkan polytheists stepped forward and challenged the Muslims to single combat. Imām Ali (‘a) came forward and killed him. After him nine others took the standard and came forward but Imām Ali (‘a) killed them all. Abu Sufyān realized his army was now losing hope so a general combat began.

At first the Muslims were winning the war. Imām Ali (‘a) and Hamza, the uncle of Rasulullāh (s), created havoc among the enemy. Hind, the wife of Abu Sufyān, had also come to this battle to avenge her father and brother who were killed by Imām Ali (‘a) in Badr. She wanted to kill either Rasulullāh (s), Imām Ali (‘a) or Hamza. She brought with her a slave called Wahshi and promised him freedom if he kills one of them. Wahshi was very good with his aim with spears. He saw a chance to throw his spear at Hadrat Hamza and it pierced Hadrat Hamza’s abdomen and he fell down a martyr. Then Hind came to his body and cut out his liver and tried to chew it in

revenge but she was unable to do so. From then onwards she was known as 'the liver-chewer' and her son Mu'āwiya was known as 'the son of the liver-chewer'.

Despite the great loss of Hamza, the Muslim still charged at their enemies and created disorder amongst them. The Makkans began turning and running away.

At this point the Muslim archers on the mountain thought the war was over. They saw some of the Muslims collecting the war booty from the battlefield so they began running down to take their share. Their commander Abdullah bin Jubayr kept reminding them of what Rasulullāh (s) had ordered but they wouldn't listen. As they ran down, a group of the Makkan army was hiding behind the mountain pass under the command of Khālid b. Walid. They saw the mountain was now unguarded and they came charging through the mountain pass and attacked the Muslims from behind. Abdullah bin Jubayr was killed on the mountain and the Muslims now had to turn to fight behind them. In the meantime, those Makkans who were running away turned to fight again and so the Muslims were sandwiched between two groups.



Someone threw a rock at Rasulullāh (s) and two of his teeth broke and began bleeding. He was also hurt on his forehead and face and began bleeding. Then someone shouted, 'Muhammad is dead!' and most of the Muslims began running away up the hills and mountains to save their lives.

Prominent Muslims like Abu Bakr and Umar (who later appointed each other as the 1st and 2nd Caliph of the Muslims) ran away as well. Uthmān bin Affān (who later became the 3rd Caliph) ran so far away that he only returned to Madina after 3 days! Rasulullāh (s) began calling the Muslims and telling them to come back but most of them became demoralized and were running up the hills without even looking back. Only a handful of Muslims like Imām Ali (‘a) and Abu Dujāna stood in front of Rasulullāh (s) and continued defending him.

At one point, Imām Ali (‘a)’s sword broke and the angel Jibrāil (‘a) brought a sword to Rasulullāh (s) who gave it to Imām Ali (‘a). This sword was called *Dhul Fiqār* and remained with Imām Ali (‘a) until the end. As he fought bravely, Jibrāil (‘a) was heard shouting in the heavens, ‘*lā fata illa Ali, la sayf illa Dhul Fiqār*’ (‘There is no hero like Ali and no sword like Dhul Fiqār!’).

Later as some Muslims regained courage and returned to help, they took Rasulullāh (s) to higher grounds and the Makkan polytheists were too exhausted to follow them or to attack Madina. They too had suffered losses. Instead they mutilated the bodies of the Muslim martyrs in the battlefield by chopping off their noses and ears. Hadrat Hamza (‘a) was one of those whose bodies were severely mutilated and Rasulullāh (s) wept for him bitterly. Hadrat Hamza (‘a) was called *Sayyid ash-Shuhada* (the master of all martyrs) and he was known by this title until much later after the Battle of Karbala when this title was passed on to Imām Husayn (‘a).

In all the confusion, 70 Muslims were martyred. Abu Sufyān shouted to the Muslims and said, ‘this is in revenge for Badr!’ and then they retreated and went back to Makkah.



Jabal Rummāt (Archers Mt.)

Above is a modern-day picture showing vendors selling goods and pilgrims on Jabal Rummāt (Archers Mountain) at Uhud (Madina). This is where Rasulullāh (s) had posted 50 archers to protect the Muslim army from being attacked from the rear but the archers disobeyed and left their positions when they thought the battle was over and out of greed for war booty. A group of the enemies then attacked from a pass behind this mountain and the Muslims suffered considerable loss.

Rasulullāh (s) collected all the Muslim martyrs and prayed over the body of each one of them and buried them at Uhud. In the meantime, a group of women from Madina came to the battlefield including Sayyida Fātima az-Zahra (‘a). Imām Ali (‘a) brought some water and Sayyida Fātima (‘a) began washing the blood from her father,

Rasulullāh (s)'s face and dressing his wounds. The other women as well began helping and dressing the wounds of the other injured Muslims.

In the Battle of Uhud, 70 Muslims were martyred and 70 wounded. Imām Ali (‘a) was also heavily wounded. The Makkans lost 22 men, 12 of them at the hands of Imām Ali (‘a).

The Results of the Battle of Uhud

The battle of Uhud created serious difficulties for the Muslims. It greatly demoralized them. Secondly it encouraged the Jews and other nomadic tribes living near Madina to make raids on Madina. And thirdly it boosted the morale of the Quraysh in Makkah and they began planning another bigger attack in Madina (that we shall study in the next lesson).

While the Battle of Uhud was the peak moment of faithlessness (*kufir*) against Islām and they would never harm the Muslims like this ever again, it was also an opportunity for the Muslims to learn the consequences of disobeying the Messenger of Allāh (s). If the archers had not abandoned the mountain, they would have won this battle as well and they were in fact already winning it until they left their positions out of greed for the world and to collect booty.

Later on when they returned to Madina and they hypocrites were making fun of them, some of the Muslims wondered why Allāh did not help them by sending angels like He did in the Battle of Badr.

Allāh revealed āyāt of the Qur’ān to Rasulullāh (s) to tell the Muslims that if they had kept their promise to obey Rasulullāh (s) then he would certainly have helped them but they suffered because of their own greed and disobedience:

﴿وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ إِذْ تَحُسُّونَهُمْ بِإِذْنِهِ حَتَّى إِذَا فَشِلْتُمْ وَتَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَعَصَيْتُمْ مِمَّنْ بَعْدَ مَا أَرَاكُمْ مَا تُحِبُّونَ مِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ... إِذْ تُصْعِدُونَ وَلَا تَلْوُونَ عَلَى أَحَدٍ وَالرَّسُولُ يَدْعُوكُمْ فِي أُخْرَاكُمْ...﴾

Allāh certainly fulfilled His promise to you when you were killing them with His permission (i.e. you were winning the battle), until you lost courage, disputed about the matter, and disobeyed after He showed you what you loved (i.e. the war booty). Some of you desire this world, and some of you desire the Hereafter.... When you were fleeing without paying any attention to anyone, while the Messenger was calling you from your rear...

- Surah Al-Imrān, 3:152-153

Allāh also scolded the Muslims for running away just because they thought Rasullāh (s) had been killed. As Muslims who believe in Allāh and the message of Islām they should have continued fighting even if Rasullāh (s) had been killed:

﴿وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ أَفَإِنْ مَاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ انْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ وَمَنْ يَنْقَلِبْ عَلَىٰ عَقْبَيْهِ فَلَنْ يَضُرَّ اللَّهَ شَيْئًا وَسَيَجْزِي اللَّهُ الشَّاكِرِينَ﴾

Muhammad is but a messenger; [other] messengers have passed before him. If he dies or is killed, will you turn back on your heels? Anyone who turns back on his heels (and flees) will not harm Allāh in the least, and soon Allāh will reward the grateful.

- Surah Al-I Imrān, 3:144

But thereafter Allāh gave courage to the Muslims and reminded them that life and death are in His hands only and that this event served as a trial for them and if they are patient they will still have the upper hand.

﴿وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ إِنْ يَمَسُّكُمْ قَرْحٌ فَقَدْ مَسَّ الْقَوْمَ قَرْحٌ مِثْلُهُ وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ ... أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُدْخِلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ الصَّابِرِينَ ... وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَنْ تَمُوتَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ كِتَابًا مُؤَجَّلًا وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الْآخِرَةِ نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَسَنَجْزِي الشَّاكِرِينَ﴾

Do not weaken or grieve: you shall have the upper hand, should you be faithful. If a wound afflicts you, a similar wound has already afflicted those people (at Badr); and We make such days rotate among mankind, so that Allāh may verify those who have faith, and that He may take martyrs from among you...

Do you suppose that you would enter paradise, while Allāh has not yet confirmed those of you who have waged jihād and not confirmed the patient?... No soul may die except by Allāh's permission, at an appointed time. Whoever desires the reward of this world, We will give him of it; and whoever desires the reward of the Hereafter, We will give him of it; and soon We will reward the grateful.

- Surah Al-I Imrān, 3:139-143, 145

The defeat of the Muslims was a test for them and through this suffering and experience they emerged more eager and determined to defend their faith and the cause of Islām.

Lesson 5

The Battle of Ahzāb & The Battle of Khaybar

After the defeat of the Muslims in the Battle of Uhud, many tribes became bold and started thinking that they could attack the Muslims without any consequences. Rasulullāh (s) for example, had sent a number of missionaries to neighbouring tribes and towns in Arabia and in some cases it was the tribes who had invited these Muslim missionaries and requested Rasulullāh (s) to send them to teach Islām but as soon as they got there, they were surrounded and mercilessly murdered.

The Battle of Ahzāb

Just as the non-Jews in Madina were made up of the tribes of Aws and Khazraj, the Jews in Madina consisted of three main tribes: the Banu Qaynuqa, the Banu Nadhir and the Banu Quraydha. The Banu Qaynuqa had been expelled from Madina after the Battle of Badr in 2 AH because of repeatedly causing trouble for the Muslims; and after the Battle of Uhud, the Banu Nadhir were expelled from Madina for openly plotting against the Muslims and even attempting to assassinate Rasulullāh (s).

As they left, the Banu Nadhir demolished their own homes so that the Muslims could not occupy them and some went towards Syria while others went to the Jewish forts of Khaybar. The Banu Quraydha Jews however were allowed to remain behind because they still honoured the treaty of peaceful co-existence with the Muslims.

Once they were settled in Khaybar, the Banu Nadhir contacted the Quraysh of Makkah to plot against Islām and 20 leaders from the Jews and 50 from Quraysh signed an agreement in the Ka'bah that so long as they lived, they would fight Rasulullāh (s). Thereafter, the Jews and the polytheists contacted their allies (*ahzāb*) from neighbouring tribes and soon they formed a powerful army of 10,000 warriors who marched to Madina under the command of Abu Sufyān.

When the news of these preparations reached Madina, Rasulullāh (s) consulted his companions. Salmān al-Fārisi advised that in Persia they used to dig a deep and wide trench to keep away enemies and they could dig such a ditch on the unprotected side of Madina. Rasulullāh (s) approved this plan and soon the Muslims were divided into parties of 10, and each party allocated 10 yards to dig.

Rasulullāh (s) himself participated in this task. The ditch or moat (*khandaq*) was completed in time, just three days before the forces of the enemy reached Madina. The Muslims could gather only 3000 men to oppose this huge army of 10,000 that camped on the opposite side of the trench facing Madina. The Battle of Ahzāb took place in Shawwāl 5 AH (February 627 AH).

A coalition or a group of clans or allies is called 'Ahzāb' in Arabic and a trench is called 'Khandaq'. And because the enemies were made up of an alliance of Jews, polytheists and their allies, this battle would come to be known as the Battle of Ahzāb or the Battle of Khandaq and in the Qur'ān, Surah 33 is named after it (Surah al-Ahzāb).

When the enemies saw the trench, they were taken by surprise. They never expected to see this and it was a new thing for the Arabs. Day and night they tried to bridge it and cross over but each time the Muslim archers prevented them.

In the meantime, the leaders of the Banu Nadhir secretly contacted the Banu Quraydha Jews still living inside Madina and convinced them to break their treaty with Rasulullāh (s) and to attack the Muslims from the inside. And as they began terrorizing the Muslim women and children, Rasulullāh (s) had to send 500 men from the Muslim army of 3000 back into the city to protect its residents.

Finally, a few of the Quraysh warriors – including their champion Amr bin Abd Wadd – succeeded in crossing the trench in an area that was not too wide. Amr was very much feared in the Arab world. He was a giant and considered equal to 1000 warriors in battle. He began challenging the Muslims and mocking them, saying, 'what are you afraid of, if you kill me you will go to paradise and if I kill you, you still believe you will go to paradise.' None of the Muslims had the courage to stand up and face him except Imām Ali ('a). Rasulullāh (s) tied a special turban on the head of Imām Ali ('a) and prayed for him and as Imām Ali ('a) left to face Amr bin Abd Wadd, Rasulullāh (s), said, 'now all of faith (*imān*) is going forward to fight all of faithlessness (*kufr*)'. In a sense, the future of Islām depended on the outcome of this battle.

Imām Ali ('a) first offered Amr to surrender and accept Islām but Amr refused. Then he offered Amr to turn back and go away but Amr also refused. And so a one-on-one combat began. So much dust flew in the air that no one could see what was happening.

The first time Imām Ali ('a) threw Amr to the ground and was going to kill him, Amr spat on Imām Ali ('a). And so Imām Ali ('a) left him alone and allowed him to stand and fight again. Later on, when Imām Ali ('a) was asked why he left Amr go the first time, he said, 'I did not want to kill him for my own anger. I wanted to kill him only for Allāh's sake.' This showed that even in battle and in danger, Imām Ali ('a) never forgot why he was doing what he was doing and he never did anything for his own pleasure or anger.

The next time around, as the dust flew, everyone heard Imām Ali ('a) shouting, 'Allāhu Akbar!' and as Amr fell to the ground dead and the Muslims cheered, the enemies panicked and even the few who had crossed over with Amr fled back.

The siege on Madina continued for more than 24 days with both sides tiring out. Rasulullāh (s) then went to a hilltop where the Masjid al-Fath (Mosque of Victory) stands today in Madina. There he prayed to Allāh for help. Soon, a fierce storm raged outside Madina. It uprooted the tents of the enemy, causing their belongings to fly in the air while striking fear in their hearts. The Makkans and Jews began fleeing and the

leader Abu Sufyān was so scared that he even tried getting on his camel and fleeing before untying the rope to which the camel was tied!

By the next day, not a single enemy could be seen on the field. Rasulullāh (s) then, on the command of Allāh, expelled the Banu Quraydha from Madina for their treachery and betrayal at such a critical time. The battle of Ahzāb/Khandaq ended in Dhul Qa'ada 5 AH. The Muslims lost only five men in this battle.

This was a huge defeat for the polytheists of Makkah and never again did they dare attack Madina. As the Muslims regained their power and strength in Arabia, all the tribes around Madina signed peace treaties with Rasulullāh (s).

There were various factors that brought Muslims victory in this battle. But the two main reasons were Imām Ali ('a) killing the champion Amr bin Abd Wadd and the prayers of Rasulullāh (s) that resulted in the storm that destroyed the courage and set up of the allies army.

Allāh has mentioned this battle in the Qur'ān in āyāt such as this:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَاءَتْكُمْ جُنُودٌ فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا
وَجُنُودًا لَمْ تَرَوْهَا وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرًا﴾

O you who believe! Remember the blessing of Allāh on you when the forces (of the enemy) came to you. We sent upon them a strong wind and an army (of angels) that you did not see. And Allāh sees all that you do.

- Surah al-Ahzāb, 33:9

In the same year (5 AH), Hajj was made mandatory for all those Muslims who were financially well off and in good physical health.

The Battle of Khaybar

To the north of Madina was situated a fertile land known as the Valley of Khaybar. Some 20,000 Jews skilled in farming and warfare lived in that area. They had built seven strong forts in Khaybar to protect themselves from any attack.

When the Jewish tribes of Banu Qaynuqā and Banu Nadhir were expelled from Madina because of their plots against Islām, some of them settled at Khaybar. Here, they continued in their old ways, encouraging and helping the Arab tribes to harm the State of Islām.

Even after the Jews had lost against the Muslims in the Battle of Ahzāb, they remained a source of danger for the Muslims. Moreover, Rasulullāh (s) had sent letters to various leaders of neighbouring countries, and he was worried that those leaders who had

rejected the message of Islām might pair up with the Jews of Khaybar to threaten the Muslims.

Since he had just signed a peace treaty with the other Arab tribes, Rasulullāh (s) knew that he would have no trouble from them and he could thus concentrate on the danger to Islām from Khaybar. He therefore ordered the Muslims to get ready to fight the growing threat from the Jews of Khaybar.

The Muslim army consisted of 1600 men, of whom 200 were mounted soldiers. The army marched out with Imām Ali (‘a) holding the standard.

The seven forts of Khaybar were equipped with giant catapults to push back an enemy attack. But the Muslims were able to go around most of these forts and surprise the Jewish forces. Soon the Muslims had taken all the forts except for the last and main fort of Khaybar. Here is where all the heroes of the Jewish army were stationed.

The siege on Khaybar lasted for many days until a point where even the Muslim force had run out of food. At this difficult time, a shepherd who used to look after the sheep of the Jews came to Rasulullāh (s) and after some discussions he was convinced of the truth of Islām and became a Muslim. The shepherd then asked Rasulullāh (s) what he should do with all the sheep belonging to the Jews he had in his care. And in the presence of hundreds of hungry Muslim soldiers, Rasulullāh (s) told the shepherd to go and give them back to the Jews because in Islām you cannot break a trust and a promise even it is made to an enemy. The Jews had given him their sheep to look after on trust. It was *harām* to violate that trust.

And so the shepherd did as he was ordered and then participated in the battle and was martyred. By his action Rasulullāh (s) showed clearly that he was not in Khaybar to conquer land and wealth, but his aim was to remove the threat to Islām from the Jews. In spite of the needs of his men, he would not permit the unlawful use of the enemy's property and instead prayed to Allāh to grant the Muslims victory.

Many companions and Muslim elders tried to lead the Muslim army to capture the fort of Khaybar - including Abu Bakr and Umar - but they all failed and were forced to retreat. Umar even demoralized the Muslims by praising the courage of the chief of the Jews, a fearful warrior by the name of Marhab. This action of Umar displeased Rasulullāh (s) very much.

Finally, Rasulullāh (s) announced: *‘Tomorrow I shall give the standard to a person who loves Allāh and Rasulullāh and who is loved by Allāh and Rasulullāh, and Allāh will give us victory at his hands. He is a brave man who never turns his back to the enemy and never runs away from the battlefield.’*

All the Muslim soldiers slept restlessly that night and prayed that they would be chosen and given the honour to be that person. The next morning they all gathered around Rasulullāh (s) to see who would be chosen. Rasulullāh (s) asked, ‘Where is Ali?’ and he

was told that Imām Ali (‘a) had a severe eye infection and was unable to even see properly.

Rasulullāh (s) ordered Imām Ali (‘a) to be brought before him and rubbed his eyes and prayed for his recovery. The eyes of Imām Ali (‘a) were instantly cured and he never had trouble with them again.

Rasulullāh (s) then ordered Imām Ali (‘a) to advance against the enemy. He told him to ask the chiefs of the forts to accept Islām. If they refused he was to ask them to surrender and live freely under Muslim protection and pay tax to the Muslim State. If this offer was also refused, then he should fight.

Imām Ali (‘a) approached the forts wearing a strong coat of armour and carrying his sword, Dhul Fiqār. The Jews sent out one of their best warriors, Hārith the brother of Marhab, to fight the Muslims. The soldiers of Islām were struck with fear when they saw the powerful Hārith advance toward them. However, Imām Ali (‘a) faced him and after a brief fight, Hārith lay dead on the ground.

The death of his brother enraged Marhab. He came out of the fort in a rage, fully armed. Imām Ali (‘a) and Marhab engaged in battle as soldiers on both sides looked on with awe.

Suddenly Marhab plunged his three-pronged spear towards Imām Ali (‘a), who avoided it and struck a powerful blow to the head of Marhab. A silence fell as the Jews watched in disbelief their champion falling dead. As he shouted ‘Allāhu Akbar!’ in victory, Imām Ali (‘a) was attacked by other experienced Jewish warriors but they were no match for him and soon they too lay dead.

Imām Ali (‘a) then approached the closed fort and ripped its gate out with one hand and threw it to the side. Later on 40 (or according to some 70) Muslim soldiers tried lifting the gate and they could barely move it. It was by the strength from Allāh that Imām Ali (‘a) was able to uproot and fling such a heavy gate.

The Muslims had now taken over Khaybar. In total, Muslims lost 20 men in this battle while the Jews lost 93 men. Rasulullāh (s) had made the Jews realise it was useless to plot against the Muslims. After the victory he gave them all their land back and they agreed to pay an annual tax to the Muslims in exchange for protection from the Islāmic State.

On the day of the victory at Khaybar, the Muslims who had migrated from Makkah to Abyssinia in the early years of Islām before Hijrah, finally came to Madina led by Ja’far bin Abu Tālib (the brother of Imām Ali (‘a)). Rasulullāh (s) was overjoyed at the return of Ja’far with the Muslims from Abyssinia just as he rejoiced and thanked Allāh for the victory at Khaybar.

The Battle of Khaybar took place in Muharram 7 AH.

Fadak

180 kms north of Madina lay a fertile territory called Fadak that was also owned by the Jews. After the victory of the Muslims at Khaybar, the Jews offered to surrender Fadak to Rasulullāh (s) without any struggle or combat.

Allāh revealed to Rasulullāh (s) that whatever was handed to him without the use of the Muslim soldiers or their weapons or horses and with no war, was the property of Rasulullāh (s) himself and he was to distribute as he saw fit. Fadak fell under this law as well. And in the case of Fadak, Allāh also revealed:

﴿وَأْتِ ذَا الْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُ...﴾

And give the relatives their [due] right...

- Surah al-Isrā, 17:26

And so Rasulullāh (s) gave the fertile land of Fadak and its revenues to his daughter Sayyida Fātima az-Zahra (‘a). Rasulullāh (s) did this for several reasons. Firstly, Allāh had commanded him to give the near ones their due and there was no one more nearer and deserving than Sayyida Fātima (‘a). Secondly, all the Muslims were indebted to Sayyida Khadija (‘a), the mother of Sayyida Fātima (‘a), who had sacrificed her entire wealth for the sake of the early Muslims. Her money had been used to spread Islām, free those Muslims who were slaves and support them in their times of trouble as in the three years of social boycott that they had faced in Makkah. Now Rasulullāh (s) could return her favours by gifting her daughter the rich land of Fadak. He also knew that after him, Imām Ali (‘a) could use Fadak as a source of income to strengthen his position as the successor of Rasulullāh (s) and the Caliph of the Muslims. And finally, it was *harām* for the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) to take alms (*sadaqa*) from others and Rasulullāh (s) wanted to leave something for his daughter and grandchildren so that they could live with dignity after his passing away.

However, after Rasulullāh (s) passed away, Abu Bakr and Umar, who had usurped the right of Imām Ali (‘a) to the Caliphate, also took Fadak away from Sayyida Fatima (‘a).

Until her last moments Sayyida Fātima (‘a) continued to demand that Fadak was her right. Not because of wanting the world but because of standing for what is right and to disclose the injustices done to her and her husband. Fadak was denied to Sayyida Fātima (‘a) because it was seen to strengthen Imām Ali (‘a) and the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) against the new Caliphs.

The proof that Fadak was always Sayyida Fātima (‘a) is that for many decades to come thereafter, whenever a Caliph who respected the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) came to power, Fadak was given back to the descendants of Sayyida Fātima (‘a) and the next Caliph would usurp it again if he hated the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a).

Abu Bakr argued with Sayyida Fātima (‘a) that he took Fadak from her because he had heard Rasulullāh (s) say, ‘we the prophets do not inherit and do not leave any

inheritance.' But Sayyida Fātima ('a) proved Abu Bakr wrong from the Qur'ān and even provided proof that Fadak was given to her in the lifetime of Rasulullāh (s) and was not inheritance. At one point Abu Bakr did write a document confirming that Fadak belonged to Sayyida Fātima ('a) but Umar snatched the document and tore it to pieces.

Lesson 6

Imām ‘Alí b. Abí Tálíb (‘a)

Imām Ali (‘a) is our first Imām. He was born on 13th Rajab 600 CE (which is about 30 years after Aam al-Feel and about 23 years before hijrah). He is the only person to have ever been born inside the Ka’bah. His father is Hadrat Abu Tālib (‘a) the son of Hadrat Abdul Muttalib (‘a). Hadrat Abu Tālib (‘a) was the uncle of Rasulullāh (s). Rasulullāh (s)’s father Hadrat Abdullah (‘a) and Hadrat Abu Tālib (‘a) were brothers. Imām Ali (‘a) therefore belonged to the same tribe of Banu Hāshim as Rasulullāh (s). Imām Ali (‘a)’s mother is Sayyida Fātima bint Asad (‘a).

Imām Ali (‘a) is the cousin of Rasulullāh (s) and also his son-in-law. Rasulullāh (s) raised Imām Ali (‘a) from the time he was born, like his own son and Allāh asked Rasulullāh (s) to appoint Imām Ali (‘a) as his successor and the leader of all the Muslims after him. Rasulullāh (s) declared Imām Ali (‘a) as his successor in his very first public announcement that was called Da’wah Dhul Ashira and also in his very last public announcement at Ghadir Khum in 10 AH, where Rasulullāh (s) told over 100,000 Muslims after his final Hajj:

مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ فَهَذَا عَلِيٌّ مَوْلَاهُ

Man kuntu mawlāhu fa hādha ‘Aliyyun mawlāhu

‘Whoever considers me as his master, then this Ali is his master too.’

And it was only after Rasulullāh (s) declared this that Allāh revealed:

...الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ

دِينًا...﴿﴾

Today I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed My blessing upon you, and I have approved Islām as your religion.

- Surah al-Māidah, 5:3

In the book Nahj al-Balāgha, Imām Ali (‘a) is quoted as narrating how Rasulullāh (s) looked after him from the time he was a child. He says, ‘Rasulullāh (s) brought me up in his own arms and fed me his own morsel. I followed him wherever he went like a baby camel following its mother. Each day a new part of his character would become known to me and I would accept and follow it as a command.’

In another place, Imām Ali (‘a) is reported to have said, ‘Rasulullāh (s) opened a 1000 doors of knowledge for me and from each door I opened another 1000 doors (i.e. branches) of knowledge.’

Rasulullāh (s) gave Imām Ali (‘a) the title ‘Amir al-Mu‘minin’ (The Commander of the Faithful) even though others used this title for themselves later on. Imām Ali (‘a) is also the father and ancestor of all the other Imāms after him.

In the year 40 AH, the 19th morning of the month of Ramadān, when Imām Ali (‘a) was praying in the Masjid of Kufa, the Kharijite Abd ar-Rahmān b. Muljam struck him on the head with a poisoned sword. Three days later, Imām Ali (‘a) was martyred and passed away from the effects of the wound. He was 63 years old.

Imām al-Hasan (‘a) and Imām al-Husayn (‘a), the two sons of Imām Ali (‘a) conducted his funeral and burial. Because of his numerous enemies, he was buried outside Kufa in the middle of the night and in secrecy. That place is now called Najaf al-Ashraf (in Iraq) and a beautiful shrine stands over his grave.

Imām Ali (‘a) was a very noble person with innumerable qualities. He was extremely generous, kind, brave and knowledgeable. His qualities are so many and so great that some people began believing he is God! Imām Ali (‘a) was the first person to believe in Rasulullāh (s) from the men and he never ever worshipped idols even before Rasulullāh (s) preached Islām. He never lost any battle that he commanded and he never fled from any battlefield.

Rasulullāh (s) said to the Muslims, ‘The best judge amongst you is Ali’ and also ‘the most knowledgeable amongst you is Ali’. Rasulullāh (s) once said, ‘Ali is with the truth and the truth is with Ali.’ Then he prayed, ‘O Allāh, turn the truth wherever Ali turns!’

Rasulullāh (s) also said, ‘O Ali, you are my brother in this world and the next.’ And he said, ‘No one knows Allāh (truly) except Ali and I. No one knows Ali except Allāh and I and no one knows me except Allāh and Ali.’

One of the most famous sayings of Rasulullāh (s) is ‘I am the City of Knowledge and Ali is its Gate.’ By this Rasulullāh (s) meant that whenever you want to enter a place, you enter through its door or gate. So to reach the knowledge of Rasulullāh (s) and Islām, we must go through Imām Ali (‘a) and not through others.

Imām Ali (‘a) himself has said, ‘Even if I cut off the nose of a believer (*mu‘min*) so that he should hate me, he will never hate me. And even if I give the whole world in gold to a hypocrite (*munāfiq*) to love me, he will never love me. This is because Rasulullāh (s) promised me, “O Ali, a believer will never hate you and a hypocrite will never love you”.’ This shows that just as believing in one God makes a person a monotheist (*muwahhid*) and bearing witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh makes a monotheist a Muslim, similarly, loving Imām Ali (‘a) and following him is a necessity of religion. It safeguards a Muslim from hypocrisy (*nifāq*) and makes him or her a true faithful (*mu‘min*).

This is also why Imām Ali (‘a) said that if someone forces you to curse him and your life is in danger, you can do it to save your life. But if someone tries to force you to

disassociate from him never agree to do so. The reason is that associating ourselves with Imām Ali (‘a) is not just a nice-to-have. It is a must-have. It is a necessity to complete a person’s faith. The most eminent companions of Rasulullāh (s) like Salmān al-Fārisi (al-Muhammadi) used to say that whenever a stranger came to them and they wanted to know if he was a *mu’min* or a *munāfiq*, they would start praising Imām Ali (‘a), and based on the stranger’s reaction, they would know his reality.

When Imām Ali (‘a) was asked to be the Caliph, he was very just and kind to his people. He never favoured anyone and he lived like the poorest of them. He wore patched clothes and ate very simple food and slept very little. He was always busy in the remembrance of Allāh and in praying. He would never let money accumulate in the government treasury and would rush to distribute it to the poor and needy.

Imām Ali (‘a) would always judge others fairly and treat the poor with kindness. In fact he was very, very similar to Rasulullāh (s) in his character, which is perhaps why Allāh has referred to him as the soul (*nafs*) of Rasulullāh in the āyah (verse) of Mubāhala (Surah Al-I Imrān, 3:61). There are very many āyāt of Qur’ān that were revealed in praise of Imām Ali (‘a).

Despite being declared as the successor of Rasulullāh (s) time and again, after the passing away of Rasulullāh (s) the caliphate and rule of Muslims was denied to Imām Ali (‘a). For 25 years, he kept quiet only to stop the Muslim community from breaking up.

We will study the life of Imām Ali (‘a) after Rasulullāh (s) (i.e. from 11 AH to 40 AH) in detail in Book 11 inshā Allāh.

The rest of the material in this lesson is for the student to read on his or her own. The teacher may review/quote some of it in class.

The Wise Judgements of Imām Ali b. Abi Tālib (‘a)

The Real Mother

During the time of the Caliph ‘Umar, two women disputed over a child. Each one claimed the child was hers but without any proof or witness. The Caliph ‘Umar had no idea how to resolve this so he asked Amir al-Mu’minin (‘a) to help solve the case. Imām Ali (‘a) first warned the women not to lie but they both persisted the child was theirs. So Imām Ali (‘a) then said, ‘bring me a saw.’

‘And what are you going to do?’ the two women asked. ‘I will cut the baby into two equal halves and each one of you can have a half,’ he suggested.

One of the women remained silent but the other began crying and saying, ‘O God, O God, Abu al-Hasan, if there is no way out but this then let her have the baby.’

'Allāhu Akbar!' replied Imām Ali ('a), 'this proves the baby is yours and not hers. If it were her son she would not have remained silent and would have shown pity on the baby and become anxious.'

The other woman admitted she was lying and the baby was not hers. Thus the case was solved.

Dividing 8 Loaves Among 3 Guests

Two men travelled on a journey. Then they sat to eat together. One of them took out five loaves of bread and the other one three. A man passed them and greeted them. They invited him to join them. So he ate with them and when he was leaving, he put down eight dirhams and said, 'this is compensation for your food that I have eaten.'

Then he left. The two men began disputing. The one with three loaves said, 'we should divide the money equally.' The one with five loaves said, 'I should get 5 dirhams and you 3 dirhams.'

They finally came to Amir al-Muminin ('a) and told him their story. Imām Ali ('a) told them, 'This is a case where meanness and rivalry is not good. It would be better if you reconcile and come to a peaceful agreement.'

But the man with 3 loaves refused. He said, 'I will not be satisfied unless a judgement is passed.'

'Since you won't be satisfied unless a judgement is passed,' replied Imām Ali ('a), 'then legally you are entitled to only 1 dirham and your friend gets 7 dirhams.'

'May Allāh be praised!' exclaimed the man, 'how can this matter come to be like that?!

'It is as I have told you,' said Imām Ali ('a). Then he asked him, 'Didn't you have three loaves?'

'Yes,' he replied.

'And your friend had five loaves?'

'Yes.'

'Then,' continued Imām Ali ('a), 'if you divide 8 loaves into 3 pieces each, you would get 24 pieces in total. Now if we assume you all ate equally then each of you ate 8 pieces. ($8 \times 3 = 24$). And we must assume each of you ate your own loaves first. So you contributed 9 pieces (3 loaves \times 3 pieces each) and ate 8 pieces yourself. You only gave 1 piece to the guest. Your friend contributed 15 pieces (5 loaves \times 3 pieces

each) and ate 8 himself. The guest ate the remaining 7 of his pieces. So he gets 7 dirhams and you get only 1.'

The two men left reflecting on the wisdom of the judgement of their case!

Miracles of Imām Ali b. Abi Tālib ('a)

The miracles of Amir al-Mu'minin ('a) are too numerous to list. He was born inside the Ka'bah and he spoke as a newborn child just like Nabi Isa ('a) spoke in the cradle. His intellect was so perfect that he was the first to accept the message of Rasulullāh (s) when he was still a young boy. Rasulullāh (s) trusted him on numerous occasions like on the night of Hijrah. In fact Rasulullāh (s) did not enter Madina until Imām Ali ('a) first joined him outside Madina. Thereafter on every occasion, he appointed him in his place. For example, when the opening āyāt of Surah a-Tawbah were revealed and Rasulullāh (s) had to go and recite them to the Makkans, he first sent Abu Bakr and then Allāh commanded him to call Abu Bakr back and go himself or send someone like himself. So Rasulullāh (s) sent Imām Ali ('a). When Rasulullāh (s) had to go on an expedition to Tabuk but the hypocrites were very active in trying to destabilize Madina, he left Imām Ali ('a) in charge of Madina and said to him, 'You are to me like (Nabi) Hārūn was to (Nabi) Musa, except that there is no prophet after me.' Imām Ali ('a) also washed the body of Rasulullāh (s) when he passed away and arranged for his funeral and burial. All these show he was the rightful successor to Rasulullāh (s) (besides the numerous occasions when Rasulullāh (s) also declared this.).

Amongst his miracles is that Imām Ali ('a) never lost a single battle all his life, whether in single combat or otherwise. He was the commander-in-chief of Rasulullāh (s)'s army. No enemy, however strong or mighty they were, could escape his blow. From the number he killed at Badr to the manner he defended Rasulullāh (s) at Uhud. From the giant Amr bin Abd Wadd at the Battle of Khandaq (Ahzāb) to the giant Marhab at the Battle of Khaybar, there was no match for Imām Ali ('a). When his sword broke at the Battle of Uhud, a new one was sent down for him from the heavens called the Dhul Fiqār and the angel Jibrāil ('a) was heard declaring in the heavens, 'Lā fatā illa 'Ali. La sayf illa Dhul Fiqār' (There is no hero like Ali and no sword like Dhul Fiqār). And even after 25 years of silence, when Imām Ali ('a) was in his fifties, his military prowess in the battles of Jamal, Siffin and Nahrawan (during his Khilāfah) had not diminished.

Among his other miracles is that despite the numerous efforts by his enemies to extinguish his name and to defame him, he still is loved and praised by millions. The Umayyad Caliph Mu'āwiyah for example, ensured that Imām Ali ('a) was cursed from all the pulpits and masājid in the Muslim world for 70 years but despite that there are still people who believe Imām Ali ('a) is the incarnation of God! Of course both extremes are wrong and Imām Ali ('a) himself said, 'Two people will be destroyed because of me: one who hates me and one who loves me with exaggeration.'

The other miracle of Imām Ali (‘a) is his prophecies about the future and his knowledge and ability to answer any question. He used to say from the pulpit, ‘Ask me, ask me, before you lose me. For I know the secrets of the heavens even better than the ways of the earth!’

The Miracle of the Gate of Khaybar

In the Battle of Khaybar against the Jews, after Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthmān had all failed to bring the Muslims victory and had returned defeated, Imām Ali (‘a) was sent by Rasulullāh (s). He rushed forward while the soldiers were telling him to slow down. He came to the fortress of Khaybar and pulled out its gate and threw it to the ground. According to Rasulullāh’s companion Jābir bin Abd Allāh, later on seventy men tried to lift the gate and they could barely move it.

The Miracle of *Radd ash-Shams* (Bringing Back the Sun)

This miracle has been reported by Umm Salama the wife of Rasulullāh (s), Jābir bin Abd Allāh al-Ansāri, Asma bint Umays, Abu Sa’id al-Khudri (a famous companion of Rasulullāh (s)) and other companions.

One day when Rasulullāh (s) was receiving inspirations and revelations from the angel Jibrāil (‘a), he was resting his head on Imām Ali (‘a) with his eyes closed and so Imām Ali (‘a) could not move. Then the time of Asr salāh passed and it was getting to sunset so Imām Ali (‘a), not wanting to disturb Rasulullāh (s), prayed whilst sitting.

When Rasulullāh (s) woke up he asked Imām Ali (‘a), ‘Did you miss the Asr salāh?’ And Imām Ali (‘a) said, ‘I did not want to interrupt the revelation coming to you so I prayed while sitting.’

Rasulullāh (s) said to him, ‘Ask Allāh to bring the sun back so we can pray properly while standing. Allāh will answer you because of your obedience to Allāh and His Messenger.’

And so Amir al-Mu’minin (‘a) prayed to Allāh and surely enough, the sun came back and it became bright again like the afternoon. Rasulullāh (s) and Amir al-Mu’minin (‘a) then prayed Salāt al-Asr at its proper time and the sun then set again.

Those who reported this said, ‘We heard it at its setting, screeching like the screeching of a saw in wood.’

The Power of His Prayer

It is reported that a man called Ghayzār was suspected of spying for Mu’āwiya and sending information to him about Imām Ali (‘a)’s government. But he denied it.

Imām Ali (‘a) questioned him and said, ‘Do you swear by Allāh that you have not done so?’

‘Yes,’ Ghayzār replied, and then he hurried to take an oath and swear in the name of Allāh.

‘If you are lying,’ said Amir al-Mu‘minin (‘a), ‘then Allāh will blind you.’

Before the next Friday had come, the man went blind and was brought out being led by someone.

Another Example of the Power of His Prayer

When Imām Ali (‘a) became the Caliph, he reminded people of his right and that he had been the rightful successor of Rasulullāh (s) from the first day. He recited for them the words of Rasulullāh (s) ‘Whoever’s master I am, this Ali is his master’ (*man kuntu mawlāhu fa hādha ‘Aliyyun mawlāhu*).

Twelve men testified that this hadith was true and they had heard Rasulullāh (s) say this. But Anas bin Mālik – a famous scholar – did not testify.

‘Anas,’ Imām Ali (‘a) said to him.

‘At your service,’ he replied.

‘Why do you not testify when you heard what they heard?’ asked Imām Ali (‘a).

‘Amir al-Mu‘minin,’ he replied, ‘I have grown old and I have forgotten.’

‘O Allāh,’ Imām Ali (‘a) prayed, ‘If he is a liar, strike him with leprosy.’

A man called Talha bin ‘Umayra reported, ‘I testify before Allāh, I saw a whiteness (of leprosy) between his (Anas’s) eyes.’

And many other miracles are reported in the books of hadith.

Some Sayings of Imām Ali (‘a)

His Words About His Real Shi’ah

Amir al-Mu‘minin (‘a) was very proud of his real Shi’ah. They are very few in the world at any point in time. But he loved them very much.

Sa’sa’ah b. Suhan al-‘Abdi reports that one day Imām Ali (‘a) led the Fajr Salāh in the Masjid of Kufa. Then he remained sitting facing the qibla without turning right or left

until the sun rose. Then he, peace be on him, said, 'I knew upright men during the time of Rasulullāh (s) who used to spend the night alternating between sajdah and ruku' (meaning praying all night). In the morning they would have disheveled hair, dust on themselves (out of humility) and between their eyes there would be (a lump) like the knee of a goat (because of excessive sujud). When they remembered death they would quiver like trees quiver in the wind. Then their eyes would shed tears until their clothes became wet.'

And on one full-moon night, Imām Ali ('a) was walking alone towards the cemetery (outside the city) when a group of men followed him. He stopped and said to them, 'who are you?'

'Amir al-Mu'minin, we are your Shi'ah,' they replied proudly.

He gazed at the faces for a bit and then said, 'Why don't I see the mark of the Shi'ah on you?'

'What is the mark of the Shi'ah, O Amir al-Mu'minin?' they asked.

'Yellow faces through staying awake at night,' he replied, 'bleary eyes through weeping (out of the fear and love of Allāh), hunched backs through standing (in salāh), hollow stomachs through fasting, dry lips through prayer, and there is the dust of those who show humility on them.'

Lesson 7

Sayyida Fātima (‘a)

Sayyida Fātima az-Zahra (‘a) is the only daughter of Rasulullāh (s). Her mother is Sayyida Khadija Umm al-Mu‘minin (‘a), the first wife of Rasulullāh (s).

The husband of Sayyida Fātima (‘a) is Amir al-Mu‘minin Imām Ali b. Abi Tālib (‘a) and their two sons Imām Hasan (‘a) and Imām Husayn (‘a) are the 2nd and 3rd Imāms of Islām after Imām Ali (‘a). All the other nine Imāms are from the descendants of Imām Husayn (‘a).

Sayyida Fātima (‘a) also had two daughters from Imām Ali (‘a): Sayyida Zaynab (‘a) and Sayyida Umm Kulthum (‘a) and her fifth child – Hadrat Muhsin (‘a) – was named by Rasulullāh (s) before birth but he died in the womb of his mother when the house of Sayyida Fātima (‘a) was attacked after Rasulullāh (s)’s passing away and she was injured.

Sayyida Fātima (‘a) was born in Makkah on 20th Jamādi al-Ukhra 5 years after Bi‘thah (the start of Rasulullāh (s)’s mission) when Rasulullāh (s) was 45 years old. Sayyida Fātima (‘a) passed away in Madina on Tuesday 3rd Jamādi al-Ukhra 11 AH at the tender age of 18. This was only 3 months after her beloved father Rasulullāh (s) passed away. Her husband Imām Ali (‘a) conducted her funeral rites and buried her in Madina, secretly and in the middle of the night. This is because she was unhappy with some people who had hurt her after her father Rasulullāh (s) had passed away and she did not want them to attend her funeral.

In her piety, worship and nobility Sayyida Fātima (‘a) followed her father Rasulullāh (s)’s footsteps. Many āyāt of Qur’ān were revealed to praise her.

Sayyida Fatima (‘a) inherited the wisdom, courage, determination, generosity, self-sacrifice and nobility of her father, Rasulullāh (s). Imām Husayn (‘a) once said, ‘I often saw my mother absorbed in salāh’, and her children always noticed that she prayed for the neighbours and others before she prayed for herself and her family.

Sayyida Fatima (‘a)’s generosity to the poor and her compassion for them was well known and numerous incidents are recorded in history to show that no one ever came asking at her door and was returned empty-handed. Even if she had little, she would give away her share of food and stay hungry.

Sayyida Fātima (‘a) was also known for leading a very simple life just like her husband Imām Ali (‘a). Sayyida Fātima (‘a) did not care for expensive clothes and jewellery. Instead she gave great importance to worshipping Allāh, hard work, helping others, modesty, being chaste and acquiring knowledge. She was also very dedicated to the upbringing of her children. The courage that was later displayed by all her sons and daughters were inspired and taught by her.

Rasulullāh (s) used to be called Sayyida Fātima (‘a), ‘the Leader of the Women of the World’ (*Sayyidat Nisā al-‘Alamin*). And he used to love and respect her so much that whenever Sayyida Fātima (‘a) entered Rasulullāh (s)’s room, he would stand up to welcome her and he would seat her in his place and would even kiss her hands. After the passing away of her mother Sayyida Khadija (‘a), Sayyida Fātima (‘a) used to look after her father. Whenever he came home after preaching, wounded and covered in blood, she would tend to his wounds and bandage them. And for this reason, Rasulullāh (s) used to call her, ‘Um Abiha’, which means “the ‘mother’ of her father”.

Often Rasulullāh (s) would be heard saying, ‘Allāh is pleased with one who pleases Fātima and Allāh is displeased with one who displeases Fātima.’

Rasulullāh (s) also said, ‘Four women are the best among all in paradise: Asiya bint Muzāhim (the wife of Fir’aun), Maryam bint ‘Imrān (the mother of Nabi Isa (‘a)), Khadija bint Khuwaylid (the wife of Rasulullāh (s)) and Fātima bint Muhammad (s) (his own daughter).’

Someone asked ‘Aisha, one of the wives of Rasulullāh (s), after he had passed away, ‘who was the most beloved to Rasulullāh (s)?’ and she replied, ‘Fātima’. And he then asked, ‘who did he love most from the men?’ and she replied, ‘the husband of Fātima’. (i.e. Imām Ali b. Abi Tālib (‘a)).

Rasulullāh (s) declared, ‘Indeed Allāh ordered me to marry Fātima to Ali’ and he also said, ‘if it was not for Ali, there would have been no match to marry Fātima’.

Rasulullāh (s) said, ‘Every child traces his or her ancestry through his or her father’s family. Except for the children of Fātima. I am their ancestor and source.’ This means the children of Imām Ali (‘a) and Sayyida Fātima (‘a) should be considered, first and foremost, as the descendants of Rasulullāh (s).

Rasulullāh (s) had profound love for his daughter and it wasn’t just because she was his daughter only but because of her virtues and how special she was in the eyes of Allāh. Allāh always praised her in the Qur’ān and never criticized her even once (like some of the wives of Rasulullāh (s) were criticized in the Qur’ān).

Surah al-Insān, Ayah al-Mubāhala and Ayah at-Tathir

Surah al-Insān is the 76th surah of the Qur’ān. It is also called Surah Hal Atā and Surah ad-Dahr. It praises the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a): Sayyida Fātima (‘a), her husband Imām Ali (‘a) and her two sons Imām Hasan (‘a) and Imām Husayn (‘a) as well as their maid Fidda (r.a.) and how they fasted for three days but still gave the little food they had to the needy, the poor and the orphan.

When a group of high-ranking Christians came from Najrān to see Rasulullāh (s) in Madina and after many days of debates refused to accept any arguments, Allāh revealed that Rasulullāh (s) should meet with them under the open sky and pray to

Allāh to curse the liars. Rasulullāh (s) took his daughter Sayyida Fātima (‘a), Imām Ali (‘a) and his two grandsons as his family. When the Christian priests and bishops saw the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) they refused to pray for Allāh to curse the liars because they realized that these were very special people who if they prayed to Allāh to move mountains, He would. This was known as the Event of Mubāhala and Allāh mentions it in the Qur’ān in Surah Aal-i Imrān, 3:61.

In Surah al-Ahzāb (33) āyah 33 Allāh mentions how pure and safe the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) are from all sins and evils. This is known as the Verse of Purification (Āyah at-Tathir).

This āyah was revealed when Rasulullāh (s) collected the four members of the Ahl al-Bayt around him and wrapped them with one blanket and prayed to Allāh to bless them. This is known as the Hadith al-Kisā (the Event of the Blanket). That is why the Ahl al-Bayt (a) members who lived during the time of Rasulullāh (s) are sometimes called Ahl al-Kisā.

The Hadith al-Kisā shows that Sayyida Fātima (‘a) is the centre of the whole Ahl al-Bayt because only her descendants her Imāms and Allāh also tells Jibrāil (‘a) that the five who have gathered are *‘Fātima, her father, her husband, and her sons’*.