

The National Amīr/ President
Jamā‘at Aḥmadiyya,

Dear Brother,

السلام علیکم ورحمة اللہ وبرکاتہ

Summary of the Friday Sermon delivered by Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V (May Allāh be his Helper) on 01st November 2024 at Mubārak Mosque Islāmabād, Tilford, UK

Huzoor (May Allāh be his Helper) said: Further details of the Battle of Banu Quraizah are that two Muslims, Ḥaḍrat Khallād bin Suwaid and Ḥaḍrat Mundhir bin Muḥammad (May Allāh be pleased with them), were martyred in this battle. There is, however, disagreement regarding the number of Jews from Banu Quraizah who were killed, with numbers varying from six hundred to nine hundred. According to Ḥaḍrat Mirza Bashīr Aḥmad’s research, approximately four hundred men were killed on that day according to the decision of Ḥaḍrat Sa‘d (May Allāh be pleased with him), and the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) ordered the Ṣaḥāba to bury them. Opponents of Islām often exaggerate the number to portray Islām as a cruel religion.

A contemporary Aḥmadi scholar, Syed Barkāt Aḥmad Ṣāḥib, has researched this topic extensively and written in his book ‘The Holy Prophet and the Jews of Hijaz’ that accepting all accounts blindly without scrutiny is not wise. He points out that if six to nine hundred men were indeed killed, then the total number of captives, including women and children, would be no less than five to six thousand. It is related that they were brought to Madinah, bound with ropes and confined in two houses, yet the notion of managing food, water, and essential facilities for such a large group seems implausible. Furthermore, it is difficult to believe that six hundred people were executed in one night with pits dug in a marketplace, all by Ḥaḍrat ‘Ali and Ḥaḍrat Zubair (May Allāh be pleased with them), and that neither of them never mentioned this event. The fact that Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhāri and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim do not record the exact number of those killed suggests the possible exaggeration in other narrations.

In Bukhāri, those whose execution was ordered are described as Muqātala (those who fought), which has been translated broadly by historians, commentators, and biographers to mean 'every adult male.' Whereas scholars inclined to a lower count restricted Muqātala to refer solely to those who actively participated in the battle, which, according to his research, did not exceed twenty. This is a plausible stance and can be made the basis for further research.

In response to objections raised by non-Muslim historians regarding the number of Jews killed during the Battle of Banu Quraizah, Ḥaḍrat Mirza Bashīr Aḥmad (May Allāh be pleased with him) writes that some of these historians have attacked the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) in very unpleasant terms, portraying him as a tyrannical and merciless ruler because of the approximately four hundred Jews sentenced to death. This criticism stems from religious prejudice, which has influenced some Muslims as well. In addressing this, it is essential to remember that the decision concerning Banu Quraizah, which is labelled as cruel, was actually made by Ḥaḍrat Sa‘d (May Allāh be pleased with him). Since it was not the Holy Prophet’s decision, any criticism directed towards him is unwarranted. Furthermore, given the circumstances at the time, the decision was neither wrong nor cruel. Also, before Ḥaḍrat Sa‘d’s judgement, he had obtained the Holy Prophet's assurance to abide by it, and the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) was bound to implement it.

Furthermore, the offenders accepted the judgement without objection, as shown by the words of Ḥuyyay bin Akḥṭab at his execution, where he viewed it as a decree of divine will. Thus, it was not the Holy Prophet’s place to intervene. The Holy Prophet’s role in the matter was only administrative; he implemented Ḥaḍrat Sa‘d’s judgement in a manner that embodied compassion. Whenever a plea for mercy was made on behalf of an individual, the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) promptly granted it. He not only spared their lives but also returned to them their families and properties.

This treatment exemplifies the highest level of mercy and kindness. Therefore, no criticism can be levelled against the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) regarding Banu Quraizah. Rather, the incident is a testament to his excellent character, effective governance, and innate mercy and compassion.

As for the judgement itself, it is evident from historical records that the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) had signed a peace treaty with three Jewish tribes residing in Madinah: Banu Qaynuqā', Banu Naḍīr, and Banu Quraizah. According to the agreement, both Muslims and Jews would live in Madinah peacefully, maintain friendly relations, not help each other's enemies, and, in case of an external attack on Madinah, defend it together. If any party broke the treaty or engaged in sedition, others would have the right to act against it. All disputes and disagreements would be presented to the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) for resolution, and his judgement would be binding for all. However, rulings would adhere to the respective religion and law of each party.

Banu Qaynuqā' were the first to breach this treaty and engage in conflict with the Muslims. When they were overpowered, the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) pardoned them and merely ordered their expulsion from Madinah to ensure the city's peace. Shortly afterwards, Banu Naḍīr violated the treaty, with their leader Ka'b bin Ashraf conspiring with Quraish and other tribes against the Muslims and even plotting the Holy Prophet's assassination. When, by the Holy Prophet's order, this man met his fate, his tribe devised a plan to assassinate the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him). Upon learning about their murderous intentions, the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) sought to warn them, which led them to prepare for battle against the Muslims, and in this conflict Banu Quraizah helped them. When Banu Naḍīr were subdued, the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) completely forgave Banu Quraizah and granted Banu Naḍīr permission to leave Madinah in peace.

Banu Naḍīr repaid this kindness by uniting with various Arab tribes and amassing a vast army to assault Madinah, vowing not to return until Islām was utterly destroyed. At this perilous moment, when 3,000 Muslims, utterly lacking resources and helpless, were surrounded by an enemy force of ten to fifteen thousand fierce soldiers, and death loomed before them, the third Jewish tribe, Banu Quraizah, committed an act of betrayal by attacking Muslim women and children from behind. This act by Banu Quraizah was not only a breach of faith but also a treacherous act of rebellion. Under such circumstances, there was no other possible punishment for their treachery, betrayal and rebellion than the one they received.

Obviously, there were only three possible punishments that could have been given: First, imprisonment or house arrest in Medina; second, exile; and third, the killing of the fighters and the imprisonment or exile of the others. The first punishment, which would have meant imprisoning an enemy group within their own city, was completely out of the question at that time because it would have given them the same freedom as before to engage in mischief and secret conspiracies. Moreover, the financial responsibility for their upkeep would have fallen on the Muslims, a burden they could not possibly bear. The second punishment, exile, meaning allowing the Jews to leave Madinah, would have had the effect of increasing not only the number of active and hostile enemies of Islām but also of allowing individuals who were already fervently spreading dangerous, inflammatory, and anti-Islamic propaganda to join the ranks of Islām's enemies. These individuals would have eagerly positioned themselves as leaders of any anti-Islamic movement. Under the conditions of that time, such an action would have been nothing short of suicidal for the Muslims. Is there any nation in the world that would willingly choose to commit suicide in order to keep its enemies alive? If not, then this could not have been expected of the Muslims either. Hence, both of these punishments were impossible, and choosing either of them would have led to certain destruction. Leaving aside these two options, only one path remained, which was the one that was ultimately chosen.

This is the reason why even a historian like Margoliouth, who is by no means a friend of Islām, was compelled to admit that the decision of Ḥaḍrat Sa'd (May Allāh be pleased with him) was based on the

necessity of the situation, which left no alternative. One of the terms of the treaty between the Holy Prophet (May Allāh's blessings be upon him) and the Jews was that if any matter concerning the Jews arose that required arbitration, the decision would be made according to their own law. If we look at the Torah, the punishment for the crimes committed by the Banu Quraizah is exactly the same as the one that Ḥaḍrat Sa'd imposed on them.

In summary, while Ḥaḍrat Sa'd's decision may appear harsh, it was by no means unjust and was in accordance with Jewish law. Nevertheless, it was Ḥaḍrat Sa'd's decision, not the Holy Prophet's. His role was merely to implement the ruling as the head of the government, and he did so with an exemplary level of compassion. This is a response to those today who criticise Islām and influence some of our own people in the process.

Some people use the Banu Quraizah incident to justify actions against Palestinians, although the situation bears no resemblance whatsoever to current conditions. Ultimately, this is the fault of some Muslims who have compromised Islām's reputation for their own interests. May Allāh grant wisdom to these people. Āmīn

Wassalām,

Abdul Majid Tahir
Additional Wakīlut Tabshīr
ISLĀMABAD (UK)
Dated:06 November 2024