



Assalamu 'alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakaatuhu



## SEERAH OF MUHAMMAD

(SalAllahu 'alaihi wa sallam)



### LESSON 89



#### TOPICS:



Ka'b bin Ashraf is killed.



The Sariyya of Qardah.



#### KA'B BIN ASHRAF

IS KILLED



The next thorn in the Muslims' side was Ka'b bin Ashraf, an extremely wealthy Jewish poet whose enmity for the Muslims and their Prophet (salAllahu 'alaihi wa sallam) was unrelenting. Ka'b would use his considerable poetic talent to compose and recite derogatory verses against the Prophet, his Companions, and the honor of Muslim women, while he eulogized their sworn enemies and incited them to fight the Muslims. Immediately after the Battle of Badr, he traveled to Makkah to stir up passions. To an already bloodthirsty and enraged Quraysh, he orated at length, bidding them to extract vengeance for their defeat.



Ka'b was a skilled demagogue, and given the high esteem poetry and poets had in Arab society, his words worked a spell on the Quraysh. His call for revenge was welcome as was his assurance that the Quraysh were on a higher spiritual plane than the Muslims. He exhorted them to learn a lesson from what had happened with Banu Qaynuqa. The Quraysh were a willing audience, and they swore to act on Ka'b's advice.



Having wound up his propaganda campaign against the Muslims, Ka'b returned to Madinah to continue his subversive acts against the Muslim state. When the Prophet (salAllahu 'alaihi wa sallam) heard about Ka'b's return to Madinah, he said to his Companions:



□ "Ka'b bin Ashraf has offended Allah and His Messenger. Who will rid me of him?" In response to the Prophet's (salAllahu 'alaihi wa sallam) call, Muhammad bin Muslimah, Ubbad bin Bishr, Abu Naailah, Harith bin Aws and Abu Abs bin Jabr volunteered their services.



Muhammad bin Muslimah was appointed the head of the mission, and accordingly thought up a plan, but since it involved subterfuge, he sought the Prophet's consent before putting his plan into action. Having received the Prophet's (salAllahu 'alaihi wa sallam) permission to entrap Ka'b, Muhammad bin Muslimah went to Ka'b. After Ka'b's initial wariness had worn off, Muhammad confided,



□ "This man [indicating the Prophet] came to us asking for charity, but he has put us to great trouble."



Muhammad bin Muslimah's words had the desired effect. Ka'b exclaimed with joy, "By God, you people will tire of him even more in the future!" Now that Muhammad had gained Ka'b's confidence, he requested a loan of wheat or dates, leaving his weapon as collateral. His request was granted. Next came Abu Naailah with a similar complaint. He confided that some of his companions held the same unfavorable opinion of the Prophet and that he would bring them to Ka'b, as they were also in need of Ka'b's help.



Ka'b graciously agreed to meet them at a later date, delighted at finding more and more disenchanted Muslims through whom he could hurt the Prophet (salAllahu 'alaihi wa sallam). It was the fourteenth of Rabi' Al-Awwal, 3 A.H., and the full moon was shining down on Ka'b as he lay with his new wife in his fortress. When the five armed Muslims called out to him, Ka'b readily went down to see them, disregarding his wife's pleas to take care.



He was so complacent about his success in finding collaborators that even the sight of the Muslims' weapons did not startle him. He certainly did not see himself as their target. They set out on a stroll. Abu Naailah complimented Ka'b about his perfume, and asked permission to smell his head. Flattered, Ka'b obliged. Abu Naailah sniffed Ka'b's head and then, holding Ka'b's head in his hands, bade his companions to smell the fragrance as well.



He asked to do so again and was allowed to smell the fragrance once more. When Ka'b's head was securely in his grasp, Abu Naailah urged his comrades, " Seize this enemy of Allah!" Instantly, the others struck with their swords, but with no success. Finally, Muhammad bin Muslimah used his axe to strike Ka'b's abdomen. As the axe cleaved his body, Ka'b died screaming horribly. The sound of the disturbance roused Ka'b's men, who lit torches around the top of the fort, but they did not find the five men who got away, having silenced their most vocal enemy at last.



Ka'b's death greatly demoralized the Jews. In their new found sense of discretion they decided against open warfare upon the Muslims and went underground, and the Muslims were safe for a while from harassment.



#### THE SARIYYA OF QARDAH



In Jamad Al-Awwal, 3 A.H., the Quraysh sent a trade caravan to Syria by way of Iraq. They entrusted the caravan to Safwan bin Umayya and were not overly concerned at the risks involved since the route went through Najd, far from Madinah and the menace of the Muslims. When the Prophet (salAllahu 'alaihi wa sallam) came to know about the Qurayshi caravan with its precious cargo, he dispatched a cavalry of two hundred men under the command of Zayd bin Haritha At Najd, as the caravan halted at a spring named Qardah,



Zayd and his men swooped down on the caravan and its travelers. Even though the men managed to flee, their possessions fell into the hands of the Muslims as did the caravan guide, Furat bin Hayyan. The humane treatment Furat experienced at the hands of his captors so impressed him that he became Muslim. When the booty from the caravan was evaluated, its worth stood at a hundred thousand dirhams. With this raid, the Muslims had inflicted on the Quraysh an economic defeat as devastating as the military one at Badr.

To Be Continued...

