

MIFTAAH SEMINAR

THE HISTORY OF MADINA



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Small Clashes

Context: Before the arrival of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in Medina, the two main tribes of the city, Aus and Khazraj, were cousins and initially lived in peace, helping each other establish themselves in society. However, a series of events led to growing animosities, eventually culminating in internal conflicts.

The Conflict of Banu Qaynuqa:

- **Initial Peace Between the Tribes:**
 - Aus and Khazraj lived harmoniously, supporting one another in establishing a thriving society.
 - They were closely related and shared a sense of brotherhood.
- **Incident at the Marketplace:**
 - Ka'b ibn Ajlan, a man from the tribe of Thubyan, visited Yathrib (Medina) and stayed with Malik ibn al-Ajlan, who was the protector of both Aus and Khazraj tribes.
 - Ka'b became a Halif (ally under protection) of Malik ibn al-Ajlan.
- **The Horse Incident:**
 - A man from Ghathafan offered a fine horse to the most honorable person of Medina, and suggestions were made

- from both tribes:
 - **Aus** suggested members from their tribe.
 - **Khazraj** suggested members from their tribe.
- **Ka'b** suggested **Malik ibn al-Ajlan**, who was from the **Khazraj** tribe, and the man agreed to give the horse to him.
- **Outrage and Murder:**
 - A person from **Aus**, **Sumair**, was upset by Ka'b's suggestion and insulted him.
 - Later, **Sumair** tracked **Ka'b** down and killed him in **Quba**, an area of **Amr ibn Awf** (a sub-tribe of **Aus**).

Repercussions of the Murder:

1. Demand for Justice:

- **Malik ibn al-Ajlan**, upon learning of the murder, demanded that the murderer be handed over or that the blood money be paid.
- The **Aus** tribe initially denied knowledge of the murderer, but eventually, it was revealed that **Sumair** had committed the crime.

2. Dispute Over Blood Money:

- The traditional practice was that if a close blood relative was killed, the full blood money would be paid, but if the person was under protection, only half the blood money would be paid.
- **Malik ibn al-Ajlan** demanded the full blood money for Ka'b, but **Banu Amr ibn Awf** (a branch of **Aus**) refused, leading to a conflict.

3. Mediation and Escalation:

- **Amr ibn al-Qays**, a **Khazraj** mediator, intervened, ruling that **Malik** was entitled to only half of the blood money.
- **Malik** rejected this decision, and tensions escalated, leading to

- the **Battle of Sumari**, which continued for **20 years**.

The Ongoing Conflict:

1. Civil War Between the Tribes:

- This conflict, initially sparked by the killing of Ka'b, led to a **civil war** between **Aus** and **Khazraj**.
- The war resulted in many casualties, including leaders and young men from both tribes.

2. Failed Attempts at Peace:

- After years of conflict, the tribes realized the need for peace.
- The Aus tribe proposed bringing in a mediator from among the distinguished people of Medina.

3. Munthir ibn al-Harami's Mediation:

- The tribes chose **Munthir ibn al-Harami**, the grandfather of **Hassan ibn Thabit** (RA), to mediate.
- Initially, **Munthir** refused to intervene due to past failures in honoring decisions but agreed on the condition that both tribes would honor his ruling.

4. Decision and Resolution:

- **Munthir ibn al-Harami** ruled that **Malik ibn al-Ajlan** would receive the full blood money for Ka'b's death.
- After this ruling, peace was restored, and the fighting stopped, ending the 20-year conflict.

Broader Context of Tribal Conflicts in Pre-Islamic Arabia:

Tribal Warfare in Jahiliyyah:

- This type of conflict, often sparked by small incidents, was common in **pre-Islamic Arabia**.
- Wars would erupt over trivial matters, such as a camel drinking from the wrong water source, which could lead to wars lasting decades.

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Example of the Battle of Tuaaf:

- Another significant example of tribal conflict was the **Battle of Tuaaf**, one of the largest and most prolonged battles in the Arabian Peninsula, which was similarly triggered by a minor dispute.

