



Life of Muhammad^{sa}

BY

**HADRAT MIRZA BASHIRUDDIN
MAHMUD AHMAD^{ra}**

THE EXPEDITION OF TABUK

These rumours became so persistent, that the Prophet (sa) thought it worth while to lead in person a Muslim army against Syria. These were difficult times.

Arabia was in the grip of a famine. The harvest in the previous year had been poor and both grain and fruit were in short supply.

The time for the new harvest had not yet come.

It was the end of September or the beginning of October when the Prophet (sa) set out on this mission.

THE EXPEDITION OF TABUK

The hypocrites knew that the rumours were their own inventions.

They knew also that their design was to provoke Muslims into an attack on the Syrians if the Syrians did not attack Muslims.

In either case, a conflict with the great Roman Empire was to result in the destruction of Muslims.


THE EXPEDITION OF TABUK

While the hypocrites were busy spreading rumours about the Syrian attack on Muslims, ...

... they also made every effort to strike fear in the minds of Muslims.

They urged Muslims not to take part in the conflict with Syria.

THE EXPEDITION OF TABUK



Their plan was, on the one hand, to provoke Muslims into attacking Syria and, ...

... on the other, to discourage them from going in large numbers.

They wanted Muslims to go to war against Syria and meet with certain defeat.

THE EXPEDITION OF TABUK

But as soon as the Prophet (sa) announced his intention of leading this new expedition, enthusiasm ran high among Muslims.

- They went forward with offers of sacrifice for the sake of their faith.
- Only the more prosperous Muslims had means to pay for the war.
- Individual Muslims vied with one another in the spirit of sacrifice for the sake of their faith.
- 'Uthman (ra) gave away the greater part of his wealth. His contribution is said to have amounted to about one thousand gold dinars, ..

THE EXPEDITION OF TABUK

The women of Medina played their part. They were busy inducing their husbands and sons to join the war.

There was at Medina at the time a party of Muslims who had migrated from Yemen. They were very poor. Some of them went to the Prophet (sa) and offered their services for this expedition. They said, "O Prophet (sa) of God, take us with you. We want nothing beyond the means of going."

Abu Musa (ra) was the leader of this group. (He later recounted), "We did not ask for camels or horses. We only said we did not have shoes and could not cover the long journey bare-footed. If we only had shoes, we would have gone on foot and taken part in the war alongside of our Muslim brethren."

THE EXPEDITION OF TABUK

The Qur'an makes a reference to these Muslims and their offers in the following words:

Nor against those to whom, when they came to thee that thou shouldst mount them, thou didst say,'I cannot find whereon I can mount you'; they turned back, their eyes overflowing with tears, out of grief that they could not find what they might spend (9:92).

That is to say, they are not to blame who did not take part in the war because they were without means.

THE EXPEDITION OF TABUK

The disbelievers and the hypocrites had probably thought that the Prophet (sa) acting upon rumours, invented and spread by them, ...

They forgot that the Prophet (sa) was concerned to set an example to generations of followers for all time to come.

When the Prophet (sa) neared Syria, he stopped and sent his men in different directions to report on the state of affairs.

THE EXPEDITION OF TABUK

The men returned and reported there were no Syrian concentrations anywhere.

The Prophet (sa) decided to return, but stayed for a few days...

When the hypocrites at Medina found that their scheme for inciting war... ..between Muslims and Syrians had failed and that the Prophet (sa) was returning safe and sound, they began to fear that their intrigue had been exposed.

They were afraid of the punishment which was now their due.

THE EXPEDITION OF TABUK

They equipped a party and posted it on the two sides of a narrow pass some distance from Medina.



The pass was so narrow that only a single file could go through it.



When the Prophet (sa) and the Muslim army approached the spot, he had a warning by revelation that the enemy was in ambush on both sides of the narrow pass.



The Prophet (sa) ordered his Companions to reconnoitre. When they reached the spot they saw men in hiding with the obvious intent to attack.



These men, however, fled ..The Prophet (sa) decided not to pursue them.

THE EXPEDITION OF TABUK

When the Prophet (sa) reached Medina, the hypocrites...began to make lame excuses.

But the Prophet (sa) accepted them.

At the same time he felt that the time had come when their hypocrisy should be exposed.

He had a command from God that the mosque at Quba, which the hypocrites had built in order to be able to hold their meetings in secret, should be demolished.

The hypocrites were compelled to say their prayers with other Muslims.

No other penalty was proposed.