

Q The main aim of Ghazwat-e-Nabawi was to establish peace. Explain.

Peace Oriented Nature of Ghazwat Nabawi

Ghazwat-e-Nabawi refer to those military expeditions in which Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) personally participated, undertaken under divine guidance to eradicate social disorder (Fitnah) and establish peace. All the Ghazwat (such as Ghazwa-e-Badr, Uhud, Ahzab) have been fought to establish peace and eradicate social chaos caused by non-Muslims. The ethical restraints imposed by Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) during warfare elucidates peace oriented nature of Ghazwat-e-Nabawi.

1- Expounding the Peace Oriented Nature of Islam

The word Islam has been derived from the roots S-L-M meaning "peace" and "submission". Islam has always been focused on establishing peace. It is

quite evident by the following verse of Holy Quran in which Allah Almighty says that:

“ And if they incline towards peace then incline towards it. ”

2. Defensive Nature of Ghazwat-e-Nabwi

Before permission to fight has been given Muslims endured 13 years in Makkah in which they faced physical torture, social exclusion (Shi'b Abi Talib), murder plots against Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) and forced migration. However, permission to fight has been given only after persistent oppression continued even in Madinah.

Allah Almighty says in Glorious Quran

“ Permission to fight has been granted to those who are fought, because they have been wronged. ”

(Al-Quran)

This clearly shows that Ghazwat-e-Nabwi were purely defensive in nature.

- Ghazwat as Instruments to eradicate social disorder (Fitnah)

Islam considers Fitnah - systematic oppression, persecution and social chaos as greater evil than armed resistance. Permission to fight has been granted primarily to eradicate Fitnah.

Allah Almighty says in Holy Quran

“ And fight with them until there is no more Fitnah and religion is for Allah. ”
(Surah Al-Baqarah)

4. Elucidating the Peace-Centric nature of Ghazwat-e-Nabwi

- i- Ghazwa-e-Badr's peace oriented nature
Quraysh confiscated Muslim's property in Makkah and used wealth to fund armies against Madinah. Ghazwa-e-Badr was fought to end economic strangulation and existential threat impending on Muslims.
- ii- Ghazwa-e-Uhad's peace oriented nature
Quraysh sought revenge by destroying

emerging Islamic order in Madinah. They destroyed pastures of Madinese people to cause food insecurity in the city. The Ghazwa-e-Uhad was purely defensive retaliation.

iii. Peace Oriented Nature of Ghazwa-e-Ahzab
A confederation of non-Muslim tribes surrounded Madinah to starve and terrorize Muslims. But digging the trench itself shows war avoidance. When the confederation dispersed, Allah Almighty says in Holy Quran:

“Allah had repelled the aggressors without battle.”

(Surah Al-Ahzab)

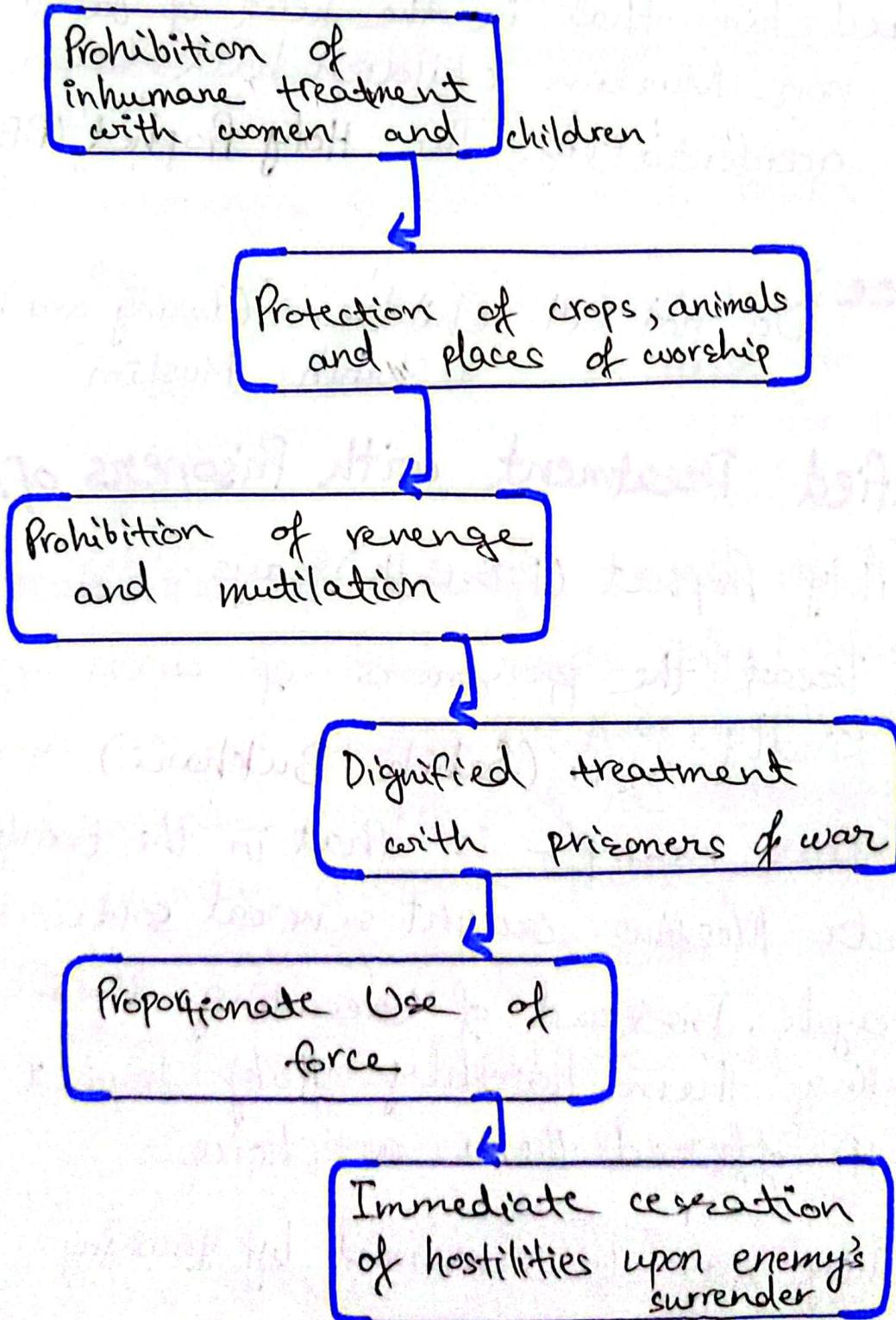
This proves that the main objective of Ghazwa-e-Ahzab was to eradicate fitnah and establish peace instead of focusing on conquest or coercion.

5. Ethical Restraints during warfare that elucidates peace oriented nature of Ghazwat-e-Nabawi

Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) imposed certain ethical restraints during warfare such

as prohibition of inhumane treatment with women and children ; protection of crops, animals and places of worship ; prohibition of revenge and mutilation.

Fig: Ethical Restraints Imposed by Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) during warfare



i- Prohibition of inhumane treatment with women and children

Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) strictly prohibited inhumane treatment with women and children during warfare. For instance, in a Ghazwa a companion of Holy Prophet informed him that in the heat of battle some non-Muslim children had been killed accidentally. The Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) says:

“ Do not kill children (during war). ”
(Sahih Muslim)

ii- Dignified Treatment with Prisoners of war

The Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) says

“ Treat the prisoners of war kindly. ”
(Sahih Bukhari)

Its clear example is that in the Battle of Badr Muslims caught several soldiers of Quraysh. Instead of executing them or treating them harshly Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) offered them a choice:

“ They may be ransomed by teaching

ten Muslim children how to read and write. ”

iii. Protection of crops, animals and places of worship

Another ethical restraint that shows peace oriented nature of *Ukhuwat-e-Nabawi* was protection of crops, animals and places of worship during war.

The Messenger of Allah says that:

” Do not cut down fruit bearing trees, do not destroy crops and do not slaughter animals except for food. ”

(Tirmizi)

iv. Prohibition of revenge and mutilation

In *Ukhuwat-e-Uhad*, when Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) saw Hazrat Hamza (R.A.) mutilated he felt intense grief but he strongly adhered to following Quranic principle. Allah Almighty says in Holy Quran

” And if you retaliate then retaliate only to the extent of injury done to you and if you endure patiently that is better for the patient. ”

Henceforth, Muslims were explicitly commanded

“ Do not mutilate (the faces of the deceased). ”

v. Proportionate Use of Force

The Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) commanded that :

“ Move forth in the name of Allah and fight in the way of Allah but do not commit excess, do not betray, do not mutilate and kill children. ”

vi. Immediate Cessation upon enemy's surrender

The Messenger of Allah says that

“ Do not kill anyone who has surrendered or is wounded. ”

Another perfect example in this regard is general amnesty at the conquest of Makkah:

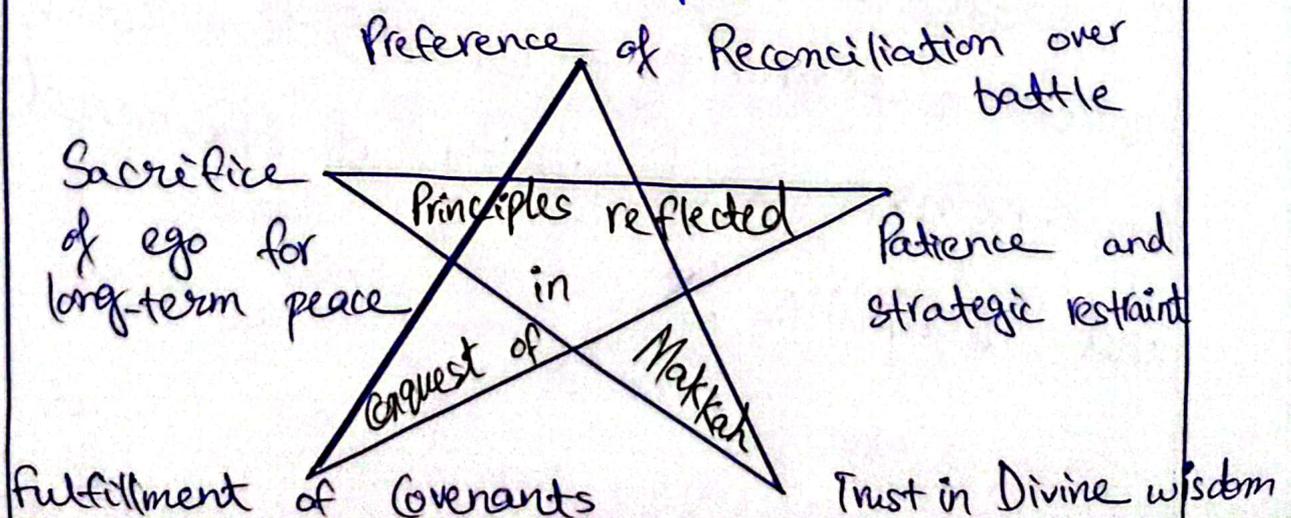
“ Whoever enters the house of Abu Sufyan is safe; whoever closes

his door is safe; and whoever enters the **Sacred** Mosque is safe."

6. Peace Oriented Nature of Conquest of Makkah

The peace oriented nature of Conquest of Makkah clearly shows the peace oriented nature of Ghazwat-e-Nabawi. The conquest of Makkah clearly reflects following principles of Islam: preference of reconciliation over armed resistance, patience and strategic restraint, sacrifice of ego for long-term peace, fulfillment of covenants and trust in Divine wisdom.

Fig: Principles Reflected in Conquest of Makkah



CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The Ghazwat-e-Nabawi were purely defensive in nature. They were fought to eradicate social chaos (Fitnah) and establish peace. The following ethical constraints imposed by Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) for warfare clearly show peace oriented nature of Ghazwat-e-Nabawi: prohibition of revenge and mutilation, prohibition of inhumane treatment with vulnerable groups and immediate cessation of hostilities upon enemy's surrender.