

Military Role of Mosques during the lifetime of the Prophet (PBUH) and the first two-Rightly- Guided Caliphs

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Abstract

According to historical records and archeological discoveries, worshipping a sacred thing has been a popular ceremony among human beings. Thus, people have built temples to perform their worshipping ceremonies for connecting to and attracting their exalted objects to meet their needs. Islam did not neglect this significant issue; rather, it put great emphasis on building sacred places for fulfilling numerous religious activities. Thus, Muslims according to their Islamic leaders' recommendations have built sacred places named mosques for their ritual ceremonies as well as other essential practices. Therefore, mosques are considered multiple sacred places which have had numerous roles in expanding the last Divine Religion, Islam. The object of this survey was to study the military role of mosques during the holy Prophet's (PBUH) and the first two- Rightly-Guided Caliphs' lifetime.

Keywords: military role, mosque, the prophet, rightly- guided caliphs

1. Introduction

The history of human civilization shows that human being wherever has found a suitable opportunity whispers his Creator in a private place. Historical evidence and archeological findings also indicate that ancient nations constructed a temple to hold ritual ceremonies according to their beliefs (Macrothink Institute, 2014).

Thus, worshipping a sacred object has been a popular ceremony among human beings from the beginning of human creation according to historical records and archeological findings.

Accordingly, they have built temples to perform their worshipping ceremonies for attracting their exalted objects in order to meet their numerous needs. Divine Religions whose missions have been guiding people and making solidarity and unity among all classes of communities in order to achieve their goals have built a place for people to gather there and perform their ritual ceremonies and praises as well.

The aim of this study was to survey the military role of mosques in guarding Islamic achievements and expanding them during the Prophet's (PBUH) and the first two-Rightly-guided Caliphs lifetimes. It expresses the military role of mosques in the three following sessions.

2. Methodology

The historical method was employed to show the military role of mosques during the holy Prophet's (PBUH) and the first two- Caliphs' lifetime by reviewing more than thirty valid references in order to obtain a profound understanding of military role of mosques during that period.

3. Literature Review

Islam according to these necessities established mosques as not only the places for performing ritual ceremonies, but also constructed them as institutions for numerous purposes such as propagator, educational, political, military, and social ones, to play numerous roles in different periods of Islamic history. Here and for short we limit our discussion to the military role of mosques during the Holy Prophet's and the first two-Rightly *Guided Caliphs' lifetime*.

3.1 *The Significance and Sacredness of Mosques*

According to Islamic teachings and religious texts, mosques have been considered the sacred places on the earth. "And the exalted God has counted some special parts of the earth to be assigned for worshipping Him where the recompense and reward of worshipers are multiplied.² God has included His servants to the subject of kindness and charity whose worships are performed in sacred places (i.e. mosques) as well as facilitated their perfection and happiness. As stated in Sahihayn (Sahih Bukhari & Sahih Muslim), the best places located on the earth are the three Mosques i.e. Masjid al Haram in Mecca, Masjid al Nabi in Medina, and Masjid al Aqsa in Jerusalem (Ibn Khaldoon).

3.2 Constructing Mosques

Reaching the necessary possibilities and having access to facilities, Islam established mosques as the Houses of God and centers for boosting faith, purity, and piety and performing ritual ceremonies as well as social, educational, judicial, financial, and military affairs. So, it has considered their buildings a great virtues and rewards for their constructors whose rewards will be a house in Paradise. The Prophet (PBUH) has said: "Whoever builds a mosque for Allah, He will build for him a house in the Paradise (Sahih Muslim, 1994).

Therefore, constructing mosques has been considered a ritual and virtuous activity which may be rewarded. Also, Muslims, according to their religious beliefs and leaders' recommendations have constructed sacred places called mosques to perform not only their ritual ceremonies but also other essential practices such as cultural, educational, economical, political, juridical, and military affairs.

Hence, by spreading and penetrating Islam to other areas and migrating the Prophet (PBUH) to Medina as well as his companions to other cities, a proper place was assigned for establishing a mosque. As historical texts recorded, the first construction built by the Prophet following his immigration to Medina was the mosque Al-Quba–Medina- (Ibn sad, 1957). Thereafter, building mosques were considered and are considered today a fine deed which will be rewarded. Thus, when a new city is constructed, a proper location is allocated for building a mosque.

It should be noted that mosques in Islam, unlike other temples, were not only a sacred places for parsing and worshipping, but were constitutions with numerous functions such as ritual, guiding, and educational activities, a base for Jihad (Holy war), other Islamic movements, juridical and political affairs , and a center for social as well as cooperative activities.

3.3 Military Role of Mosques

3.3.1 Military Role of Mosques during the Prophet's Lifetime

During the Prophet's lifetime, readiness of military and preparing strength for confronting enemies were performed in mosques. People were assembled there then sent to the fronts. Also, the outcomes and achievements of wars were discussed and analyzed in mosques. It was customary for the Prophet (PBUH), when he returned from a journey, to enter the mosque and perform a two- rak'ah prayer. Next, he sat and talked to people there. When he returned from the Battle of Tabuk, AD 639,(a fort located between Peninsula and Syria border)he entered Medina and went immediately to the mosque where he commanded people to be ready, then,30 thousands both foot-soldiers and cavalry were mobalized for combating enemies (Vaquedi,1987). That is why mosques were not merely a place for ritual affairs because Islam has assigned all of the land as sacred places for people ,rather, they have played numerous functions during Islam history. As the Prophet (PBUH) has said : "Allah has made the land pure and sacred for me (Sahih al Bokhari,2006).During the residence of the Prophet(PBUH) in Medina, the Beduin ,the ancient tribes of Arabia peninsula, under the light of religious and political unity established by the Prophet(PBUH),became an independent nation with a single religion, law, and government but in the last days of his life ,when the

news concerning his death was prevailed among people, a group raised and claimed they are prophets including Asvad Ansi in Yemen, Musalimah in Yemama, and Tlyhh in Najd exited (Tabari, 1973).

The Prophet called Muslims to gather in the mosque, where he set out a group of them to fight these false claimants. Fighting them continued during the Caliphate of the First Caliph, Abu Bakr Sediq (Fayaz, 1976).

3.3.1.1 Mosque as a Military and Security Base

The significant decisions and military mobilizations for the first battles, in which the Prophet (PBUH) himself was presented, were made in mosque where the battle frameworks, equipping the army, and other related operations were arranged. In fact, mosques were considered the basic headquarters for military activities against enemies.

3.3.1.2 The Military Role of Mosque in the Battle of Badr (623 AH)

The Prophet consulted people in mosques on Islamic political affairs as well as in settling economic, political, and social problems particularly in affairs in which Muslims had useful experiences as he consulted them in drawing war maps or selecting properly military positions. As stated in historical texts, the Prophet (PBUH) consulted his companions in the mosque "Erq al Zonya, located around Medina, concerning choosing a proper position for the Badr battle (Samhudi, 1905). Also, he consulted Muslims in Masjid al Nani, Medina, to set out for the battle "Uhoud", 624 AD (Ibn Hosham, 1934).

3.3.1.3 The Military Role of Mosque in the Battle of Ohoud

The Prophet (PBUH) provided the social and intellectual foundations for almost all battles in mosques. By delivering warm sermons in Masjid al Nabi, Medina, he prepared and mobilized Muslims there for fighting enemies and set out them to war camps. As Ibn Hosham stated, the Prophet (PBUH) and his companions set out for Uhoud battle from the mosque after performing the Friday prayer (Ibn Hosham, 1934).

3.3.1.4 The Military Role of Mosque in the Battle of Hamra al Asad (625 AD)

As stated in Maqazi Vaqedi, for participating in the battle Hamra al Asad, Medina, the Prophet (PBUH) entered the mosque while he was seriously injured in the battle Uhuod and the people of Medina as well as others living around it gathered there to set out for fighting enemies. Afterward, he performed two -rak'ah prayer in the mosque and commanded his horse to be prepared then he wore combat armor and put his ferrous, iron helmet, so that only his eyes could be seen for setting out to the war (Vaqedi, 1987).

The prophet usually mobilized Muslims in Madjid Al Nabi, Medina, to be ready for combating infidels. As stated in Islamic historical texts, when the Prophet was informed that a great many of Hijaz, Meka, infidels united to eradicate Islam as well as the Prophet or other Islamic movement's heads, came to the Mosque and ordered Muslims to be gathered there. Then he ascended the Pulpit to inform them concerning the enemy's danger and said: A group of Muslim must arose to eradicate this sedition. Therefore, a group of them announced their

readiness for fighting and the Prophet set out them to the enemy's camp as a systematic army whose commander was Abu baker (Mofid, 1995).

3.3.2 Military Role of Mosques during the First Caliph's Lifetime

During the lifetime of Rightly-Guided Caliphs, mosques also were centers for educational activities, guidance and propaganda, political bases, and a stronghold castles against enemies as well as other apostates.

After the death of the Prophet, activities of the false prophets increased and a great people of Peninsula apostatized. Consequently, sedition and disorders prevailed over widespread areas. Some primary tribes refused to pay Zakat, religious taxes, and some gathered around the false prophet, then, became apostate (Ibn Athir, 1965). Thus, while Abu baker became Caliph, he faced many challenges. His first mission was equipping Osama army, Mohammad's (PBUH) last expedition, to set out it to Motta according to the Prophet's command. Although the mission was very difficult at that critical situation and some Muslims disagreed with dispatching the army, many enemies were afraid and refused to conspire against Muslims (Tabari, 1973). After passing 40 days, the army returned to Medina then Abu baker made ready himself to fight apostates and false prophets seriously and during one day he dispatched 11 armies equipped by plenty of military mobilizations to various areas of Peninsula with whom he himself and some other Muslims also participated (Ibn Athir, 1965). They strongly fought apostates and in a short time could submit all middle Peninsula tribes including Tay, Asad, Qadfan, and Bani Hanifa and forced the inhabitants of Yemen, Bahrain, Oman, and Hadhramaut (Arabian Peninsula) to accept Islam (Balazari, 1967).

Mosques played a significant role in ending the internal wars and settling Islam throughout the Peninsula ; the social and thoughtful readiness for war such as forming counseling associations, appointing military commanders, issuing circulars , as well as mobilizing soldiers were determined also in the mosques.

As Tabari and Ibn Khaldoon recounted, when the Prophet (PBUH) demised, most people of Asad, Qatfan, and Tay tribes assembled around Tolayha, a false Prophet, and became apostate. The tribes sent representatives to Medina to talk with the Caliph Abu baker that they agree to only perform prayer but do not pay Zakat. The Caliph didn't accept their requests. Then, they returned to their people and announced them that there is not plenty more of people in Medina, so, they decided to attack there. Shortly thereafter, Abu baker designated some companions like Zobair, Talha, and Abdullh Ibn Masud on Medina entrances and mobilized people of Medina ready in Masjid al Nabi then said: "The people around became unbeliever and found you are little in number, so they may attack you either nightly or daily and their arriving may last less than a day". Also, they wished their requests be accepted and asked us to made a peace with them but we did not accept .Therefore, be ready. After three days, they attacked nightly, then, confronted the fighters and guardians on the entrances. Abu baker heard the event, then, sent someone to the guardians to tell them to be there and he himself with the Muslims settled in the mosque driving camels to set out for fighting the enemies. They confronted the enemies as soon as they fled. Finally, Muslim fighters pursued

them and during a conflict arose between them, Muslims were eventually victorious. This was the first victory Muslims gained in apostate wars against infidels (Tabari, 1973).

3.3.3 Military Role of Mosques during the Lifetime of the Second Caliph

Movement and Jihad (Holy War) were considered the significant roles of mosques in this period. The theoretical and social provisions of most wars were made in the mosques and the Caliph himself mobilized people there in order to fight infidels. As Tabari says: "The first action of the second Caliph, after the death of the first Caliph, was setting out army to Persia. Thus, he called people in Masjid al Nabi for participating in congregational prayer then invited them to set out to the Persian" (Tabari, 1973a). Masudi also recounts from Vaqedi that "Umar(may God be pleased with him) stood up and praised God then invited and persuaded people for Jihad(holy war) and said: You should no more stay in Hejaz, west of Arabian Peninsula, and the Prophet (PBUH) promised you to concur Roman and Iranian empires ,so set out to Iranian territory". He also says: "When Abu Ubaidah ibn al-Jarrah, the famous companion of the Prophet, was killed, the Caliph as well as Muslims became very sad. So, the Caliph addressed a sermon for people in the mosque and commanded them to be mobilized for setting out to Iraq (Masudi, 1965).

Appointing military commanders were also made in mosques then they set out to war zones. Balazary has written: "Umar entered the mosque and sat near the Noman ibn Maqran, a famous companion of the Prophet, while he was performing his prayer. When his prayer was finished, Umar said him: "I am going to select you as my agent". Noman replied that I did not get tributes since I am a fighter. Umar said him: "I want you to be a combatant. Then, he set out him to war zone and asked people of Kufa to help him"(Balazari, 1967).

3.3.3.1 Military role of the Mosque of Kufa

After capturing Iraq in 17th (AH), the city of Kufa was established by Muslims during the Caliphate of Umar. The main purpose of its construction was to establish a fixed camp for Islamic army. The first building constructed in the city was a mosque built by Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, one of the Prophet's companion's followers, according to Umar's command 185. Regarding its area, it is said:" The mosque was built on a widespread area which included a capacity of 40000 people when Umar wrote a letter to Sa'd and commanded him saying : "construct a mosque including a capacity for all combatants". Then he built it according to his command (Yaqut, 1990).

4. Conclusion

Since the beginning of the Prophetic mission of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) as the last Divine Prophet and the spread of Revealed Religion of Islam, mosques, the houses of God, have played significant multiple roles in numerous affairs whose military role was significant in guarding Islamic achievements and spreading the Revealed Religion. Consequently, they were not merely the sacred places for performing ritual activities. Today, they can be used as multi-purpose places for guarding Islamic achievements too.

5. Recommendations

More studies and further research on Islamic historical texts are recommended to find out the significant roles of mosques throughout the Islamic history.

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