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**See also:** BODY; CONJECTURE; CALUMNY; ENORMITIES; FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE; GOSSIP; ʿISĀ, UPON HIM PEACE; TONGUE.

**GIBRIL FOUAD HADDAD**

## BADR

This article comprises the following sections: i. Location and Events: Badr I, II, and III; ii. The Great Severing (*Furqān*); iii. The Sura of Badr: Synopsis of Sūrat al-Anfāl; iv. The Prelude to Badr; v. The Major Battle of Badr; vi. Angelic and Prophetic Address to the Unbelievers Who Died at Badr; vii. The Debate over the Captives; viii. The High Rank of the Comrades of Badr (*Badriyyūn*); ix. Bibliography.

### Location and Events: Badr I, II, and III

An oasis and seasonal market town of the Ghifār tribe possibly named after the digger of its well, Badr b. al-Ḥārith, located at the lowest point of the Wādī al-Ṣafraʾ valley between Madina (155 km away) and Makka (310 km away), east of the Red Sea coastal route used by the Syrian and Egyptian trade caravans, Badr is where the Prophet—upon him blessings and peace—led three military expeditions, the first two in the second year of the Hijra and the third in the fourth year.

Badr I, also known as the Safawān expedition and Badr al-ʾUlā, took place in Rabīʿ I 2/September 623 in response to a raid by the Makkan chief Kurz b. Jābir al-Filrī on the grazing herds (*sarḥ*) of Madina. The Prophet led a counter-expedition up to the Safawān

valley in the vicinity of Badr, then returned to Madina without finding Kurz, who later became Muslim and was killed in a skirmish during the conquest of Makka (Ramadan 8/January 630).

Badr II is mentioned explicitly in Sūrat Āl ‘Imrān as a victory against all odds: *Allah had already given you the victory at Badr, when you were contemptible in number* (Q 3:123); and implicitly elsewhere (Q 3:13, 140, 165; 8:5ff.) (see ANONYMOUS MENTIONS). Sūrat al-Anfāl is a Divine commentary on the events of that campaign and its aftermath (see below). The Battle of Badr holds tremendous importance in the Prophetic biography and world history. Fought on Ramadan 2/March 624, it is known as the Major Campaign of Badr (*ghazwat Badr al-kubrā/al-‘uzmā*) and “Badr of the Battle” (*Badr al-qitāl*)—the Arabic word *ghazwa* or “raid,” plurals *maghāzī* and *ghazawāt*, being traditionally used by the scholars for the 27 military operations in which the Prophet took part, as distinct from the *sariyya*, plural *sarāyā*, or *ba‘th*, plural *bu‘ūth*, the 60 expeditions he did not physically accompany (al-‘Irāqī, *Alfiyya* v. 573-780, p. 103-122; al-Sibā‘ī, *Sīra*, p. 79). Its Qur’ānic name is *the Day of the Criterion* (Q 8:41) and it is also mentioned as *the Day the Two Thrones Met* (Q 8:41) which also refers to the Battle of Uḥud (3/625) (Q 3:155, 3:166).

Badr III was fought in Sha‘bān 4/January 626 (according to the majority of the historians of the Prophetic biography, a minority dating it in Dhūl-Qa‘da 4/April 626) in response to Abū Sufyān’s challenge, upon parting at Uḥud: “We shall meet again at Badr in exactly one year,” to which the Prophet assented (Ibn Ishāq, *al-Sīra* 2:343), whence its alternate names of Badr of the Tryst (*Badr al-maw‘id*) and the Minor Badr (*Badr al-ṣuḡhrā*). The Prophet went out on the night of the new moon with 1,500 men and 10 horses, leaving ‘Abd Allāh b. Rawāḥa in charge of Madina, and camped at Badr for eight nights during which they engaged in fruitful trade, while Abū Sufyān came out with 2,000 men until they reached the oasis of ‘Uṣfān between al-Juḥfa and Makka. There he changed his mind and decided to return to Makka on the pretext that it was a drought year, to the jeers of his fellow Makkans. The revelation of Q 3:174 was linked to that campaign: *So they (the Muslims) returned with grace and favor from Allah, and no harm touched them. They followed the good pleasure of Allah, and Allah is of infinite bounty* (Baghawī; Ibn Rushd, *al-Jāmi‘*, p. 104, 106-107, 122; Muḡhulṭāy, *al-Ishāra*, p. 191-192, 197-201, 243-245; Shurrāb, *al-Ma‘ālim*, p. 44-46; Mar‘ashli, “Badr,” *Mawsū‘a*, p. 144). The rest of this

entry is about Badr II.

### The Great Severing

The Qur’ānic appellation of *furqān* (Q 8:41) or “Criterion” (*q.v.*) for the Battle of Badr prophetically sums up its historical, strategic, and geopolitical ramifications as the first step in the subsequent demise and assimilation of all the non-Muslim powers in the Arabian peninsula and its fringes one by one—the Arabs, the Jews, the Byzantines, and the Persians—followed by outward expansion. The erudite early Muslims viewed Badr as one of the major signs of the end of times; the Baṣran *Jāhiliyya*-born *Tābi‘ī* (Successor) exegete Abū al-‘Āliya Rufay‘ b. Mahrān al-Riyāḥī al-Tamīmī (d. 90/709) said: “We considered that *the day when We shall strike them with the greatest strike [then], in truth We shall punish* (Q 44:16) was the Day of Badr” (Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Maghāzī*, p. 216-217 §204)—and it was indeed Ibn Mas‘ūd’s (d. 32/ca.653) famous exegesis of “the greatest strike” (*al-baṭshat al-kubrā*) in that verse and his view that it had already taken place (Bukhārī, *Tafsīr, yaḡhshā al-nās, hādihā ‘adhābun alim*; Muslim, *Ṣifāt al-qiyāma, al-dukhān*). Much more than just Islam’s first major military victory, Badr as the *Day of Criterion* (*yawm al-furqān*, Q 8:41), embodies the Muslims’ sense of themselves as *the people of Belief* in latter-day history, the last opportunity for mankind—the Prophet prayed, “O Allah, if You do not grant victory to this small band of Muslims You will no longer be worshipped on earth” (Muslim, *Jihād, al-‘imād bil-malā’ika fī ghazwat Badr*)—who can never be one again with the people of Unbelief (see DISBELIEF AND DOUBT; DISBELIEVERS) regardless of parentage, tribe, or national affiliation, as the battle pitted brother against brother, father against son; “for on that day truth (*ḥaqq*) was distinguished from falsehood (*bāṭil*)” (Bayḍāwī, *sub* Q 8:41). The more analytical works of Prophetic biography and Qur’ān commentary have elaborated these and other momentous consequences of Badr (e.g., Ibn ‘Āshūr, *sub* Q 8:29 and 8:41; ‘Arjūn, *Muḡammad Rasūl Allāh* 3:284-538; Abū Shahba, *al-Sīra al-Nabawiyya*, p. 123-178; al-Būṭī, *Fiqh al-Sīra*, p. 229-247).

### “The Sura of Badr”: Synopsis of Sūrat al-Anfāl

Revealed in the Madinan period and numbered 89 (according to Ibn ‘Āshūr) or 93 (according to al-Jābirī) in the sequence of revelation, the 75-verse Sūrat al-Anfāl was dubbed by Ibn ‘Abbās (3BH-68/619-688) “the Sura of Badr” (Muslim, *Tafsīr, fī Sūrat Barā‘a wal-Anfāl wal-Ḥashr*; Baghawī, *sub* Q 9:1; cf. Bukhārī,