

MLU-13.1: Major Battles and Milestones in the Life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)". Madani Period

THE BATTLE OF UHUD (SHAWWAL 3 A.H.)

The fire of vengeance was blindly burning in the hearts of the Makkans for they had met with a crushing defeat at Badr. In the third year of Hijrah they marched with 3,000 well armed soldiers towards Madinah. The kuffar of Makkah having lost their greatest leaders at Badr chose Abu Sufyaan as their commander, who swore that he would not rest until he had full vengeance on the Muslims.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) made mushwarah (consultation) with the Muslims regarding the expected attack. It was finally decided to repel the attack outside the city of Madinah. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) offered Jum'a Salaat at Masjid-e-Nabwi and left for Uhud, a mountainous region 5 km north of Madinah with a thousand men on 14 Shawwal 3 A.H. Abdullah bin Ubay the leader of the Munafiqs deserted the Muslims with 300 of his men, reducing the strength of the Muslim army to 700 men, poorly equipped in arms but filled with enthusiasm to defend the truth at all cost.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the Muslims camped with the mountain behind them. On the one side there was a mountainous pass and there was danger of an attack from behind, so Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) posted 50 archers on Mount Rumat under the command of Hazrat Abdullah bin Jubair (R.A.) with strict orders not to leave the post at any account, irrespective of victory or defeat.

On Saturday 15 Shawwal 3 A.H. the opposing armies prepared for battle. According to Arab custom, the battle began with a round of hand to hand fighting before general attack.

Hazrat Ali (R.A.) and Hazrat Hamza (R.A.) an uncle of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) killed many of the kuffar. Twelve flag bearers of the kuffar were killed, eight of whom were killed by Hazrat Ali (R.A.). The kuffar were in desperate situation seeing their brave soldiers slain, they fled from the battlefield pursued by the Muslims. When the archers saw the fallen flags of the enemy and their companions collecting the booty (spoils of war) they sensed victory, and in their enthusiasm and desire to participate in the pursuance of the enemy, the archers overlooked the command of prophet (PBUH) and left their positions.

Hazrat Hamza (R.A.) was martyred in this battle by Wahshi a Negro slave. Jubair bin Mut'am the slave owner had offered Wahshi his freedom while Hinda binte Utbah, the wife of Abu Sufyaan, the commander of the Makkan army, offered her jewellery on her person if he, Wahshi succeeded in killing Hazrat Hamza (R.A.)

Khalid bin Walid, a Makkan army general, did not fail to observe the weak position of the pass and saw his chance. Through the pass, at the head of his cavalry (soldiers on horseback) he fiercely attacked and the Muslims suffered heavy losses. Hazrat Mus'ab bin Umair (R.A.), a sahabi who resembled our beloved Nabi was martyred in this attack. The Kuffar soldiers raised a cry that the prophet was slain. This alarming news spread like wild fire and caused great grief amongst the Muslims. This false cry of the kuffar rallied the devoted Sahaba round Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Hazrat Aus bin Nazar (R.A.) said: 'Oh what worth is life then if

the Prophet (PBUH) is no longer in our midst. Let us fight on for the cause which he fought for'. These words inspired the Muslims to fight for the cause of Islam.

Hazrat Ka'ab bin Malik (R.A.) saw Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and loudly proclaimed; 'Muslims be happy, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is alive and well'. Thereafter Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, 'Come to me, I am the Rasool of Allah'.

Hazrat Ali (R.A.), Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.), Hazrat Sa'ad bin Waqaas (R.A.), Hazrat Zubair (R.A.), Hazrat Talha (R.A.) among the Muhajireen and Hazrat Abu Dujana from the Ansaar were standing around our Nabi and formed a secured wall around him. The sword of Hazrat Ali (R.A.) named 'Zulfiqar' fell like lightning and many of the attackers were forced to fall back. The enemies' best effort to get to our Nabi was now frustrated.

One of the enemies, Ibn Qami'ah moved forward and gave a blow with his sword over the head of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) which caused two rings of his helmet (head gear) to pierce the face of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Another enemy struck him on the face with a stone with the result that two of his teeth were martyred.

The kuffar had to retreat because they were frustrated in their attempts against the Muslims. Before leaving the battlefield their passion and hatred and vengeance took the most barbarous shape, namely they gave vent to their vengeance on the dead bodies of the Muslims. The bodies were mercilessly mutilated. Hinda the wife of Abu Sufyaan hated the beloved uncle of Nabi, Hazrat Hamza (R.A.) and seeing his dead body, ripped it open, took out the liver, chewed it, and garlanded herself with the intestines. She climbed up a hill and sang a song indicating that the defeat at Badr was avenged that day, Sixty five Ansaar and four Muhajireen laid down their lives and achieved matchless martyrdom. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) never lost his fortitude and patience.

Yet again, the Kuffar left the battlefield having failed to exterminate Islam.

RELATIONS WITH THE JEWS

When Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) came to Madinah, he signed a treaty (agreement) with the Jews to live in peace and harmony and help each other against anyone who wanted to attack Madinah. The Jews broke the treaty and made plans with the Quraish of Makkah, the Munafiqs and other enemies of Islam to bring to an end the mission of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) ordered the Banu Qainuqah out of Madinah and they went and settled in Syria. Then the Banu Nadhir was ordered to leave Madinah. They refused to make a new agreement and they attempted to assassinate Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Some of the Banu Nadir clan settled in Khaibar while others went and settled in Syria. All this happened in the 4th year of Hijrat. In the year 5 Hijrat the Banu Quraizah joined the kuffar against the Muslims in the Battle of Ahzab. After a siege (blockade) of one month they (the Banu Quraizah) gave up and requested that Hazrat Sa'ad bin Mu'az (R.A.) be asked to decide what should be done with them. In passing judgment Hazrat Sa'ad bin Mu'az (R.A.) ordered that the able bodies and active fighters be put to death, the women and children to be treated as prisoners of war and their goods and property to be handed over as spoils of war to be distributed among the poor Muslim workers. This decision was compatible with the commands of the Torah (The Book of the Jews).

BATTLE OF AHZAB (TRENCHES) (ZIL-QAADAH 5 A.H.)

In the year 5 A.H. the Makkans made another great effort to destroy the Muslims with the help of the Jews and the desert tribes of Ghatafan. This great army of 10,000 men, 4000 camels and 300 horses marched towards Madinah under the command of Abu Sufyaan. The

coming danger seemed to cast a great gloom over Madinah. When Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was informed of the approach of the big army he summoned the Sahaba to devise means to meet the great danger.

On the advice of Hazrat Salmaan Faarsi (R.A.), it was decided that a trench be dug. Since Madinah was surrounded on two sides by lava rock and palm groves on the third side it was decided to dig the trench on the open approaches. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) with the assistance of the Muhajireen and the Ansaar got down to the difficult task of digging the trench. They made the trench 5 meters deep and 5 meters wide.

All the time the Sahaba were marvellously inspired by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) himself who worked as a labourer amongst them. The enemy approached Madinah and faced a setback when they saw the deep trench around the town. They settled down to a siege. The siege went on for 27 days. They failed to penetrate the defiance of the Muslims.

There was no hand combat since the trench was five meters wide. However, arrows were being showered from both sides. Amr bin Abd, a kuffar fighter, made his horse jump over a narrow portion of the trench. As soon as he reached the other side, Zulfiqar, the sword of Hazrat Ali (R.A.) flashed out and fell upon the enemy and killed him. Hazrat Ali (R.A.) triumphantly raised the war cry Allah hu Akbar- Allah is the Greatest.

On the twenty seventh night of the siege a severe storm approached Madinah. The effect of this severe storm was most devastating for the Kuffar. Their tents were uprooted, goods were blown about, fires were extinguished and the whole kuffar army was in utter fear and in a state of confusion. Under the circumstances the kuffar army fled in disarray.

THE TREATY OF HUDAYBIYAH (ZIL-QAADAH 6 A.H.)

In the year 6 A.H. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) saw a vision in which he found himself and the Sahaba entering the holy place of Makkah to perform Hajj. So he set out for Makkah in the month of Zil-Qaadah 6 A.H. with fourteen hundred Sahaba to perform Umrah, without the least intention of going into battle. To avoid any misunderstanding and impress upon the kuffar that it was entirely a peaceful mission, he ordered that none should carry arms except a sheathed sword, a common feature in those days. Camels for sacrifice were taken also. When Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) approached Makkah, he encamped at Hudaibiyah, a mountainous plain, a few kilometres from Makkah in the direction of Jeddah. The kuffar did not allow them to advance despite the peaceful intentions of the Muslims.

Hazrat Uthman bin Affan (R.A.) the son-in-law of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was sent as a negotiator, to explain to the Quraish of Makkah of the intentions of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the Muslims. While Hazrat Uthman (R.A.) was in the Haram a report reached the Muslim camp that Hazrat Uthman (R.A.) has been murdered. The news caused a great stir in the Muslim camp. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) sat under a tree and called the Sahaba to take a fresh oath to fight to the last man. This pledge is known as 'BAI'AT-UR- RIDHWAAN'.

After some time Hazrat Uthman (R.A.) returned unharmed. The kuffar sent Suhail bin Amr to come to terms with the Muslims. When Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) saw Suhail bin Amr from a distance he said that now matters have become easy. Since the kuffar had sent him i.e. Suhail bin Amr their intention is to make peace.

A pact was drawn up, both parties agreeing to maintain peace for ten years on the following conditions:-

- (1) The Muslims would return to Madinah without performing Umrah.
- (2) They would come for Umrah the following year, and would stay in Makkah for only three

days.

(3) They shall not come bearing arms except the sword.

(4) They would not take any Muslim living in Makkah to Madinah, and would not stop any Muslim from staying in Makkah.

(5) If any Makkan Muslim went to Madinah the Muslims would return him to Makkah, but if any Muslim from Madinah went to Makkah he would not be returned to Madinah.

(6) The Kuffar would neither attack Muslims nor help others against them, but would remain neutral in case of Muslims fighting a third party.

(7) All the Arab tribes shall be free to enter into alliance with whichever party they like.

EPISTLES TO THE KINGS AND GOVERNORS (ZIL-QAADAH 7 A.H.)

The truce of Hudaibiya turned out to be a complete triumph for Islam. The numbers of Muslims increased by leaps and bounds. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) thought that it was the opportune moment to spread the 'Message of Allah' far and wide, including the Kings around Arabia. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) addressed his companions as followers: 'Now the time has arrived that you should spread the Message of Truth'. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) selected some intelligent Sahaba, and entrusted them with written invitations to Arab rulers and neighboring Kings. He sent envoys to the Emperor of Rome, the Qaysar of Persia, the Aziz of Egypt, the Negus of Abyssinia and the Arab chiefs, inviting them to embrace Islam.

Hazrat Abdullah bin Huzaifa (R.A.) took a letter of invitation to the Persian Court. The Qaysar was enraged and tore the letter into pieces. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) surprised the Sahaba by telling them that the Qaysar was dead. The Qaysar's son had assassinated him that night.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) also sent a letter to the Arab Chiefs inviting them to worship one 'ALLAH. The epistles that were sent to the various kings in the year 7 A.H. shows that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was an Apostle of Allah for the whole of mankind and he, though surrounded with an unstable situation, believed that Islam would prevail and its light would illuminate the world.

MU'TAH EXPEDITION

The Expedition of Mu'tah took place in the 8th year of Hijrah. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) received news of a threat from the Byzantine Empire and the rulers of the Syrian region. In response, he (PBUH) prepared an army of 3,000 Muslims and sent them towards Syria. Hazrat Zaid bin Harithah (RA) was appointed as the first commander, with Hazrat Ja'far bin Abi Talib (RA) and Hazrat Abdullah bin Rawahah (RA) appointed to lead the army after him. The Muslims faced a much larger opposing force, but despite being heavily outnumbered, they displayed remarkable courage and determination. All three appointed commanders were martyred during the fierce fighting.

After the martyrdom of the three commanders, Hazrat Khalid bin Waleed (RA) took command of the Muslim army. Through his courage, leadership and careful military strategy, he was able to protect the remaining Muslim forces and lead them safely back to Madinah. The Expedition of Mutah demonstrated the bravery, sacrifice and steadfastness of the early Muslims. Although the Muslims did not achieve their original territorial objective, the expedition strengthened their reputation and showed their ability to face a powerful enemy with faith, courage and disciplined leadership.

THE FALL OF KHAIBAR (7 A.H.)

Of the three main Jewish tribes of Madinah, the Banu Nadhir and the Banu Quraiza went into self-exile and settled at Khaibar, a town situated 320 km north of Madinah. This town possessed a number of fortresses and fortifications all around, thus making it difficult to gain entry.

They took advantage of the distance and became more active in the final attempt to harm the march of Islam. After the Battle of Ahzaab (Trenches) in 5 A.H. the malice of the Jews increased in greater intensity. These tribal fights burdened the patience of the Muslim army. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) set out with 1600 men from Madinah to Khaibar. Some muslim ladies accompanied the Muslim army. It was the first time that an Islamic standard was introduced of three Islamic flags. One was prepared from the shawl of Hazrat Bibi Ayesha (R.A.) and it was entrusted to Hazrat Ali (R.A.). Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) ordered an attack and one by one the fortresses fell into Muslim hands. When they reached the famous fort called Q'MOOS, the Muslims spent twenty days without entry. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was hopeful of gaining success and handing over the flag and sword to Hazrat Ali (R.A.), he appointed him as Commander of the troops.

Eventually the Fortress was captured. Some fifteen Muslim Mujahids (soldiers) achieved martyrdom and 93 Jews were killed. The Jews sued for peace and came begging for forgiveness. A peace treaty was signed between the Muslims and the Jews.