

## 8. At Badr

The Battle of Badr was the most important among the Islamic Battles of Destiny. For the first time the followers of the new faith were put into a serious test. Had victory been the lot of the pagan army while the Islamic forces were still at the beginning of their developments the faith of Islam could have come to an end.

No one was as aware of the importance of the outcome of the Battle as the Holy Prophet. We might read the depth of his anxiety in his prayer before the beginning of the Battle when he stood up supplicating his Lord: "God this is Quraish. It has come with all its arrogance and boastfulness trying to discredit Thy Apostle. God I ask Thee to humiliate them tomorrow. God if this Muslim band will perish today Thou shall not be worshiped!"<sup>1</sup>

At this battle in which the pagan army consisted of 950 fighters and the Muslims did not exceed 314 (including the Messenger) the Islamic defense was a combination of three elements resembling three defensive lines:

1. The personality of the Messenger his leadership and his unequalled firmness. He was to the Muslims the final refuge at Badr and at every battle he attended.
2. The Hashimites (the clan of the Prophet) led by 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib who entered this Battle relatively obscure and came out of it with unequalled military fame.

His military performances became the popular subject of the Arab caravans' conversations throughout the Arabic Peninsula.

3. The hundreds of companions of the Messenger whose hearts were filled with faith and readiness for sacrifice. Many of them viewed martyrdom to be a gain equal to life and victory. These good companions were the army of Islam its first line of defense and the thick wall behind which the Messenger used to stand. They were defenders and they were attackers.

As to the clan of the Messenger they were the ones whom he used to call before any one else to offer

the heavy sacrifice. They used to stand in the first line of defense opening for the army the way through their thrusts in the lines of the enemies. When the general offensives began and every companion present participated the clan of the Messenger were the most damaging to the enemies. They were so at Badr and at the following battles.

The battle began when Utbah Ibn Rabi-ah his son Al-Walid and his brother Sheibah (all from Umayyad) stood in front of their pagan army and asked the Prophet to send to them their equals for a duel. Hundreds of companions were around him and many of them were expecting to be called upon by the Prophet but he chose to start with his own family.

The load was heavy and the heavy load could be carried only by the people to whom it belonged. He called upon 'Ali Al-Hamzah and Obeidah Ibn Al-Harith (all from the clan of the Prophet) to face the three warriors.

'Ali destroyed Al-Walid and Al-Hamzah killed Utbah; then they both assisted Obeidah against his opponent Sheibah. Sheibah died immediately and Obeidah was the first martyr at this battle. He died after he lost his leg.

When the general offensive began hundreds of companions participated in the battle. They offered sacrifices and pleased their Lord. But the members of the House of the Messenger distinguished themselves. 'Ali's endeavor was unique at this battle.

When Hanthala Ibn Abu Sufyan faced him 'Ali liquified his eyes with one blow from his sword. He annihilated Al-Aws Ibn Sa-eed and met Tuaima Ibn Uday and transfixing him with his spear saying: "You shall not dispute with us in God after today."

The Messenger took a handful of gravel when the battle was extremely heated. He threw it at the faces of the pagans saying: "May your faces be disfigured. God terrify their hearts and invalidate their feet." The pagans ran away turning their faces to no one. The Muslims went on killing them and taking prisoners.

Seventy pagans met their death and the Muslims took from them seventy prisoners. History preserved in its records only fifty of the names out of the seventy pagan losses. Twenty<sup>2</sup> or twenty-two<sup>3</sup> of them died at 'Ali's hands.

This battle laid the foundation of the Islamic State and made out of the Muslims a force to be reckoned with by the dwellers of the Arabic Peninsula.

However we should not overlook the fact that it took three hundred and twelve companions to achieve sixty percent of the outcome of the battle while 'Ali alone achieved at least forty percent of it. It is not an exaggeration to say that his endeavor was a very substantial factor in bringing the battle to its victorious conclusion. Should we subtract his forty percent the outcome of the battle might have changed. On the

other hand if we subtract any other single companion in that battle the outcome of the battle would not have changed.

- [1.](#) Ibn Hisham Biography of the Prophet Part 2 p. 621.
- [2.](#) Ibn Hisham Biography of the Prophet pp. 708–713.
- [3.](#) Al-Waqidi Al-Maghazi (Oxford printing) Part 1 p. 152.

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