

Marwān b. Hakam's Role in Penetration of Syrian Army into Medina

Medina, like a stronghold, was resisting against the Syrian army and breaking through the Medinan troops seemed not very easy.¹109

Having become worried, Muslim b. 'Uqba turned to Marwān and said: "You claimed earlier in Wādī al-Qur' that you have devised a plan for penetrating into Medina that you will carry out in its due time; is it not the right time to carry it out?!"

Marwān b. Hakam set out toward Medina until he arrived near Banī Hāritha tribe. He summoned one of the tribe's men whom he had already identified and in a secret conversation promised to heavily reward him and do good to him for showing a way to penetrate into Medina. The man was taken in.² He showed Marwān a way to Medina from the neighborhood of Banī 'Abd al-Ashhal and the Syrian troops penetrated into Medina from that same way.³

A considerable number of troops managed to reach behind the front lines of the Medinan combatants, clashed with them, and killed a great number of them.⁴

It so happened that the front line combatants and defenders heard the *takbīr* and wailing from inside Medina⁵ and after a very short while noticed the onslaught of the Syrian army prompting them to leave the battle and rush back to Medina to defend their women and children!⁶

The news of the Syrians invasion of Medina quickly spread all over the Medina's resistant front and overwhelmingly alarmed the people of Medina. A group of them returned to Medina and another group clashed with the Syrians, while a third group were rolled down into the trench in their hit-and-run fighting and skirmishes that resulted in the number of the people killed in the trench outnumbering those who were killed in the battle field.⁷

From this stage on, the Medinan defending forces dispersed and gradually weakened, not showing much resistance in the battle field.

Muslim b. 'Uqba pointed to the standard-bearer of the Medinan forces Fadl b. 'Abbās and instigated his

soldeirs to carry out a targetted and harmonized attack on him. A heavy fighting broke out in which Fadl b. 'Abbās was killed, while being at a distance of ten cubits about five meters away from Muslim b. 'Uqba.⁸

In this attack, Zayd b. 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Awf also lost his life along with Fadl b. 'Abbās.⁹

¹. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh vol. 2, p. 250.

². The reason why the Banī Hāritha had betrayed the Medinans is not mentioned in history, but as Yazīd's mother, Maysān, was from this tribe, it is possible that it has been a factor in their cooperation with Yazīd's army (Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, al-'Iqd al-Farīd, vol. 5, p. 124). Of course, this tribe also had a record of treason in the battle of Ahzāb at the time of the Prophet (s) and that the āyah 14 of Sūrat al-Ahzāb was revealed in reproaching them. (Ibn Hisham, Al-Sūrat al-Nabawiyya, vol. 2, p. 106; Sayyid Qutb, Fī Zill al-Qur'ān, vol. 6, p. 556).

³. Ibn Qutayba, Al-Imāma wa al-Siyāsa, vol. 1, p. 211; Dinawari, al-Akhhār al-Tiwāl, p. 310; Samhūdī, Wafī' al-Wafī', vol. 1, p. 129. Various viewpoints have been expressed concerning the geographical location of Banī Hāritha and Banī 'Abd al-Ashhal tribes' area, from among which the soundest view seems to be that their area has been located in the eastern part of Medina; i.e., the region where the trench was located between the Shaykhān area, Uhud region and 'Urayd area. See: Samhūdī, Wafī' al-Wafī', vol. 1, p. 191; Yāqūt Hamawī, Mu'jam al-Buldān, vol. 5, p. 319.

⁴. Samhūdī, Wafī' al-Wafī', vol. 1, p. 130.

⁵. Ibn Athār, Al-Kāmil fī al-Ta'rīkh, vol. 4, p. 118.

⁶. Samhūdī, Wafī' al-Wafī', vol. 1, p. 130.

⁷. Ibn Athār, Al-Kāmil fī al-Ta'rīkh, vol. 4, p. 118.

⁸. Ibid, vol. 4, p. 118.

⁹. Ibn Athār, Al-Kāmil fī al-Ta'rīkh, vol. 4, p. 118.

Source URL:

<https://www.al-islam.org/battle-harrah-muhammad-ali-chenarani/marw%C4%81n-b-hakams-role-penetration-syrian-army-medina#comment-0>