

The Syrian's Defeat during the Early Stages

After 'Abd Allāh b. Hanzala's sermon, the Medinan forces got ready for another attack. Ibn Hanzala reorganized his troops and made Fadl b. 'Abbās the head of the defending army and entrusted the banner to him.

The Quraishī troops were put under the command of 'Abd Allāh b. Mut' 'Adawī¹, the *Muhājirīn* under the command of Ma'qal, and the *Ansār* were commanded by Ibn Hanzala himself. The voluntary public forces that undertook the guarding of the trench were put under the command of 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Zahār.²104

Fadl b. 'Abbās's fight along with the experienced cavalries was very effective in dispersing the Syrian forces. The Syrians escaped and the Fadl's riders approached near the Syrian army tents.

Fadl b. 'Abbās encouraged his riders and companions and called them to resistance, galloping onwards until he reached the standard-bearer – Muslim b. 'Uqba – and attacked him, cutting through his helmet and killing him with a single stroke of his sword.

Fadl imagined he had killed Muslim b. 'Uqba, whereas the standard bearer had been a brave Roman slave.³

Anyhow, the Syrian army was apprehended by this gallant attack launched by the Medinan cavalries and failed to advance. Muslim b. 'Uqba encouraged them to fight and when noticed their infirmity, he cursed them and threatened for their fear and retreat, and said:

“I swear by God! Whoever of you that flees, will be killed by *Amr al-Mu'minīn Yazīd* in a most cruel way or at least the shame of it will remain with him for the rest of his life. If you do not fight and advance seriously enough, do not disperse or separate from each other.”⁴

Whatever region around Medina that the Syrians attacked, the presence of the Medinan defenders would force them back to Muslim b. 'Uqba!⁵

The battle lasted till noon. 'Abd Allāh b. Hanzala asked one of his slaves to safeguard him in the rear so that he could say his prayers. 'Abd Allāh performed his prayer⁶ and went on to fight against the Syrians.

¹ 'Abd Allāh b. Mut' b. Aswad b. Haritha b. 'Awf b. 'Abd b. 'Awāj b. 'Adiyy b. Ka'b was born in the time of the Prophet

(s); he participated in the battle of Harrah, but after the Medina resistance was broken down, he escaped to Mecca to Ibn Zubayr and was killed with him. (Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, vol. 5, p. 106; Ibn Athar, *Usd al-Ghaba*, vol. 3, p. 262.)

[2.](#) Tabarī, *Ta'rikh*, vol. 4, p. 374; Ibn Athar, *Al-Kamil fi al-Ta'rikh*, vol. 4, p. 115.

[3.](#) Tabarī, *Ta'rikh*, vol. 4, p. 374; Ibn Athar, *Al-Kamil fi al-Ta'rikh*, vol. 4, p. 116.

[4.](#) Tabarī, *Ta'rikh*, vol. 4, p. 374; Ibn Athar, *Al-Kamil fi al-Ta'rikh*, vol. 4, p. 116.

[5.](#) Ibn Athar, *Al-Kamil fi al-Ta'rikh*, vol. 4, p. 115.

[6.](#) Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, vol. 5, p. 48.

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