

Battle of Uhd

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1. This incitement by the Jews added fuel to the fire which was burning in the hearts of the Quraish and they began to make preparations to avenge the defeat they had suffered at Bad. A year after this an army of 3 000 strong marched out of Makkah to invade Al-Madinah and a battle took place at the foot of Mount Uhd. The Holy Prophet came out of Al-Madinah with one thousand men to meet the enemy. While they were marching to the battle-field three hundred hypocrites deserted the army and returned to Al-Madinah but there still remained a small band of hypocrites among the seven hundred who accompanied the Holy Prophet. They played their part and did their worst to create mischief and chaos in the ranks of the Believers during the Battle. This was the first clear indication of the fact that within the fold of the Muslim Community there was quite a large number of saboteurs who were always ready to conspire with the external enemies to harm their own brethren.
2. Though the devices of the hypocrites had played a great part in the set-back at Uhud the weaknesses of the Muslims themselves contributed no less to it. And it was but natural that the Muslims should show signs of moral weakness for they were a new community which had only recently been formed on a new ideology and had not as yet got a thorough moral training. Naturally in this second hard test of their physical and moral strength some weaknesses came to the surface. That is why a detailed review of the Battle of Uhud was needed to warn the Muslims of their shortcomings and to issue instructions for their reform. It should also be noted that this review of the Battle is quite different from the reviews that are usually made by generals on similar occasions.

Historical Background

The Islamic army's setback in the Battle of Uhud (A. H. 3) that resulted from the error of the archers appointed by the Holy Prophet so boosted up the morale of the Arab pagans and the Jews and the hypocrites that they started entertaining the hope that they would soon be able to exterminate Islam and the Muslims completely. Their high state of morale can be judged from the events that occurred in the first year after Uhud. Hardly two months had passed then the tribe of Bani Asad of Najd began to make preparations for a raid on Madinah and the Holy Prophet had to despatch an expedition under Abu Salamah to counteract them. In Safar A. H. 4 some people of the tribes of Adal and Qarah asked the Holy Prophet to send some men to instruct them in Islam. Accordingly six of the Companions were allowed to accompany them for the purpose. But when they reached Raji (a place between Rabigh and Jeddah) they summoned Hudhail against

them who killed four of the Companions and took the other two (Hadrat Khubaib bin Adi and Hadrat Zaid bin ad-Dathinnah) to Makkah and sold them to the enemy. Then in the same month of Safar on the request of a chief of Bani Amir the Holy Prophet sent another deputation of 40 (according to others 70) preachers consisting of the Ansar young men to Najd. But they were also betrayed. The people of Usayyah and Ri'l and Dhakwan tribes of Bani Sulaim surrounded them suddenly at Bir Maunah and slew all of them. Meanwhile the Jewish tribe of Bani an-Nadir of Madinah getting encouragement continued to commit breaches of the treaties; so much so that in Rabi'ul Awwal A.H. 4 they plotted against the life of the Holy Prophet himself. Then in Jamadi al-Ula A. H. 4 Bani Thalbah and Bani Muharib the two tribes of Bani Ghatafan started making preparations to attack Madinah and the Holy Prophet had to go to punish them. Thus after their setback at Uhud the Muslims went on encountering repercussions continuously for seven to eight months.

However, it was the Holy Prophet's determination and wisdom and his great Companions' spirit of sacrifice that changed these adverse conditions completely within a short span of time. The economic boycott by the Arabs had made life hard for the people of Madinah. All the polytheistic tribes around Madinah were becoming rebellious. Inside Madinah itself the Jews and the hypocrites were beat upon mischief. But the successive steps taken by a handful of the sincere Muslims under the leadership of the Holy Prophet not only restored the image of strength of Islam in Arabia but also increased it manifold.