

## FROM VICTORY TO DEFEAT

The two armies faced each other across the battlefield at Uhud. The Makkkan army was present in all its glory and might - the superpower of the region. They had devised many strategies by which they hoped to easily defeat the Muslims and crush them once and for all. Last time at Badr, the Makkans had suffered a humiliating defeat and this time they wanted their pride, arrogance and military might to be known throughout all Arabia. For them it was payback time - a time to avenge their defeat.

Their opponents were the Muslims who had raised an army within a few days. They were ill-equipped for battle and were less than quarter in numbers compared to the Makkkan army. They were the lesser army by all criteria apart from their hearts which were filled with tawheed. They were committed in defending their beliefs despite the odds. They had the truth on their side which was all they needed to overcome this enormous challenge looming before them.

First Abu Sufyan stepped forward and addressed the Muslim Army. He was overjoyed when he saw this tiny army before him and was already contemplating an easy victory. He invited the Ansars (the Muslims of Madina) to walk away and return to their homes and let the Makkkan face the Makkkan Muslims (Muhajirun) who had migrated there. Abu Sufyan said that their issues were with their kinsmen and not with the Ansars.

However, the Ansars were a noble and dedicated group of Muslims and they remained shoulder to shoulder with their Muhajirun brothers. The Ansars had many exemplary qualities which included steadfastness, honesty and bravery which were demonstrated time and again.

Abu 'Amr al Fasiq (Abu Amr bin Saidi) stepped forward and also addressed the Aws, a tribe amongst the Ansars. He had previously been an influential leader in Madina and had migrated to Makkah when the prophet (pbuh) had arrived. He advised them to leave the battle and return to their homes but even his words fell on deaf ears. His influence had waned in Madina and he despondently returned to the Makkkan camp.

The Makkkan warrior Abi Talha al-Abdari stepped forward and challenged a Muslim to face him in man to man combat. Abi Talha was a mighty warrior of immense skill and strength. In fact, he was considered invincible in combat and his

unblemished record and reputation was known throughout Arabia. There was slight hesitation from the Muslims to face the Makkani champion until Zubair bin Al-Awwam stepped forward.

Zubair was also a fearless and dedicated Muslim, respected and honoured as both courageous and pious. He fought Abi Talha and quickly overpowered him and finished him off, much to the shock of the watching Makkans. The loss of their great warrior was the beginning of the main battle.

The Makkans sent the cavalry in to attack the Muslims from their side, hoping to inflict heavy losses and chaos within the Muslim Army. However, the Prophet (pbuh) had placed fifty of the best archers on a mount defending the Muslims from such attacks. They fought off the waves of Makkani attacks with streams of arrows causing the cavalry to retreat each time. This was a key position and it was for this reason that the prophet (pbuh) had stressed that this position could not be vacated under any circumstance. Abdullah bin Jubair was in charge of these archers.

There was a tremendous din as both armies clashed. The heroic Muslim forces fought with vigour and bravery against the aggressors. The Makkani army pushed towards the Muslim position but the Muslims held them at bay. This was truly a worrying sight for the Muslims as what seemed like an endless army was moving upon them, armed to the teeth. Many standard bearers on both sides were killed during the battle.

Before the battle, the prophet (pbuh) was carrying a sword and had asked the Sahabi who would fulfil the honour due to this sword. Abu Dujana said he would take this sword and would fulfil its honour by fighting the Makkans without respite. Shortly after accepting the sword from Prophet Muhammad, he donned his red headband which was a warning to the enemy to watch out that Abu Dujana intended to fight till death.

Abu Dujana was seen moving through the Makkani army with his sword flashing as he tore through the Makkani ranks. Abu Dujana was true to his word. His bravery and commitment to his deen became an example to all. He suffered many wounds but continued to carve through the Makkani army unimpeded by the vast number of Makkans that had swamped the Muslims.

Hamzah the Prophet's uncle was also in the midst of the fighting. Opponent after

opponent were coming towards him as he over powered them one after the other. Hamzah's bravery had been demonstrated throughout his life and today was no exception. He didn't show any hesitation as he continued to fight off the enemy forces.

However, unknown to Hamzah, there was one skilled warrior called Whashi who was specifically looking for him. He had no intention of fighting against the Muslims and wasn't interested in who would win the battle. Instead, he had only one thing on his mind.... the assassination of Hamzah.

Whashi was a slave and his skill and accuracy with the javelin had impressed many people, including Hind the wife of Abu Sufyan. She had a score to settle with Hamzah and wanted revenge for the death of her family members in the battle of Badr (Utba bin Rabia, Shiba bin Rabia and Waleed bin Utba). She had offered Whashi freedom in return for the death of Hamzah.

Whashi watched from the side and moved with stealth towards Hamzah. He watched this great warrior taking on soldier after soldier until he was in firing distance. He waited until the moment arose and fired his javelin toward Hamzah. It passed through Hamzah's body causing fatal injuries to this great warrior. Hamzah turned around to face this coward but moments later he had been martyred.

Whashi collected his javelin and returned to his camp waiting for the battle to finish. He had done his part of the bargain and his reward was freedom and riches. The battle still continued and the din of beating drums and clanging swords was strong as Whashi waited for the battle to conclude.

The Muslims gained the upper hand and the Makkans were retreating from the brave Muslim warriors. The Muslims continued to gain ground as rank after rank of the Makkans were defeated. The Makkan army was soon in disarray as they left the battle field. The end of the battle seemed to be close and the Muslims began to collect the booty from the battlefield and capture the remaining Makkan soldiers.

The archers on the hillock were over looking this impressive scene and from their vantage point it seemed that the Makkans were defeated. Many of the archers thought the battle was over and began to leave their position and move to the battlefield. Abdullah bin Jubair urged his archers to stay but they replied that the battle was over and went down.

At this moment things began to turn against the Muslims. The Makkans made a counter-strike against the Muslims as their cavalry passed through the weakened defence on mount Aynain. Khalid bin Walid led the assault and was soon in the midst of the Muslim army. There was panic and confusion as the Muslims became exposed to this new danger. To add further chaos, the Makkans announced that the Prophet (pbuh) had been killed and many of the Makkans were already rejoicing.

Both these events had a drastic effect on the Muslims with many of them losing hope and some running from the field. The Makkans had regrouped and made fresh assaults on the chaotic ranks of the Muslim. The Makkans could smell victory and fought with renewed vigour and made inroads into the Muslim forces. The tide had turned and now the Muslims were losing the battle with the odds stacked heavily against them.

There seemed no hope but many of the Muslims remained strong in conviction and deeds as they fought off this army which was swamping them from all sides. Many of the great sahabah were martyred during this onslaught. Even though the prophet (pbuh) was supposedly dead, many of the Muslims remained steadfast to the cause and continued to defend with the usual courage.

Then from the field, the voice of the Prophet (pbuh) was heard calling the Muslims towards him. Instantly, the Muslims moved towards him but the Makkans also headed towards Muhammad (pbuh) to finish him off. For a moment, the battle seemed to be concentrated around the prophet (pbuh) again.

The small group of Sahabah who were defending the Prophet (pbuh) consisted of seven Muslims with other Muslims rushing to the aid of the prophet (pbuh). The seven fought bravely and were martyred one after the other. The prophet (pbuh) was struck by the sword which caused him to injuries his face and shoulder. The Muslims looked on in horror as they rushed towards him and regrouped around the prophet (pbuh).

The injured prophet (pbuh) got up with blood gushing from his face and the iron rings of his helmet forced into his flesh. Many Muslims had regrouped around him and fought off waves of attackers from the Makkans. There were many stories of heroics from the Muslim warriors who put their own lives on the line to defend the prophet and defend their beloved deen.

The Muslims moved up the hill to a more defensive position and after much fighting the battle was all but over. Many of the Makkans went to the battlefield and began killing the injured Muslims and in many cases mutilating the dead Muslims.

Abu Sufyan, the leader of the Makkans, came towards the Muslim position and shouted out, "Has Muhammad (pbuh) been killed?" The Muslims did not answer and then he also enquired about Abu Bakr and Umar bin Khattab. Finally, Umar shouted back that the prophet (pbuh) was safe, ready to continue his mission.

Abu Sufyan was disappointed with this news and also with the behaviour of his Army who had mutilated the dead Muslims. He also said that they would face the Muslim army again next year. One of the Muslims was instructed by the prophet (pbuh) to reply back that they accept this challenge of a rematch next year.

The fact of the matter was that the Makkans were in a winning position and they could easily march onto Madina and finish off the strong hold of the Muslims. On the other hand, the Muslims had now regrouped from their earlier setback and Abu Sufyan knew that they would pose a great threat to the Makkans if they attacked Madina. He also knew that the Muslims were ready to fight, despite the odds, and fight with such bravery that their victory could be turned to defeat again. The Makkans were anxious to return back and savour the moment of victory.

Soon the jubilant Makkan army was on its way back towards Makkah, mounted on their camels and taking their belongings and booty. The Prophet (pbuh) gathered his people and tended to the wounded and dying. The Muslims buried the dead and was soon returning towards Madina. They may have been beaten in this battle but they had fought bravely and Allah had sent revelation forgiving the people who had ran from the field.

The Muslim had suffered a major setback and now the tribes around Madina were showing a lot more hostility towards the Muslims. There was a whole catalogue of problems awaiting them in Madina itself and amongst the tribes around Madina.

The Hypocrites who had turned tail and had abandoned the Muslim army were now rubbing their hands with glee. They had succeeded in causing the Muslims to suffer this setback and they were looking for the next opportunity to weaken the Muslims again.

The Jews of Madina were extremely happy at this development and saw this as the first step to getting rid of the Muslims. They now began hatching new ploys of undermining the Muslims and causing the community further problems.

The tribes around Madina were confident that they could fight and beat the Muslims. They began getting their armies together as well with the hope of attacking Madina. The once invincible Muslims now seemed like an easy target for everyone as plans were being formed all over Arabia against the Muslims.

Source: [musalla.org](http://musalla.org)