

On the Path of the Beloved ﷺ

The Battle of Uhud

In the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Ever-Merciful. Peace and blessings be upon our master, the most noble Prophet Muhammad (SAWS)¹.

I would like to remind you that the last ten days of Ramadan begin today; we are approaching Laylatul-Qadr (the Night of Determination). May all the audience watching us now be saved from hellfire.

As for today's lecture, we will talk about the battle of Uhud, which took place on Saturday, the 7th of Shawwal, in the 3rd year A.H.².

Motives of the battle:

What happened is that Quraysh decided to avenge for those who were killed in the battle of Badr, but actually this was not their real motive for the battle of Uhud. It was that Quraysh found out that its leadership became in danger and that the power of Muslims was continuously increasing; more and more tribes began to listen to the Prophet (SAWS), which meant that he (SAWS) was about to be the leader in the Arabian Peninsula.

Moreover, Quraysh began to worry about its trade and interests. All what the Prophet (SAWS) wanted was to be left on his own to talk to people. However, Quraysh was obstinately refusing to leave him alone; it was their source of living that the Prophet (SAWS) wanted to deprive them of – as they thought. Allah (SWT) described them in the Holy Qur'an in , **“And making your provision (for livelihood) that you cry lies?” (56:82)**. While many people nowadays fight the truth for their living; many others are ready to fight to death for their cause in order to deliver their message.

Under the pretext of taking revenge for their defeat in the battle of Badr, Quraysh started the fight this time. They went out in 3000 soldiers. The Prophet (SAWS) knew this piece of news earlier, through the “Islamic intelligence” represented in Talha (RA)³ and Saïd Ibn-Zaid (RA).

An Introduction to the battle:

¹ SAWS = *Sala-llahu Alaihi Wa-Sallam* [All Prayers and Peace of Allah be upon him].

² A.H. = After Hijrah [migration].

³ RA= *Radya-llahu 'Anhu* [May Allah be pleased with him].

The Prophet (SAWS) saw a vision in his sleep. He (SAWS) saw that he was wearing a strong shield, his sword was broken and some cows were being slaughtered. He (SAWS) interpreted this vision that the strong shield signified Madinah; the broken sword signified that one of his relatives was going to be killed; and the slaughtered cows signified that some of his companions were going to be killed. In other words, the signification of this vision was that the Prophet (SAWS) should take shelter in Madinah and should not come out of it. However, the Prophet (SAWS) gathered the people and consulted them. Now, who says that Islam opposes democracy?!

While the young wanted to go and fight the enemy outside Madinah, the elderly preferred to stay in Madinah, and that was supported by the Prophet (SAWS). He (SAWS) said, "We shall stay in Madinah and fight from here. When we succeed to drag them here, men are going to fight them in the streets and women are going to fight them from the roofs of their houses". Even while planning for the battle, the Prophet (SAWS) did not forget the role of women. Now again, who says that the role of women in Islam is minor?!

The Prophet (SAWS) did not impose his opinion, though visions of Prophets are always true; yet, counsel in Islam is of a very important value. If he (SAWS) had told his companions about the vision, he (SAWS) would have suppressed their opinions. The majority of the companions agreed to meet the enemy outside the town, and thus the Prophet (SAWS) complied with the opinion of the majority.

After the Prophet (SAWS) got ready for war, some of the companions told him, "It seems that you are not satisfied with this decision. We can change our minds in order to please you". The Prophet (SAWS) got angry and told them, "There is no way that a prophet who puts on the suit of war can take it off until the fight between him and his enemy is over. When you are resolved, then put your trust in Allah". He (SAWS) shows us here the value of counsel, democracy and respect for the opinion of the majority. It is not because he (SAWS) was the leader that his opinion should always be obeyed.

A thousand Muslims went out to meet the army of the disbelievers. On the Muslims way to Uhud, Abdullah Ibn-Ubay Ibn-Salul - the chief of hypocrites in Madinah - withdrew from the Muslim army along with 300 soldiers, expressing his anger because the Prophet (SAWS) listened to the opinion of the young and ignored that of the elderly, including himself (SAWS). This man was going out to the battle in the first place so as to discourage Muslims and pull their spirits down. After this soldier-withdrawal, the Muslims' self-confidence began to shake; so, Allah (SWT) reassured them in , **“(Remember) as two sections of you were about to be disheartened, and Allah is their Ever-Patronizing Patron; and on Allah let the believers then put their trust” (3:122).**

As you see now, we are filming in the area of Uhud, on Mount Darters. Mount Uhud is one of the mountains of Paradise. The Prophet (SAWS) says about it, "This is a mountain

that loves us and is loved by us". It loves us because it knows how much Muslims have sacrificed; we love it because it protected Muslims on the day of Uhud, as we shall see.

One day, the Prophet (SAWS) was standing on Uhud, together with Omar (RA), Othman (RA) and Abu-Bakr (RA). The mountain began to tremble for the passion it carried towards the Prophet (SAWS) and his companions (RA). The Prophet (SAWS) said, "Calm down, Uhud. You have on you now a Prophet, a sincere man and two martyrs". The mountain calmed down.

Back to the battle itself, Quraysh's army came from the far mountains. The Prophet (SAWS) met them on the battlefield, as Madinah - being surrounded by mountains - had no entries but this one.

The plan of action:

Look how great the strategic military-planning of the Prophet (SAWS) was! He wanted to force Quraysh to meet his army face to face, instead of being flanked. Thus, the plan was to secure the left wing by making his army stand one line in the narrow space between Mount Darters and Mount Uhud, so that the first soldier in the Muslim army stood adjacent to the mountain. The right wing was secured by placing 50 of the companions (RA), led by Abdullah Ibn-Jubair, on top of Mount Darters so as they would not get flanked from their back.

As for Quraysh, the left wing consisted of 700 soldiers, led by Ikrima Ibn-Abu-Jahl. The right wing consisted of 300 horsemen, led by Khaled Ibn-al-Walid. The middle wing consisted of 2000 soldiers, led by Abu-Sufyan. Quraysh's army was more than thrice as much as the Muslim army.

Abu-Sufyan planned, indeed, to flank the Muslims from their back, however, his plan failed due to the intact planning of the Prophet (SAWS) for the right and left wings. Whenever Khaled Ibn-al-Walid tried to move towards Mount Darters, the darters attacked him and his army, so he was obliged to stay where he was. As for the right wing, the only way for Ikrima Ibn-Abu-Jahl to attack the Muslims was to go around Mount Uhud, which was a very large distance – about 23 km. Thus, just as the Prophet (SAWS) planned, Abu-Sufyan was forced to meet the Muslim army only with the middle wing.

The flag-bearer in the Muslim army was Mos'ab Ibn-Umair (RA). The commander of operations was Hamza Ibn-Abdul-Muttalib (RA), who had two assistants: Ali Ibn-Abu-Taleb (RA) and Az-Zubair Ibn-al-Awwam (RA). On the other hand, the flag-bearers in Quraysh army were the family of Abdud-Dar, who were of nine members.

The battle begins:

The Prophet (SAWS) gave specific and strict instructions to the darters, **“If you saw us triumphant and gathering booty, do not follow us. If you saw us defeated and killed, don't try to support us. Stay where you are whatever happens”**. Look how far-sighted the Prophet (SAWS) was! He (SAWS) knew that this was the only weak point through which Quraysh could get to them.

The Prophet (SAWS) wanted to pull the spirits of the Muslims up; so, he (SAWS) carried his sword and asked the Muslims,

- **“Who wants to take my sword?”**.
- **“I am, Prophet of Allah”, all of them replied.**
- **“Who is going to be worth of taking it?”**, he (SAWS) asked them.
- **“How can one be worth of taking it?”**, they asked him.
- **“He who strikes the heads of disbelievers with it”, he (SAWS) replied.**

Look how serious and determined in war time this kind and passionate Prophet (SAWS) can be!

- “I can take it and be worth of it”, Abu-Dojana, one of the Prophet's companions said.
- “I traced him during the battle, and I saw him striking disbelievers strongly, until he came to a masked horseman, whom he was going to strike, but it turned out to be a woman. He refused to strike her, as the Prophet (SAWS) never hit a woman, and so should his sword do”, Az-Zubair Ibnul-Awwam said.

Abu-Dojana was worth of the Prophet's sword, indeed.

Hamza Ibn-Abdul-Muttalib, the Lion of Islam, stood in the middle of the battlefield putting a feather in his chest, as if he wanted to say that he was not afraid. He began to march in a bragging way. The Prophet (SAWS) said, “Allah hates this walk, except in such a situation”. We have the right to boast and brag, not in front of our people, but in front of our enemy.

The Prophet (SAWS) pulled the spirits of the army up and the army began to move. Hamza (RA) penetrated Quraysh’s army to and fro many times. Ali (RA) and Az-Zubair (RA) imitated him so courageously. Hamza decided to kill the flag-bearer. He started by killing the first one, so another one carried the flag, so he killed him, and so on until he killed all nine. Look how 700 are triumphant over 3000! You see how the power of faith can be?

It was clear that the Muslims were the triumphant party just after only half an hour of the beginning of the battle. However, Allah (SWT) has His own enactment in the universe. He (SWT) does not favor anyone; whoever makes a mistake is responsible for its consequences.

Thinking that the battle was over, the darters decided to leave their positions on the mountain and look after their share the booty. Only Abdullah-Ibn-Jubair and ten of the darters refused to move in obedience to the order of the Prophet (SAWS), whereas all other 40 broke the Prophet's orders. Consequently, the Muslim army was defeated.

Now, think for a minute! What if a whole nation broke the orders of the Prophet (SAWS)? What happens then? The phrase “Obey Allah and obey the Messenger” is repeated in the Qur'an more than 30 times. However, his orders (SAWS) are still broken!

Khaled, too, thought that the battle was over and the plan failed; so, he decided to withdraw the army. When he saw the darters leaving their positions on the mountain, he returned in order to flank the Muslim army from their back. He managed to kill the ten darters, who stayed in their places. Then, he stood on Mount Darters crying loudly, “Glorified be Hobal”⁴, so that Abu-Sufyan would know that their plan succeeded.

The spirits of Quraysh were pulled up, while the spirits of the Muslims began to be pulled down. Abdullah Ibn-Qame'a, one of Quraysh's army, was fanatic against Muslims. He went out to war just to kill the Prophet (SAWS). He attacked Mos'ab Ibn-Umair (RA), thinking he was the Prophet (SAWS). He cut Mos'ab's right arm, so Mos'ab carried the flag in his left arm. Then he cut the left one, so Mos'ab carried the flag on his chest, so that the flag of Islam remains high as long as he lives, until he was killed in the end. The man cried, “I killed Muhammad! I killed Muhammad!”.

The Muslims began to throw their weapons and run away towards Madinah. Meanwhile, the Prophet (SAWS) remained in the battlefield with just 20 of his companions, among whom was a woman – Om-Emara, Nosaiba Bint-Ka'b.

Examples of the companions (RA) who loved the Prophet (SAWS) and sacrificed their lives for him and for Allah (SWT) in the battlefield:

1. **Abu-Dojana (RA):** Groups of Quraysh army started to surround the Prophet (SAWS). Darts were unleashed towards the Prophet (SAWS). Abu-Dojana embraced the Prophet (SAWS) so that darts hit his back instead of the Prophet (SAWS), to the extent that his back became like a hedgehog being completely full of darts. However, he (RA) refused to move. You see how much they (RA) loved him (SAWS)? Are you ready to defend him (SAWS) to that extent as a proof of your love?

⁴ Hobal = A famous idol in Quraysh at that time.

2. **Sa'd Ibn-Abu-Waqqas (RA):** The Prophet (SAWS) told Sa'd Ibn-Abu-Waqqas, "Throw (arrows); let my father and mother be sacrificed for you"; it was the first time that the Prophet (SAWS) told that, as he was a clever darter. The Prophet (SAWS) does not just love anyone; he (SAWS) loves only skillful people. How much we envy you, Sa'd!
3. **Talha Ibn-Ubaidullah (RA):** Talha told the Prophet (SAWS) "Lower your head, so that you are not hurt by darts. I'm ready to sacrifice my life for you". He used his hand as a barrier between the Prophet (SAWS) and the darts. One of the darts penetrated his hand to the other side; Talha's hand became paralyzed while defending the Prophet (SAWS).
4. **Yazid Ibn-al-Sakan (RA):** Yazid came together with ten of al-Ansar and surrounded the Prophet (SAWS). The Prophet (SAWS) began to feel exhausted, so he (SAWS) said, "Who is ready to push them away from me and be rewarded with paradise?". The first guy volunteered to this mission, and he kept fighting until death. The second, third, fourth, ...etc. volunteered as well, and all of them ended as martyrs. After Yazid's death, the Prophet (SAWS) wiped dust off his face and prayed to Allah (SWT), "O, Allah. I call You to witness that I am satisfied with Yazid Ibn-al-Sakan".
5. **Abdullah Ibn-Jahsh (RA):** Before heading to the battle, he sat with his friend making wishes. His friend said, "I wish to meet a man tomorrow from the disbelievers, one that is very strong. I fight him, he fights me, and then I kill him". Ibn-Jahsh (RA) said, "As for me, I wish to meet a man tomorrow from the disbelievers, one that is very strong. I fight him, he fights me, and then I kill him. And then I meet a man from the disbelievers, one that is very strong. I fight him, he fights me, and then he kills me, stabs me in the stomach, mutilates my nose, and cuts my ear. I will come to Allah (SWT) in that form in the Day of Judgment and Allah (SWT) will ask for its cause. I will say, for You Allah". Right here in this very place, Abdullah Ibn-Jahsh (RA) was found stabbed in the stomach, his nose mutilated and his ear cut off. Near him was one of the disbelievers killed. Allah (SWT) granted him (RA) his wish.
6. **Sa'ad Ibn-Rabee' (RA):** The Prophet (SAWS) asked the companions to look for Sa'ad Ibn-Rabee' and to inform him (SAWS) of what happened to him. They found him lying on the ground, about to die. He (RA) told them to greet the Prophet (SAWS) and to tell him (SAWS) that he (RA) got what the Prophet (SAWS) truly promised him. He (RA) also mentioned that there was no excuse if the disbelievers reached the Prophet (SAWS). There is no excuse for us either. Work, move and carry the message! Do not forget these words and do not forget this place after Ramadan.

7. **Hamza Ibn-Abdul-Mutalib (RA):** He did not die in Uhud. He died in the area at the back of Mount Ruma, behind the battlefield. Hamza (RA), the master of martyrs, noticed that Khaled Ibn-al-Walid began to take control of Mount Ruma, where the Muslims were. Hamza (RA) took some companions to climb the mountain from the back and return its strategic position to the Muslims. Some disbelievers were protecting the mountain and he (RA) began to fight fiercely and quickly because the Prophet (SAWS) was alone with only 20 people in the battlefield. Hiding behind the rocks near the mountain was Wahshei, Abu Sufyan's slave - who went to the battle precisely on a mission to kill Hamza (RA). Hind bint-Utba, Abu-Sufyan's wife, promised him that if he killed Hamza (RA), she will free him. Hamza (RA) killed her brother and father in the battle of Badr. Wahshei wanted to be a free man and was very skillful in darting. As soon as Hamza (RA) gave him his back, Wahshei hit him with a dart, which went through his back and out from his stomach. Hamza (RA) did not fall at once, but he gazed at Wahshei and knew that he was the one who killed him. Hamza (RA) started walking towards him looking to him right in the eyes with challenge and faith. Wahshei said, **"From my fear and his gaze, I couldn't move from my place"**. When Hamza (RA) got near Wahshei, he (RA) fell dead. Wahshei happily went to share the news with Hind, who went joyfully to Hamza (RA). She took a sword, cut open Hamza's stomach, took out his liver and squeezes it. Abu-Sufyan laughed and one disbeliever came and opened Hamza's (RA) mouth and smashed it with stabs. Never worry! Hamza (RA) now is in al-Ferdaws (the highest level of Paradise). When the Prophet (SAWS) saw him after the battle, he cried like never before. Hamza (RA) was buried in this area until a flood came in Madinah forty years after his death. The Emir (ruler) of Madinah at that time ordered to have the bodies moved somewhere else to protect them. Surprisingly enough, Hamza's body was exactly the same as when he died; His wounds were the same; nothing changed. That was the master of martyrs. Our tears for Hamza (RA) should be used for goodness in this world, for our revival, and for reform.

The graveyard of the martyrs:

It is here that you find all the martyrs of Uhud. The three in front of you here are that of Hamza Ibn-Abdul-Mutalib (RA), Anas Ibn-Jabr (RA) and Mosa'b Ibn-Umair (RA). This is the land of people who sacrificed for the message. The Prophet (SAWS) came here everyday to greet them, "Peace be upon you, you have preceded us and we will follow you".

This place is a witness of what these great men did. What did you do?! We do not examine this place so as to make it holy or something; it is just that it reminds you to promise yourself to work and do something useful.

You just feel peacefulness and Paradise in this place. Those martyrs are from the people of Paradise and Mount Uhud is a mountain in Paradise. Make a promise that by seeing

this place you will sacrifice for the Message! Don't die! Live for the sake of Allah (SWT)! May Allah (SWT) gather us with them in al-Ferdaws and may Him (SWT) make Uhud a witness that from today on we will live for the Message.

Let us now go back to the battle! The Prophet (SAWS) and the companions reached the mountain. The area is high and narrow and the Muslim army went up. If Quraysh decided to follow them, they would feel as if they were starting another fight and that's what the Prophet (SAWS) intended. But the Prophet (SAWS) could not go up to the area and was tired, so Talha (RA) offered his back to help him (SAWS) get up.

There were approximately 500 to 600 companions here. While Mount Uhud from behind takes an embraced form, and thus made Quraysh then feel that they were constricted. Abu-Sufyan stood below the mountain and began a verbal war.

Abu-Sufyan spoke and the Prophet (SAWS) asked the companions, "Will you not answer him?". They questioned, "And how do we answer oh Prophet (SAWS)?" "Say Allah (SWT) is the greatest and ever-lasting." They all shouted together from the mountain, "Allah (SWT) is greatest and ever-lasting!". Abu-Sufyan spoke back and the Prophet (SAWS) asked again. Finally, Abu-Sufyan said, "Today will not be like Badr". Guided again by the Prophet (SAWS) they said, "There is no similarity. Our dead are in Paradise and yours are in the hellfire!"

Abu-Sufyan then realized that the Prophet (SAWS), Abu-Bakr (RA) and Omar (RA) were all still alive, for they would not have spoken in that manner without them. Eventually, Abu-Sufyan backed out and took back his army to return home.

The Prophet (SAWS) and the companions descended the mountain feeling sad. Comforting the Muslims, Allah (SWT) revealed the ayah which can be translated as, **"And do not feel feeble nor grieve; and you are the most exalted in case you are believer" (3:139).**

The companions were also distressed to see the Prophet (SAWS) unhappy. Some also wondered why the angels were not present in the battle of Uhud. Allah (SWT) answers them saying , **"And in no way has Allah made (this supply) except as good tidings to you and that thereby your hearts may be composed; and in no way does victory (come) except from the Providence of Allah, The Ever-Mighty, The Ever-Wise" (3:129).**

Surat Al-'Imran truly heals the spirit of the companions, of the Prophet (SAWS) and of the situation of Uhud. Allah (SWT) tells the Prophet (SAWS) , **"So it was by (some) mercy from Allah that you have been lenient with them; and if you had been stern (and) harsh of heart, they would indeed have broken away from round about you. So be clement towards them, and ask forgiveness for them, and take counsel of them in the command. Yet when you are resolved, then put your trust in Allah; surely Allah loves the (ones) trusting (in Him)" (3:159)**

No matter what, democracy and consultation doesn't come to an end since a Muslim doesn't simply follow his own thoughts. This is our religion. The Qur'an teaches the Prophet (SAWS) and the Muslim rulers to do so. We should consult each other and not abandon others' opinions.

And Allah (SWT) further tells the companions , **“Allah has indeed already been bounteous to the believers as He sent forth among them a Messenger from (among) themselves...” (3:164).**

For those who left and ran away, they had sins and that led to it. For this Allah (SWT) says, , **“Surely the ones of you who turned away the day the two gatherings encountered, surely it was only that Ash-shaytan (The ever-vicious, i.e., the Devil) made them slide back for some of that which they had earned; and Allah has indeed already been clement towards them. Surely Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Forbearing” (3:155).**

I wish that you would read Surat Al-'Imran, especially the ayahs related to the battle of Uhud, from which we learn two main lessons:

1. Don't oppose and disobey the Prophet (SAWS).
2. Sacrifice for the sake of Allah (SWT) and the Message, like the companions (RA) sacrificed here and were very passionate about the Message.

Tomorrow's lecture is about what happened after Uhud. We will see it then Insha' Allah.

Lecture Notes Provided By: Imam Ghulam Moyhuddin

Seerah: Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Hisam, Ibn Kathir and Diya al-Nabi were used in the compilation of these lecture notes as well as various books of Hadith.

The selective topics and format is from Amr Khaled's Arabic lecture on Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ with renditions from the "dar al tarjma" convoy.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3oDLD8B-has>

I have included modifications for the sake of readability and clarity.