

## **Khalifa Ali bin Abu Talib - The Battle of Uhud**

### ***The battle***

After the duels, the battle began. The Quraish charged with great force, but the Muslims held fast. Then in a counter attack the Muslims broke the enemy's line, and the Quraish fell back. At this stage, the contingent of the Muslim archers, contrary to the instructions of the Holy Prophet left their position in order to plunder the camp of the retreating Quraish. Khalid b Walid who was still a non-Muslim and was commanding a contingent of the Quraish cavalry rushed with his contingent, and occupied the position vacated by the Muslim archers. That exposed the Muslims to an attack from the rear as well as from the front. That changed the course of the battle. The defenses of the Muslims were broken, and in the confusion that followed many Muslims were martyred. Hamza an uncle of the Holy Prophet fell fighting. His dead body was desecrated by the Quraish as a mark of their fury against the Muslims. Hinda the wife of Abu Sufyan, the leader of the Quraish ripped the dead body, took out his liver, and chewed it. It was a barbarity which an unscrupulous woman like Hinda alone could practice. Among the Muslims who were martyred was Mas'ab b Omair. He bore some physical resemblance to the Holy Prophet, and seeing his dead body the Quraish shouted that Muhammad (peace be on him) had been killed.

In the confusion that followed, the Holy Prophet was wounded, and he fell in a pit over the dead bodies of his followers. Ali charged the Quraish with unprecedented fury, and killed many men of the enemy. He received no less than sixty-one wounds. When the Quraish continued shouting that the Holy Prophet had been killed, and Ali could no longer see the Holy Prophet where he was stationed, he rushed to the spot where the Holy Prophet lay wounded. He took the Holy Prophet from out of the pit, and with the aid of other companions including Abu Bakr and Umar escorted the Holy Prophet to a safer place. Ali fetched water in his shield, and dressed the wounds of the Holy Prophet, taking no heed of the wounds that he himself had received in the battle. As in the meantime, the Quraish continued shouting that the Holy Prophet had been killed, and no contradiction was made from the Muslim camp. The Muslim warriors engaged in combat with the Quraish were demoralized. They felt that if the Holy Prophet had been killed, there was no point in fighting the battle. At this juncture, at the instance of the Holy Prophet, Umar shouted back at the Quraish to say that the Holy Prophet was very much alive. On regaining consciousness, the Holy Prophet charged Ali to launch a counter attack against the Quraish. Ali rallied the Muslim, exhorted them to fight for the glory of Islam, and fell upon the enemy with the ferocity of a lion. Ali broke into the lines of the enemy, and caused great havoc in the ranks of the enemy. So great was the slaughter caused by Ali in the ranks of the enemy that his sword broke down. Thereupon the Holy Prophet sent Ali his own sword, and with this sword Ali caused further havoc among the ranks of the Quraish. He held the flag in his right hand, and when his right hand was wounded he held the nag in his left hand. Ali drove back the enemy. Because of the prodigies of valor performed by Ali, the Quraish could not take advantage of the victory that they had won at an earlier stage of the battle. Abu Sufyan accordingly commanded the Quraish to return to Makkah. He, however, shouted in a boastful mood that the Quraish had taken the revenge for their defeat in the Battle of Badr. Abu Sufyan declared that the Quraish would soon have another confrontation, when the Muslims would be annihilated.

When after the battle Ali returned to the camp his entire body was covered with so many wounds that Umm Salim and Umm Atiya, the Muslim nurses, did not know how to dress the wounds of Ali. The Holy Prophet washed and dressed the wounds of Ali himself, and said that God in whose cause Ali had received the wounds would heal them. Ali said, "

May God grant me the patience to bear this suffering. It was indeed a favor of God that He gave me the courage to stand and fight in spite of these wounds, and not to leave the field". For his marvelous bravery, the Holy Prophet conferred on Ali the appellation "Asad Allah", the lion of God.

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