



Assalamu 'alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakaatuhu



SEERAH OF MUHAMMAD

(SalAllahu 'alaihi wa sallam)



LESSON 84



TOPICS:



A New Qiblah.



The Battle of Badr.



A NEW QIBLAH



In Sha'ban, 2 H, the Qiblah (direction Muslims pray toward) was changed from Bait Al- Maqdis in Jerusalem to the Ka'bah in Makkah. The change was announced by Allah in a verse in the Qur'an. The Prophet (SalAllahu 'alaihi wa sallam) and the sincere Muslims rejoiced over this change. The Hypocrites who had pretended to be Muslims, however, protested the change, and many of them reverted to either Judaism or paganism, thereby purifying the ranks of Muslims.



THE BATTLE OF BADR



The military raids undertaken by the Muslims were minor until this point. They had been more exploratory than anything else, but they had served to initiate Muslims into the conduct of warfare. It was the Battle of Badr, however, that was a milestone for Islam as the first decisive battle between the Muslims and the Quraysh.



The Prophet (SalAllahu 'alaihi wa sallam) rode to Dhul Ashirah attempting to intercept a trade caravan from Makkah to Syria. The caravan, however, managed to flee to Syria. The Prophet (salAllahu 'alaihi wa sallam) then dispatched two men to Hawraa in Syria to await the caravan's return. When the scouts spotted the caravan approaching, they hurried back to Madinah to inform the Prophet (SalAllahu 'alaihi wa sallam). Once the Prophet (SalAllahu 'alaihi wa sallam) heard that the caravan was returning,

he mustered between 313 and 317 men, two horses and seventy camels. He then headed for Badr, about 155 km southwest of Madinah.



The Prophet (SalAllahu 'alaihi wa sallam) awarded the white standard to Mus'ab bin Umayr. The Muhajireen were given a separate standard which was carried by Ali bin Talib, while the standard of the Ansaar was borne by Sa'd bin Mu'adh.



Badr, ringed by high mountains, was accessible through three routes. One, called Al-Udwat Al-Qaswa, lay in the south; the second, called Al-Udwat Al-Duniya, approached from the north, and the third approached from the east and was used by the people of Madinah as the main thoroughfare to the settlement of Badr. There were some houses, wells and orchards in Badr, and for this reason Makkan caravans heading for Syria traveled along it and generally broke their journey there, staying anywhere from a few hours to a few days.



It would have been simple for the Prophet (SalAllahu 'alaihi wa sallam) and his men to seize the caravan by blockading all three escape routes. Success depended on the element of surprise, however, and the Muslims would have to appear only after the caravan pulled into Badr and seal off all three routes before the Quraysh could react. Accordingly, the Prophet (SalAllahu 'alaihi wa sallam) and his men left Madinah heading in the opposite direction from Badr. Once the Prophet (SalAllahu 'alaihi wa sallam) was at a safe distance away from Madinah, he changed routes and headed directly for Badr.



The caravan that the Muslims hoped to seize was headed by Abu Sufyan bin Harb. It consisted of forty men, one thousand camels and goods worth about fifty thousand dinars. Abu Sufyan was highly cautious, and he asked every person he met about the movements of the Muslims. He was at a great distance from Badr when he found out that a large band of Muslims had left Madinah. Acting quickly, he turned the caravan westward and headed for the coast, bypassing Badr altogether. Moreover, he sent a messenger to Makkah requesting reinforcements. When the Quraysh received Abu Sufyan's message, they quickly rounded up a squadron of 1,300 men to confront the Muslims and protect the caravan. All the notable chiefs of Makkah, except for Abu Lahab, joined the force, as well as every available man from each of the neighboring tribes. Of the Makkan clans, only Banu Adiy refused to take part.



When the pagan army reached Juhfa, they received a message from Abu Sufyan informing them that the caravan was safe and that the army should return to Makkah. The men were preparing to return when Abu Jahl arrogantly refused to retreat. Only the men from the Banu Zahra returned on the advice of their chief, Akhnas bin Shariq Thaqafi. The rest of the troops, now numbering one thousand, continued their journey. Upon reaching Udwat Qasbi, the Quraysh set up their camp in a spacious field, just behind the mountains that surrounded Badr.

To Be Continued...

